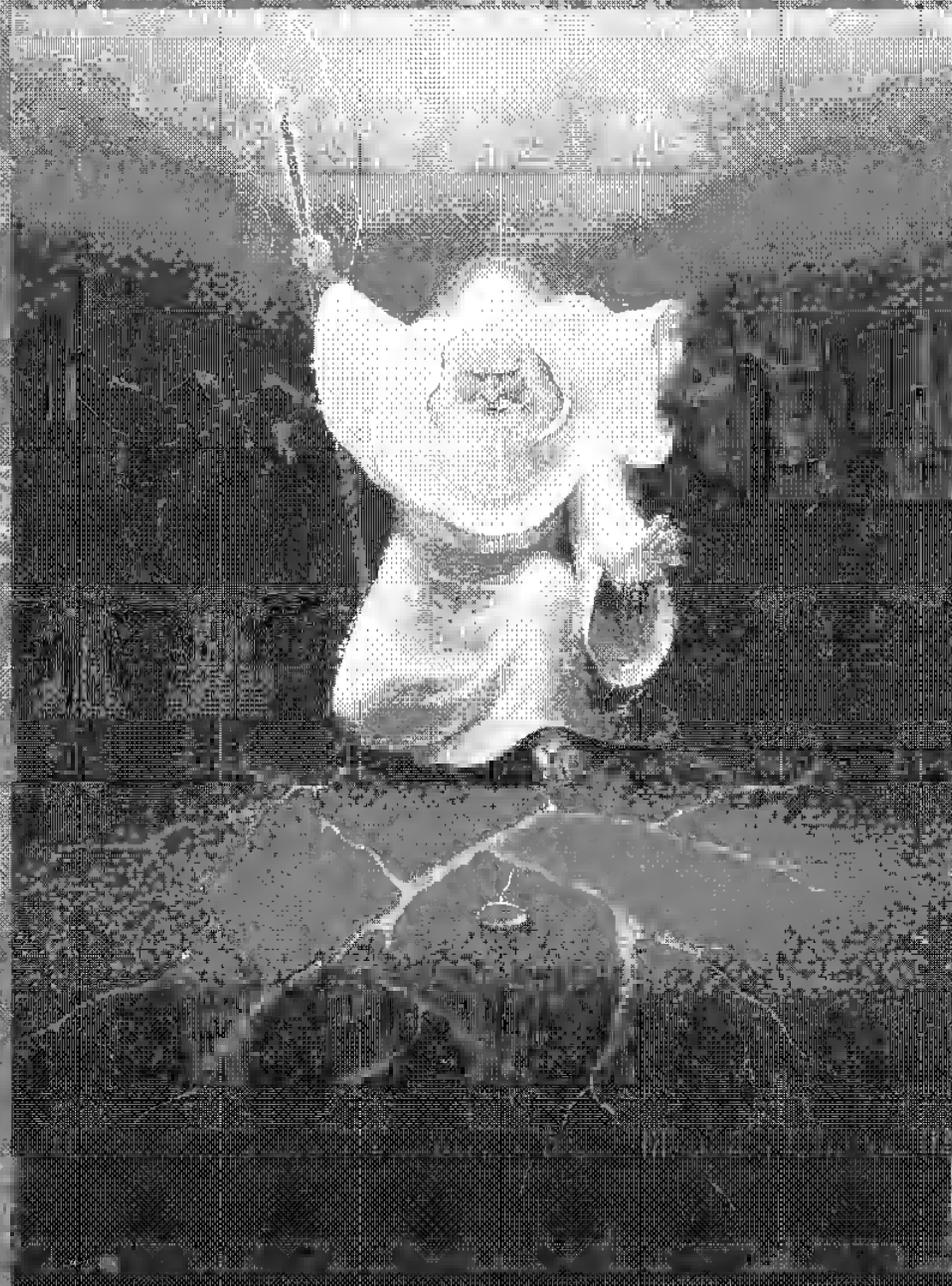


The True History of Wizards and Witches

(The Early Years)



"John Smith"

Dedicated to the search for truth.

The True History of Wizards and Witches (The Early Years)

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“John Smith” 2004

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The True History of
Wizards and Witches

The Early Years

John Smith

FOREWORD

In the year 1999, after a decade of research and writing, I released a 1,000-page history book devoted to uncovering the life and times of medieval counter-culture. Using the great witch burnings as a datum point, I regressed into a much earlier phase, when Europe enjoyed a wide range of cultural interaction with Asia. The odyssey stepped up quite a few notches in 1994, as I encountered new Russian theories about pre-Christian Europe. These sources claimed Europeans had inherited religious traditions akin to those of the Buddhists, Hindus and Magians. Such were the origins of European witchcraft. At first I laughed uncontrollably, that is until I took a much closer look at the situation, and found their stance vindicated by the evidence. Western readers were lagging behind in some very important developments. What I was not however prepared for was the ideological free-fire zone I'd inadvertently wandered into. In its day it was an emotional rollercoaster that plunges into an abyss of genocide, an orgy of incineration, revolution and military conquest.

The road was arduous indeed, particularly since I resolved from a very early stage to place as much of the story as possible between one set of covers. As I soon discovered, my choice was a little unwise. Weighing in at a hefty 3.8 kilograms, distributors deemed it unprofitable unless they were moving them in some quantity. Their best advice was to break it down into two or more paperbacks. So, back to the drawing board I went. Two years later (2003) two titles sprang to life, namely the *True History of Wizards and Witches* and *Christianity's Greatest Controversy - Prelude to Genocide*. At 150,000 words a piece they contain select portions from *Before the Burning Times*, substantially re-arranged, incorporating new information and commentary.

Those of you who presently believe that witchcraft was the preserved domain of socially-isolated, sole practitioners on the lunatic fringe are in for an enormous shock. This image belongs to a much later time, many centuries after the conversions that transformed Europeans from pagans to Christians. Prepare now to visualize arcane witchcraft as it was in its heyday, a multi-national pagan civilization spread from Central Asia to England, running the gauntlet of Islam and Christianity.

The modern face of white witchcraft is of course Wicca, which differs from olden traditional witchcraft in a number of respects, especially by disowning concepts of race and bloodline in their craft. Wicca owes part of its origins to *Ordo Templi Orientis* (the Order of the Eastern Temple), banned by Masonic brethren partly for admitting women, but more especially due to the perfidious influence of Aleister 'the Great Beast' Crowley, that fervent devotee of the dark art. Their position on the 'second sight', inherited down through the family, and powerfully present in Eastern Europe is far from clear. Nevertheless those knowledgeable in such matters will find this an interesting, mind-expanding read.

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Introduction

Pan-European folklore is rife with tales of wizards, witches and warlocks, mystical figures so intriguing that they have endured in our imagination for more than a thousand years. In legend, pointy hats, brooms, lengthy robes, veils, long hair, beards, magic, astrology, gems and wands were their trademarks. Nowadays they feature in high-profile novels, spectacular movies, popular television shows and video games. With millions of dollars riding on them, they have truly become hot property. Despite this level of public interest few scholars felt a need to explore the past for genuine evidence of their existence. Little wonder they are but a dubious flight of fantasy. As it happens the truth is altogether different. European wizards were, for the most part, adherents of the religion of the Magi, a faith of fire and sun-worship vigorously driven from Iran by Arab forces intent on introducing Islam to Persia, and bringing the ancient creed of the Magi to its knees. For those unfamiliar with the title, *Magus* is the singular and *Magi* the plural. The word Magians collectively relates to the Magi themselves, and their followers. Such then is the origin of the English word "magician".

Retracing the footsteps of the sages takes us back to Bronze Age Iran, a realm ruled by the tribe of the Medes. There its priestly caste of Magi revelled in arcana pertaining to the divine beings. To this can be added their impressive understanding of musical theory, politics, literature, medicine, mathematics, astrology, astronomy, meteorology and alchemy. Over the years their fame grew all the more, granting them exceptional renown and privilege throughout Persia, Egypt, Greece and Rome.

Theirs was a race apart, for they and all their kindred had unique spiritual powers; powers to speak with angels and gods, to prophecy future events, to understand dreams, to converse with souls in the hereafter, to perform magic and the religious rites, to cast horoscopes, to heal and increase the fertility of nature. Their royal bloodline, passed on to their descendants, gave them these supernatural abilities, this second sight. Having beheld the remarkable gifts at their disposal, the common folk adored them as incarnate gods and goddesses.

There's one thing history amply demonstrates; things change. The march of time leaves nothing unscathed, even civilizations crumble away, crushed by the hungry wheels of that weighty juggernaut. In direct contrast to this maxim, history also confirms that some things never change. Tragic events are doomed to be relived by those unwilling to learn the lessons of prior ages. War begets war.

It took a mere 20 years for the Muslims to go on the war path after the death of their prophet Mohammed. Between 642 and the first decade of the 8th century AD Arab Islamic forces pierced the vulnerable underbelly of Magian Iran, and across the Oxus river into the

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lands of the nomadic Turkic tribes. Tirelessly they annihilated the pre-Islamic Persian and Turkic cultures of the region, stealing for themselves the choicest jewels of Asia's lucrative silk road ... Bokhara, Samarkand. It was political and missionary activity of a different kind.

As the Arabs entrenched themselves throughout the newly-acquired Iran, remnants of the ousted Persian royal family, and the Magi of Zoroaster withdrew to Tabaristan near the Caspian Sea. Determined to preserve their people and faith from Islamic domination they established well-garrisoned settlements throughout Khoresmia, in conjunction with the region's already sizeable Buddhist population. Yet even this refuge was destined to collapse in time.

Location: The city of Khorezm, 712 AD, due east of the Caspian Sea, in the Land of the Sun.

Khorezm, one of the last great bastions of the wizards, had fallen. Islamic cavalry and footmen engaged the city's last remaining defenders in pitched battles, as they seized control of the streets and public buildings. Smoke hung over it like a buzzard. Jumpy vultures swooped down on the many corpses littering its forlorn, sunburnt thoroughfares. Haunting screams reverberated around the dying city ... rape, people succumbing to wounds, weeping orphans. In the aftermath of the siege, its inhabitants were detained and questioned. Some if not many were executed, others deported to make way for the ensuing waves of Arab colonists.

The Magi, the priesthood of astrologers and scientists so central to Iranian pre-Islamic culture, were not to be spared. To let them live was to invite a possible resurgence of the old faith. So they were put to death as encountered. They had governed large parts of Asia, served in the court of the Chinese Emperor, and studied alongside the priests, priestesses and philosophers of Greece, Rome, India and Egypt. Could it be that a religion so esteemed throughout antiquity should perish this ingloriously?

Arab soldiers rushed through the halls of the *Herbadestans* (Magian colleges), where wizards once trained. Rooms that formerly came alive with the orations of wise folk and academics stood deathly silent. All that remained was to destroy or commandeer the books kept by the wizards, a wealth of wisdom and higher learning accumulated by them since the Bronze Age. But as they furtively searched these institutions, they realized their worst nightmare had come true. Few writings were found... Evidently an unknown number of Magi had escaped their clutches.

Under new suppression orders Persian writing was banned, Magian fire temples refurbished as mosques, and non-Islamic Iranian *dhimmi*s subjected to extensive public humiliation, heavy taxation and extortion. Over the next hundred years Islam spread like wild fire across North Africa, even as far west as Spain.

Location: Spain, the flourishing Moorish Caliphate of Seville, under the governance of

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Abd ar-Rahman II, Anno Domini 845

If it wasn't for the massive invasion fleet mustered off shore, it would have been an otherwise normal day in Islamic Spain. The muezzin should have been standing atop the minaret, his wail calling the faithful to the mosque. Instead, fearful citizens looked seaward in horror as hundreds of serpent-prowed ships glided ashore. They had sailed far just to get there, all the way from Russia, under orders from their king.

As the longships of the Northmen beached, their angry raiders leaping overboard into shallow surf, it became obvious that Seville was about to get a call from some old friends - *Al Madjus*, the Magi. By the time the invaders had settled their grudge, much of the city lay in tatters.

You see the Magi had not vanished at all. In the shadow of the lofty Caucuses the exiles had rebuilt their temples, and hundreds of kilometres of stone defensive works and towers, all designed to keep the Muslims at bay. Others went further afield into Armenia, Transcarpathia, the Balkans, Russia and Scandinavia, into the arms of an even older enemy, the Christians. It was in such places that they regrouped, reorganized and planned retributive military action. Over the next two hundred years, combined heathen Norse, Russian and Alanic forces repeatedly launched brave attacks against the Islamic, Jewish and Christian heartlands of the east, brazenly foraying into Iran, Byzantium, Anatolia and the Caucuses. They were here to stay.

The venerable paganism of the wizards

There is an old saying "to the victor go the spoils". Our understanding of the nature and history of paganism has suffered greatly as a result of the Dark and Middle Ages, for it was during that tumultuous era that the Church sought to suppress and eradicate the 'idolatrous', 'superstitious' and 'heathen' beliefs of pre-Christian Europe in order to supplant it with the more 'enlightened' Christianity. For this reason, the Mediaeval churchmen did not seek to record the authentic traditions of the pagans at any great length. All we are left with are views of our ancestors parading about silvan woodlands, 'devilishly' dancing around bonfires, getting blind drunk, feasting, prostrating themselves before blocks of wood, venerating the sun and natural springs, sacrificing cattle, telling and retelling 'blasphemous' and 'obscene' myths, or "false histories". We also hear of their incest and the worship of men and trees.

Are we to believe that for thousands of years, Europeans had no religious sense at all, and delighted in the profane? Are we to accept that the heathen faith (or faiths) was as ridiculously baboonish as it has been portrayed; a feast of carnal longings and foolhardiness, and that it is only we who have genuine beliefs and morality? You are about to discover just how much information on the pagans has been preserved, only academics specialising in

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paganism and witchcraft studies have not bothered to pursue some of these very valuable clues to their ultimate conclusion, perhaps for ideological reasons. In doing so they would have found an historical reconstruction greatly at variance with the current, almost nihilistic, interpretations of European paganism. So, what was paganism? In brief it is a Latin term first coined by the Romans; *paganus*: "villagers". It is therefore a contrived and deceptively naive term that conceals an amazingly wide range of beliefs. The term "heathen" possesses a similar quality. In Olden Rus', the word *pogan'*,¹ which was derived from Latin, differed from other terms for "a pagan" like *yazychnik*² or *busorman*.² It meant "bad", "filthy", or "dirty". *Pogan'* is most likely a word used by Christians during the post-conversion era when referring to devotees of the "Old Faith". Another interpretation is that it was used when speaking of certain pagans who might have deliberately defiled themselves with filth, or who had a different standard of hygiene. Throughout greater Europe the word "pagan" need not have applied merely to those who revered bonfires in towers or woodland clearings. Mediaeval clerics could just as easily use it when speaking of Muslims, or Jews, followers of "the Jewish superstition". In the *Hodoeporicon of St Willibald*, Huneberc of Heidenheim terms the Arabs "pagan saracens". Here formal religions, complete with their own holy texts, are derided as "paganism" and "superstition".³

Surviving data suggests that paganism connoted closeness with the land, fire, water and wind, and a deep reverence for created existence. It comprehended the march of time, the cycle of life, death and destruction. Pagans, in synchronization with nature itself, worshiped the Creator and/or the many living essences of creation, often by ritually emulating the eternally recurring drama of creation and destruction inherent in the cosmos.

Despite the fact that Celtic, Greek, Slavic, Germanic and Roman pagan observances had a certain degree of uniformity across virtually all of Europe, many authorities have not focused on their shared features, and the reasons for this inherent sameness. So what was the common source for their heathen observances? To answer this we must regress some 4,000 years to a time when white Europoids inhabited deepest Eurasia, in lands we normally associate with the Chinese. Nowadays researchers have termed the descendants of these Caucasians the Tokharians, or Saka who have in turn been equated with the Yuehzhhi tribes recorded in ancient Chinese historical sources. The Yuehzhhi were folk characterized by their white complexions and red, Brunette or blonde hair. Following hostilities with the Chinese (the most catastrophic being in 140 BC), the Yuehzhhi were largely expelled from Eurasia. From the archeological examination of their mummified remains we know they were tattooed and wore clothing similar to tartan. While population movements between Europe and Asia took place as much as 3,000 years prior to the 2nd Century BC, the latter period witnessed an explosion of migratory dislocation.⁴

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The Huns formed a later wave of emigres. They too possessed Caucasian and Eurasian physiology, and their constituent tribes controlled a broad expanse of land spanning from Europe to the quite distant Tarim Basin area. The period of the Hunnish excursions into Europe typified the westerly dispersions of these diverse white nations out of Asia, which, as mentioned, began in earnest from the second century BC onwards, owing to heightening levels of conflict. Many of them were Tokharian-speaking Buddhists and no doubt Magians, so their coming was synonymous with the introduction of Asiatic beliefs into Europe. Consider the word *shaman*, which entered English vocabulary via the Russian, which probably has as its source the New Persian word *shaman*.⁵ It may equally have come from the now-extinct asiatic Tokharian language (which was closely related to the Celtic sub-family),⁶ and in its original form denoted a wandering Buddhist monk.⁵ There you have it, white folk practicing a religion that began in India, and thrived throughout most of the Orient. They brought asiatic linguistic affiliations with them also. Did you know that all the European languages, with the exception of Basque, Finnish and Hungarian, are related to each other? Did you know that Sanskrit (the language used to record the Vedic holy texts of the Hindus) is significantly related to our European languages? Are you aware of recent developments in y-chromosome research, which indicate an archaic and substantial presence of white people throughout Europe and India.⁷ By implication they had interbred with the Dravidians, India's most ancient inhabitants, bequeathing their genetic legacy to the modern Indian population.⁷ The source of this genetic and linguistic inter-relationship was our Indo-European ancestors, nations of itinerant Indo-European horsemen who saw fit to colonize not only Europe, but Asia. Amongst them were a great many nomadic Aryan tribesmen and their families.

The research controversy

The term Aryan is particularly applicable to the Indo-Iranians (linguistically the word Iran is related to the word Aryan). In saying Iranians, I am referring to Caucasian folk like the Alans and Tokharians, or Persian tribes such as the Germanians and Daans, or the pious Magian family of the Fryanaks who peopled Central Asia and the Caucuses in antiquity. Arab forces invaded Iran in the 7th Century AD, and deported many of the original inhabitants (many of which probably had blonde, red or brown hair). Thereafter they repopulated the region with Arabian colonists, with the result that many modern Iranians are a Semitic-Iranian hybrid, whereas they were once more Caucasian in appearance. Consider the existence of indigenous blondes and red-heads, with blue and green eyes, in places like the Balkans, the Ukraine, Afghanistan, China, Iran and Iraq, the genetic remnants of the Aryan, pre-Islamic age.

At a certain point research took a turn for the worse. Owing to the nazification and

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subsequent misuse of the word Aryan, the term has nowadays become taboo, synonymous with tyranny and evil. It would however be more fitting to associate it with a rigid, stable, social order and monumental civilization-building, through which highly-evolved modes of living, complete with arts and sciences, came upon an otherwise barbarous world. In short, the term, and the people it once applied to, have a basis in fact. For this very reason the Aryan nations merit far closer scrutiny, despite the uneasy imagery the very word evokes.

I will begin by furnishing two examples from Persia, in which the word Aryan is used, in its original context. Firstly we have a monumental inscription carved into a rock face situated north of the Persian capital Persepolis. It reads "*I am Darius the Great King, King of Kings ... a Persian ... an Aryan, having Aryan lineage*".⁸ And in the Magian prayer *Mihir Yast* I:4 we are told of the sun god Mithra's great virtues, as the Magi recited "*We offer up libations unto Mithra, the lord of the wide pastures, who gives a happy dwelling and a good dwelling to the Aryan nations*".⁹

Throughout the *True History of Wizards and Witches* you will be presented with information drawn mostly from Iran, India, the Balkans, Scandinavia and Russia (once called Scythia) which shall de-mystify and rehabilitate the seemingly leprous term Aryan, by rectifying the sort of misconceptions that most people have. Although the following information has been well known in European academic circles for some time, English-speaking researchers still approach the topic with great trepidation, perhaps understandably. Before I lead into the life and times of the magicians it behoves me to briefly outline the trail of discoveries which led to the unearthing of Europe's Asian connections, in both a religious and historical sense.

While studying Indian Sanskrit the Renaissance enquirer Scalinger chanced upon points of semblance between the Greek, Romance, Germanic, Baltic and Slavic words for "God", or "a god".¹⁰ For example we have the Lithuanian word *Dievas* and the Latvian *Dievs* which meant "a god" or "the sky". Then there is the Old High German word for "god" *Ziu*, and the Greek *Dios* ("God"), or the Latin *Deus* ("a God") and *Divus* ("divine"). It can also be found in the Old Icelandic as *Tioar* ("the gods"). These many terms are cognate with the Old Indian *Devas* ("God").¹¹ An apparently different Russo-Baltic tradition, which intimates that the *Daevs* are malign beings, seems to have stemmed from the Avestan Persian word *dev*, meaning "a demon". This tradition may well be embodied in the Slavic word *divii* ("something that is wild, untamed or savage"), the Latvian *diva* ("a monster") or the Greek *daimon* (derived from *daio* "to distribute fortune"). Whether celestial or subterranean, these gods had amazing powers, as is indicated by the Polish *dziv*, and the Lithuanian *dyvas*, both of which mean "a miracle".

Yet Scalinger was ill-prepared or unwilling to fathom the nature and genesis of these similarities, perhaps due to the prevailing religious climate of his era. Somewhat later, in the

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year 1767 AD, an English amateur linguist called Parsons, began a far deeper enquiry into the matter. His findings were tabled in what was then a ground-breaking work, the *Remains of Japhet*. Through this broad-based enquiry he deduced that the languages of Europe, India and Iran were fundamentally related to one another, in fact part of the same linguistic stock, of similar pedigree. Even so his observations failed to coax enough discerning minds to more fully examine the implications of his discovery.

It was only in the last years of the eighteenth century that someone of merit followed in his footsteps. Jones, the Chief Justice of India, and a qualified linguistic scholar in his own right, devoted much energy to paleo-linguistic research. From his labors came our first serious inklings that, at some time in ages past, the pagan Europeans shared the same linguistic and religious ancestry as many in India and Iran, not to mention northern, central and south-east Asia.¹² There was a scientifically quantifiable relationship between Sanskrit and Europe's linguistic sub-families. Comparative linguistics was born.

Paleo-linguistics or comparative linguistics is the craft of "word archaeology", the valuable excavation of archaic words from diverse languages. Comparative linguists can make inferences about the cultural meanings originally associated with a given word, and the effect that these same cultural trimmings may have had on the recipient race, whose language is being dissected by them.

Amid the euphoria of Jones' revolutionary find, it probably never dawned upon anyone what a terrible scholastic burden had just descended upon academia. For now they had a duty of care to examine the many cultural and religious similarities between Europeans and Asians. If they had common linguistic ancestry, could it also be that comparable elements of their respective cultures were not a coincidence, but contextual features of a cultural inheritance shared by Europeans and Asians?

Only in the late 1800's did the likes of Frazer, Muller, Darmesteter, and West begin to attempt the seemingly impossible, and evaluate the significance of these concurrences. Tangible results took form. But before too long their new findings were steered towards sinister ends. On the looms of Nazi historians the "Aryan myth" was woven. Science had now "proven" the existence of a master-race, and surprise, surprise, it was Nordo-Germanic. With this myth a whole nation of industrious men and women were serenaded, and lured to the destruction of their families and country. Carnage enveloped their neighbors on every side as Germans tried to lift themselves from their problems by reliving those glorious days of old, a thousand year Reich. Jews and other condemned elements of German society died by the million. The unparalleled tragedy of these events left a stain that tarnished Indo-European studies, enshrouding it in taboos that are present to this day. For example, upon hearing the word "Aryan" most readers will think of Hitler's "master race". This graphically illustrates how a legitimate field of academic endeavor, like Indo-European studies, can be

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hijacked, and almost consigned to ignominy by misguided politically-inspired historical models. After World War II any willingness to further explore Europe's Aryan legacy had been exhausted by nightmare visions of a charred continent.

Still, some persisted. In the 1950's the "New-comparativists" (academics like Dumézil, Eliade, Mallory, and Gimbutas) emerged. They bravely stepped back into the breach and picked up where their predecessors had left off. Much toil remained. Archaeology, folklore, historical sources, mythology were all areas that needed to be explored to confirm or deny any actual or perceived connection between European and Asian cultural and religious manifestations. Thanks to them we are a whole lot closer to understanding the glorious and impressive history of the wizards.

European paganism included religious traditions that remained amid the cultural backwash left behind by the nomads who once ruled throughout Europe and Asia. Their form of Aryan paganism, though crude, concerned the worship of *Daevās* (a class of gods still worshiped by the Hindus of India), something suggested by the fact that the word for "god" in many European languages are related to the Sanskrit word for the *Daeva* gods, as mentioned. While it is true that Indo-European words for "god", belonging to this etymology, continued to be used after the conversion to Christianity when referring to the god of the Christians, there is every reason to believe that the heathen priests of Eastern Europe and the Urals region, continued to understand the original context of the words.

Idols with many arms and heads were carved by heathen Celts, Poles and Balts. These images resembled those of Vedic deities throughout India. Very often Gaulish and Celtic idols are seated in the "lotus position", a traditional Hindu pose for divinities. Aryan *nagas* (magical, half-human, half-cobra beings from the underworld) appear throughout much of the ancient and Mediaeval world, thousands of kilometres west of India, as *naaki* (Finnish), *nakh* (Estonian), *nocca* (Gothic), *nhangs* (Armenia), *nathr* (Old Norse for "adder"), *naia* (Egypt - "a form of poisonous asp"), *nga* (the Samoyed word for "a type of God, particularly a divinity that brings death")¹³, *nix* (German),¹⁴ Other words for "snake" were *nathir* (Old Irish), *naeddre* (Old English) and *natrix* (Latin).¹⁵ The Aryans ascribed to the quasi-human, demi-serpentine naga beings, mighty powers of protection. This being the case, Aryans throughout the Orient often had them crafted into serpent amulets in the form of necklaces and arm rings. Similar items of jewellery continued to be worn by European heathens as late as the Middle Ages.

Aryan rites typically included the lighting of incense, the offering of libations and sacrificial meals, the slaughter of horses and oxen, as well as the lighting of perpetual fires which brought prosperity and protection to settlements. For this reason many European words meaning "fire" are related to the Sanskrit. The Old Russian word was *ogon'* or *ogn'*. This is related to the Bulgar *ogn*, the Serbo-Croat *ogan*, the Slovenian *ogeni*, the Czech *ohen* or

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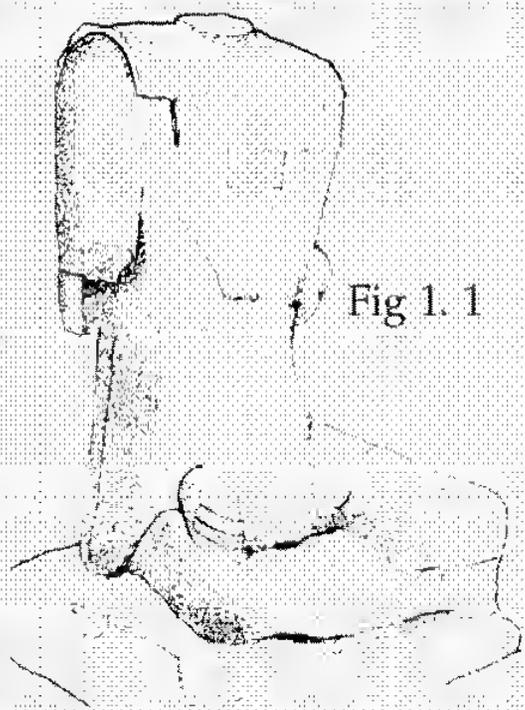


Fig 1. 1

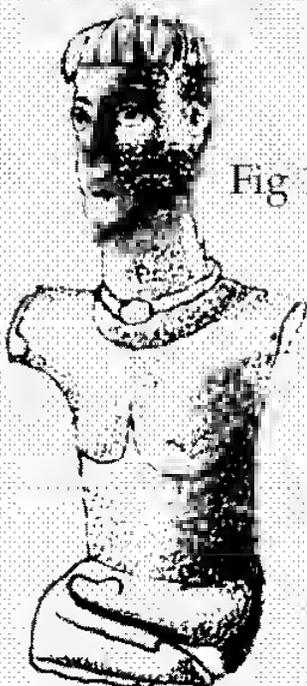


Fig 1. 2

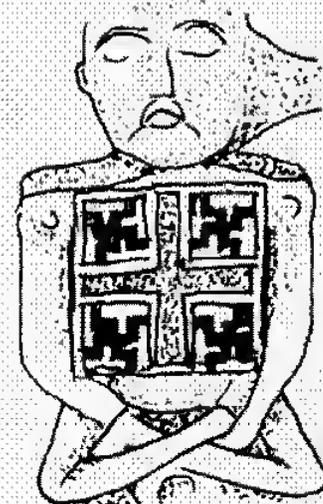


Fig 1. 3

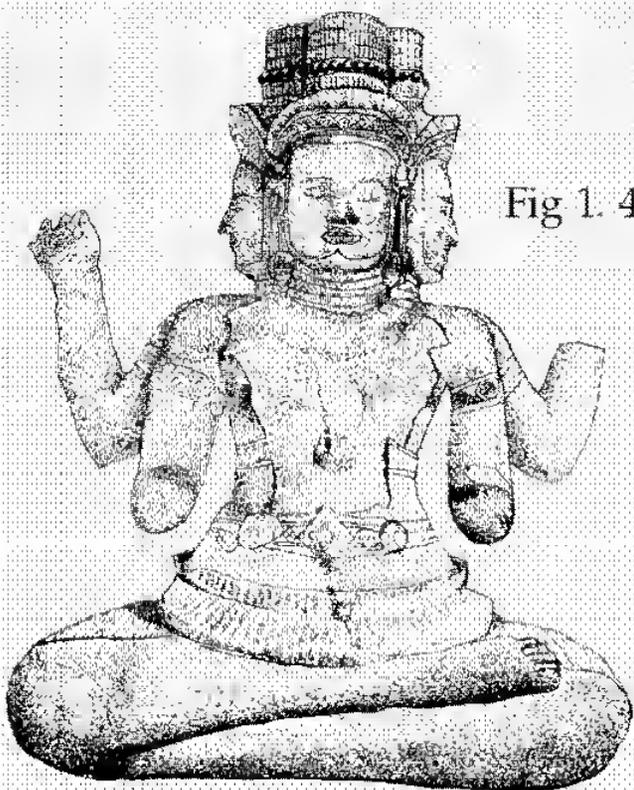


Fig 1. 4



Fig 1. 5

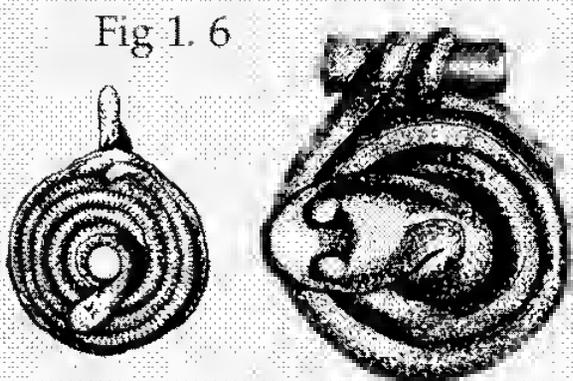


Fig 1. 6

Fig 1. 7



Fig 1. 8

Fig 1. 1. Celtic idol, Gaul, 5th Century BC.

Fig 1. 2. Celtic idol, Gaul, 1st Century AD.

Fig 1. 3. Figure on handle, seated in the lotus position, and with swastikas, Ireland.

Fig 1. 4. Hindu idol of Brahma the creator, India, 10th Century AD.

Fig 1. 5. Idol of Svantovit, the creator. Rugen, Poland. The sanctuary for this idol was destroyed by Christians in the 12th Century AD.

Fig 1. 6. Pagan Norse snake-amulet pendant, Sweden, 10th C.

Fig 1. 7. Pagan Norse snake-amulet pendant, York, 10th C. The snake may be a

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ohne, the Polish *ogien*, the Lithuanian *ugnis*, the Latvian *uguns*. The name of the Hindu fire god Agni is especially related to Indo-European words for "fire", namely the Latin *ignis*, the Hittite *agnis* and the Vedic *agnis*.¹⁶

So by the 10th Century AD, after several thousand years of diversification, European pagan observances were simply a welding together of Aryan customs focussed on the performance of the old vedic sacrifices, rites still performed in India to this day. I shall now introduce you to the next most influential pagan tradition, that of the Magi, one born among these Aryan practices, yet which took its own controversial evolutionary course.

Magi - The magicians

Today the English word "magician" conjures images of cunning tricksters performing astonishing illusions. In mediaeval Europe they were seen as masters of the devil's arts. Clearly our unflattering view of the magician has undergone substantial devolution. I will now elucidate their original form and virtues during that age when they held power.

So, who were the Magi? Well for a start, the Magi are not some figment of our imagination, or a fable; they were an actual religious hierarchy every bit as evolved as the Catholic or Orthodox churches.¹⁷ Plutarch and Apollonius of Tyana were just some of the authorities to inform us that a Magus was a person of royal blood, possessing *magu* (a special mystical power that was inherited by bloodline from generation to generation). In addition to this, they were able to induct foreign persons of royal blood into their arts.¹⁸

The Magi formed the Iranian religious caste, performing varied functions vital to the running of society, additional to their duties as divine intercessors. So in many respects they held similar status to the Brahmin priests of the Hindus. They worked as scribes, herbalists, doctors, teachers, philosophers, musicians, astronomers, astrologers, genealogists, judges, mathematicians, administrators, smiths, architects, builders and so on. Magi were the moral watchdogs of their society, exhorting the faithful to acts of goodness, truthfulness, and observance of the law. Above all they conducted many festivals and rites in adoration of the sun (the face of god, iconographically speaking), who was the propagator of all life on earth, and the source of *Spenta Mainyu*, the Holy Spirit. We get a brief glimpse of the Magi through Greek pagan gnostics, notably by Iamblichus in his writings on the life of Pythagorus;

"(Pythagorus) was taken captive by the soldiers of Cambyses, and carried off to Babylon. Here he was overjoyed to be associated with the Magi, who instructed him in their venerable knowledge, and in the most perfect worship of the gods. Through their assistance, likewise, he studied and completed arithmetic, music and all the other sciences".¹⁹

Pythagorus also learned the rites of the Babylonian-Chaldean priesthood (which I shall

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discuss a little later), in addition to those of the Magi. Porphyry tells us they had special expertise in "astronomical theorems, divine rites, and worship of the Gods",²⁰ but, having witnessed Chaldean witchcraft first hand, Pythagorus "was shocked at all the blood-shedding and killing".²¹

Among their number were counted the Magus-Kings, who were not seen as ordinary monarchs, but divinities in their own right. The Achaemenid and later Parthian blue-bloods were specifically referred to as "gods" or "descended from the gods".²² Like their predecessors, the kings of later post-Parthian, Zoroastrian Sassania, they went by the formal title of *Bagi* which meant "gods" (which resembles the Slavic word *bog*, also meaning "a god", the plural being *bogy*), thus indicating that Sassanian monarchs were regarded as living-god kings too.²³ Their ability to enter a state of *magu* (a preternatural experience that placed them in league with the divine beings) is what distinguished the Magi from ordinary pagan priests and sorcerers, for in doing so they heard the voices of gods and otherworldly essences directly. In effect they were mouthpieces of the celestial divinities; prophets and prophetesses.

Apparently the magical power and wisdom of the Magi was very real indeed, partly owing to their masterful knowledge of the arts and sciences. Even as staunch an enemy as the Christian clergy had no trouble admitting the marvels they performed. Yet some misinformation arises. According to the Nicaean Anastasius and St Clement of Rome, Simon Magus (the arch-enemy of St Peter) was a master of illusion, arts known throughout the Middle Ages as *legerdemain* or *juggling*. Magus is a misnomer. To be more precise he was a gnostic sorcerer said to have crafted walking statues (mechanical devices animated by wires?), was unharmed by fire (a fire-resistant salve such as that used by modern stuntmen?), could make phantasmal images appear in the air (tricks with lenses, such as the Chinese lantern?). Before a large audience he made a person appear in every window of an upper story tower simultaneously (chicanery with multiple mirrors, perhaps based on Ptolemy's 2nd Century AD experimentation with optics?), he had two faces (convincing facial masks?) and could mutate into a goat (costumery not unlike that of the witches?).²⁴

Later European witches were certainly purveyors of ingenious contraptions. For example, in an illuminated Church manuscript, penned during the Hussite Wars in Germany, there is a picture of a heretical commando saboteur dressed in a diving suit. His apparatus consisted of flippers, and a hood (complete with transparent eye-holes) which was connected to the surface by a breathing tube. The insurrectionist is seen to be carrying crates, which were either victuals for the besieged commune of heretics, or even gunpowder as some have suggested.²⁵ We again hear of diving apparatus during the trial of John Wildman in England on charges of sedition in the last years of the 1600's. He allegedly procured the equipment from a female witch who learned how to construct the devices from the angels. Being a resourceful chap addicted to treasure hunting, Wildman used this

novel gear to fossick offshore, where Spanish shipping had gone down.²⁶

The mystical potency of the Magi supposedly stemmed from the supernatural blood running through their veins. This precious blood was both pure and sacred, and could only be inherited by a specific pool of descendants who were all related to one another. In practice this meant that the Magi engaged in incest (for want of a better word) within various degrees of consanguinity, even with those as closely related as their cousins, largely by arranged marriages. The Parthian era saw a major deviation from this custom arise. Traditional Magian consanguineous nuptials competed with exogamous marriage rites, under foreign, and especially Greek influence. No doubt the more orthodox Magi would have seen this as debased, and in every way contrary to Zoroaster's unequivocal support for the next-of-kin marriage. Many Parthian Magi still wedded in the required manner, even allowing for the new exogamous fad, "*and these Magi, by ancestral custom, consort even with their mothers*".²⁷ Greek suggestions that they bred with members of their own immediate family are hotly contested by the Parsees (the last recognized descendants of the Magian exiles who resettled in Bombay), for this is not acceptable among the Magian exiles of India, if indeed it ever was. Perhaps the Greeks had misconstrued the meaning of the "next-of-kin marriage", and wrongly concluded that it included mother and son, and father-daughter unions. Whatever the case Magians belonged to one big family, genetically, culturally and philosophically - they were so to speak brothers and sisters, the brethren and sistereen.

The Medean Magi (whose tribal homeland centered around the Iranian city of Rai) were to the pagans what the Levites were to the Jews; potent inheritors of the sacerdotal priestly bloodline granting them alone the right to intercede on man's behalf before the gods of the cosmic and infernal realms.²⁸ Even more than this the Magi were believed to be incarnate gods, angels and archangels, of noble or Aryan birth, their pedigrees signified respectively by the terms *Arizantava* and *Ariyazantava*. In fine they were not seen as wholly mortal, gifted beings preordained to be the "*chosen and pure lords of the earth*".²⁹ During the medieval European Inquisitions they were still alive and well, though chided as a clandestine corporation of angelic beings. To a tenuously converted Europe, and a Church attempting to promulgate the *magisterium*, they were an unremitting disease that hung over the parishes and countryside.

The concept of divine mortals was certainly not peculiar to the Magi, for such beings were known among the Aryan Brahmans, sages and saints, not to mention the pagan gnostic priests and priestesses. Like the Magi, the Brahmin stood at the apex of the Aryan sociological tree.³⁰ Indian texts known as the Puranas state that Brahmans should be worshiped by all people, even kings.³⁰ With a religion directed toward Jesus Christ, the creator made flesh, Christians should be more than familiar with the idea also.

Egyptian and Greek pagan gnostic cults allowed their rulers and philosophers to become

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gods worthy of worship, providing that they had reached certain levels of spiritual and ritual attainment, and had been enlightened by the fine learning imparted by the Great Spirit.

What is even more interesting is that man-worship was a component of early Mediaeval European paganism. In Spain, Martin of Braga spoke of pagans making idol houses, within which were situated images dedicated to men, who in their turn received sacrifices.³¹ Therefore Western European pagans, like the Slavic pagans, had gods who were, or had been, in reality, beings of flesh and blood. Some were venerated posthumously, others while they yet lived. For instance in Britain, in the year 959 AD, the Christian King Edgar began moves to eradicate heathenism in all its many forms. One item stressed in his letter to the clergy was that man-worship no longer be tolerated.³² This is an undeniable reference to mortal-gods (male or female). Unless this relates to a form of man-worship imported into Britain at a later date, it might be residue from the age of druids. As you are about to see, the likely religious source for the divine status of these pre-Christian living gods was Magianism and pagan gnosticism.

How many types of "Magi" were there?

Five different species of "Magus" originated in the region of Iran, though strictly speaking not all of them were Magi in the pure sense of the word, but fire-priests.

1. PRE-ZOROASTRIAN MAGI

Before the birth of the Magian prophet Zoroaster, the religious needs of the Iranians were served by wizards immersed in arts known to the Aryan Brahman, and Mesopotamian priests, such as the Chaldeans. Wizards of this calibre ceremonially interacted with an enormous range of eastern divinities, the foremost being Mesopotamian *daemones* and heroes, as well as the *daevas* gods of the Hindus, and the opposing faction of beings called *Asuras*.

2. ZOROASTER'S "MAGI"

According to Magian texts the ascension of Zoroaster brought a time of major religious reformation in Iran. Under his guidance a new philosophical movement took root in the Aryan homelands, which disallowed the worship of *daemones* and Hindu *daevas*. The cosmos, as he saw it, was essentially a battlefield in which two spirits clashed. One brought life, good fortune and virtue, the other death, grief and iniquity. At this point in Iran's religious development however, the Evil Principle was not yet personified as a god. Accordingly all worship was to be monotheistically directed towards *Ahura Mazda*, the mighty sun, the Good and Wise Lord, and *Spenta Mainyu*, the Holy Spirit. In practice Zoroastrians revered trees, water, earth, animals and mountains as aspects of this one god,

plus moreover the sphinxine *yazata* angels that shepherded creation.

Zoroaster's religion typecast believers as participants embroiled in a war of good against evil, white versus black, of god's light clashing with the darkness of *Angra Mainyu*, the Unholy Spirit. Their weapons were good thoughts, good words, and good works. Zoroaster urged them to venerate and vivify the creator through the cult of fire, which was, as before, celebrated in sacred groves. In his day the Magi briefly lost their role as tenders of these holy fires, a place ceded to the *Athravan* (literally "Fire-men").³³ Be that as it may, the priesthood he advocated still consisted of sun-worshiping astronomers and astrologers, though idolatry, powerfully integral to the rites of the Hindus, Chaldeans and Babylonians was banned.

For his fated meddling in their affairs the wizards conspired to kill Zoroaster at his birth, but did not succeed in murdering him until he had reached a ripe old age.

3. THE MEDEAN/ZURVANITE MAGI

The teachings of Zoroaster filled the Aryan heart with consternation. Was it fitting to worship the *Daevas* or the *Ahuras*? For many Aryans the answer was the path of least resistance, one which resolved the long-standing religious conflict. It was righteous to honour and appease both classes of Aryan god. From that time the ways of the Magi and the Brahman continued to mingle in very many respects (as they had been before Zoroaster), and this gave rise to a reinvigorated tradition which outwardly bore the characteristics of Magian and Hindu religion. In addition it retained the Persian and Mesopotamian cultus of their day, thereby forming a body of religious tradition capable of appealing to most of the Near-East. That is not to say that these hybridizations occurred as a result of dogmatism. They were probably haphazard, owing to the open-mindedness of regional heathenry. Inevitably this type of paganism was built on a foundation of dualism, with the war between light (good) and darkness (evil) ensconced as a central theme. At some point during Achaemenid times, the Unholy Spirit was transformed into the nemesis *Ahriman*, Lord of Demons, the face of Chaos and disorder throughout civilization and creation. There were now two gods in the universe, both part of the natural order of things, every area of existence now fell under the jurisdiction of one or the other. Still, some postulated the existence of an even higher power, who sired these gods of good and evil, these two pillars of the opposites, the fathers of the positive and negative aspects of existence. The awesome influence of both gods throughout nature was equally real, and equally perceptible: Happiness-Sadness, Life-Death, Growth-Demise, Health-Sickness, Order-Chaos, Generosity-Greed.

The Medean Magi espoused arts known to the archetypal Magi of the Medes and Mesopotamians, being astronomer magicians devoted to a spectrum of gods, above and below - the *Ahuras*, *Daevas*, hero-gods and *daemones*. The terms *Magus* or *Mageus* (similar to

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the Vedic term *magha*), once signified that the Medean priests were both holy and godly. By Greek reckoning, they were mortal-gods, the "Magu-men" scorned in later Orthodox Zoroastrian texts.³⁴ If we are to believe the Zoroastrian scriptures, one segment of their number consisted of black Magian sectarians, or, to use a mediaeval phrase, "Luciferians". Just as the omnipotent, sunny *Ahura* Mazda had his own white priesthood, so too did *Ahriman* possess cohorts of devoted wizards and witches who enacted his decrees, ostensibly via the Mesopotamian rites of demon-summoning. Like their father in the underworld, their supposed miscreator, they sought to increase the earthly reign of crime and destruction, and bring much vexation to created existence. Through the efforts of incarnate angelic and demonic ministers, the world's greyness, caused by the mixing of the two opposites, came to an end, as humanity divided two ways, each flock veering toward its own peculiar path.

4. THE POST-KARTERIAN ZOROASTRIAN FIRE-PRIESTS

The Magi were known to successive Persian dynasties - the Achaemenids, Parthians, and Sassanians. During the Sassanian era a high priest arose named Karter. His reign brought a notable remodelling of Zoroastrian Avestan and Pahlavi religious texts and practices. In the formative stages of Zoroastrian Orthodoxy many of Zoroaster's original thoughts were re-kindled and re-written to incorporate new concepts from the west, particularly from Greece. The ancient Avestan literature (once devastated by Alexander the Great) was resurrected during this reorganization, perhaps the greatest legacy of the long-defunct Parthian and Sassanian Empires. From that time traditional Magi began to fall from grace. Their functions were usurped by a new breed of fire priest, the *Mobed* (*Magbad* or *Magupat*). The main ceremonial offerings made by these fire-priests included the sacred *Haoma* drink (an Iranian variant of the Hindu *Soma* libation), holy gruel and dron cakes.

Conversions to other apostate faiths, especially to Christianity (which their clergy held in great contempt), gnawed away at their religion during the Sassanian era particularly, and had to be halted by the threat of state execution.

Modern-day Parsee *Mobeds* propagate ritualism and religious ordinances codified in Karter's day. While the Parsee fire priests are not related to the original Magus wizards, a large proportion of their religious rites were inherited directly from the Medes, and so represent a continuation of the most ancient Magian observances.

5. MITHRAIC MAGI

Mithra (The Iranian God of Truth) became the patron deity of Roman Emperors from 274 AD, a century after Marcus Aurelius fostered the cult of *Sol Invictus* (the Invincible Sun). The sect's administration was overseen by a college of fire priests (called Pontiffs) who, since 300 BC, performed the state sacrifices in Rome, the heart of the empire.³⁵ They were mostly

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drawn from the noble Patrician families, and wore mitres (a tall pointed hat originating in the Near East, so named in honour of *Mithra*). Greatly nourished by the patronage of Marcus Aurelius (who the Roman Senate lauded as *Gothicus Maximus*³⁶ {the high Goth}, Mithraism saw further high level sponsorship under his successors, notably between 284-313 AD.³⁶

At first Mithraism embedded itself among the highest officials; the divine Caesars (incarnations of Jupiter), provincial governors and renowned military leaders. With such respectable figureheads captivated by its sacred occult mysteries, not to mention its militaristic nature, it was only a short while before Mithraism blossomed among the legions guarding the frontiers, only later coming to Rome. Persian Mithraism had become trendy among the "people that mattered", and to show their unfathomable support for the cult, military engineers, craftsmen, soldiers and public monies were siphoned into constructing subterranean temple vaults (*Mithraea*) in Rome, and throughout every region of the empire, even as far away as Britain.

Mithraism was, in some respects, an outgrowth of the radical Iranian philosophy called Zurvanism, a belief that a nebulous creator/time god made two sons, one holy, the other unholy. The Mithraic godhead known to the Romans consisted of a trinity, formed by the high god *Kronos* (the god of time), beneath which lay *Sol Invictus* (the sun) and his inveterate foe *Deus Ahrimanius* (the devil). *Mithras* (god of the light) stood between the sun and devil.

Worshippers gave their homage to *Mithras* and *Sol Invictus* at outdoor locations, whereas *Deus Ahrimanius* was venerated in underground vaults (judging by the sort of idols unearthed in some of these chambers). At Carrawburgh in England, a well has been excavated containing various heads, statuettes of a horse or dog, bells, glass and ceramic receptacles, money, and some two dozen altars.³⁷ The altars were most likely ritually deposited there over a period of time, so perhaps these constituted older altars which had been replaced with newer ones. The altars invariably came from a Roman surface *Mithraeum* situated close by, directly above a spring. Dog statues were frequently found at the Lydney temple (wherein the Celtic god Nodens was also worshiped), and so Bond guesses that they were gifts to the lord of hell.³⁷ I believe they might also represent *Ahriman* himself, in a typically Assyrian dog form. Nevertheless these dogs might only have acted as guardians for the site. In Britain an outdoor well found near a *Mithraeum* was overlooked by two altar stones and an on-site building.³⁸ Buildings of sacramental significance were associated with wells in the orient, so by my estimation this may have been a hall in which the Roman soldiers shared ritual meals, or even a permanently covered fire sanctuary.

The influence of the fire-pontiffs attached to the Mithraic brotherhood, made itself felt not only in the halls of Roman power, but on the battlefield. During an outbreak of hostilities with the Germanic Marcomanni tribe, Marcus Aurelius supposedly gathered the Roman and Germanic pagan priests together in Rome prior to the commencement of hostilities.³⁹

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There the German priests and Roman fire pontiffs collaborated, concelebrating certain ritual mysteries,³⁹ which we might guess were somehow connected with Iranian Mithraism. After all, participation in the Mithraic rites required one to be a member of the brotherhood, and of a certain minimum level of initiation. It therefore seems evident that the Marcomanni had their own Mithraic *flamen* (fire-priests) who were party to the same Iranian religious and ceremonial traditions as the Roman pontiffs. By my estimation the Marcomanni tribesmen of Germania ought to be identified with a Persian tribe known as the Germanians, who, more likely than not, originated among the Scythian nations who had begun moving out of Scythia into the northern reaches of Greater Europe during the Iron Age. What is more, observing the same or similar pagan Iranian cult traditions was in no way a recipe for cordial relations.

As with Magianism, the central doctrine of Mithraism was the eternal, primordial conflict between the insidious *Deus Arimanius* (Lord of Destruction) and *Sol Invictus*, the Sun-Christ (also known as *Helios Christus*) who had descended from heaven, and come into the world, where he shared a sacred banquet with twelve men.⁴⁰ The strength and life of the Invincible Sun was embodied in each successive generation in the form of Sun-Kings, kings who, like the Invincible Sun, were as one with fecundity in nature and the land.

Not all Mithraic priests were Magi; some were pagan gnostic philosophers. As a consequence Mithraic Magianism became a melange of Chaldean, Greek and Persian religious thought and ritualism, a cross-pollination probably brought about by the prolonged Greek occupation of Persia, not to mention Pythagoras' interaction with the Magi during his extended period of eastern captivity.⁴¹ For example Anaxilus, a deportee from Rome, was described as both a Pythagorean and Magus.⁴² Evidently he was a pagan gnostic philosopher, but also possessed the requisite pedigree of the Medean Magus. True, the worship of Ignis (ie; Agni) and the vestal flame existed in Rome prior to the advent of Mithraism, and perhaps had been there in a primitive form since Indo-European times. Later, under Persian Mithraic influences the number of *flamens* increased at the Roman capital, and throughout lands occupied by the imperial eagle. Hierarchically speaking their brotherhood consisted of *sacerdotes* (priests), *antistes* (high priests), pontiffs, and of course the *Summus Pontifex* (otherwise known as the *Pontifex Maximus* or *Pater Patrum* (the Father of Fathers)). There one also finds the terms *magistratus* ("magistrate") and *magister* ("teacher"), both traditional roles of the Magi. St Augustine stated;

"they (the Romans) even appointed a *flamen* for him (Romulus), a type of priest so pre-eminent in Rome's religious rites that they had only three of these, distinguished by the wearing of a special mitre, appointed for three divinities, the *Flamen Dialis* of Jupiter, the *Flamen Martialis* of Mars, and the *Flamen Quirinalis* of Romulus (a patron god of Rome, suckled by a she-wolf at his birth)".⁴³

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Suitably attired in sacramental garb akin to that of the Magi, the Mithraic Fathers performed baptisms, cleansings, hymns and other rites peculiar to varied gods, on behalf of the Roman people. Membership of their brethren was only open to males naturally. As with Magians, women of noble blood were authorized to perform rituals in adoration of female divinities, largely for the females of their community.^{43a} Female priestesses did exist, and possessed sacerdotal offices of extreme importance. With the exception of the inviolate virginal Vestals, most were married to male *flamens*, and aided them in their duties, in an auxiliary role, robed in royal purple.⁴⁴ The white-clad virgins formed their own special college, one charged with the care of Rome's state fires. It was directly administered by matriarchs, and ultimately by the *Pontifex Maximus*. The supreme pontiff's finery was readily identifiable to the populace, consisting of a white toga garment, held in place by fibulae, and a distinctive mitre sporting a length of olive foliage suspended from its point, tied with a thread.⁴⁴ Interestingly, Persian scriptural sources confirm the penetration of Magianism into the Roman Empire, possibly as a result of the Sassanian period of repression against dissident Magi and a host of other religions, beginning in 226 AD. The rise of Roman Mithraism coincides with this bloody imposition of Orthodoxy in Persia, and may help explain Rome's continued offensives against the Parthians, despite the common Iranian origins of their respective religions.

"And Kai Spendad and Zargar and other royal sons instigating the many conflicts and shedding the blood of those of the realm, accepted the religion as a yoke while they even wandered to Arum (Rome) and the Hindus (India), outside the real (ie; Persia), in propagating the religion".⁴⁵

In addition to this a Persian Pahlavi etching found at *Nakch-i-Rajab* translates the term *Pontifex Maximus* (the supreme fire pontiff of Ancient Rome, and a term used by later Catholic Popes) as *Magupat u airharpat Rum*.⁴⁶ In this instance the term *magupat* is clearly used, the Orthodox Zoroastrians knowingly classifying the Roman *Arch-flamen* as "chief of the Roman Magi and fire priests", in their own tongue. What is even more intriguing is that pagan Roman prophets were once associated with *Vaticanus*, the name of a hill near the Tiber river, beneath which lay Mithraic catacombs. By inference the Vatican was once connected with pre-Christian, Mithraic mysticism; *vaticanator* ("prophet"), *vaticinor* ("to prophecy").

After the fall of the Late Republic, and the onset of the Julio-Claudian Emperors, laws were devised in Rome to combat the growing number of sectarians belonging to mystery cults, especially where black magic, crop hexing and transfers, demonic rites, and human sacrifice were concerned. Foremost of these statutes was the *Laws of the Twelve Tables*.⁴⁷ In 33 BC, during the reign of Agrippa, Magi, sorcerers and many practitioners of the arts were evicted from the Roman Empire, despized not only for their religious devotions, but their

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natural affinity with enemy barbarian states; the greatest being Persia. Marcus Cato mentions the existence of Chaldeans in Rome too, the erstwhile lords of Mesopotamia.⁴⁷ Barely two hundred years later the Magi had regained the limelight. Clearly these were new times in Rome.

Being politically-aware the Magi divided their world up into five patriarchates,⁴⁸ each of them ruled by a Zarathustra (in other words an extremely high ranking Magus). Four of these religious regions centered around the key central Patriarchate of Khvaniras, which housed the supreme Magus, the head of the entire Magian religion, from one end of their known world to the other.

PATRIARCHATE	NAME	LOCATION
Western	Arzah (Arsa?)	West of Khvaniras
Eastern	Savah	East of Khvaniras
Central	Khvaniras	Equatorial?*
Northern	Vorubarst / Vorugarst	North of Khvaniras
Southern	Fradadafsh / Vidadafsh	South of Khvaniras

* During summer the sun illuminated only one half of Khvaniras. And due to references to winter sunshine illuminating a half of Khvaniras when it goes over to "the dark side",⁴⁹ one might think that it lay somewhere on the Equator. The only problem is that the equator is too far south of any plausible Iranian homeland. Therefore, if the references are correct, Khvaniras was not even in Iran, but southern India, if not an even more southerly equatorial location.

Whatever the case, by the end of the 7th Century AD it is fairly certain that the Magian patriarchates of the southern, and central regions had ceased to exist, due to the Muslim and Turkish holy wars and the Islamicization they brought with them. This must have left only the Patriarchates of the eastern, northern and western world, which probably saw large numbers of refugees. And it was to these other zones that important Magian dignitaries fled. Some ended up in Rome, the wandering beggar-Magi.⁵⁰

The geographical extent of Achaemenid Persian political influence is better identified in a monumental inscription gouged into a rock face situated north of Darius' Persepolis. Such was the lordship of this Aryan King of Kings, master of the known world.

"Darius the King says: By the favour of Ahura Mazda these are the countries which I seized outside of Persia; I ruled over them; they bore tribute to me; what was said to them by me, that they did; my law – that held them firm; Media, Elam, Parthua, Aria, Bactria, Sogdiana, Chorasmia, Drangiana, Arachosia, Sattagydia, Gandara, Sind, Amyrgian Scythians, Scythians with pointed caps, Babylonia, Assyria, Arabia, Egypt, Armenia, Cappadocia, Sardis, Ionia, Scythians who are across the sea, Skudra, petasos-wearing Ionians, Libyans, Ethiopians, men of Maka, Carians".⁵¹

War amongst the Aryan gods

For so long the Aryans were devoted to the worship of the *Daevas*, yet finally it came to pass that the supremacy of this class of god was challenged. The revolt against the *Daevas* was promoted by the Magi who ritually interceded for the Indo-Iranian component of the Aryans. Their novel way of thinking gained even greater impetus with the arrival of the great prophet Zoroaster. It was nothing less than an inversion of the prevailing religion of the Aryans. Zoroaster preached long and hard against the ways of the Aryan nations to which he belonged, in particular the war-culture philosophy which required the warrior class to make war flourish. Disappointed and repulsed by the spread of Aryan rapine and fury throughout the lands, his heart became filled with divine inspiration which came from a source that opposed the *Daevas*, namely *Ahura Mazda*, who shone with a brilliance as radiant as the sun. At his hand the religion of the Aryans was rent apart by a profound religious schism, drifting away from homage to *Daevas*, to the "ways of goodness, peacefulness and piety" embodied in the *Ahuras*. Accordingly, many Aryans followed Zoroaster's new creed, others remained true to the *Daevas*, and yet others, uncertain of which way to turn, gave worship to both the *Ahuras* and the *Daevas*. This intermediate form ever grew in size, and in time zealous Zoroastrians derided it as the faith of the ubiquitous Zurvanites; the schismatic Magian heretics.

The essential tenets of the Zoroastrian creed were embodied in the Mazdayasnian confession, which was recited during each *Haoma* ceremony, and which, for the sake of an analogy, performed the same function as the Apostle's creed that Christians recited during the mass. The Zoroastrian profession of faith, as taught by the wizards, begins with a renunciation of Hindu ways;

"I drive the Daevas hence; I confess as a Mazda-worshiper of the order of Zarathustra, estranged from the Daevas, devoted to the lore of the Lord, a praiser of the Bountiful Immortals, and to Ahura Mazda, the good and endowed with good possession, I attribute all things good, to the holy One, the resplendent, to the glorious, whose are all things whatsoever which are good; whose are all things whatsoever which are good; whose is the Kine, whose is Asha (the righteous order pervading all things pure), whose are the stars, in whose lights the glorious beings and objects are clothed. And I choose Piety, the bounteous and the good, mine may she be.

And therefore I loudly deprecate all robbery and violence against the (sacred) Kine, and all drought to the wasting of the Mazdayasnian villages. ... Away do I abjure the shelter and headship of the Daevas, evil as they are; and, utterly bereft of good and void of virtue, deceitful in their wickedness, of (all) beings those most like the Demon-of-the-lie, the most loathsome of existing things, and the ones the most of all bereft of good. Off, off, do I abjure the Daevas and all possessed by them, the sorcerers and all that hold to their devices, and every existing being of the sort; their thoughts do I

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*abjure, their words and actions, and their seed (that propagate their sin); away do I abjure their shelter and their headship, and the iniquitous of every kind who act as Rakhshas act!"*⁵²

The Greek geographer Strabo was intimately familiar with the Pontus and Persian region, and had personally witnessed Magian customs, shortly before the birth of Christ. Other things he knew of from history books he perused while studying in Alexandria, Egypt. With the exception of one or two extra details, the majority of what he recorded can be corroborated by surviving Magian texts. His writings preserve the traditions of several different groups of Magians; those who sacrificed after the manner of the Persians, and devotees of Mithraism who worshiped Mithras, nay even those who made obeisance to *Ahriman* (the Lord of Devils).⁵³

Strabo wrote, "*Persian customs are the same as those of ... the Medes ...*"⁵⁴ His statement is roughly correct, but not universally true.

*"the Persians do not erect statues or altars (as the Medes did), but offer sacrifice on a high place, regarding the heavens as Zeus; and they also worship Helius (ie; the sun), whom they call Mithras, and Selene, and Aphrodite"*⁵⁴

Many details found in Strabo's descriptions of Magian ceremonial precincts resemble ritualism practiced by modern Parsees.

*"it is especially to fire and water that they offer sacrifice". Fire was worshiped "by adding dry wood without the bark and by placing fat on top of it; and then they pour oil upon it and light it below, ... fanning it"*⁵⁴

In Strabo's time the Magian process of igniting the holy fire was governed by ritual prohibitions of an extreme nature. Those who desecrated the holy fires with unclean matter, or breathed upon the flame, were liable for the death penalty (something also recounted in the surviving Magian scriptures).

*"And to water they offer sacrifice by going to a lake or river or spring, where, having dug a trench leading thereto, they slaughter a victim"*⁵⁵

Maintaining the purity of the water being venerated was of some importance. To this end they ensured that blood effused during the slaughter did not flow into the water. Having carved meat from the slain beast the Magi lay it upon a bed of laurel and myrtle foliage. Next came its consecration to make it pleasing to the gods. The Magus sacrificer blessed the meat with incantations, periodically touching it with a bundle of myrtle wands.⁵⁵

Then there was an outpouring of "*oil mixed with both milk and honey, though not into fire or water, but upon the ground; and they carry on their incantations for a long time.*"⁵⁵

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Strabo mentions that a sizeable number of Magi congregated in Cappadocia, Turkey. Temples erected in honour of the Persian gods were situated throughout that same region also.⁵⁶ He went on to describe their sacrificial technique in the temples, namely bludgeoning the victim with a large wooden cudgel.⁵⁶ The Magian sanctuaries were;

"noteworthy enclosures; and in the midst of these there is an altar, on which there is a large quantity of ashes and where the Magi keep the fire ever burning. And there, entering daily, they make incantations for about an hour, holding before the fire their bundle of rods and wearing round their heads high turbans of felt, which reach down over their cheeks far enough to cover their lips. The same customs are observed in the temples of Anaitis and Omanus; and these temples also have sacred enclosures; and the people carry in procession a wooden statue of Omanus. Now I have seen this myself".⁵⁶

The great cosmic battle

The crucial moments of the great cosmic battle between light and darkness, the *causa bellum*, the opening shots, were preserved within ancient Iranian lore, as told by the prophets of the Magi, by Zoroaster especially. Death, evil and destruction were born when *Ahriman*, the father of all demons, after his initial incarceration, despondency and lamentation in the abyss, was loosed from his prison;

"because Auharmazd and the region, religion and time of Ahuramazd were and are and ever will be; while Aharman in darkness, with backward understanding and desire for destruction, was in the abyss".⁵⁷

"The Evil Spirit, on account of backward knowledge, was not aware of the existence of Auharmazd; and, afterwards, he arose from the abyss, and came in unto the light ... desirous of destroying, and because of his malicious nature".⁵⁸

Ahura Mazda said to Ahriman "Evil Spirit! bring assistance unto my creatures, and offer praise! so that, in reward for it, ye (you and your creatures) may become inmortal and undecaying, hungerless and thirstless".⁵⁹

And the evil spirit shouted thus: "I will not depart, I will not provide assistance for thy creatures, I will not offer praise among thy creatures and I am not of the same opinion with thee as to good things. I will destroy thy creatures for ever and everlasting; moreover, I will force all thy creatures into disaffection to thee and affection for myself".

And Auharmazd spoke thus: "You are not omniscient and almighty, O evil spirit! so that it is not possible for thee to destroy me, and it is not possible for thee to force my creatures so that they will not return to my possession".⁶⁰

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Here *Ahura Mazda* threatens the devil's power by promising the arrival of *Sraosha*, the virgin-born pagan Messiah, and the resurrection he was empowered to bring. Through this act the seemingly-victorious fiend would lose his death grip over the numberless creatures of the god of goodness. *Sraosha's* power to raise God's creatures from death, meant that created existence would eventually return to *Ahura Mazda* the Creator from the Kingdom of Death, full of life, as before, hungerless, thirstless, devoid of infirmity.

Having seen the light of *Ahura Mazda* the brazenly defiant *Ahriman* "fled back to the gloomy darkness, and formed many demons and fiends" ... "creatures terrible, corrupt, and bad".⁶¹ Upon escape he was cast down into the world with legions of fiends as thick as clouds, to sow conflict, mayhem and distress, such as *Ahura Mazda* and the Archangels had never seen.

The Magi's Book of *Bundahishm* recounted exactly how this conflict came about. You see, *Ahriman* absconded from his imprisonment, not long after the Great Whore incited him into making reprisals against creation. In *Bundahishm III: 3-10 Geh*, the Great Whore, deliberately comes to rouse *Ahriman* from his darkened prison in the abyss, to cheer him on to greater heights of evil, yelling "Rise up oh Father of us", and she proposed the desecration and pollution of all the earth, and the destruction of so many souls.

The Harlot told him of her unspeakable deeds, dumfounding the father of demons. So then he kissed her, causing her to spontaneously menstruate. Magian law decreed that all menstrual women were unclean for a short time, both during and after their menses, because they had been kissed by *Ahriman*. By her black witchcraft the world fell under attack

"And, again, the wicked Geh shouted thus: "Rise up, thou father of us! for in that conflict I will shed thus much vexation on the righteous man and the laboring ox that, through my deeds, life will not be wanted, and I will destroy their living souls; I will vex the water, I will vex the plants, I will vex the fire of Auhuramazd, I will make the whole creation of Auharmazd vexed".⁶²

By the power of the Unholy Spirit (*Angra Mainyu*) *Ahriman* became a mighty serpent, and, once conjured from his tomb, slithered forth to the very extremities of the heavenly vault. Backed by a demonic swarm he jumped down to earth through a hole bored in the clouds, all fiery and burning vapours. In the form of countless snakes, scorpions and poisonous toads, they pierced the surface of the earth, and entered his underworld (sometimes called Middle-Earth).⁶³ Wherever he and his vicious serpent demons landed a hill or mountain grew ... "As the evil spirit rushed in, the earth shook, and the substance of mountains was created in the earth".⁶⁴

We are told of how the battle would eventually unfold. Towards the end of the world, all creation would enter a period of sustained spiritual and ecological defilement as a result of the prolonged, aeons-old activities of *Ahriman* and his demons, and the malignant spells of

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the Whore.

From the time *Ahriman* set foot in the world, war broke out in heaven and on earth, as his unwholesome children, the demons, were enlisted to tirelessly pollute and destroy the lands, and all upon it. To save creation the Yazatas (angels and genii of creation) closed ranks, and waded into battle against the "Evil One". With great effort they succeeded in driving back the demons, and built a wall around the heavenly city (*Garodoman*) to keep them out;

"And afterwards, he (the Unholy Spirit) came to fire, and he mingled smoke and darkness with it. The planets, with many demons, dashed against the celestial sphere, and they mixed the constellations, and the whole creation was as disfigured as though fire disfigured every place and smoke arose over it. And ninety days and nights the heavenly angels were contending in the world with the confederate demons of the evil spirit, and hurled them confounded to hell; and the rampart of the sky was formed so that the adversary should not be able to mingle with it." "in their fearlessness they seek for the destruction of the demons and for the perfection of the creatures of the good beings".⁶⁵

This hard-won battlefield accomplishment was by no means complete. The heroic bravery of the angels in repelling the demonic host only gave heaven a temporary reprieve, while on earth the demons thronged in still greater numbers, becoming more and more numerous as each year passed. At the end of the world their orgy of destruction, which will have left planet earth frazzled, denuded and exhausted, would be put to an end in the last great showdown between the forces of good and evil. The archangelic winged *yazatas* and holy *fravashi* saints, led by the returned *Sayoshant* (the last pagan Messiah) would enter into single combat with their own rival arch-fiend during that epic apocalyptic event, when evil would be killed off forever. To prevent the people being taken by surprise, the white Magi taught their flocks how to recognise the signs which portended the imminence of that terror-filled final moment, that "hundredth Winter" as they called it - the Devil's time.

Humans would be born very, very tiny, and destined to be "*deceitful and more given to vile practices*". Medical marvels would have everyone living to a ripe old age, alive even when exhausted of blood.⁶⁶ People would no longer care about their family, their parents, their brothers, their sisters, duty, their neighbor, or their country. Families would be torn apart as the penultimate fiend unleashed his last tyranny on the world ... brother against brother, son against father, friend against friend. There was to be much sodomy, promiscuity and unnatural behaviour. Bread and salt (ie; hospitality) would be held in little esteem. People would be much taken in by dishonest wealth and iniquity, and would go to great lengths to achieve either. The lands would be filled with crime and highwaymen.⁶⁷

The deicidal fiend would war against all the gods, armed with atheism, his religion of non-belief. The love and faith of all people was to grow cold in that antithetical age, as the masses denied the very existence of the creator. It was at this time that the star bridge

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connecting the physical and spiritual worlds would collapse. Priests were to lose all heart, discard their robes, and wander destitute, while others were to fall prey to iniquitous activities and yet others would no longer perform the ceremonies correctly. There would be no prayers for the dead, nor lighting of holy flames, nor alms, nor gifts. Most of all, the people would no longer fear hell, and would rush there at break-neck pace, feeling self-satisfied. Everywhere, false oaths, gossip and calumny would be the order of the day. There was to be mismanagement, misgovernment, and an all pervasive lawlessness destined to throw the people into chaos and disarray. Contrary to Magian prohibitions against sowing death into mother earth, the dead of the future would be buried in the ground, fully attired in good clothing.

And woe for the misery of the impoverished world of creation in that one hundredth winter, for the earth would be torn open with great gaping holes to expose her inner wealth and riches. There would be spots on the sun, strange winds, earthquakes, droughts, little food in the lands, seasons would be out of synchronization; nine out of ten people would die of malnourishment. The plants of the earth would diminish too, so that more than 90% of the trees and plants would had been uprooted from the soil. What few plants remained would be sickly and unsightly to behold. Beasts of burden like the ox and the horse would carry less, and the milk of the cow would have little cream.

So much for the basic tenets of the religion of the wise men and women, and the forebodingly grim future they foresaw, that lawless, tormented, ungodly time. What of their comings and goings? What of their history? What of their elder and future homelands?

The Indo-Europeans

And so it was in the remotest beginnings of the world, when the mighty kings of Ur built canals and the great ziggurats, that their citizens developed the arts of astrology, metallurgy, writing, music, poetry, glazing, brewing, mathematics, medicine, pottery and the craft of making wheels.⁶⁸ These wheels were fitted to the very chariots that made them lords of the world.⁶⁹ Long they reigned over the lands, and prospered. Even the gods rubbed shoulders with mankind, giving advice to rulers, and making them great. But as they gloated over the “primitive beings” of the realms beneath their domination, and revelled in the glory of their Empires, nothing could prepare them for the coming of the invaders.

Far to the north of their prosperous cities, in the region of the Steppes, lived Caucasian Indo-European speakers from the Caspian area.⁷⁰ Numerous theories about the precise location and parameters of these ancestral Indo-European homelands have been postulated.⁷¹ At present the steppes of Central Asia, in the Pontic Caspian region, are favored above other options. What is more certain is where they ultimately came from; Inner

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Eurasia.⁷²

Led by chieftains appropriately endowed with metal goods and other status symbols, their roving bands of horsemen left Siberia roughly 4,000 BC.⁷³ Thus began a series of epic tribal dispersions far to the west, into the European periphery. They may have arrived even earlier than this though, for there is evidence of horsemanship in the Ukraine as early as 4,000 BC, at Srednyi Stog. There these semi-nomadic horsemen and their families lived adjacent to the pre-Indo-European Tripole peoples, and made mound-covered *kurgany* pit graves of a type found in Asia.⁷⁴

In the millennium spanning between 3,000 and 4,000 BC the new-comers somehow acquired wheeled technologies. Since the Mesopotamians and Proto-Indo-Europeans spoke of these vehicles using linguistically similar terms, they evidently borrowed the ability to make them from the Mesopotamian states. This revolutionary technology saw service not only in the Pontic-Caspian and Mesopotamian region, but in the Carpathians and northern Europe.⁷⁵ At the farthest limit of their influence, Indo-European Celts are seen as responsible for bringing both horses and chariots into Ireland.⁷⁶

Around 3,000 BC wheeled vehicles, whether chariots or wagons, began appearing on the Russian steppe. Since the technology resembled that utilized in Central Asia during the same period, one might guess that the Ukrainian pastoralists lived in much the same way as those living in Asia's Altai mountains and the Urals. Some scholars have even theorized that Eurasians living as far away as the Yenisei river, had been influenced by the inhabitants of Russia and Central Asia. They suggest an eastward repopulation or population of farthest Asia, one which brought vehicle-making skills to their ancestral lands.⁷⁷

The remarkable successes of the Indo-Europeans are attributable not only to their vehicles and mounts, but to the many bronze weapons found in their pit-graves. Suitably armed they were able to overcome whosoever they encountered along their seasonal migratory paths.⁷⁸

These Indo-Europeans, like the Sumerians, were users of the plough, of metal, chariots and the sword; but they lived in close company with horses, whom they regarded as their children and brothers. When they rode they were as one; like riders grafted on the back of their beasts. These were the Aryan nations, the masters of bloodstock which would one day be synonymous with power over others.

Between the 20th-23rd Centuries BC, Aryan Indo-European lords had begun to dominate a number of races then inhabiting regions to the north of the constantly feuding Akkadian and Sumerian city states (both of which were eventually absorbed into Babylonian Empire).

Evidently the Mesopotamians knew of these northern races. The city of Jeitun (situated in Iran near Kopat Dag) showed substantial Mesopotamian influences, thus indicating contact, if not outright Mesopotamian colonization of the area c. 6,000 BC.⁷⁹

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During the Bronze Age urbanization reached dizzying levels near Kopet Dag. Namazga (132 acres) and Altyn-depe (10.52 acres) were the foremost of these towns, with Altyn-depe serving as a major religious cult center. These sites possessed novel features. The abodes of the priestly class surrounded a lofty brick tower; dual carriageways served the needs of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Significant trade ties developed there, reaching out as far as Babylon, Sumeria and India.⁸⁰

About 2,000 years before Christ, the oasis city-state of Margiana (near Iran) climbed to regional prominence. It took the form of a *qala*, a castle with crenellated battlements, outer defensive walls, palatial quarters, and densely packed intra-mural suburbs. The *qala* at Margiana, which bore some resemblance to the sorts of fortifications built in later Persia, was the first of its kind in Central Asia. From there the construction of *qalas* spread to even smaller provincial areas. They must have had trade and administrative functions, for they were inhabited by seal-bearing regional leaders, perhaps princes or chieftains.⁸¹

Some of the forts were built for religious purposes. In the white-washed interiors of their temples, pagan priests concocted ritual libations around fire altars using hemp and ephedra. Current thinking makes these holy drinks akin to the *Soma* and *Haoma* libations prescribed by the *Vedas* and *Avesta*, rites once performed by Brahmans and Magi respectively.⁸²

Central Asian settlements of this design became linchpins in the network of international trade. Their ideal central geographical positioning enhanced the scope of their commercial ventures, allowing Iranian merchants to do business with Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, and China.⁸³

In the wake of the highly successful power plays, which saw them muster formidable numbers of vassal warriors, Aryan leaders began to realize their dream of dominating the prosperous civilizations that lay to their south. In the last years of the 3rd Millennium BC their hordes dispersed east and west of the Aryan homelands, vanquishing everything that lay within the gallop of their steeds. Such was the dramatic emergence of a nation of peoples destined to topple successive Mesopotamian and Indian civilizations like a house of cards. Ethnically speaking these horsemen (the Luwians, Kassites, Hittites, Mitannians, and Hurrians) were all Indo-Aryans/Indo-Europeans, or tribes which had fallen under their suzerainty.⁸⁴ This is evidenced by the Indo-European names of their various leaders, and unmistakable references to Vedic deities such as Mithra, Indra and Varuna, in their writings of 1380 BC.⁸⁵

The presumably Aryan Central Asian Andronovo culture featured dwellings similar to those described in the *Vedas*.⁸⁶ It may well be that they were followers of Vedic religion, a pagan faith which, in time, they would bring into India and which, in a more evolved form, is nowadays known as Hinduism. With the white steppe-dwellers came y-chromosome marker M17, which began to displace M20, the foremost patriarchal gene indicator of

Dravidian India.^{86a}

Some time around 2,000 BC they moved southward out of their tribal lands, into India and Iran. Following the death of king, Hammurabi, Babylon fell apart at the seams, rotten to the core with civil disorder, and the collapse of the agricultural sector which had been caused by the greedy overworking of the farms.⁸⁷ The temptation to assail such a target was overwhelming for the Aryans. The Hittite attack on Babylon brought down the last vestiges of government there. But before long the Aryan Kassites had risen to even greater prominence than the Hittites and installed their princes on the Babylonian throne, which brought about a period of immense stability and growth in Babylon.

Much later, in 539 BC, Babylonia-Chaldea was humbled by the Indo-Iranian army of Cyrus the Great, a Medean who became King of Persia. This must in turn have caused an efflux of Chaldeans from Mesopotamia, into the lands of Scythia and remote Central Asia, or become absorbed into the warp and weave of Indo-Iranian society. These Indo-Iranians, the Persians, Medeans, Zikirtu, Haraiva, and Parthians,⁸⁸ were the next wave of invaders, who in their turn, took over all the lands once held by the descendants of the Aryans. Upon their coming the Aryan *Daeva* gods officially became diabolized, and the *Ahuras* raised in great exultation. In practice though, the *Daevas* were worshiped by many commoners, but in a syncretic form which blended together portions of Vedic and Magian teachings. Indo-Iranian supremacy came via powerful and prosperous dynasties such as the Achaemenids, Parthians and Sassanians, who patronized the religion of the prophet Zoroaster, in various guises.

The earliest Indo-Iranian migrants to settle in Slavia, are associated with the so-called Andronovo culture, a people who once dwelt to the east of the Caspian in Central Asia. Their presence was signified by nomadic pastoralism, horse domestication and kurgan mound burials, which, as in the Afanasievo culture, were erected over square excavated sites, in which the body of the deceased was covered in ochre. The material culture of these various tribes was linked with the Caspian. Similar ceramic ritual braziers were found in both places.⁸⁹

Next came one of the most important "races" to ever inhabit Russia. As early as 1,000 BC the widely-travelled nomadic Scythian cattle-herders moved westwards out of Central Asia and Siberia. Upon reaching the prosperous grazing areas of Russia, many were inspired to settle down for at least part of the year, striking more or less permanent camps for these periods.⁹⁰ Commonalties in the construction of slab-grave funerary monuments in Scythia and Mongolia point to common mortuary rites spread from Scythia to Siberia during the Bronze Age. Massive burial mounds were also raised, containing sacrificed retinues and livestock. Bronzes and other artifacts found in them prove that the Mongoloids and Europoids interred in them had traded extensively between Europe and Asia.⁹¹

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During the 7th-4th Centuries BC, the Scythian nations played a major role in the construction of the Khorezmian and Samarkandian city-states.⁹² These sites were admirably endowed with towers, irrigation and even luscious, well-stocked game parks for recreational hunting. There were holy sites too, perhaps cult centers around which the nomads congregated for religious feasts of calendrical significance. Cauldrons, iron-working, horses and religious depictions of deer were just some of the things that Scythians habitually carried with them on their travels.

The Indo-Iranian-speaking Saka ("stag") nations had three main divisions. In the heart of Central Asia lived the Haumavarga (whose ancestral realms lay east of Tashkent). Further west were the Tigraxauda, amongst whom were the Massagetae. The westernmost of the Saka were the Scythians of the Russian steppe.⁹³

In the 7th Century BC Scythians fled from an internal conflict with the Massagetae. Consequently, the Scythians erupted onto the Russian Steppe where the castle-building Cimmerians dwelt. According to Herodotus a prolonged time of friction ensued, during which the Scythians sought to chase the Cimmerians from their pastures. At one point they harried a large band of fleeing Cimmerians, but took a wrong turn, headed down past the Caucasus and violated the Iranian borders of the Medes. For this reason throngs of Scythian horsemen ended up in Medea. A more likely reason for the Scythian invasion was some form of Scythian-Assyrian alliance with the Assyrian king, Ashurbanipal, built from the much flimsier military arrangements of prior times. What followed was a 28-year Scythian occupation of Medea. At length the Scythians and their Saka allies governed Medea, sufficiently long enough to allow an intermingling of cultural traditions, and more importantly the integration of the Scythian and Magian aristocracies.⁹⁵ Judging by one Scythian site in Russia, their religious architecture conformed to designs once employed in the construction of Iranian temples. Beasts were ritually slain in them too.⁹⁶

Politics in Central Asia was eternally mutable though; fortunes changed quickly, drastically, unexpectedly. Because the Scythians had been draconian in their treatment of the Medes, the most prominent Scythian chiefs were assassinated while attending a Medean banquet in 624 BC. The ensuing confusion promoted by the loss of their leaders permitted the Medes to re-gain their sovereignty, and establish a new Magian capital at Ecbatana. Even after this act of treachery, Scythians lent their support to the Medes (ie; the Magi).

With Assyria in a severe state of decay and a resurgent Medean state strutting about, the Scythians decided to concern themselves with pillaging other locations. They were now ideally placed to raid prosperous southerly regions unopposed. Scythian horsemen of the Russian Steppe successfully conquered Syria, the Caucasus and as far south as Egypt, but diverted their attack on the Nile countries only when the Pharaoh made a sufficiently large offer of money and goods.

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Between 610 and 615 BC the Medes again sought to gain independence by force of arms. Their successful uprising sent nearby powers like the Babylonians clamouring to join in. The siege of Assyria resumed, though this time with a combined and reinvigorated force of Medeans and Babylonian-Chaldeans, who waged a series of epic battles against them. The last remaining Assyrian strongholds were bolstered by Egyptian troops sent across to Asia Minor at the eleventh hour, but all was lost. The enemy threw their full might against the final bastions of Nineveh, Assur and Nimrud and cast them down forever. Thus died Assyria. Their new overlords, the Babylonians, never sought to rebuild their towns and cities; few indeed were spared. Meanwhile, sensing further strikes on the Egyptian homelands from this powerful eastern enemy, the Egyptian Pharaoh sent a large body of troops to occupy Syria and vital tracts of the Euphrates. Concerned by these developments, Prince Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was directed by his father to utterly destroy not only the Egyptians, but the Greek forces which were lending aid to them, and thus reopen the route to the Mediterranean Sea.

Leaving their co-collaborators to sort out their own affairs with the Egyptians, the Medes began seizing land in Armenia and Asia Minor. Babylonian and Median rule was to be all too brief though, with the emergence of Cyrus at the head of a Persian host which occupied much of Iran. Cyrus' military operations against the more easterly Choresmians and Soghdians had the effect of forcing the Massagetae to escape their domains, moving westward toward the steppe and Caucasus region.⁹⁷

Somewhere around 550 BC the Medeans were themselves conquered by Cyrus and the Persians. Low and behold the Persians (who included ethnic Persian sub-tribes such as the "Germanians" and "Daans") had thrown off the Median yoke, then subjugated not only their former masters, but the Babylonians as well.⁹⁸ Accordingly new powers foreclosed on Babylon, relatively speaking, and with it their leaders and their gods. Cyrus made it his business to bring the seemingly vanquished gods of Assyria back to life, by re-erecting their idols in newly built temples. Next Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, entered the holy and royal Egyptian city of Memphis, and Sais too (where many an Egyptian priest or priestess was trained), leading a multitudinous army. Like Ionian Greece, Egypt entered vassalage as a Satrapy of the Achaemenid Persian Empire, down as far as Ethiopia.⁹⁹ From the inception of his rule Cambyses was termed the "*offspring of Ra* (ie; the sun God)", for he saw himself as ruler of the Egyptian people, one already related to their royal family, and the high gods of Egypt.⁹⁹ The Egyptian kings therefore seem to have been blood relations of the Sun-Kings of Medea and Persia.

During Darius' period of sovereignty (522-486 BC), Persian troops marched into Scythia with the aim of exacting a very great vengeance upon the Scythians. This was in retribution for the past warring of the Scythians against the Medeans, whose forces they defeated and

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whose lands they occupied for more than 20 years.¹⁰⁰ The business of subjugating the Scythians was a necessary part of Persian empire building, though it turned out a very drawn out affair. All that remained was to bring the Sakas, especially the Massagetae, to a state of obedient submission. Cyrus attempted the same assassination ploy once used by the Medes on the Scythians, but it backfired and he lost his life. Though their leader perished, the Persians overcame the Saka and subsequently brought Central Asia into Persia's growing sphere of influence. At the end of it all the Persians emerged powerfully victorious, but were propped up by the very nations they had sequentially vanquished.

As a result of these Persian victories, the Scythians, Medians and Massagetae became loyal to the dynastic visions of the Achaemenid state, and were an indispensable part of the Persian power base.¹⁰¹ Through them the Persians extended their trade influences far into Asia. Many Scythians served the needs of the Achaemenids, and, based on wall murals at Persepolis, took part in consular processions before Darius in their trademark tall pointed hats. Scythian resources were also highly prized. Scythian miners and gold prospectors became the largest single source of gold for the Iranians and Persians.¹⁰² And for this reason, the relationship between Scythia and Persia was sure to be a long one. One Bronze Age Scythian interment in the Urals contained a seal and bowls of Achaemenid manufacture, some of which were even engraved using Aramaic script. It is therefore likely that some of the Ural's Scythian inhabitants knew how to read and write Aramaic.¹⁰³ During the construction of the Achaemenid palace at Susa, Egyptian and Median craft-masters were charged with all goldsmithing projects, owing to their special prowess in this art. They turned Scythian Ural gold into exquisite works of art.

For a very long time Russia was ruled by the very same Scythians who became embroiled in the Assyrian conflict. Further westward on the Russian steppe, Scythians lay claim to a great deal of territory, and built at least a hundred walled towns.¹⁰⁴ Though fortified, many of these lesser settlements were merely seasonal places of residence, in which the nomadic Scythians pitched their tents.¹⁰⁵ At other times of the year, Scythians followed their herds about in four or six-wheeled tent-covered wagons.¹⁰⁶

To the north of the Scythians lived the Neurian wolf-men. In close proximity to them were the Melanchlaeni, a Gothic race who lived near the Pripyet swamplands, and who garbed themselves in black robes. To the east were the peaceful Argippaean, who housed themselves in tented groves and were drinkers of the Aschy libation, a mixture of milk and the strained juices of squashed cherries which grew on their holy trees.¹⁰⁷ Other locals, the Androphagi, were cannibals who probably dwelt somewhere near the Urals. They practiced a different form of cannibalism from the nearby Issedonians (who consumed the flesh of their deceased kinsmen during a funeral banquet).

To the south lived colonists from Ancient Greece. Athenians sank their roots into the

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Crimea, establishing not only colonies but commercially viable agricultural districts.¹⁰⁸ From these extensive wine-growing regions came taxes aplenty, and trade further afield. In adjacent territories the Scythians reaped copious amounts of grain, and sold it to the ancient Greeks.¹⁰⁸ They became rich accordingly. Consequently an enviable range of exquisite gold ornamentation was manufactured by Greek craftsmen for the Scythians, for they prized that metal greatly, and even worshiped it.

Scythians were keen to maintain the purity of their customs, and for this reason given to murdering fellow tribesmen infected by Greek teachings, Dionysianism in particular. The gods of the Scythians were peculiar to themselves, but owing to Herodotus's writings, confusingly equated with classical Greek divinities. Bearing in mind their xenophobic hatred of foreign ways the following correlations are unlikely to have been factually analogous. Thus the Scythians worshiped Tabiti (a fire goddess like Hestia was the greatest), Papoeus (a thunder god like Zeus), Apia (an earth goddess like Ge), Oetosyrus (a messenger of the gods like Apollo), Arimaspa (a heavenly goddess like Aphrodite), Hercules (none other than Hercules himself), Ares (a war god), and Thamimasadas (a sea god like Poseidon).¹⁰⁹

After living so long among the Medes, it appears that the Scythian religion had inherited a number of Magian customs. The best evidence for them being Magian comes from Herodotus. They are likely to have been avid fire-worshipers, and drank their libations from golden cups. Like the Magi, the Scythians achieved bodily cleanliness by means of a paste made from pulverized cypress, frankincense (from Ethiopia) and cedar woods, which was plastered all over their body, and peeled off the following day. The Magi used this same custom because they deemed water so holy that they would not contaminate it for the sake of washing in it.¹¹⁰ Embalming corpses in wax was another Magian funeral rite, one which was also incidentally practiced throughout Bronze Age Scythia.¹¹¹ The name of one of the Scythian leaders, Octomasadas, seems derived from the Zoroastrian word for God - *Ahura Mazda*. Their highest god was most likely the same as that of the Persians (ie; *Ahura Mazda*), as evinced by the following account. When the Persians lunged upon their Scythian quarry, the defenders appealed to neighbors for military aid ...

"The assembled princes of the nations, after hearing all that the Scythians had to say, deliberated. At the end opinion was divided - the Kings of the Geloni, Budini and Sauromatae were of accord, and pledged themselves to give assistance to the Scythians; but the Agathyrsonian and Neurian princes, together with the sovereigns of the Androphagi, the Melanchaeni, and the Tauri, replied to their request as follows:

"If you had not been the first to wrong the Persians, and begin the war, we should have thought the request you make just; we should then have complied with your wishes, and joined our arms

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with yours. Now, however, the case stands thus - you, independently of us, invaded the land of the Persians, and so long as God gave you the power, lorded it over them; raised up now by the same God they are come to do to you the like".¹¹²

Several pieces of interesting information arise from this passage. Firstly there is an admission that the god of the Scythians and the Persians is one and the same. Secondly, there is evidence of social cohesion among the various northern races, many of which were ruled by princes. Despite being portrayed as pitiless man-slayers (and in one case cannibals) the likes of the Androphagi, and Tauri were well able to meet in council with all of their nearby neighbors, and reject the Scythian call to war against the Persians out of fairness and honour, and a desire to not commit the first wrong.

Scythian priests, the Enares, were akin to the Magi in very many ways. Like the Magi, their soothsaying magician-priests sacrificed horses and cattle, and performed ceremonies using bound faggots of willow wands. Herodotus also tells us that Scythia was certainly not under-manned when it came to prophets, for there were already many different occult societies there, especially haruspex (anthropomancers).

According to Ptolemy's map, a presumably Indo-Iranian people known as the Anares lived east of Margiana, in Bactria around 150 AD.¹¹³ Bearing in mind that the Massagetae lived not far due west of them, and are known to have migrated toward Europe, it's plausible that the Anares did likewise. Accordingly the Scythian Enares may have been Anares. Recalling the Scythian fortune-tellers Herodotus recounted;

"Scythia has an abundance of soothsayers, who foretell the future by means of a number of willow wands. A large bundle of these wands is brought and laid on the ground. The soothsayer unties the bundle, and places each wand by itself, at the same time uttering his prophecy; then, while he is still speaking, he gathers the rods together again, and makes them up once more into a bundle".¹¹⁴

Herodotus then wrongly asserted that this method of divining originated in Scythia, when in fact it was of Magian provenance, though not unknown in some Hindu vedic rituals. That the Persians had such a rite is confirmed by Magian scripture and a Persian relief depicting a Scythian magician with a pointed "scythian hat" and wand bundle.

Scythian war customs were exceptionally brutal. In my opinion the graphic barbarity described by Herodotus (which I shall now examine) might only normally have been unleashed when their kinsfolk were threatened, or when challenged by oath-breakers. As the text suggests, those who refused to side with the Scythians would have been compelled to aid their war effort if only the Scythian cause had been just. In war they took heads (for each head they presented to their leaders they gained a given portion of the war booty). Battlefield scalping was virtually a Scythian trademark, and proven by scalp marks found on a frozen corpse found at Pazyrk, Siberia. After cleaning a scalp, a warrior traditionally

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used the grim trophy as a placemat, or, if he had enough of them, sewed them together to make a prestigious cloak. They knew no limits when it came to grotesque ornamentation. Occasionally they dangled the amputated limbs and body parts of their enemies from the saddle or reins, or stretched the skin of a flayed adversary over a frame, which was in turn mounted on a pole and carried as a battle standard. Arrow quivers were made from skin flayed intact from a defeated enemy's arm. All in all they must have presented a terrifying and macabre sight to the 'more civilized' inhabitants of Greece and Persia.¹¹⁵

It is unfortunate that the passing of the Scythians went unrecorded, for they vanish from classical sources some time during the 4th Century BC. But of course they didn't disappear. Scythians nomads migrated further westward into what we now call Poland and Germany,¹¹⁶ while others no doubt stayed behind on the Steppe.

Other marvels existed there. In his 5th Century BC travel log the ancient Greek historian Herodotus spoke of Scythian ramped 'pyramids' made from kindling. They had 600-metre wide bases and enormous swords stabbed into their peaks. In comparison, their bases were two and a half times bigger than that of Egypt's "Great Pyramid of Khufu", or the Aztec "Pyramid of the Sun". While it is tempting to believe that Herodotus had over-inflated the true scale of these temples, it should be remembered that he actually visited Scythia at the time of the Persian invasion, and so saw these things first hand. The cyclopaean dimensions described by him are probably credible considering the exactitude of his notations on the pyramid of Cheops.

Scythian megastructures had three almost perpendicular sides and a fourth consisted of a steep rampway which led to the top of the building.¹¹⁷ In some ways the design was akin to the sacrificial dais' of the Medean Magi, but built on a similar scale to ziggurats. These "ziggurats" were so heavy, that they sunk under their own weight, and each required 150 cart-loads of brushwood annually to help them maintain an appropriate height. The temples were raised in honour of the Scythian War God. Consequently herds of cattle and 1% of all war prisoners were slaughtered atop the temples to appease him. After pouring consecrated wine over their heads, priests slit the throats of captured enemies, allowing their lifeblood to flow out into a bowl, which was then ceremoniously tipped upon the sword,¹¹⁸ perhaps to give it life. In an almost Meso-American display of butchery, the sacrificers hacked off the sword arm of captives and tossed them into the air as an offering, after which the body was flung from the heights of the "ziggurat" to the land far below.

One sign of strong government on the steppes is that each Scythian district possessed one of these mountainous temples dedicated to Ares. Obviously they required a large labor force to construct. Equally so the canal which allegedly spanned from the Sea of Azov to the Taurus mountains. Why they stopped making these temples seems problematic, and today, no trace can be found of them. It is my guess they were burned down.

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The Persian colonization of Scythia provided a further powerful infusion of Iranian dualism amongst the various inhabitants of the region. The tattooed Scythian nations who built these "ziggurats" were perhaps related to the Tauri, a later people much given to human sacrifice and war, and who also immersed themselves in the construction of gargantuan building projects. One such location, Charax, has been excavated, providing firm proof of the epic proportions of their efforts. The Taurian fort called Charax¹¹⁹ (named after the Chaldean for "fort"), at the foot of the Crimean Mountains, on the Black Sea coast, was eventually stormed by Roman troops who had gained a foothold in the area. Thereafter Rome used Charax as a permanent garrison.

As you will later see in this book, the fullest range of horrors is yet to be revealed, for in this land, among the pagan Slavs and their predecessors, lay a bizarre sect of devil-worshippers that lived by ethics too terrifying to contemplate.....

Meanwhile, east of Scythia

We now look eastward to the monumental developments taking place in Iran and Central Asia from the 3rd Century BC onwards.¹²⁰ Alexander the Great assumed power over the Greek and Balkan peninsula in 336 BC, and followed in his father's footsteps not only by consolidating his hold on the area, but by pushing Macedonian influence into Asia.¹²¹ By chasing Darius afar, and subjugating Persia, Babylon, Afghanistan, and many other nations between Greece and the Hindu Kush mountains, Alexander stole the mantle of King of Asia. From there he ventured into India, but found his warriors unwilling to over-extend themselves. He then returned to Persia where he set about mating his forces with local women, with the aim of creating a superior breed of human. It was there that Alexander promoted the idea that he was a divine being, perhaps in emulation of the region's former rulers.¹²²

With the death of Alexander in 323 BC, the already serious fractures among his generals, became worse. Being more powerful, Seleucius, and later Antiochus I, took control of Graeco-Macedonian Bactria, and strived to requisition lands in Khorezm and beyond the Oxus river.¹²³ Greeks of every description came to live there, bringing customs, lifestyles, and Hellenic religious sensibilities and traditions that would linger for century after century.¹²³ As time went by the Greeks became more Persian in their outlook.¹²³ What emanated from this cultural marriage was the Iranian civilization of Parthia, which lasted from 238 BC until 226 AD, when they lost power to Ardashir and an entirely new dynasty of Sassanian monarchs. The Parthian Empire was based for the most part on Achaemenid governmental structure, but with substantial Greek influence.¹²³

Greeks formed the nucleus of their administrative engine, to the exclusion of Persian scribes and academics.¹²⁴ A shrewder means to alienate the Magi from the halls of power

could not be found. Democratic processes were instituted in many places, where previously there had been absolute feudal monarchies with clear class distinctions.¹²⁴

From the reign of Seleucius through to the 4th Antiochus, Greek military outposts, villages, towns and cities flourished throughout much of Seleucia. Their farmers were at one and the same time warriors. This enabled the new regional overlords to cultivate a thriving agricultural sector capable of being defended at a moments notice. Larger cities were modelled on the autonomous Greek states, and very often possessed their own assembly.¹²⁵ Local religious heads, sacred prostitutes and their many holdings and temples were now required to submit to Greek rule.¹²⁶

As the power of Macedonia unravelled owing to successive failures on the field of battle, even as far away as Egypt, the eastern Greeks were cut off and forgotten.¹²⁷ The homogeneous Hellenic presence there entered a period of decline, and finally suffered its *coup de grace* at the hand of the Scythians, and allied Indo-Iranian tribes, like the Parthian Persians and the Saka.¹²⁷ The spark of Greek influence never fully died out though, for its virility had already inseminated the diverse cultures and religions of Central Asia and Iran.

Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, the Persian Parthian tribe rebelled against the waning power of the Greeks, under the Arascid dynasty, thereafter gaining a position of sovereignty. Parthian royals were notable for their attempts to resurrect the Zoroastrian teachings, which, during Alexander's reign, had lost the supremacy they had previously enjoyed under the Achaemenids.¹²⁸ And so the faith of Zoroaster, not to mention fire and sun-worship experienced heightened popularity. We have them to thank for the reconstructed Avestan texts which had been mutilated by Iskander.

Aramaic became the script of the era, applied in both domestic and commercial documentation, whereas Ancient Greek saw service only among the Parthian administration. Its use had long been abandoned by ordinary people.¹²⁹ The guiding hand of the Parthian kings prepared the way for the revivification of Zoroastrianism (which was suppressed by the Greeks), which in time led to the foundation of the Zoroastrian Sassanian state in 226 AD.

The halls in which Achaemenid dignitaries once lived and dined, before the Greeks came, had their lofty roofs supported by equally impressive Greek columns.¹³⁰ Later, between the 3rd Century BC and the 3rd Century AD, Parthians arranged their massive, oblong, high-roofed feast halls (*iwans*) in groups of four, each hall forming the side of square inner communal courtyard.¹³⁰ Clusters of these square iwan arrangements were encircled by a surrounding wall. Parthians had a practice of buttressing their walls, and we also find lasting vestiges of Greek sculpturing and architecture.¹³⁰ Thus Parthian monumental masonry was stuck in a time-warp, displaying ancient Mesopotamian beasts, griffons, and Greek iconography such as centaurs.¹³¹

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Greek gods, religious traditions and philosophies were never far from the horizon in Parthia either. Parthian kings and their Armenian royal allies are known to have enjoyed the extravagances of Bacchic theatre,¹³² and this is something which ensured that they would be erased from Sassanian Orthodox Zoroastrian psyche from the 2nd Century onwards. So favorable an impression did the drunken revelry of Pan and Bacchus leave on the region, that his rites were still being celebrated in Central Asia as late as Islamic times.¹³³ Though the Dionysian mysteries had by that stage incorporated the extremely ancient worship of Anahita, a goddess also found in Zoroastrian scripture.¹³³

Meanwhile Babylonian temples nestled safely into their venerable niches, and were still substantially operative in Parthian times.¹³⁴ They had resisted the absorption of religious hybridizations born to this Parthian menagerie of faiths, and would live on into the Islamic era, when they met their doom. Undeniable confirmation of a Babylonian presence within the Persian empire is provided by Darius, since one of his monumental inscriptions was rendered in Babylonian. It was obviously intended for the eyes of his Babylonian subjects. Temple prostitutes such as those once found in Babylon were still to be found in Armenia and Pontus in that day.¹³⁵

Military coordination and cooperation proved difficult to achieve in Parthia.¹³⁶ Instead the land was studded with petty kings and princes who fielded their own forces, multi-national armies which may or may not have lent support to the Parthian kings.¹³⁶ Such untamed arrangements left social unity vulnerable to the lobbying of kingmakers, or nobles intent on feathering their own nest.¹³⁶ Some Parthian rulers were better able to muster support from lesser kings, with the result that they, and Parthia, fared better at those times.¹³⁷ But a house divided is one that is destined to fall, and for this reason Parthia fell victim to its own internal bickering.¹³⁸ It caused them to lose control over the silk routes which sustained them, and made them an easy target for Pompey and Trajan's legions. Only the Roman Empire and the prosperous Kushan empire to their east could profit from this.

Parthia's successors, the Sassanians, governed Persia from 226 AD through to the year 651 AD. I will omit further discussion on the Sassanians at this point purely because they are discussed elsewhere in this book.

To the east of Iran lay the Kushan empire (50-250 AD), which was led by the Great Kings, the Sons of Heaven.¹³⁹ They dominated a large part of northern India, Central Asia and Afghanistan, and many arterial trade routes along the silk road. But Kushan was itself subservient to Zoroastrian Sassania, with whom they presumably had strong contacts.¹³⁹ An unprecedented spectrum of religions intermingled in Kushan lands.¹⁴⁰ One could just as easily find Zoroastrian fire priests, preachers of ancient Greek philosophies, Chaldeans, Brahmans, Manichees, Buddhists, Taoists and Christian priests.¹⁴⁰ In this climate of coexistence, doctrinal purity was difficult to maintain. Antiochus' funerary rites were jointly

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performed in a Greek and Persian manner. As conservative as it may have been, Magianism readily accrued Oriental asceticism in certain areas.¹⁴¹ Greek and Buddhist philosophers likewise shared whatever they saw fit.¹⁴² Owing to a predominance of Buddhists, Kushan became a staging point for the intensive Buddhist missionary bombardment of distant China.¹⁴³ With the wandering monks came countless Chinese monasteries, which sprouted from the mountains, hills and arid plains like wild-flowers after a desert shower.¹⁴³

Kushan's extensive trade contacts are highlighted by their material culture, which showed evidence of Chinese, Indian, Greek, and even Egyptian craftsmanship.¹⁴⁴ Its pre-eminence in Central Asia diminished after 250 AD, leaving the region open for later Kidarite and Hephthalite control.¹⁴⁵ Much of the countryside was governed by wealthy regional lords known as the *Dihqans*.¹⁴⁶ The affluence of these nobles was measured by the extent of their trade and agricultural holdings, and the size of their castles, manor houses and private armies.¹⁴⁶

Khorezm, one of the most lavish and important cities in the entire region, fell into decline. After a lull in progress spanning the 300-400's AD, the Khorezmian city-state once again emerged as an illustrious promoter of advancement under the Iranians.¹⁴⁷ Extensive irrigation projects, astronomical observatories, educational, and profitable craft centers were built.¹⁴⁸

The next major regional development was the formation of two Central Asian Turkic empires between 552-734 AD, the first of which collapsed around 630 AD.¹⁴⁹ The Turkic ethno-cultural complex was diverse, for they inhabited lands ranging from Mongolia through to Scythia.¹⁵⁰ Ancestral legends depict them as having originated in the Altai mountains, where they were led by demi-gods. These same rulers continued to govern them throughout their history.¹⁵¹ From the 6th Century AD Turks displayed a strong desire to usurp mastery of the trade routes throughout the various regions in which they lived. Turkic mounted war bands earned their notoriety and power by sacking the immense wealth of the Chinese Empire, at every opportunity. This prosperity coaxed many of them to revel in the luxuriance of their spoils. Turkic nobles became enamoured with Chinese ways, and this resulted in their Sinisization, and subsequent pacification. The raiding which brought them their pilfered riches became less, and their status as a regional power waned accordingly. The Khagans were further lulled into a false sense of security by arranged marriages between the Chinese and Turkic highborn. Now inside the Turkic elite the Chinese were better placed to exploit inherent inter-tribal animosity. Imperial forces were then able to pounce on the squabbling khaganates and through a series of battles, picked them off one by one.

In the 7th and 8th Centuries the Turks attempted to regain their grip on Central Asia, but this came to nought with the assassination of Bilga Khan in the year 734 AD.¹⁵² Grandiose

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plans for the establishment of urban centers and monasteries to house their Taoist and Buddhist adepts were abandoned, since it was thought that becoming sedentary, and adopting pacifistic lifestyles would rob them of the warrior spirit that made them great. Nevertheless some favored urbanization.¹⁵² After an illustrious career the second Empire came to a violent end, causing many Turks to disperse throughout Asia in every direction. It was succeeded by the Uighur Empire, which, within a short space of time, became the foremost champion of Manichaeism, a nominally Christian heresy. Eventually they turned Muslim.

The Last Days of the Magi

Traditional Magian civilization came to a close as a result of a three-fold foe; the Turanian devil-worshippers, Christians and Arabs.¹⁵³

The shutdown of Sassania was well and truly underway following the bitterly contested Byzantine Crusade against the Zoroastrians in 622-628 AD. This war was merely the culmination of centuries-long warfare between the Roman and Persian states.

The 7th Century AD Roman counter-offensives against the Magians were heavy handed and vengeful to say the least. After all, the Zoroastrians had previously taken Edessa, Jerusalem, and what's worse the greatest relic of Christianity, the Holy Cross upon which Jesus was supposed to have been crucified. Such was the inflamed ideological arena in which Magians and Christians fought it out to sever the ancient connection between their two faiths, since mass conversions of the former had given rise to most of the latter throughout much of the east. The reason why Magians so readily mutated into Christians is a story in itself, and one I shall not indulge in at this point.

Anyhow, steamrolling Byzantine forces crippled them to the point where political and religious disunion, coupled with a fractured organizational and logistical structure, made them incapable of adequately repelling the massive Arab Muslim incursions, which began shortly after the cessation of hostilities with the Byzantines. Notable in this Byzantine campaign was the use of marines to penetrate deep inside Iran, whereby they ransacked Gushnasp,^{153a} one of the three greatest Magian fire-temples to have ever existed, and made their way to just outside Ctesiphon, the heart of Sassanian royal power. The death blow was not far off.

For the Magi, the year 637 AD marked one of unparalleled tragedy. Mohammedan forces routed whatever troops the Sassanians had mustered, during a battle on the plains of Harran.¹⁵⁴ From there the Muslims grabbed much of Iran and the Caucasus on the western shores of the Caspian. In disarray, the Sassanid leader Yazdegird retreated to the city of Merv, situated south-west of Gurganj in Khorezm.¹⁵⁴ Yazdegird was assassinated some 14 years after the debacle at Hamadan, thus prompting his hereditary successor Peroz to take flight

into China.¹⁵² Into this vacuum fed tens of thousands of Muslim settlers from Arabia, lured by the promise of land grants.

In this initial phase of Islamicization, Qutayba was installed as the most influential of the Umayyad Islamic governors.¹⁵⁶ To realize the resettlement program of his masters required the depopulation of Merv and Khorezm, either by genocide or selling the Magians into slavery.¹⁵⁶ Muslim documentation tells us that Magian archives, educational institutions and books were destroyed, and the intelligentsia liquidated, at Khorezm.¹⁵⁶ In one stroke a thousand years of Persian civilization evaporated. By Al-Biruni's recollections Qutayba further eliminated opposition to the conquests by re-opening wounds in Iranian society, and turning the protagonists on each other. Whether the Persians liked it or not, Arabs were there to stay.¹⁵⁶

Early Arab leaders were open to the possibility of negotiations with Iranian infidels but only if they remained humbly obedient and submissive to their new overlords. This is how Qumis and Rai escaped the typical predations, and gained concessions for the continuation of their faith, by handing over the princely sum of half a million dirhems.^{156a}

In spite of the terrors inflicted on the white Zoroastrian Magi and their flock, they still found some way of surviving. As the irrigation channels which turned their desert cities into livable oases capable of supporting phenomenally-sized populations dried up, many of the wizards, and fellow Iranians faithful to the creed of Zoroaster, withdrew to more secluded locations. According to Al-Masudi, the magicians still possessed well-fortified enclaves during the Middle Ages, which harbored practitioners of the old faith, even as late as the 10th Century AD. While they had lost substantial geographical regions to the Muslims, they were regrouping in strength, and well able to maintain sovereign Magian rule over certain areas. For instance in 913 AD Abbasid Islamic forces were forced to retire from Tabaristan (on the Western Caspian seaboard) at the hand of a Magian army. Many of their forces garrisoned massively-walled cantonment valleys on the Caucasian seaboard, pre-positioned there to fight off Islamic amphibious intrusions. Further inland others manned formidable mountain fortifications once built there by the Arasid kings of olden Iran.¹⁵⁷

The city of Istakhr, the location of the Magi's greatest library, remained psychologically significant to the Magi in Islamic times, and for this reason a spirited resistance took root there in the 10th Century, which the Muslims spared nothing to suppress. The uprising ended with "*fierce fighting ... siege engines and killing therewith 40,000 of the (Magian) Persians and wiping out most of the noble houses together with the chiefs of chivalry*".^{157a}

As years went by the ferocity of the Islamicization push died down somewhat. Judging by Al-Nadim's mention of Muslim religious texts dedicated to refuting Magianism and other diverse pagan faiths,¹⁵⁸ Islamic preachers no doubt hoped to convert the remaining pagans rather than kill them. Once Islam was firmly entrenched in both religious and

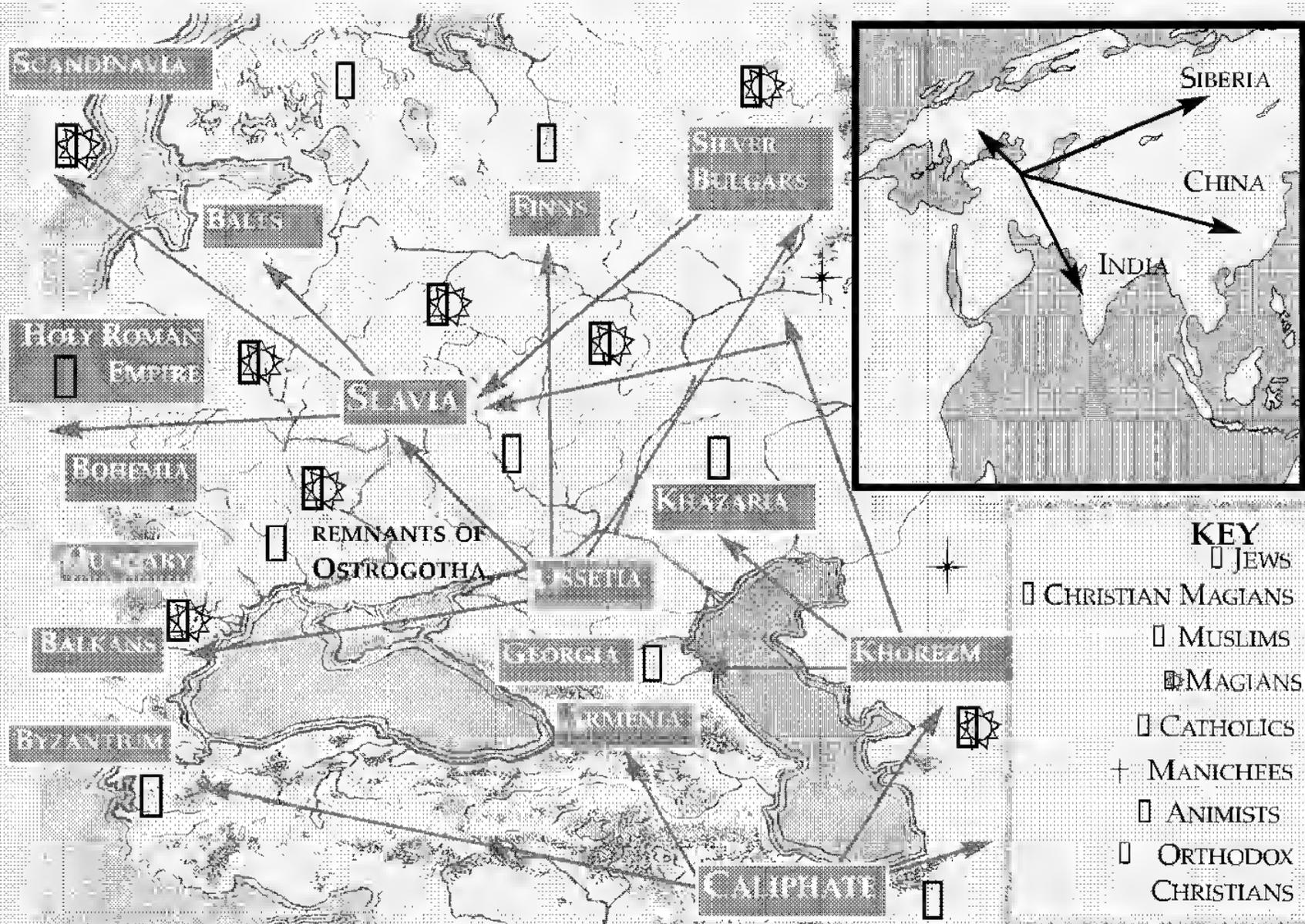
governmental terms, alien creeds posed minimal threat to the new order, and a spirit of tolerance flourished. Fugitive Magians lived an existence quite separate from that of Muslims, yet a certain number chose to remain behind and slotted into Islamic society fairly well. As a result of this, most of the Abassid Caliphate's administrative apparatus was still being run by Magian civil servants during the Mediaeval era, still wearing the tell-tale white linen shirts and *kustik* belts, the traditional dress of the Magians.¹⁵⁹ Yet others served as court astrologers to the Caliphs. In the end, Muslim authorities became so tolerant, that the Yezidis, the surmized devil-worshippers of Iraq's Basra marshes continued to live there unmolested, and still do, to this very day.

But as a rule, the fate of the blood-Magi was vastly different to that of their followers, the Magians. The Magi, together with their books of ancient lore and fire temples, were destined to be systematically exterminated by Muslim devastators, particularly during the harsh rule of Umar II.^{159a} Paradoxically many of their treatises on the ancient sciences found their way into Islamic academic institutions, to be fully investigated. Al-Nadim reported how one group of Magians fared after having surrendered themselves to Islamic authorities, to convert to the faith of the *Qur'an*.¹⁶⁰ These Magian turn-coats who apostasized to Islam the Magi called *Mutazalik*. So heinous was apostasy in their eyes, that the Magi professed that it was better to suicide than abjure the religion of Zoroaster. In a scene that was probably repeated many, many times over since the advent of the 7th Century Islamic conquest of Central Asia, the Muslims were only too happy to accept the prospective recruits whole heartedly. Not so the white Magus, who was just as eager as his followers to become a Muslim. They slaughtered him on the spot. Al-Nadim explained that they did this simply because he was a Magus priest. He had the blood, the blood that others once wished for but could never have; once a Magus, always a Magus. By killing him they were helping to eliminate once and for all the powerful lineage that was the backbone of Magianism. To kill a Magus was to kill everything that he held so dearly in his heart, his impressive command of the sciences, and the prayers and rites committed to memory during at least a decade of rote learning and tuition. Most of all they were killing the only folk able to pass the blood and faith on to their offspring, and the only figures permitted to conduct their foremost ceremonies. With the death of each magician the chances of the Magian faith ever resurrecting itself from the ashes of what once was grew less and less. Accordingly Islam waxed stronger.

Some Magus-priests stood firm in an overwhelmingly Islamic world, unsuccessfully attempting to re-muster support for the faith. Prince Mazyar's failed rebellion was beaten down in 854 AD.^{160a} The *Muslimiyah* was a Magian-Muslim sect of uncertain size, begun by one Abu Muslim, a self-styled prophet of Zoroaster.¹⁶¹ According to his followers Abu Muslim would make a dramatic return in the distant future to reinstall the faith of the Magi.

The exodus

With death constantly staring them in the face as the Islamic crescent overshadowed Central Asia, and Iran, many Magi logically chose one of the last courses of action available to them, to migrate eastward into India or China, north into the Sarmatian forests, or westward onto the great Russian steppe (the mouth of the Volga is only 800 km's from Khorezm), and thence into the Balkans, the Baltic and other little-known locations.



Chinese annals and substantial Iranian archeological remains in China tell us that thousands of Magians sought refuge in the Far-East too.¹⁶² Most probably reached there after a 5,000 kilometre journey across the 3-7,000 metre-high Tien Shan range. They arrived there firstly as small cogs in a large oriental trade machine, and the last wave of them rolled in contemporaneously with the collapse of the Sassanian empire during the reign of King Chosroes II. The final Sassanian King of Iran was amongst those who preferred a life of exile in China, and in 651 AD he packed up his royal heirs and went to live under the protection of the Tang dynasty.¹⁶² As a destination for the dispossessed, China was probably highly favored, especially when one considers the extensive diplomatic and trade connections which they enjoyed with successive Chinese emperors, particularly during the 5th-6th Centuries AD. The number and types of books spirited away to their oriental havens by the Magians went unrecorded, but it is difficult to accept that the Muslims succeeded in

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destroying or acquiring everything they possessed on the sciences.

The better documented refugees sailed to India in the 10th Century AD, or trekked a taxing 2,250 kilometre route across the 5,000+ metre-high Hindu Kush Mountains. There they were called Parsees, which meant Persians. In the 20th Century the Parsees are all that officially remains of the Magian religion besides small pockets living in Iran and the West.

Other Magian colonists continued their religion in the vicinity of the Ural mountains, and beyond its ridges, out in the forests of Siberia. There the inhabitants were largely animists, or the inheritors of Aryan pagan religious customs, particularly in the form of Buddhism. Others made a brief expedition over much kinder terrain into once-Scythian districts, into pagan eastern Europe and the Balkans (barely 800-2,000 kilometres away, depending on how far they wanted to penetrate into the area). The really smart ones probably boarded ships which took them across the Caspian, and straight up the Volga into new lands, and a new life. The only thing they did not count on though, was the Christianization of these heathen nations in the 9th and 10th Centuries AD, roughly 300 years later. After the loss of these final western Magian refuges to Orthodox and Catholic Christianity the Magi knew no safety. Without a home or land to call their own, many wizards and witches took their chances at surviving in a Christian environment, while the even more committed of their adherents took to the roads, moving into the Baltic, where paganism still flowered until suppressed by the Teutonic knights during the especially violent Northern Crusades of the 13th Century AD.

Owing to many similarities between the beliefs of the Magi and those of the Christians, Magian and Christian religious themes intermingled. Subsequently, heterodox forms of dualistic Christianity began popping up in Eastern Europe as Magians and Christians interacted inside the parishes. Over time these new demi-pagan Christian teachings gained momentum, drawing more and more Church vitriol, as apostolic Christianity, a more Jewish vision, became stronger and sought to purify the faith from the influence of Magianism.

My next book, *Christianity's Greatest Controversy - Prelude to Genocide*, explores the life and times of the heretical Christian witches and wizards, a remarkable story beginning with the journey of the Magi at the birth of Jesus Christ.

The extent of the Magian diaspora is perceptible in the following words, found in locations many thousands of kilometres apart.

LANGUAGE	WORD	MEANING
Old Persian	<i>Magus</i>	"a Magus" ¹⁶³
Greek	<i>Magos</i>	"a Magus" ¹⁶³
Latin	<i>Magus</i>	"a Magus" ¹⁶³
Latin	<i>magicus</i>	"magical"

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Arabic	<i>Al-Madjus</i>	"a Magus" ¹⁶⁴
German	<i>magisch</i>	"a Magus" ¹⁶⁵
Spanish	<i>Magoa</i>	"a magician"
Hungarian	<i>Magoch Magus</i>	"a pagan priest who keeps the bonfire"
Sassanian Pahlavi	<i>Mog</i>	"a Magus" ^{164a}
Lithuanian	<i>Mag</i>	"a magician, or wizard" ^{164b}
Old Russian	<i>Mag</i>	"a magician, or wizard" ^{164b}
Old Russian	<i>magiya</i>	"magic" ^{164b}
Estonian	<i>Maag</i>	"a magician" ^{164b}
Old Chinese	<i>Myag²</i>	"a magician" ¹⁶⁵
Babylonian	<i>Rab-Mag</i>	"Chief Magian" ^{164c}

Other interesting terminologies exist in Eastern Europe, words once related to the Magi and the specialized roles they undertook.

Slovak	<i>Bieloknyazi</i>	<i>Bieloknyazi</i> were heathen white priests known to the Slovaks. ^{164d} It translates as "The White Princes".
Magyar	<i>Arbis</i>	A doctor or herbalist.
Old Russian	<i>Arbui</i>	"A priestly sacrificer versed in the old pagan rites". ¹⁶⁶ The Old Russian verbs <i>arbovati</i> or <i>arbuyu</i> meant "to perform the pagan religious ordinances". ¹⁶⁶
Finnish	<i>Arpoja</i>	"A pagan priest who foretells the future". ¹⁶⁶ Among the Finnish Mari tribe they were called <i>Arbuj</i> , which is derived from the words <i>ar</i> ("intellectual") and <i>-buj</i> ("head"). ¹⁶⁶ Finnish pagan priests were therefore part of an intellectual class.
Magyar	<i>Baksa</i>	A pagan priest knowledgeable in the sciences.
Kirghiz	<i>Baksy</i>	A sorcerer skilled at healing, and fighting off the demons responsible for illness.
Tibetan	<i>Bhikshu</i>	A Tibetan Buddhist monk.

From historical and folkloric sources we know that certain pagan musicians performed a religious role, which continued well into the Christian era. For this reason I include the following words;

Old Russian	<i>Skomorokh</i>	A minstrel-poet
Magyar	<i>Harsany</i>	A minstrel-poet

And then there were the witches dedicated to evil.

Magyar	<i>Garabancias</i>	A warlock.
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Serbo-Croat *Garabancias* A warlock. The *Garabancias*^{164d} priests of Slavia and the Balkans seem to have been dedicated to crime, brigandage and every kind of lawlessness; "crime-fathers" if you like. The Old Prussians had priests of evil also. In ceremonies reminiscent of the witch Sabbaths of the later Middle Ages, Renaissance and Early Modern era, a 13th Century AD Prussian "black priest" was recorded as congratulating attendees for their crimes, pilfering, extortions and bloodshed, and anything else "iniquitous".¹⁶⁷

Polish *Planetnik*^{164d} An astronomer in some way akin to the *Garabancias*.
Russian *Ved'ma* Witches who interacted with demons.¹⁶⁸

The wizards come to Europe

To adequately probe the question of wizards as historical entities one must put certain regions of Europe under the microscope, places like Russia, Scandinavia, Germany, Hungary, the Balkans and England. For it is in such lands that we find a point of origin for the European wizards and witches. Vital clues exist suggesting the existence of a shared regime of religious traditions throughout these vast tracts of Europe, and with them comes proof of cultural interaction between the pre-Christian inhabitants of these localities.

The likely truth underpinning the close inter-relationship between the Mediaeval pagan Norse, Hungarians, Goths, Finns and Slavs is a shared religious heritage, traceable to nations of eastern magicians who had emigrated from Persia and Central Asia over a wide span of centuries. From the Bronze Age onwards they came into Scandinavia and Eastern Europe via Scythian Russia, especially so between the 1st-3rd Centuries AD, when the Huns and Goths proceeded into Europe from places as far away as China. From that time Europe became home to "witches".

For much of their formative history the Magi passed on their erudite teachings, histories, sciences and ritualism orally, varied colleges of brethren being the mode of transmission. Only later, during the persecutions of Alexander the Great, the Christians and Muslims, did they commit them to parchment. By the Dark and Early Middle Ages, as Christianization gained ground, the histories, as told by the Magi, fell under the assault of polemicists, who detested the public recitals of this knowledge taking place in royal courts. Then came the inquisitorial censors, who extirpated or requisitioned many volumes kept by the wizards. Small wonder we only have Jewish Old Testament records of the monumental migratory period.

The following portion of text was drawn from a 10th Century Hebrew document (the *Book of Jossipon*) penned in Kiev by Jews who had been driven out of the crumbling Khazarian Jewish empire, then situated by the Caspian Sea. It drew upon the Old Testament

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when explaining the ancient waves of migrants who shifted into Europe from the vicinity of Mesopotamia and the Steppes, but goes on to specify the various family groups that migrated elsewhere after the dissolution of Babylon. Considering that Moses can be seen as the founder of Judaism, the many figures preceding him (Noah etc) need not necessarily be seen as Jews in the pure sense of the word, but much rather the earliest ancestors of later generations of humanity, some of whom were Jews.

"Noy (Noah) sired Sima (Shem), Khama (Ham) and Iafet (Japheth). The sons of Iafet were Gomer (Homer), Magog, Madai, Yavan, Tival, Meshekh and Tiras. The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Ripat and Togarma. The sons of Yavan were Elisha and Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim. And all the lands had one language and one dialect. And having moved out of the east, they settled the plains. And they said to eachother, let's make ourseloes a city. And the Lord God came down to see the city and the tower, and the Lord said "This one people, I will descend upon their language and jumble it up. And the Lord scattered them from there throughout all the lands, from that place he calls Babylon. These are the races of the sons of Iafet, and the lands which they settled in, recorded in the tongue which they use in their own homelands.

The sons of Gomer are the Frankos (the Franks) who live in France on the river Seine. The sons of Ripat are the Bretons, who lived in Brittany, on the River Lera. The Lera and the Seine flow into the Great Ocean. The line of Tograma consists of 10 races, of which there are Khazars, Pechenegs, Alans, Bulgars, Karbina (unidentified), Turks, Buz (or Kuz, perhaps Oghuzz), Zakhuik (unidentified), the Ugrians and Tolmach (a Pecheneg tribe). All of them live in the north, and their countries are named after them, and they live along the Itil' River (the lower Volga).

Only the Ugrians, Bulgars and Pechenegs live along the Great Danube River, that is the Dunai River. The sons of Yavan, the Greeks, live in the countries of Ionia and Macedonia. The sons of Madai, the Al'dailash, live in Khorezm. The sons of Tival are the Tuscans, who live in Tuscany on the River Piza. The sons of Meshekh are the Saxons and the sons of Tiras are the Russes.

The Saxons and the Angles live on the Great Sea, the Russes live on the Kico River, which flows into the Gurgan Sea (the Caspian). The sons of Alisha, the Alemari, live between the Iod and Sabtino mountains (the Alps). They conquered Italy and settled there until this very day, along the River Pao and Tichno, and from them are the Burgundians who live on the River Rodno (Rhone), and from them come the Baioriya, who live on the River Renuis (the Rhine) which flows into the Great Sea. The Tichno and Pao Rivers flow into the Venetian Sea (Venetian Gulf).

The sons of Dodanim are the Danes, who live in the gulf of the sea, of the Ocean, in the countries of Denmark and Indri'ya, on the Great Sea. They swore never to submit to the Romans and lay course out on the high seas and the Ocean, but they could not do so (for long) because the power of Rome stretched unto the farthest islands in the Sea.

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And the Moravians, the Croats, the Serbs, and the Luchanians and the Lyakhs (Poles), and the Krakars, and the Boimn (Bohemians), consider themselves to stem from the sons of Dodanim, and they inhabit the coastline between the Bulgar border and the Venetian, and from there they stretch up towards the Saxon frontier, to the Great Sea, and they are called Sclavi (Slavs).

Some say that they are from the sons of Khanaan (Canaan?), but they elevate themselves to the pedigree of Dodanim".¹⁶⁹

For so many years now, educated westerners remained convinced that such records are little more than fairy tales, bankrupt of any truth whatsoever. Genetics, archaeology, linguistics, history and folklore tell a vastly different story, one largely supportive of events similar to those portrayed in the above-mentioned Jewish text.

For instance, Dr Ornella Semino, an Italian genetic researcher, has determined that almost all European males emerged from ten different patriarchal gene pools, that originated in the Middle-East and Ural regions. Of them, four-fifths are thought to have dwelt in Europe since the stone age (25-40,000 years ago), while another one-fifth arrived intermittently between 10,000 years ago and the present. The point of origin for a Y chromosome characteristic possessed by one in 20 European men is yet to be identified. At this point I feel these researchers need to work hand in glove with archaeologists, to see if the timing of these population movements can be more precisely mapped out, by comparing modern samples with DNA extracted from excavated skeletal material.

Archeological debris indicates the importation of artifacts and manufacturing techniques from the Near East into Europe. Linguistics confirms that European languages branched out from a source common to Hindus and Central Asians. Genetics proves the reality of a past migration of peoples from the east into Europe. Put simply, in the millennia following the retreat of the Ice Age glaciers, the northern world was peopled by hunter gatherers, owing to the agriculturally marginal nature of the climate and soil. Whereas more southerly latitudes particularly lent themselves to exploitation by farmers skilled in sowing and harvesting crops, and domesticating livestock, the very things which allowed for the establishment of permanent settlements. Using an undreamed of range of data on genetic distances, mitochondrial DNA and craniometric measurements, geneticists have illustrated that much of Russia and Central Europe was settled by eastern farmers, with segments of the modern population still exhibiting genetic traits characteristic of these ancient folk from Asia Minor.

Linguistics not only clarifies a time frame for this genetic intrusion, but provides clues as to the ethnicity of the immigrants. Fossilized words tell us that European farming was heavily steeped in Persian agricultural practices, and that many of these same techniques were shared by Slavs, Balts, Germans, Scandinavians and Saxons.

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Russian folkloric tradition has it that many of their vegetables once came from Asia in remote antiquity: buck wheat from Turkestan, peas from China.¹⁷⁰ Their oats, barley, rye and wheat first arrived in the Dunai region from the Indian sub-continent, via the Caucasus.¹⁷⁰ Linguistics in part confirms this, for some Russian words concerning agriculture and agricultural produce come from the Avestan and later Persian. Consider the following examples;

The Russian word for a garden *bashtan* came from the Turkic/Persian *bostan*.¹⁷¹ *Ovoshchi* (meaning "vegetables") came from *ovoshit* which was derived from *vagsaiti* (Avestan: "to grow") or the Old Indian *vaksayati*, a connection more faithfully preserved phonetically in the Gothic/Germanic languages.¹⁷²

The Russian word for "wheat" (*psheritsa*) is traceable to the Old Indian word *pistam* (meaning "flour") through intermediate words. The Russian word for barley (*yachmen*) is part of many Eastern European languages and is believed to be related to the Greek word for "barley".¹⁷³ The Russian word for "rye" (*rozh*) is not traceable to Indo-European or Avestan roots, but is in common use (in various forms) by the Finns, Scandinavians, Germans, Balts, Saxons and Slavs.¹⁷⁴ The Russian word for "porridge", *kasha* (which is found in a number of Eastern European countries), is only barely traceable to the Indo-European.¹⁷⁵

Perhaps Russians might also have grown egg plants (aubergine). The Russian term *baklazhan*,¹⁷⁶ otherwise known as the *Solanum esculentum* (egg plant) began somewhere near Astrakhan, and came into Russia via the Eastern Turkic and Arab-Persian. Their other crops¹⁷⁷ were;

Northern crops:	Flax, hemp, and millet
Southern crops:	Millet, oats, wheat, barley, rye, and hemp
Fruit crops:	Pears, apples, grapes, plums, and cherries
Nuts:	Almonds and walnuts
Vegetable crops:	Onions, garlic, pumpkins, cucumbers, radishes, cabbages, beetroots, lentils, mushrooms, peas, and turnips

Apricots were unknown in Mediaeval Russia if we consider historical sources alone. Linguistically however, the Russian *zherdela* came from the Turkic, and indirectly from the Avestan and New Persian.¹⁷⁸ This suggests that apricots initially entered Russia with Turkic-speakers, perhaps Bulgars, as early as the 7th-8th Centuries AD.

Archaeological excavations at Novgorod show that agriculture was rudimentary during the 10th Century, because of problems with seed stock. Many different crop types were brought northward from the steppes by Slavic colonists during the 9th and 10th Centuries AD, but not being suited to such harsh climes they had trouble growing,¹⁷⁹ with the result that famines were a regular occurrence. It took a few hundred years of sustained cultivation

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to produce seed capable of producing acceptable crop yields in northern regions.

In Mediaeval Rus' peasant plot farmers were called *ryadovichi*, which implies that they worked in fields laid out in furrowed rows or lines. This is fairly natural considering that they extensively used ploughing as a means of soil preparation, and practiced crop rotation. The plough was therefore an implement vital to progressive agriculture.

By examining Russian words for "plough" we gain some understanding of where Russian agricultural technologies originated. Two Russian words for "plough" (*omezhi'* and *omezha*), and Bulgarian and Croat words with similar forms, come from the Persian *amazh*,¹⁸⁰ thus indicating Persian influences in the field of Slavic agriculture, among the Russians, Bulgars and Serbo-Croatians. Then there was a scratch plough known as the *sokha*, which proved so remarkable an innovation that it opened up much of the northern forests to plot farming.¹⁸¹ *Sokha* is related to Old Indian and New Persian words meaning "a branch" or "a bough", or "a horn" (which were arguably plough components), but originated from the Gothic *hoha* ("plough").¹⁸² It is also related to the Old High German *sahs* ("a knife").¹⁸² In this instance the Slavs and Goths probably utilized *sokha* scratch ploughs, which scarified the surface of the ground, rather than digging under it. They were therefore ideally suited to cultivating the stump-riddled, agriculturally marginal northern soils of Russia. The Russian word *plug* ("plough"),¹⁸³ which often has pagan religious connotations, is a pan-Slavic linguistic form related to the Old High German *pfluog*, the Old Icelandic *plogr* and the Anglo-Saxon *plog*.¹⁸³ In this instance we find neither Baltic nor Gothic correlations, thus indicating that it was something shared within a Slavic and Nordo-Teutonic forum. It was either present from very early times, when both races freely shared cultural traits, or it was exchanged between all three cultural groups, taking root as far away as the Balkans and England.

And now for livestock. The massive, long-horned aurochs once found on the Russian steppe were without question descended from stock once raised and herded into the region by Magian pastoralists. The Russian word *tur* ("an auroch") is related to the Avestan Persian *staura* ("huge, horned cattle").¹⁸⁴ From this we get the English word "steer", which came via the Gothic *stiur*.¹⁸⁴ Likewise the English word *cow* is closely related to the Avestan *gao* ("a cow").

The Russian words for "a sow", *svinoi* or *svina*, are related to the Gothic *svain*, the Anglo-Saxon *su*, the Latin *sus*, the Greek *us*, Middle Latin *suinus*, the Avestan Persian *hu*, the Old Prussian *swintian*, and the Old Indian *sukaris*. Similarly related is the Latvian *sivens* or *suvens* ("a suckling pig").¹⁸⁵ *Kaban*, the Russian word for "a boar", comes via the Turkic.¹⁸⁶

Etymologies concerning domesticated pigs are unlikely to have arisen from the Indo-European since observers of Hindu vedic lore did not eat swine meat, deeming it unclean. Therefore European terms for pork are likely to have come from the next most likely source,

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Avestan. Consider one Finnish term for "a pig", *porkus*. It evidently came from the Avestan Persian word for "a pig". The English word *pork* has the same origin.

Many Old Russian words used to describe housing seem to be of Magian origin. For example the Slavic word for "a village", *derevnya*, is predated by the older word *ves'* (meaning "village" in Old Russian and Old Slavonic). This word can also be found in use in other languages. For example *vas* (Slovenian), and *vies* (Polish) meant "a village", but were also connected with *viespatis* (Lithuanian meaning "a Lord"). These are all derived from the Old Indian *vic* ("a settlement"), or more especially the Avestan and Old Persian *vis* (meaning "a house").¹⁸⁷ One Russian word for "home", *khata*, comes directly from the Avestan Persian word *kata*.¹⁸⁸ The other commonly used word *dom* (Old Russian for "home") is traceable partly to the Old Indian *damas*, but more specifically to the Avestan *dam* all of which meant "a house".¹⁸⁹ The Latin *domus* and the Greek *domos* no doubt originated from the Old Indian or rather Indo-European, instead of the Avestan (which gave rise to the Russian). As correctly pointed out by the late Professor Margaret Murray, *khata*-style housing existed not only on the steppes of Russia, but in Britain also, where they came to be associated with the huts of the mystical fairy folk¹⁹⁰ (which by her reckoning was another name for the witches).

Khata were made by heaping thatching over a skeleton framework of timbers, which radiated outward from a vertical pylon. The Russian word "to build" *stroit'* comes from the Russian *stroi* or *stroya*. These originated in the Lithuanian word *straja* ("to cover with thatching"), with its true origin residing in the Avestan *urvaro-straya* ("the cutting of plants").¹⁹¹ Obviously the construction of Magian *khata* in Slavia and the Baltic took place at harvest time, when bundles of cut grass and hay were gathered up and piled on their roofing. Again, an Avestan connection.

Where there's smoke there's fire. Where one finds the activity of pre-Islamic Persians and Iranians, one will, no doubt, also detect the presence of Magi, the priests and priestesses who tended to the religious needs of that same culture. And that is exactly what one finds.

Nordic Magi

On our voyage of discovery, ancient Russia and Scandinavia excite our every interest. Perhaps the greatest single confirmation of a Magian (or at the very least Chaldean) presence in Scandinavia, Germany and Russia can be found in none other than the Nordic *Ynglinga Saga*, as recorded in Mediaeval times by Snorri of Iceland, based on epics narrated at Scandinavian royal feasts. This particular saga is notable for its worldliness, since much of the interaction between the vikings and mortal gods like Odin takes place in known geographical locations such as Turkland (Central Asia), the Ukraine, Saxony and Denmark. In essence the *Ynglinga Saga* traces the ancestry of Odin (one of the principal gods of the Norsemen), his people and his gods to an ancient homeland in the east. According to the

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surviving pagan, non-Jewish tradition, he was the leader of a mass migration into Europe from Eurasia during the era of Roman conquest in Persia and other such places. It was from his bloodline that so many European royals claimed ancestry. The Norse *Ynglinga Saga* evidently recalls the arrival of the Magi in Europe, and their leader, a man-god called Odin,

*"The country east of the Tanaquisl (the Dnieper River) in Asia was called Asaland, or Asahelm, and the chief city in that land was called Asgaard. In that city was a chief called Odin, and it was a great place for sacrifice ..."*¹⁹²

"There goes a great mountain barrier from north-east to south-west (the Urals), which divides the Greater Swithiod (Greater Scythia) from other kingdoms..

*South of this mountain ridge it is not far to Turkland (the Caspian, Iranian and Central Asian region), where Odin had great possessions. In those times the Roman chiefs went wide around in the world, subduing to themselves all people, and on this account many chiefs fled from their domains. But Odin having foreknowledge, and magic-sight, knew that his posterity would come to settle and dwell in the northern half of the world"*¹⁹³

*"He therefore set his brothers Ve and Vilje over Asgaard (in Asia); and he himself, with all the gods and a great many other people, wandered out, first westward to Gardarike (Russia), and then south to Saxland (Poland / Saxony). He had many sons, and after having subdued an extensive kingdom in Saxland, he set his sons to rule the country. He himself went northwards to the sea (Denmark), and took up his abode in an island which is called Odins in Fyen"*¹⁹⁴

*From these arts (of magic) he (Odin) became very celebrated. ... He taught the most of his arts to his priests of the sacrifices, and they came nearest to himself in all wisdom and witch-knowledge. Many others, however, occupied themselves much with it; and from that time witchcraft spread far and wide, and continued long"*¹⁹⁵

This was how the Norsemen inherited their religion, or so Snorri Sturluson tells us in the 12th Century, some 200 years after their conversion to Christianity. But can you trust what he says? Most modern historians regard this folk epic as strictly unhistorical. Nevertheless, the *True History of Wizards and Witches* shows that Snorri's writings are probably more trustworthy than most scholars give him credit for, by using a variety of proofs that historians do not normally access. As you will see, what he was in fact describing in his epics, was the arrival of displaced Magi into Europe, from their homelands in Asia and Asia Minor. As the Christian order gained control of education it became imperative to discredit the 'false' folk stories.

Linguistics and historical reports suggest a factual connection between the vikings, the witches and the Magi. Any suggestion that this amounts to a factual Magian presence in

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Scandinavia has never been given a second thought by the vast majority of researchers, and for this reason much of what you will read here concerning the Norse *Al-Madjus* is controversial, but by no means unsupported. As it happens nobody has bothered to examine the possibility or impossibility of the connection, they just simply ignore some very significant clues. On the other hand I spent a considerable amount of time examining the Magian aspects of Russian pagan religiosity, only to discover that many Magian-style features were present in Scandinavia also. For this reason we ought to wonder about the significance of a temple site found near Oslo, Norway, which contained objects from Europe, India and Persia. It dates to the time of the Islamic penetration of Iran.

With the Magi came power politics. Many Scandinavians were peaceful farmers, highly accomplished artisans, explorers and merchants. Even so we cannot ignore evidence that a fair number of Norsemen were eager to blood their swords, some as part of a king's territorial and political designs, others as a matter of lawlessness and piracy, others just trying to find a new home.

Academics are still theorizing about reasons for the viking attacks on Europe and Church property. Was this conflict something which predictably accompanied their migrations into Scotland and Ireland, a result of population pressures, attempts by banished Norsemen and their kin to settle down in new regions, a looting spree, or an anti-missionary response prompted by their staunch adherence to paganism, or a combination of the above theories?¹⁹⁶ I personally believe these were all factors.

In the west, vikings undertook repeated raids against major European targets the very same century as the Nordic Rus' tribe and its princes helped amalgamate the numerous Slavic nations. These included Ireland (830-840 AD), Francia (834 AD), Paris (845, 885 AD), Spain (859-862 AD), Constantinople (860 AD), York (866 AD), Cologne (882 AD).¹⁹⁷ And let's not kid ourselves some of these were major fortified targets (though defensive works are thought to have become dilapidated by the 9th Century) being attacked by predominantly sea-borne forces, advancing down inland waterways.

In essence many viking operations were little more than elaborate extortion attempts, where highly mobile bands of Scandinavian warriors arrived by sea to besiege rich trading cities as large as Paris. As in Russia a common ploy used by vikings was to control major arterial waterways, rivers such as the Seine, Rhone, Rhine, and the Elbe to name but a few places, and thereby choke commercial traffic entering and leaving major cities. Their *modus operandi* becomes blatantly obvious in the case of the heathen Russian attack on Constantinople, because clearly they had little chance of taking a city that big with the number of forces they reportedly fielded in 860 AD. No, these troops planned on cutting off Constantinople from its agricultural provinces, outer suburbs (which they looted and destroyed) and trading partners. More importantly they could prevent the passage of trade

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goods in and out of the city by either land or sea. Therefore their aim was to besiege prosperous world trade centers, and keep them blockaded until they have paid you a sufficiently large sum of money to leave. Either they pay the money or stay entrapped within their own walls, slowly watching their economy and international trade status fall apart at the seams. Either way their victims were likely to pay them everything they wanted.

Viking attacks on Church property in the west, the earliest recorded being that of the 8th Century raids on Lindisfarne, have long been portrayed as having been prompted by purely financial concerns.¹⁹⁸ Naturally monasteries were a soft target for vikings, and their lavish trappings and ornamentation presented an irresistible temptation; maximum gain for minimal losses. It is logical that the strong often can and do attack the weak. In many cases raids on monasteries were a get-rich-quick scheme. And vikings were not the only ones to arrive at this realization; Irish kings and monks became wealthy by plundering neighboring monastic communes, and they were Christian. Monasteries were not always utterly destroyed either. Vikings often only removed their more valuable ornamentation and furnishings, leaving the building intact¹⁹⁹ so that the faithful could restock their place of worship with valuables at some time in the near future. This provided the Norsemen with yet another opportunity to come back and raid them. Thus looting was clearly a major, if not the major objective of their raids.

There is no mistaking a religious component to viking raids in Ireland however. The adventurous Norse raider Turgesius (whose supposed agenda was to eradicate Christianity in Ireland) led his longships up the Shannon river into central Ireland, and there besieged the O'Moore keep.²⁰⁰ Other targets awaited him. The monasteries at Terryglass and Glonenagh were utterly devastated by his swift assaults, their abbots put to the sword.²⁰⁰ At Clonmacnois, one can only guess the terror felt by the monks as they saw the Norsemen beaching their ships on the reedy river banks, a mere stone's throw from the Church. After eradicating the resident clergy, he placed his sibylline wife Ota on the altar, and there she issued prophecies that went unrecorded. Turgesius' rash of plundering came to an unhappy end: once he has taken captive and executed by the King of Midhe in the year 845 AD.

The direct byproduct of these assaults (intentionally or unintentionally) was the disruption of the Church in many parts. Whether this was in some cases the aim of the viking attackers (or an added bonus), or whether it was just a booty adventure is hard to say in each given incidence, but it was almost always a matter of becoming rich through plunder. And yet there are factors which strongly point toward a clandestine religious agenda among some of the pagan priests of the Norse, Bulgars and Slavs, which aimed to head off Christian expansionism by deliberately "knee-capping" Christian learning and mediaeval missionary outposts, and, to this I will add, attacks against the Muslim populations of 9th Century AD Spain, Persia and North Africa.

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An historical precedent for Magian religious conquests can be found in the writings of Procopius, who, amongst other things, recorded the events of earlier wars between the Persians and the eastern Romans of Byzantium. In his day the Magian doctrines were degenerating. Too many of the faithful had converted to the faith of the Christians. Edessa, being only a short distance from Persia, must have seemed a real thorn in the side of Zoroaster's religion, a vexing source of missionaries and a Roman post perched on the edge of his Empire. Just before 562 AD, as the Slavs were piercing down into the Balkans, on Byzantium's western flanks, King Chosroes set forth against the Byzantine city of Edessa.

"Now this invasion was made by this Chosroes not against Justinian, the Emperor of the Romans, nor indeed against any other man, but only against the God whom the Christians reverence. For when in the first invasion he retired, after failing to capture Edessa, both he and the Magi, since they had been worsted by the God of the Christians, fell into a great dejection".²⁰¹

Accordingly this campaign was not one of pillage, power, or land acquisition, but a Magian holy war against Christianity, against one of the biggest Christian cities in the region.

His army did not prove sufficiently capable of taking Edessa; the city was not to be the easy pushover he first envisaged. So the king arranged for a troop withdrawal that would save face. He stipulated that he would only call his troops off once the Romans had purchased peace *"for a great sum of money"*.²⁰² By this, the Persian king went on to say, he meant *every article of wealth in the city*.²⁰² So great was his hate for Christianity that his original plan entailed capturing Christian Edessa and transporting all its inhabitants back to Persia, but not before wrecking the city, and turning it into a pasture for sheep.²⁰² Chosroes didn't want to add Edessa to his empire, he wanted it gone forever. The Romans were not forthcoming with the peace price he demanded, so he renewed the siege but found the going tough, with much of his army devastated by wounds, or lost. Saddened by the inauspicious events, Chosroes returned to Persia with his tail between his legs, and somewhat less money than he had hoped.

But his bigger plan was to demolish Constantinople, and to bring about this achievement he, in unison with the Alans, took control of land north of the Caucasus, as far away as Tmutorokan. And it was from here that he wished to pummel the Byzantine capitol, reaching there by sending an invasion fleet across the Black Sea. Without foreknowledge of a sea attack, his arrival outside Constantinople's walls would therefore come as an unpleasant surprise to the Romans.

Some 280 years later the Magi were still like yelping war dogs. Iberia (ie, Spain) saw the arrival of viking raiders shortly before 844 AD. Not too many years later (between 859 and 862 AD) other vikings were going about their business of sacking various places around the

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Mediterranean, including Moorish Spain. These vikings made repeated highly successful sorties against significant Moorish strongholds (like Seville) and settlements within the Cordoban Caliphate, during which they plundered much and took many captives. Cordoban Muslim commentators, specifically referred to these sea-borne viking assailants as pagan sorcerers, and termed them *Al-Madjus*, which in Arabic meant "the Magi".²⁰³

The luck of the vikings had had run out though. Having recovered from the shock of the surprise attack, the Moors prepared the sort of retaliatory response that the Norsemen would not have wanted. Hemmed in on their island base by the warships of Caliph Abd Ar Rahman II, the vikings found themselves with little or no opportunity to escape the encircling Muslim fleet. Far from home, with dwindling food supplies and many of their raiding vessels falling to the Moors on an ever increasing basis, all that was left was to try and negotiate their way out of the blockade. The bargaining chips used to gain their freedom were the non-combatants kidnapped during the initial raids. Not so fortunate were the vikings captured by the Muslims, almost all of which were strung up from the city's gallows and date palms, or decapitated.²⁰⁴

These particular vikings also tried attacking Pisa in Italy, which they originally thought was Rome, their intended target. For a time they also moored their ships at the mouth of the Rhone, which one might guess turned the river into a viking checkpoint where they could board at whim, the unsuspecting Frankish merchant vessels en-route to the Mediterranean, and fleece them of their valuable monies and cargoes.²⁰⁵ Pisa and the Cordoban caliphate were also very prosperous locations, something which, based on present historical interpretations, would provide the single motive for these raids. And yet, during the 9th Century Al-Nadim was just one of a number of eastern Muslim authors who recorded the existence of isolated well guarded enclaves of Magian devotees throughout the Orient, who maintained their resistance to Islamic conversion. It is unlikely that Arab writers who very likely knew of the Magi could mistakenly refer to the Norseman as *Al-Madjus* ("the Magi") without there being some creditable basis for their comments. And bear this in mind. There were various types of sorcerer present in the Muslim east which were known to the Muslims by the non-specific term *Al-Kaldaniyun*. *Al-Madjus* however was a very specific term, it related to one group of sorcerers only, namely the Magi.²⁰⁶ Magi weren't just wizards, they were the priests and priestesses of an organized Iranian mystery religion.

Viking Magi? But could there be some mistake? Surely? Apparently the Cordoban Caliph didn't think so. He had no illusions as to who these Norsemen were. Some time during the year 845 AD he bothered to send Al-Ghazali, and a gift-laden peace delegation, to meet with the reigning monarch of the Magi, whose stronghold lay somewhere in the northern seas, on a large island amid even larger clusters of islands which were themselves inhabited by the Magi. Several days journey from this verdant Magian paradise lay the

mainland, where his rule and authority were equally well recognized.²⁰⁷

Significant elaboration is provided by Al-Jacub, who records in his annals;

*"In the year 844, the heathen men we call Rus attacked Seville, plundered, laid waste, burned and murdered".*²⁰⁸

What allegedly ensued was a six-week-long looting spree that ravished all of Seville except the keep.²⁰⁹

It becomes important to establish whether or not Seville was attacked by one or more Magian invasion fleets. Unless there were two separate and unrelated attacks on Seville in the same year, the Russes should be identified as the *Al-Madjus* Norsemen described in the caliphate's record of the incident. Unmistakable evidence for Magianism in pagan Rus' gives added poignancy to this assessment.

While reports of the Russian invasion force seem credible enough, there are other factors which create confusion as to the nationality of Seville's troublesome attackers. Unaware of Al-Jacub's tale of the Russian attack, some believe the *Al-Madjus* came from early Mediaeval Ireland!²¹⁰ On the strength of a Hibernian manuscript, they maintain that the Norsemen responsible for these assaults can be tentatively identified as sons of King Ragnar Lothbrok and their attendant bands of sea fighters. These particular Norsemen ran a lucrative slave-trading operation out of Dublin, which had been founded by viking settlers from Norway.²¹⁰ As it happens they had previously taken in excess of 1,000 slaves during hard-hearted raiding along the British coastline, and northern Scotland in particular. It was after their return to Dublin, laden with human chattels, that they decided to plunder the Islamic lands of Moorish Spain and North Africa. What happened there has already been told. But, according to the Irish Annals, once back in Dublin, fresh from the Mediterranean, they brought ashore their consignment of Bluemen (Old Norse: "Blackmen" ie; Africans and Moors).²¹⁰ I think they were Moors rather than negroes (termed *heljar-skin* {Old Icelandic "dark skinned", lit. 'hell-skin', or 'skin of the damned'}).^{210a} This terminology must have come from white Magianism, since in the old faith negroes were born through the mating of a demon and a black witch.

That the life and death of Ragnar Lothbrok was recorded by Snorri, will cause some to disbelieve the factual existence of this Norseman and his kin. That is because a fair number of researchers cannot muster enough courage to admit that these folk memories are at the very least quasi-historical. Be that as it may references to his sons in the Irish Annals provide sufficient corroboration for him as an historical personage. That is unless one cynically requires 2, 3, 4, or even 10 independent sources before considering him a living being.

Clearly Seville was invaded by both parties. Considering the level of Magianism found

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among the Slavs and Scandinavians, it is my personal belief that there was a propensity for collaboration between the Dublin vikings and Ruslanders; something suggested by linguistic correlations between the Old Irish and Slavic tongues.

There is little chance that the Moors mistook the Norsemen as Magi; this is, if anything, a highly believable facet of the account. Cordoba knew the Magi well enough, because between the 6th and 12th Centuries they were experiencing a revival of the faith of the Magi in their own back yard. There the Islamic universities of this Caliphate and Madrasas were riddled with subversives attempting to revive the ancient beliefs of the Manichees and Magi, many of whom were executed for their activities.²¹¹ Is it not possible that these secretive Spanish Muslim Magi were somehow connected with the Norse Magi then attacking Cordoba, and seditiously aided them in their attacks on various Islamic centers in Spain, by providing intelligence reports in the lead up to the planned invasions?

If an undetermined number of vikings were Magi, as the Spanish Muslims stated, is there any other evidence to corroborate this from Christian sources? Mediaeval Church sources do indeed discuss the presence of European Magi, and refer to them by name, though not in connection with the vikings. Sadly, most writers have seen European references to the Magi as merely another word for a sorcerer. But there is a body of evidence which strongly points to them being actual Magi. It is noteworthy that Church writers understood the differences between the various kinds of Magi, and some were less acceptable than others.²¹²

Without question the most exotic account of pagan military activity comes from Russia, with anecdotal evidence of a land armada organized and led by a great heathen sage named Oleg the Wise. Under his leadership the poly-ethnic Rus' State made its prestigious medieval debut by attacking Europe's largest city in 2,000 ships mounted on wheels.²¹³ The chronicled event apparently cost Byzantium very dearly indeed in money terms, and forced their city into instant capitulation, and a humiliating trade deal with the Rus', in which the northern upstarts held all the trump cards.²¹⁴

Any suggestion that this curtain raiser actually took place is avoided by scholars specializing in ancient Russian history. After all, these military tactics lack any historical precedent. Nor does it fit neatly with the barbarian image fallaciously bestowed upon the Russes. Equally great are doubts about the Russes' ability to built such contraptions, and indeed their drivability. So it was perhaps inevitable that academics would disregard the entire episode as a monkish fantasy, given the sensational nature of the Chronicle entry.

However an illumination of the event contained within the *Radziwil Codex* (an illuminated copy of the *Primary Chronicle*) convincingly suggests that the accompanying Chronicle article was anything but an impish inclusion by the monastic scribe.

You see the Rus' vehicles depicted outside the walls of Constantinople (fig 2.1.), bear an uncanny resemblance to Central Asian wind-cars (fig 2.2.),²¹⁵ and their prows are identical to

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ship graffiti depicted on the wall of a Scandinavian stave Church at Bryggen (perhaps carved somewhere between the 9th-14th Centuries AD).²¹⁶

The technology to build operable vehicles comparable to those shown in the Russian Church illumination existed much earlier than the 10th Century AD. As early as 552 AD, the Central Asian Chinese were making wind-cars, which they used to speedily traverse the dusty wind-swept desert plains of that region.²¹⁷ They were capable of transporting up to 30 passengers at speeds approaching 60 k/ph. When there was insufficient wind to fill their sails the vessels were drawn by oxen.



Fig 2.1 Illustration of the 907 AD attack as contained in the *Primary Chronicle* (written c. 1039 AD).

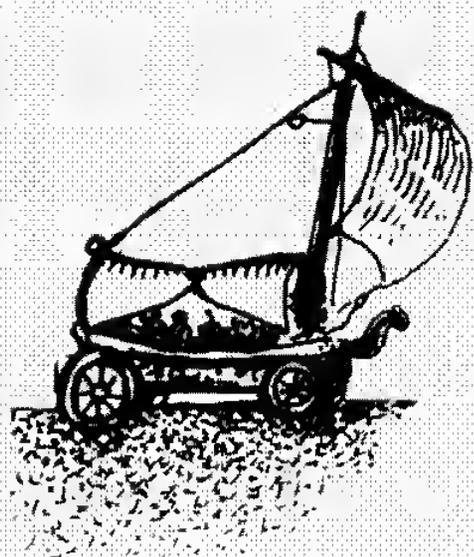


Fig 2.2 A 16th Century AD drawing of a Central-Asian wind-car, rendered by a Portugese explorer (the design of which is similar to those built in Central Asia from the 6th Century AD onwards). Note the forward positioning of the sail and the awning to keep the sun off passengers - these unusual features can also be found on the Pagan Slav wheeled-ships depicted in the Russian codex.

It is perhaps coincidental that Al Masudi claims Rus' warships had a complement of 100 men, whereas during the 907 AD attack, Oleg's vessels carried 40.²¹⁸ The passenger load of

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the latter vessels was thus on par with that of a wind car.

The 907 AD assault was apparently conducted in unison with cavalry. All the while Ruslanders flew war-kites with disturbingly bizarre faces over the battlefield,²¹⁹ to further spook Constantinople's defenders. In so far as war-kites are concerned, we find yet another link with Central Asia. No nation at that time is thought to have used them in warfare besides the Chinese, who employed them for propaganda purposes (ie, psychological warfare).²²⁰ The Chinese also fielded manned variants as observation platforms, into which battlefield observers were strapped.²²¹ The Russian term for a kite is *Bumazhniy Zmei*, literally "paper serpent" or "paper dragon". Having said that, Russian flying paper serpent kites may have resembled the serpentine windsock-style standards of the French Merovingian Magus-kings.

How terrifying and demoralizing the advent of this heathen invasion force must have seemed to the Byzantine soldiers manning the battlements. As they looked down over the pagan army arrayed against them many would have thought "Just who are they?" or "If they can do these marvels, what else are they capable of?". Thus, on the balance of probabilities, Rus' pagan sages (like Oleg) learned to make land-ships and war-kites in Iran and Central Asia (the old heartlands of Magianism).

A wheeled-ship (lacking a canopy and sail) is portrayed some 420 years later in the Danish Sjaeland Church of Kirkerup c. 1325 AD, carrying a man with horns who is holding a pitchfork and waving about some kind of bill or writ.²²¹ Birgitte Munch Thye interprets this as Moses (whose name can equally be translated as meaning either "a halo of light around the head" or "horns at the front of the head") sitting in the Ark of the Covenant. The (obvious) pitchfork she regards as Moses' snake staff, and the boat she explains is a mistranslation of Ark (the ornate box which held the tablets of the ten commandments), and Noah's Ark (the boat). While it is possible to suggest that the uneducated rural clergy of the age might have been sufficiently in the dark about scripture to allow such a misperception to have occurred (as it happens Mediaeval western and eastern clergy quoted more often from Old Testament than the New), I am doubtful of her interpretation. Western Church iconography during the Middle Ages allowed for the depiction of the "enemies of the Church" in the eastern wing of the building. Therefore parishioners would emerge from mass into an essentially pagan world through a portal (at the opposite end of the altar) above which were the "devil's agents". This might account for why they chose to depict a wheeled ship in Denmark.

Let us see what comparative linguistics can tell us about the (pagan) Russian wheeled vehicles. The Russian word for "wheel" *kolo* is the same in the Old Russian, Old Slavonic, Serbo-Croat, Czech, Polish and Slovenian, and virtually identical to *kola* (Bulgarian). These words are apparently connected with the Old Indian, Latin, Avestan and Tokharian.²²² The

origins of the Old Russian word for "an axle" are more certain. *Os'* is derived from the Avestan *asa*, and less likely from the Old Indian word for "axle" *aksas* (from which came the Latin word *axis* meaning "a chariot" or "an axle").²²³ Little could I have known what other secrets this word held. The Russo-Slavic word *os'* seems rather close to the Middle Irish word *aiss* (which does not belong to the Old Irish) meaning 'a carriage', 'a cart' or 'a wagon'.²²³

On linguistic grounds one might presume that the vehicle-making capabilities of the Slavs and later Irish were derived from those of the Magi, whereas the Romans were custodians of technologies known to the Aryan mechanics (who are repeatedly mentioned in the Vedas and other Hindu texts). What is even more curious is that there do not appear to be any Norse intermediary word between Russian and Irish. This probably means the Irish obtained this word from pagan Slavs during the Middle Ages, and what is more, these words may have come from a Persian source. In other words they may have been exposed to Magian vehicle-making technologies. While some may regard the linguistic connection between *os'* and *aiss* as a freakish coincidence, I intend to show, in the remainder of this book, that there was contact between Russia and Ireland during the Middle Ages, contact attributable to pagans, pagans cognisant of Eastern religious ideologies.

J. J. Norwich²²⁴ states that the entire account of the wheeled-ship attack is suspect owing to the fact that any mention of the Rus' assault does not appear in surviving Byzantine documentation dating to 905-907 AD. However, several hundred years later, when the Mongols had begun attacking Byzantium's easternmost settlements, we find that any mention of such an important series of invasions did not begin to appear in Byzantine annals until 20 years after the event. So Norwich's observation may not be as significant as one might otherwise think. Moreover, it seems strange that the large scale 860 AD attack on Constantinople only appeared in the writings of Patriarch Photius,²²⁵ the source from which the Russian monks took excerpts when compiling the *Primary Chronicle* accounts. As it turns out the 907 AD Rus' attack was noted by Marvazi in the 12th Century, a retelling of an account written by the Arab writer Al Jayhani between 892 and 907 AD,²²⁶ who mentioned that the Rus' could get around the chains which spanned the entire mouth of Constantinople's harbor (though the mounting of wheels was not mentioned). In 1453 AD the Turks only succeeded in negating the harbor chains during their attack on Constantinople, by taking their ships overland on log rollers, perhaps in emulation of the earlier Rus' attack. Moreover a treatise on Arab and Rus' naval vessels was written in 905 AD by one Byzantine author, indicating that like the Arab armada of 904 AD, a fleet of Russian warships had freshly appeared some time around 904-905 AD (any mention of wheels is lacking in this account also). Lastly we have Al Masudi's *The Meadows of Gold* which state that Oleg made war on the Greeks. This can only be a reference to Oleg's 907 AD attack on Constantinople.

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It is to my mind plausible that local Christian authorities formulated their own names for the various types of Magi they encountered, just as the Muslims had their own Arabic term for them. If we are to admit that some vikings were Magi, then the next most important task before us is to identify what kind of Magi there were; black Magi, white Zoroastrian Magi, grey Zurvanite Magi, or Mithraic Magi?

It is possible that some vikings were dualistic. In Ireland, as in Scandinavia, Central and Eastern Europe, names and titles denoting families, clans or races were often preceded by the words "black" or "white". For instance in Ireland Danes were considered blacks, whereas the Norwegian vikings were seen as white.²²⁷ From Adam of Bremen we know that in some cases the title "the white", "the black", or "the red" related to a person's hair colour.²²⁸ But they are found in alternative contexts too. In Magianism white or black signified which of God's two sons a person followed; whites, the radiant sun, and blacks a horned winged goat or serpent called *Ahriman*.

If some vikings were Magi, then, considering the viking predilection for sporadic and unprovoked sprees of violence and brigandage, it is to my mind beyond question that a certain proportion were black or grey (Zurvanite) Magus wizards. Adam of Bremen terms some of the Norse raiders *wichingi*,²²⁹ which seems to be a reference to witches and warlocks, (but more succinctly meant a sage, wiseman or wisewoman). Perhaps these *wichingi* were dualistic Zurvanite wizards, some of whom saw crime and robbery as acts of devotion to the lord of the underworld.

The other option is that many of the *wichingi* were white wizards. The Germans called some viking raiders *Ascomanni* (perhaps meaning "Ashmen"),²³⁰ which I perceive as a reference to the Golden Ash or Mountain Ash trees (the *Haoma* trees of the white Magi). Strange too that *As* was a Russian colloquialism for "a wizard", so evidently Adam of Bremen was not the only person to make such a connection. By the same token *Askr* meant not only "the ash tree", but "an ash spear", or "a small boat".²³¹ I am disinclined to equate *Ascomanni* with "men in small boats", mainly because longships were much bigger vessels. That would leave "men with ash spears" which, based upon Norse legend, could also have a religious connotation.

The reasons for overseas forays by sea-borne white Magian troops assume an entirely different dimension beyond the mere sacking of settlements. Firstly the white Magi were peaceable in every respect, that is unless you throw concepts like despotism, oath-breaking, Magian heresy or apostasy from the Magian faith into the equation. In such instances they were duty bound to gather arms and confront enemies which they perceived as elements of *Ahriman's* black forces. They mobilized to hunt down lawlessness, and fought for matters of principle, law and honour, especially hoping to destroy tyrants wherever they may be found ruling in the material world. Therefore some of the viking warriors who raged against

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the Moors of Spain and Africa might have been exacting vengeance on the Muslims for past injustices against their kin back in Iran and the Caucuses, or the persecution of fellow Magi in Spain. Many of the latter were Slavs, many of whom had been captured during a series of Arab incursions in the Caucuses and southern Russia in the 8th Century AD, emasculated, and shipped to various parts of the Islamic world. Those Vikings who attacked Pisa thinking it was Rome might have been signalling their intention to up the stakes in their intellectual and moral war with the Roman Catholic Church. In either case we are provided with an undreamed of range of possibilities for the military and piratical exploits of the Norsemen and Vikings, beyond that of the obvious looting which took place.

In the Norse *Ragnarsdrapa*, Ragnar was immortalized as pursuing conflict with the evil viking king Jormunrekk.²³² And if this was the case, and the Magian presence in Dublin was attributable to his kinsmen, then the line of Ragnar might have been white Magian.

These particular Scandinavian Magians reportedly had unconventional Magian marital customs, for their Queen and womenfolk were free to sleep with whosoever they wished.²³³ This makes them Magians of the heretical Mazdakite sect by my reckoning. Al Nadim described how Mazdakites lived: "*The master, the former Mazdak, ordered them to partake of pleasures and to pursue carnal desires, food and drinks, social intercourse and mixing together*" and "*they shared their women ... as no one of them was excluded from the women of another, nor did he himself withhold his own women*".²³⁴ Ibn Fadlan, the trusted emissary of Caliph Muqtadir, witnessed this same level of hospitality on the Upper Volga, during a 9th Century AD mission to the King of the Russes.

Whatever the case, this Magian monarch considered himself sufficiently powerful to wage war on Cordoba, something land forces would have been hard pressed to achieve. We might think that he had designs on other places also. Some of the most devastating attacks on the English mainland occurred at the dawn of the 9th Century AD, at a time when Charlemagne began directing the Irish and Anglo-Saxon clergy to begin educating the people about the papacy's version of Christianity, through homilies in the vernacular, and by producing books which would help parishioners understand the mass. Tuition of the clergy and parishioners became standardized, or at least directed towards a greater missionary effectiveness.²³⁵ We might think that such new developments seriously galled the Magi once these teachings began penetrating into the largely uneducated demi-pagans of Britain and the Holy Roman Empire. During raids directed against monastic communes, vikings obliterated the very libraries which were the fountain of all Christian learning in those parts.²³⁶ Thus many relics and items of secular and religious writing permed by the Churchmen were probably destroyed forever during these attacks, and with them many detailed references to the pagan world which they tried so hard to convert.

If in some cases the real aim of these viking (*Al-Madjus*) raids was to cause havoc in

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Catholic missionary outposts and schools in Britain, then of necessity they would have needed to attack Ireland's many monasteries, which for so long had shone like a beacon of the Christian faith across Europe. And what should we find during the 9th Century AD but Norsemen descending on the emerald Isle like a swarm of enraged bees. Obviously libraries were not the only reason they came there, but it's food for thought. Once Norsemen had gained a foothold in places like Scotland and Ireland, some chose to be baptized, but in the main their coming was synonymous with a returned pagan presence. There they were called "heathens", which is a non-descript term.

Back in Scandinavia we hear tell of a unified and lightning-swift anti-Christian response where proselytizers were concerned. The very moment King Olaf issued a proclamation for the baptism of his subjects, a general revolt originated at the Thing place (ie; the council assembly) where they were required to assemble. A pagan advocate said;

"A man is come to Loar who is called Olaf (the King), and will force upon us another faith than what we had before, and will break in pieces all our gods. ... if we carry Thor, who has always stood by us, out of our temple that is standing upon this farm, Olaf's god will melt away, and he and his men be made nothing so soon as Thor looks upon them. Then the bondes all shouted as one person that Olaf should never get away with life if he came to them ... They chose out 700 men to go northwards to Breida, to watch his (ie; the King's) movements".²⁵⁷

"Another faith than what we had before" is a particularly significant admission in this account, for in it we find clues that the Norsemen were part of an organized set of religious traditions and beliefs, sufficient to be called a "faith". But the king braved the moment and approached them, hoping to gain their ear, and entice them into converting. *"They replied, "We shall give thee something else to do today than to be mocking us;" "*²⁵⁷ and at that a furious melee broke out. The fight went in the king's favor, the insurrectionists (largely farmers) hurriedly disbanded in fright.

The father of one of the ringleaders sought the council of an important chieftain in that valley, by the name of Thord Istermage. Istermage ordered that a group of 13 delegates should meet the king and entice him into facing the people at the Thing-place, so that they could find out *"if there was any truth in it (Christianity)"*.²⁵⁷ The king came and gave them news that Norsemen in Lesjar, Loaf and Vagar had already made the transition to Christianity, and had *"broken down their houses of sacrifice"*. Visibly unimpressed a spokesman for the pagans called Gudbrand quizzed the king *"Dost thou call him God, whom neither thou nor any one else can see?"*²⁵⁷ Gudbrand made a challenge for their respective gods, to change the weather; but Thor was to go first. And on the following day Thor made the skies overcast as asked. Now it was the king's turn. His bishop gave the pagans a long sermon about the virtues of God and the Christian faith, after which Thord Istermage responded.

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"Many things we are told of by this horned man with the staff in his hand crooked at the top like a ram's horn; but since ye say, comrades (ie; fellow countrymen), that your god is so powerful, and can do so many wonders, tell him to make it clear sunshine tomorrow forenoon, and then we shall meet here again, and do one of two things - either agree with you about this business, or fight you".²³⁸

Here Istermage was referring to the bishop and his crozier. That he calls him a "horned man" is problematic. Perhaps the bishop was wearing the typical double-pointed mitre, perhaps it was an allegorical phrase for a holyman current in Scandinavia at the time, and if so it probably meant that Norse pagan priests wore horned headdress (something suggested by a heathen tapestry found in Scandinavia). Perhaps he was really saying that the bishop was evil. The name Istermage, the bishop's protagonist, is alluring in the light of other seemingly Magian information emanating from Scandinavia and Slavia. One of the proscribed pagan names in Rus' was Ister, leading to the possibility that Istermage is a compound name meaning "a Magus called Ister". I cannot confirm this without seeing how faithful Istermage is to the original translation, but on face value this appears to be the case.

This showdown between the might of gods could end up a bloody affair, with kinsmen and countrymen smiting each other. The way the pagans thought, if the Christian god could not manifest his powers before their eyes, and make the sun shine, then there was no truth in the new faith, and thenceforth they would raise their arms to strike down proponents of Christianity. Based on this and other Sagas it is irrefutable that religious dissension was a cause for social fractures and internecine warfare in Scandinavia. Money was not the only thing the Norsemen were willing to fight and die for, and to suggest this is to degrade their former religious sensibilities. It was dear enough for them to rise up en-masse, hundreds at a time, not just to protect their religion from proselytizers, but to eliminate the unwanted doctrinal intrusion. Norse religion can hardly be seen as a conglomeration of superstitions, for the assembled pagans were so incensed that they "shouted as one person that Olaf (the Christian king) should never get away with life". If all they believed was personal family superstitions, unimportant to anyone outside their immediate family or district, how do we explain this community response, if not by a common religious system, that was worth living and dying for. A breaker of treaties in Norway was to be forever condemned and "driven off" for as long as "Christians go to Church, heathens hallow temples, ground grows, ... mother bears son, ... sun shines ... He shall shin ... every home save hell".²³⁹ All that such a person owned was confiscated and the offender placed under a life-long censure against ever setting foot in that land. Inherent in this passage is an admission that Mediaeval European heathens (most likely Norsemen) were building their own temples after the Christianization of Iceland, though their precise form is not hinted at. Such was the remarkable tenacity of the varied pagan faiths.

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So much for internal proselytizers. What happened when outsiders wanted them to convert? When Otto, the Holy Roman Emperor, requested the conversion of the Danish king, Harald, and his subjects (in 975 AD), war broke out. And it was no small affair. *The Saga of King Harald Grafeld and of Earl Haakon Son of Sigurd* tells us that forces mustered together from all over Denmark. The request for military back-up which he sent to the Norwegian Yarl Hakon saw an enormous army gather in Norway, and sail to Denmark to meet this Frankish Emperor head on. The combined Dano-Norwegian force was recorded as "very numerous". The issue at stake was the abandonment of paganism, the result was a war. Not a war over lucky rabbits' feet, or which way you stir your porridge, but over highly emotive articles of pagan faith.

The word viking was coined by the Danes to denote "a pirate". Even so, the precise origins of this Danish term have never been satisfactorily resolved. Some scholars say it comes from the word *vig* ("combat"), others *vik* ("a water inlet of various kinds"), and yet others maintain that it comes from a much older word *wic* (Anglo-Saxon), meaning "an encampment".²⁴⁰ I would like to postulate an additional genesis for "viking" by drawing attention to similarities between the word "viking", and the names Adam of Bremen used when referring to the vikings who did untold damage throughout the Lowlands in the years leading up to the turn of the millennium (these he called *wichingi* or *Ascomanni*).²⁴¹ After factoring in Arab accounts of the viking *Al-Madjus* it becomes eminently plausible that the term *wichingi* ("a viking") was connected with the origin of the English word "witch". Consider the following terms²⁴²:

wita (Old English): "a sage" or "an advisor": *wiccian* (Old English): "to perform witchcraft": *wig* (Old English): "an idol": *wiglian* (Old English): "to divine the future": *wicche* (Middle English): "a wizard": *wicken* (Middle High German): "to divine the future" or "to bewitch": *wizzo / wizzi* (Albanian): "a wizard" or "a sage": *wizzo* (Old High German): "a sage". Obviously the English word 'wizard' is related to the Old High German, and (if the connections which I have provided are valid) infers that the pagan priests of the Norsemen (and most likely those of the British Isles) were not only wizards but sages of some intellect.^{242a} Old Icelandic has conceptually similar terminologies; *visdoms-madr* (literally "a wise man", meaning "a sage", "a soothsayer" or "a prophet"), *visdoms-kona* ("a wise woman"),²⁴³ *visinda-madr* ("a soothsayer"): *visinda-kona* ("a wise woman or sybil"): *visinda-tree* ("the tree of knowledge"),²⁴⁴ and *visi* ("a poet", "a chieftain" or "a leader"). *Visi* was simply another word for a *gothar*.²⁴⁵ Collectively I see these words as related to the Near Eastern term *wasir* ("a high chieftain"). The Norse wizards probably had books too. The Old Icelandic word *visinda bok* meant "a learned book".²⁴⁶

Drifting momentarily from this geographical area, we also hear of the rune-using Magyar (Hungarian: pronounced Modjer) *Vezer*, or *Nagyvezer* ... their chieftains, of the line of Arpad,

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which hailed from the Central Asian city state of Khorezm (which in the Iranian meant "the Land of the Sun"). By some strange coincidence this Hungarian dynastic name phonetically resembles the title proudly flaunted by the Magian priestly bloodline ... Ehrpat. This once-nomadic folk dressed in typically asiatic and near eastern dress styles, had their own learned heathen culture, and were remnants of the old Hunnish hordes.

Another style of Nordic magic related to singing and smithing is perceptible in *gala* and *galdr*, but they might only be different words. *Gala* "to sing or chant" is conceptually related to *galdr* "a magical song or charm", and in the plural it meant "witchcraft". This form of magic, if it varied from the rites of the wizards, was an evolved type of religiosity, using sung incantations. Witness *galdr-ligr* ("magical"), *galdra-mathr* ("a wizard"), *galdra-raunir* ("a great sorcerer") or *galdra-smithr* ("a sorcerer {smith}"), *galdra-kind* ("a foul witch"), *galdra-kona* ("a witch"), and *galdra-bok* ("a book of sorcery").²⁴⁷

The Old Icelandic words *vita* ("to know"), *vitki* ("a wizard") and *vizka* ("wisdom" or "sagacity") were related to the aforementioned words denoting a wizard or sage. Based on this word set, we can infer that the Scandinavian wizards in question were the recipients of vedic knowledge, for the words seem derived from *vita* and *veda*, Old Indian words relating to vedic knowledge, but specifically meaning "I know".

Perhaps the Norsemen had chieftains who were at the same time sages, soothsayers and living gods. If so these Norse wizards may well have inherited the divinity, wisdom and sciences of the Hindu Brahmans or Iranian Magi, and continued to perpetuate them during the pagan era.

Besides written accounts of the viking *Al-Madjus* attacks on Moorish Spain, Norse eschatology provides powerful evidence for Magian religion in pagan Scandinavia. That is because the viking doomsday of *Ragnarok* resembles the "apocalypse" portended by the Magi not only in the nature of the predicted events, but in the internal event sequence of both armageddons. This uncanny resemblance far exceeds whatever "end times" similitudes can be found in the Christian *Book of Revelations* and the *Qur'an*, though in substance there are certain features common to all four, owing to the common origins of the doomsday mythos. But for now you will read precised accounts of doomsday as told by Magi and the Vikings.

THE MAGI During the three-year-long "Terrible winter", an era of unprecedented ecological catastrophe, lawlessness, deforestation, rapine, promiscuity, family and civil disorder, the heavens collapse (including the star-bridge). *Gokihar* (literally the "wolf-progeny" in the form of flaming meteors) and the demon-serpent, plus perhaps "the thievish *Muspar*" (a fiery comet that loiters around the sun),²⁴⁸ lunge down upon the world, thereby melting the mountains and they sink down, making a great plain, upon which the war will be fought.

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"this earth becomes an iceless, slopeless plain; even the mountain, whose summit is the support of the Kirvar bridge, they keep down, and it will not exist".²⁴⁹

A river of molten metal thus springs up and all mankind must pass through it at this point, having been raised up from death, in a preliminary sense, by the Magian messiah (whose body shone like the sun) so that they could undergo the ordeal. This assembly of resurrected souls is called the Assembly of Sadvastaran, and during it the Archangel Rashnu weighs the souls of each and every one. As this progresses, the "archangelic" hero-gods of many virtues ride into the fray, mounted on white horses and carrying spears. They enjoin a one-on-one battle to the death with a particular demon (responsible for making devastating fires, frosts and many other baneful experiences) who was their personal arch-enemy throughout their long existence. After this war the wolf-progeny are killed, but *Ahriman* (the dog/goat who is lord of the devils) and *Az* (the serpent of greed) escape the scene. To bring about the utter cleansing of evil, *Ahura Mazda* (the God of the Light) and *Saoshans/Sraosha* (the messianic judge and resurrector) chased them down, and the fleeing pair were utterly consumed in the broad fiery river. Long preceding this, *Yima*, the benevolent lord of the dead would gather together selected men, women, plants and beasts, and secrete them under the earth, in a hall-shelter of mammoth size. And there they would live out their days until the "apocalypse" had passed, and thence emerge from hiding to re-people an earth victimized and inundated with horrifying fires and engulfing waters. From the moment the battle was over, a newly-renovated universe would be created for eternity. This renewal was called "The Renovation", and decrepitude or misfortune would no longer exist once it was consummated.

SCANDINAVIANS AND GERMANS During the three-year-long "Fimbul Winter", during a period of immense warfare, discord and moral decay, whoredom, winds, disunion and the collapse of the family unit, the *Fenris* wolf escapes its bonds. The heavens then break asunder, and the Bifrost bridge leading to heaven collapses. In company with *Loki*, the Midgard serpent and various *Muspilli* (fire giants) plummet out of the sky (demons of desolation in fiery raiment) to array themselves against the gods and all that existed. A boat-load of giants sails to fight the *Aesir*. Upon their arrival flooding and fires will bury the land, so that the earth appears to sink down, creating a vast plain that stretches in every direction.²⁵⁰

The word *Muspilli* is inexorably connected with Ragnarok, though the term is derived from the Old German (meaning "Judgement day", or "the end of the world").⁷⁶ Portions of the 8th Century AD German myth, the *Muspilli* read;

"This is what the wise men have told: The Antichrist shall fight with Elijah. The Evil One is well-armed, they will fight it out. The warriors so mighty, the stakes so great ... The

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mountains catch fire, No tree is left standing, ... The moon will fall ... On the Day of judgement ... In the face of the Muspilli. ... A red hot rain burns up everything".²⁵¹

Clearly Christian taints have found their way into the once-pagan German prophecy, but there seems to have been pagan cognisance as to the interrelatedness of the events. It was on account of this that believers felt little disquiet when intermingling the pagan and Christian eschatological traditions, when mixing their metaphors.

Then came Judgement Day according to the *Muspilli* text,²⁵² when rewards and punishments were parceled out to the good and the wicked respectively. Considering that Judgement Day is a feature absent from the Norse *Voluspa*, it seems that this aspect of the myth was a Christian nuance added to their recollections of the Germanic apocalypse.

For the Norsemen it is on that flame-ravaged plain that the last great battle of all the ages is to be fought. The crafty and insidious Loki, the Serpent, the Wolf and the many enemies of the gods enter single combat with their own ancient foes like Thor, Odin and many others. The forces of good were bolstered by battalions of fallen warriors who lived in Valholl with Odin. The fight is fierce and unforgiving, most contenders fighting until death. The shining Baldar the Beautiful, and some sons of Odin, are the only ones to survive. Baldar rises from *Hel*, into the newly resurrected world, and a golden age.

Similar notions of a catastrophic collapse of the heavenly vault were present among the Goths and Celts too, probably arising from one and the same source.²⁵³

Unfortunately the Norwegian age of wizards came to a fiery end, or was greatly diminished once a great many of the wise men and women were deliberately entrapped within a feast hall and burned to death by the Christian King Olaf. Such was the common fate of Europe's many wizards and witches.

The European Væagi consolidate power

Norsemen, and the Goths in particular, had long been using the southerly arterial rivers to travel to the lucrative markets and bazaars of Byzantium and Asia Minor. An undetermined number of them were already living along Rus's main rivers, in supply depots or the cabins of fur traders. They included Danes, Russes and Swedes. But for reasons unknown, the Finns and Slavs pooled forces and militarily ejected the Nordic Russes from the area, sending them back to Sweden. In the ensuing power vacuum created by their absence, inter-tribal conflicts erupted. At some point during those turbulent years the more northerly Slav and Finnish tribes sent word abroad to the Rus' princes, beckoning them to return and install some sense of order among them. Thus the ascendancy of Norse royals, under Prince Rurik, to a position of dynastic honour, took place not at sword point, but for political reasons mutually agreeable to both the Rus' royals, and those who invited them. In

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this land of Rus' it took only a sword and an axe to carve out a kingdom for yourself from the forest wilderness. With a reputation for big drinking and an almost feral hardness, the Slavs and Finns were a people after the Norsemen's hearts. As you might expect, Norse assimilation with the local tribesmen was fairly rapid, though it was often the case that Norse colonists preferred to congregate in their own enclaves.

In the early to mid-9th Century AD the Swedes, and more particularly Russes, systematically penetrated the northerly Finnish and Slavic lands, heading east towards Silver Bulgaria, where they often went to trade. With their Slavicized Ros partners (from Rostov), the Slavic Krivichians and Finns from the Ladoga and Beloozero districts (such as the Chud and Ves) at their side, they began making moves towards tribal solidarity between Finn, Estonian, Scandinavian and Slav. This became enshrined in history as the pivotal "Call to the Varangians",²⁵⁴ the birth of Russia.

To be sure the Norsemen were beginning to look far beyond their frost-bound northern peninsula. Today's historians simply attribute their adventurous eastern forays and racial politics to trade and a trail-blazing spirit. Commerce was, no doubt, a significant reason for them colonizing Russia, and even trekking to regions as distant as Azerbaijan, Iran and Iraq, often in company with Slavs or Alans. I however see religion as the primary catalyst for their extensive interaction with other heathens in Greater Scythia and beyond.

According to *Ynglinga Saga*, many hundreds of years after the *Aesir* had settled among the Vanir, Norse nobles continued to remember their venerable eastern ancestry, which was traceable to *Godheim* and the *Great Svithiod*. These lands were legendary and still held an aura of mystique and wonderment for later Norsemen, many centuries after they had migrated westward.

"To Saeming Earl Hakon the Great reckoned back his pedigree. This Svithiod they called Mannheim (literally: The home of men), but the Great Svithiod (Greater Scythia) they called Godheim; and of Godheim great wonders and novelties were related".²⁵⁵

It would appear that the descendants of Odin and the initial wave of immigrants lost contact with *Godheim* (literally "the home of the gods") in the ancestral motherland, and after having lived a long time in Europe set out in search of it, having previously sworn that they would succeed in this mission. It was in Turkland (ie; Central Asia) that the Norseman Swegde chanced upon the very people he had been searching for. Having rediscovered *Godheim* and the *Great Svithiod* he apparently established lasting contact with the inhabitants of the region.

"Swegde took the kingdom after his father, and he made a solemn vow to seek Godheim and Odin. He went with twelve men through the world, and came to Turkland, and the Great Svithiod, where he found many of his connections".²⁵⁶

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Earl Hakon the Great was not the only high-born one to look eastward. In the Old Norse tale *Gylfaginning*,²⁵⁷ the Swedish king Gylfi is said to have undertaken an arduous journey to Asgard (an Icelandic folk remembrance of the Persian regional governmental center of Asagarta {sandwiched between Parthia and Medea}), where he met in consultation with the wizard-gods, who, the Christian Snorri tells us, “*deceived him*” with their tales of the world’s origins and its coming end. There the king learned many other things that proved to be the basis for Norse pagan beliefs. As you have already seen, the epic of Ragnarok was probably one such teaching. Here Snorri’s pen appears to have faithfully recorded Gylfi’s unforgettable adventure, preserving for us profound Norse remembrances of the divine wizards of Asia Minor.

Additional relevant details are found noted in a 13th Century Icelandic tract, which allow us to specifically identify the wizards as Magi, for it was said that - “*Magon reigned over parts of the Great Svithiod, but Madia over Kylfingaland, which we call Gardariki (Rus’)*”.²⁵⁸ This account intimates that the Svithiod was ruled by a Magus, with the best part of the Medes, the original tribe of the Magi, serving as temporal lords over ancient Russia, having left Iran at some point in ages past.

The subsequent analysis of thousands of birch scrolls unearthed at Novgorod has conclusively proven that Novgorod was founded by Slavic-speakers who had previously inhabited a region just south of the Baltic, perhaps near Poland or Prussia.²⁵⁹ Yet their language was different from that of every other Slavic linguistic group, displaying at least twenty points of difference, and lacking the “*second palatization of the back palate consonants*” (a standard feature of Slavic language).²⁵⁹ In short, the language of these highly-educated Slavs had formed in isolation from the others. Perhaps they had lived on an island, just as the Russes were supposed to have, perhaps the mysteriously-deserted island of Gotland. Maybe the Russes weren’t really ethnic Slavs at all, but Balts or Scandinavians who came to speak Slavic as their preferred language. Nevertheless these scrolls are likely to reveal a great deal about the linguistic affiliations of the tribe in question. Unhappily I have been unable to obtain copies of Professor Zaliznyak’s more specific findings in relation to this.

The Varangians of which the *Primary Chronicle* speaks were commonly described as Swedes or Norwegians. For Russians it meant a person of Scandinavian heritage, either a settler, a trader or mercenary. The word technically refers to those who served in the bodyguard of the Byzantine Emperor, and it is from this term that the Russians adopted their wide usage of the label Varangian. Despite the relatively late origins of the term Varangian, Persian texts as early as the 10th Century make mention of these marauding men of fury, the *Asiu o Varag* (Alanic-Varangian) alliance which conducted plundering expeditions throughout the Caucasus.²⁶⁰ Vernadsky believed there may be a relationship

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between the two terms. I concur.

Such then is the traditionally accepted Normannist view of Russia's birth. Put simply the vikings are invited by the region's ethnically-diverse inhabitants to come and rule them, to cement them into a single nation. It's nice and tidy, free of any anomalies. That is until one asks some simple and very obvious questions, that blow its naive simplicity apart forever. Why did the Finns and Slavs place so much store in the ability of the Russes to restore order there? Why on earth would the region's ethnically-diverse inhabitants invite the very people they had militarily vanquished back to rule over them? It just doesn't make sense. No doubt these tribes ascribed to the Gothic Norse royals a power of some kind, well able to bring order and law from the warmongering of their various chieftains. What ever led them to place so much trust and hope in these Norse royals from over the sea? After all they were not under threat from foreign aggressors, and could just as easily have chosen a Latvian lord to act as an independent mediator, if they wished. As you will see later, their unquestioning recognition of Norse royal power, and their obedience to these same royals was rooted not just in politics, but in their common paganism.

Normannists also fail to address a number of other salient details. For instance why did Vladimir oversee the erection of stone Iranian idols in Kiev, not far from the prince's tower, after assuming power there?

Simargl'	The fertility deity Simurg, as recorded in the scriptures of the Magi. ²⁶¹
Khors	The Good Sun, and ruler of the twelve signs of the zodiac. Khors was originally an Alanic deity from Khorezm in Central Asia and/or in Mesopotamia which, in one form, is almost certainly equated with Jesus, the Good Son. ²⁶²
Khorsabad	
Dazhbog	A sun God with an Iranian title. ²⁶³
Stribog	A high-ranking Iranian deity. ²⁶⁴
Perun	Cognate with the Vedic war god Indra. ²⁶⁵

Why were Rus' rulers (allegedly of Swedish ancestry) using the royal title *Khagan*, which is exclusive to the Russian steppes, and acting as patrons for gods once worshiped by the Magi of Iran and Persia. Just a little un-Scandinavian wouldn't you say? Why did Vladimir require the Slavic masses to worship demons, plus pagan Alanic, Finnish, Iranian and Greek gods? What was the purpose of this move? Where did the *Volkhvoy* (the Rus' Magus priests) get their classic astronomical and astrological expertise, not to mention the skills to build the observatories that Arabs knew of? Why were the Rus' pagan priests, the *Volkhvoy* (Old Russian: "Magi") revered as living gods, just as the Magi once were? Could they be actual Magi? How could it be that the pagan Russes had occupied Rus' since the mid-9th Century, and yet it was only in 981 AD, a mere eight years before their conversion to Christianity, that

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they finally brought their chief Iranian and Indo-European idols to Kiev and later Novgorod? The *Primary Chronicle* entry relating to this event made it almost seem as though Vladimir was introducing less than familiar gods and temples to the Slavic locals. Was he? ... or were the Iranian gods always there but went unrecorded in the earlier Chronicle entries of that same text? And if the *Volkhvy*, and the idols that they served, weren't indigenous to Kiev, why did it take up to 100 years for them to arrive in Kiev?

Why, when Oleg "the Sage" had taken Kiev as early as 878 AD, did a century have to pass before the Russes immersed themselves in temple construction projects, in the southern Ukraine region at least? Obviously, the Ukraine's Slavic inhabitants were already pagan, and paganism was not being introduced to the eastern Slavs for the first time. Was this a taste of a different style of eastern or northern paganism, with trimmings that they were not fully accustomed to? And I deliberately use the term unaccustomed to, rather than unknown, because most likely the religious practices were not completely unknown to them, judging by the ease with which they began worshiping the newly-arrived idols.

The inevitable conclusion is that somehow a new Magian faith had established itself in Kiev (the capitol of Rus') in year 981 AD, almost a thousand years after the birth of Christ. It may be that Magianism already existed in northern Rus', or near the Urals, but for political reasons the pagan hierarchy chose to relocate their most important cult center to the Ukrainian frontier. In support of this hypothesis, the word *ukraina* (Ukrainian) or *oukraina* (Old Russian), meant "the border" or "the frontier".²⁶⁶ This indicates that Kievan territories were a peripheral location in relation to the pagan political-military nerve center. If this was the case, then the Kievan idols may have been brought there from a former administrative capitol. But where was it? ... Rostov? ... Novgorod? ... Tmutorokan? ... Bolgar? ... elsewhere in the Urals? My guess is Tmutorokan, but the question is almost impossible to answer with any conviction.

The presence of Magians in Rus' is clearly demonstrated by this material, priest-judges who by Ibn Rusta's word were regarded as even higher than kings, and capable of ordering anything they deemed necessary for the advancement of their religion.²⁶⁷ Considering this level of adulation and respect granted them, these divine pagan figureheads must have exerted a considerable controlling interest over the kings, as events ever unfolded.

The implications of this are enormous. There was another religion on Europe's doorstep, and it was neither Christian, Muslim or Jewish, but pagan, Magian pagan. So, whose Magi were they; Norse, Slavic or Finnish? Never had I seen a single scholar specializing in Ancient Russian studies, present the topic for open discussion. This unwanted and embarrassing data was like a deformed child locked away in a box by disturbed parents, hoping to hide it from the world. I too felt sheepish about it. So I was faced with two options. I either had to tackle this cryptic data head on, by prying open that box to see what lay within it, or coyly

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escape the magnitude of the task with a houdini-like shrug of the shoulders. On principle alone I felt it improper to disregard the evidence without further appraisal, irrespective of its wild and seemingly inscrutable nature. If the data was unsustainable then this would easily become apparent once it was subjected to meticulous analysis. If the existence of Magi in Rus' was mere fable, then the set of tests I proposed to lay down would surely disprove it.

By my estimation the only way of assessing whether or not Magians were an integral part of the Rus' state was by comparing information relating to the Magi and the Russes. Of necessity this comparative study would need to include an assessment of the similarities and differences between their respective languages, funerary rites, magical traditions, superstitions, rituals, customs, mythology, social structure, architecture, art, music, literature, Persian chess boards, clothing, military structure, politics, law, and religion. A Magian presence could only be confirmed if, and only if, each of these areas showed Magian influences.

From the outset I assumed the task of dismissing a Magian presence in Rus' would be mercifully easy and brief. Little did I know that this particular research phase would consume almost five years, and mutate into a 1,000-page book. It was like opening a closet, only to be greeted by an avalanche of hidden contents. The more I rummaged through the historical, linguistic, archaeological and folkloric source materials, the more I found that adequately demonstrated that the priests of the Russes were, what has been claimed all along, Magi (the blood-priests of ancient Iran).

Surviving Mediaeval Arab and Christian historical sources conjure images of a southerly or south-westward religious/military migration across Russia, that progressively gobbled up tribes along the way, gradually assimilating them into the new pagan Rus' state. The original protagonists are already known from the *Primary Chronicle* - the Nordic Rus', the Finnish Ves', the Estonian Chud, and the Slavic Krivichian nations.

Returning to the apparently answerless questions just posed, only one alluring solution seems to cover every base. The Rus' royals were really Scandinavian Goths, and their process of forging the Rus' state was no venture into the unknown, simply a return to a more ancient political model for the region. Gothic kingship worked before during Ermanaric's reign, it could work again. This saw the poly-ethnic easterners rally behind the ancestors of the semi-divine Gothic Magus-kings who formerly governed their respective peoples many hundreds of years previously.

Russian Goths probably had Magian practices and affiliations, at least on par with those of their ancestral kings. Gothic ancestry might be traceable to one of the Medes' greatest tribes, the *Guti*. One of the most illustrious surviving Magian fire temples, the *Goti*, is presently sited in Surat, India. Like all Medeans, the *Guti* were deeply influenced by Indo-Aryan culture and religion.²⁶⁸ Gotic priests were predominantly magician-smiths.²⁶⁹

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Considering that the Scythian *Getae* and *Massagetae* originally inhabited a region geographically neighboring Medea, the analogy has distinct possibilities. Even more so when one learns that the dignified attire of the famed semi-divine Gothic Amali dynasty was Sassanian.²⁷⁰ That is, similar to the manner of dress of the Magian kings.

That they were demi-gods is sign-posted by surviving linguistic data. The words *Gothr* (sing), *Gothar* (pl) (Old Norse : a pagan priest or chieftain of the Norse), *Got* (Germanic: "God") are in all likelihood linguistically related to each other. So it is eminently plausible that these linguistic similarities reveal the Goths as a race of priestly mortal gods. The closest parallel for them are the Magi, or the pagan gnostic philosophers. In Gothic the words "God" and "priest" are from the same root, but *Guth* also held an older meaning: "idol".²⁷¹ This Russo-Germanic custom may be related to an old Persian practice whereby devotees carved idols of their heathen priests, royals and heroes after they had died. These words are also related to *gothr*, *goth* and *gott* ("good", "morally commendable", "honest", "kind", "friendly"),²⁷² and *goth-mogn*, *guth-magn*, *gothmagn* ("divine powers", "the gods").²⁷²

First names used by the Gothic royals were in some instances Persian. One such name was Gaatha, and it applied to a 4th Century AD Gothic princess.²⁷³ White and black magic were acknowledged influences in Gothic society.²⁷³ So too the influence of demonic possession known as *daimonareis*.²⁷⁴ Collectively these are indicative of dualistic wizardry in Ostrogotha, the eastern Gothic marches of Scythia. Such dualistic beliefs were a standard feature of the Indo-Europeanized Magianism, of a sort known to the Zurvanites.

Eliminating opposition within the Rus' state

Although the Slavs, Norsemen and Finns were no strangers to each other, the events of the 9th Century saw a more elaborate and formalized relationship begin to appear, resulting in the formation of the Rus' state, which was ruled from Kiev. The sudden emergence of Kievan control represented a totally new development in all of their relationships and came about as a result of intense inter-tribal diplomacy, brinkmanship, and, if necessary, by military conquest against non-compliant tribes.

The most likely consequence of this was the emergence or re-emergence of a pagan governmental system, which independent tribal entities were required by treaty to submit themselves to, if the task of bringing law out of lawlessness was to be achieved. This being the case one would presume that Rurik employed a Norse governmental model, one destined to control a country as big as Russia, by ingenious means. The 10th Century AD saw the widespread establishment of palisaded administrative settlements known as *pogosts*. These were outposts that housed military personnel loyal to the Grand Prince, plus groups of tradespeople and their families.²⁷⁵ Through the agency of archaeology it is only now coming to light just how many of these settlements were established during the

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Mediaeval era of pagan Rus'. Their prevalence signifies a flourishing centralized pagan government in Kiev, which succeeded in extending its control over the length and breadth of the countryside, with these outposts serving as regional outposts of royal military and administrative power. Nobody knows how quickly the *pogosti* spread, though by the time Princess Ol'ga had introduced the *polyudie* tax (literally "going around to the people") the need for governmental stockades in even the remotest places was greater than ever. Accordingly *pogosti* appear to have been flourishing by the mid 900's AD, and this *pogost* network proved so workable that it crossed over into Christian hands following the conversion.

Since *pogosti* were constructed in the vicinity of the larger and better fortified cities it seems that they were intended to be autonomous enclaves, independent of any nearby tribal *grad* and its princely ruler. They had a psychological effect also, reminding the Russes of exactly who was in control of their Empire; *pogosti* were visual proof. *Pogosti* might have been an added insurance policy against treasonous rebellions, a marvellous ploy by Kiev. Should an uprising occur, in which a prince tried to break away from the Rus' tribal federation, then the existence of a *pogost* in close proximity would have been timely and crucial. Through affiliations made with city folk within the *grad*, local *druzhinna pogost* troops might have been better able to plot a breach in the errant city's defenses, or remain on standby pending the arrival of reinforcements from the Grand Prince, all the while reconnoitering the situation as it unfolded. What is more they would serve as the eyes and ears of the Kievan throne.

The name *pogost* infers that they served as royal guest houses too, manors where traders, travellers and dignitaries could stop over on their journeys. *Pogosti* probably afforded protection for merchant caravans against bandits, and allowed traders and artisans the opportunity to undertake commerce in an otherwise little known area, or simply shelter from inhospitable weather conditions. In all they sound very much like the Persian governmental satrapies, regional administrative centers with their own settlements and fortifications, such as *Asgarta*. The *Ynglinga Saga* alludes to similar public works programmes back in Scandinavia;

"Onund had roads made through all Sweden, both through forests and morasses, and also over mountains; and he was therefore called Onund Roadmaker. He had a house built for himself in every district of Sweden, and went over the whole country in guest-quarters".²⁷⁶

Considering that such measures saw service in Rus' during pagan times, instituted after the "Calling of the Varangians" it is highly likely that the Norsemen were responsible for bringing these same skills into Russia.

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That is not to say that the Slavs were ignorant of public works. Far from it. Western Slav cities were very elaborate, well established and protected. Adam of Bremen flatters one heathen Polish city with the following kind words;

"The city itself has nine gates and is surrounded on all sides by a deep lake. A wooden bridge, over which approach is allowed only to those who would make sacrifices or seek oracular advice, affords a means of crossing".²⁷⁷

"At its mouth (the Oder river), where it feeds the Scythian marshes, Jumne, a most noble city, affords a very widely known trading center for the barbarians and Greeks who live round about. Because great and scarcely credible things are said in praise of this city, I think it of interest to introduce a few facts that are worth relating. It is truly the largest of all the cities in Europe, and there live in it Slavs and many other peoples, Greeks and barbarians. For even alien Saxons also have the right to reside there on equal terms with others, provided only that while they sojourn there they do not openly profess Christianity. In fact all its inhabitants still blunder about in pagan rites. Otherwise, so far as morals and hospitality are concerned, a more honourable or kindlier folk cannot be found".²⁷⁸

From what Adam reported, we know that Rugen (where Svyatovit's idol was situated) was supposed to have been a very dangerous place, and tales of it are reminiscent of those concerning the Rus' Arsa tribe;

"So much are they (the Slav kings of Rugen) feared on account of their familiarity with the gods, or rather demons, whom this people holds in greater veneration than do the others. Both these islands, too, are infested by pirates and by very bloodthirsty robbers who spare no one who passes that way. For they kill all those whom others are accustomed to sell".²⁷⁹

So what else do we know about major urban centers in other parts of heathen Slavia? In the Slavic world of the 9th and 10th Centuries AD the royals and nobles built their own keeps surrounded by timber palisades and mottes. Tribes also had their own specific fortifications, which granted them safety during inter-tribal warfare. Some sites, such as the Slavic island-fortress of Biskupin had been continuously inhabited since the earliest years of the 8th Century BC.²⁸⁰

Slavs had a love of hill forts, many of which have since been excavated by Russian archaeologists. To the west, fortifications were commonplace in Bohemia, the Baltic, and among the Eastern and Western Slavs. In Central Europe Bohemian fortifications conformed to four main styles:²⁸¹

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1. Those built in the middle of swamps.
2. Those raised atop hills.
3. Large-scale fortifications established on level ground.
4. Those built on stretches of land between two rivers.

The Western Slavs, being close to the Catholic Holy Roman Empire, felt a need to build defenses that could only be assailed with difficulty. One Polish hill fort, at Gniezno, had 50-metre-thick walls made from log lattice work with rubble filling sandwiched in between. That's half a running field thick! The scale of this gargantuan fortification is in some ways reminiscent of the old Tauro-Scythian fort at Charax, and eclipses the wall thicknesses of the mediaeval world's major cities. This reveals several things;

1. There was immense social cohesion, sufficient to undertake projects of this size.
2. The herculean nature of the undertaking suggests that the rampart was erected to guard the inhabitants against Christian German or pagan siege engines. The thickness of the wall would have been rather pointless if it was only designed as defense against attacking infantry, since once they had scaled the top of the wall, its thickness would have been irrelevant. In so far as Bulgar siegecraft is concerned, linguistic evidence suggests that their military engineers used equipment and techniques that originated in Central Asia.⁶²²
3. Who or what was so valuable or important that it needed a 50 metre thick wall for protection? Constantinople didn't, so why should some place in Poland require it? My guess is that Gniezno was a major pagan center, charged with protecting high-ranking heathen dignitaries, royals and pagan priests.

Archeological examinations of Sassanian sites are pitifully insufficient owing to a lack of funding for such projects, and to prohibitions against archeological excavations put in place by the Islamic government of modern Iran. We do know that circular city plans predominated in Sassania, a point of difference with Roman square town grids.²⁸² In this respect they may have provided the blueprint for the circular Slavic residential enclosures, which differed from the squarish settlements also known in Russia.

Another Norse name for pagan Russia was *Gardariki*, the "land of enclosures", the "land of forts". This mention of enclosures is a reference to the ubiquitous walled fortifications that studded the landscape, and perhaps even the boundary fences encircling their groves. Norsemen used a similar term for their settlements *gard* (which means "a city"). Russian cities were known as *gorod*, or *grad*. Considering the level of Magianism in Russia, Slavic fortress walls might have had a sacral meaning, I believe, intended to emulate the Magi's heavily fortified heavenly city *garodoman*, which was patrolled by the holy warrior-saints. In a Magian context a typical Russian or Norse *gard*, *grad* or *gorod* may have been an earthly fortresses of the righteous, just as *garodoman* encircled heaven, to keep out the demons.

The major cities and towns of pagan Rus' were normally built on large flattened mounds,

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or preferably on the spur of a hill, presenting attackers with their first formidable obstacle. Frequently they were also situated in the midst of a marsh or at places where tributary and arterial rivers joined. This allowed chieftains and other rulers the right to tactically restrict river access if they so wished. Fortified places of refuge had always been a necessity in a land so prone to invaders, and poisoned by the chaos of internal wrangling. Here power meant having more swords and warriors than your neighbors. So Russian cities and towns were formed around a central lofty citadel or keep made of thick oak logging, known as a *detinets*. The *detinyets* was in turn surrounded by a small partitioning wall and then on the other side of that, houses and workshops were arranged into different quarters. The whole settlement was often surrounded by a sturdy log palisade and ringed by defensive ditchwork or a moat. In the later Middle Ages they made their fortifications from stone and bricks; these became known as Kremlins. Secret underground passages (souterrains) and rooms are known to have been dug beneath the stockades. The tunnels linked houses and key buildings, allowing speedy escapes during surprise raids and sieges, or freedom of movement during the terrifyingly-cold winter weather. The underground hiding pits like those dug by pagan Germans, Slavs and Celts continued to see service in Rus' after the conversion, largely owing to their functionality.

The *Volkhovy* Magian advisors who worked closely with the Slavic and Nordo-Gothic royals seem to have been masters of government diplomacy, and the gathering of information through contacts abroad. They soon gained the upper hand over the farmers and herders of the forests helped by their force of hardened Rus', Slav, Norse and Finnish warriors. By military conquest, and displays of their superior technology, they so profoundly inspired those who witnessed them that, in the north anyway, they were regarded as living-gods. They gave the inhabitants a re-organized Magian pantheon to bow down to, new *ahuras* and *daevas* (gods of the Aryans and Magians) of heaven, the earth and the underworld, and achieved a unified magical theocracy with stout warrior backing. This was the birth of what could even be called the last great pagan Empire.

The northerners did not have it all their own way though. To the south and east of the eastern Slav lands there were a few dissenting voices. The Rurikids aimed to bring them to heel by mustering forces for an all out offensive against the rebellious Malorussians and Belorussians. These two Slavic sub-groups asked for Magyar aid against the northern Ros/Silver Bulgar invaders, a request which saw pre-Rurikid Kiev receive a permanent Magyar garrison, under Amos.²⁸³ Their attacks on the south might have been influenced by religious developments taking place there at the time. The growing influence of Christianity in Kiev became a cause for concern to pagan leaders, even more so when it was discovered that catastrophic chinks were starting to appear in the pagan camp: Dir and Askold (the *boyar* nobles who allied themselves to Rurik, and commanded the Constantinople attack of

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860 AD) converted to Christianity under German Catholic missionaries. Pagan schisms among such major political and military figures probably posed a threat to the divine *Volkhov* priesthood, and the pagan state they were attempting to establish. As the pagan northern forces moved ever southward, Dir and Askold subsequently steeled their people for heavy battle. After protracted warfare and siege, in which they fought so bravely, the Kievan-Magyar alliance was utterly destroyed.²⁸⁴ Dir, Askold, and all the Christian priests and elders found in pagan Kiev were rounded up and executed. Parish churches and chapels were razed to the ground. With the unwanted Christian presence now suppressed, the *Volkhov* were free to exert their influence over the people of the south, though deep down there was still the seed of rebellion in the southerners. This resulted in the bloody warfare of 983, 1015-1019AD, and cost many lives. After the conversion of Rus' in 989 AD, the *Volkhov* and their sympathizers, who were always more numerous in the north of the nation, promoted uprisings against the Russian Church, especially in Suzdal and Yaroslavl, Novgorod, Rostov and Kiev, in 1024 AD and again in 1071 AD. These were the pagan "hot-spots".²⁸⁵

Having achieved their goal of forming a pagan nation, the Rus' (like the Vikings) then seemed hell-bent on controlling some of the region's major trade routes, and no doubt had very considerable diplomatic skills, which must surely classify them as more than just a gang of wily beer-swigging forest trappers. Oleg began by destroying Byzantine maritime control and supremacy of the western Black Sea.²⁸⁶ This level of strategic brinkmanship calls to mind the foreign policies of the Magian Sassanians, who sought to maintain a tight grip on sea and land passages, to consummate their monopoly on oriental trade.²⁸⁷

The Jewish Khazars, one of the few nations to actually know the Russes, became quite afraid once their tribal amalgamations began. They had no doubts about their ability to scorch the eastern empires, including their own, as in fact they later did.

With the arrival of the Magi and the Rurikid dynasty, the newly formed nation of Rus' acquired a new regime of command and control, the spontaneous formation of a centralized government and military apparatus, which sought to guide and limit the overseas movements of its people by issuing passport seals,²⁸⁸ and which gathered around itself a large standing army, known literally as "the Children". Seal-bearing officials had lived in Russia for tens of centuries previously, for several examples of Scythian seals are extant.²⁸⁹ It was at that point that the tribe known as the Rus' / Ros disappeared almost as mysteriously as they came, most likely absorbed into the society they helped create, perhaps forming the upper religious caste. According to Galina Lozko there were so many Magi in Rus' that there was a minimum of one Magus for every settlement in the lands, however small. Such was also the case in pre-Islamic Iran.²⁹⁰

Ties with the silver Bulgars

Even so there was one other major participant in the "Calling of the Varangians", whose activities are normally quarantined from our understanding of these gargantuan events; the Silver Bulgars. I say this because Al-Nadim and Abu Muslim divulged that the Bulgars were Magians.

Nearby in the Urals, where Norsemen often came, and close to the domains of the eastern Finnish and Slavic tribes, the idolatrous Silver Bulgar nation was progressively succumbing to the overtures of Islam. Those who had converted to Islam had begun building mosques.²⁹¹ As a result of this, the pagan militants of the Silver Bulgars, presumably with some of their more important idols, probably decided to emigrate to the Balkans, to amalgamate with their southern Bulgar brethren (who also once had Sassanian ties). But evidently they changed their minds, linked arms with the Norse princes and sought power amid the bickering tribes of the eastern Slavs (some of which were still under Jewish Khazar suzerainty).

By 922 AD the Silver Bulgar homeland had officially converted to Islam. This necessitated a rapid and complete exodus, of whatever Magians remained, though understandably they would have been moving south-west prior to this year, having already seen the warning signs of Islamicization. This emigration amounted to the almost total dislocation of a race possessing extremely advanced blast furnaces,^{291a} hot water baths, complete with plumbing,^{291a} and highly-skilled architectural and magical practices. This is certainly true of those Bulgars who moved into the Balkans, the Crimea and southern Ukraine.

Their entanglement in the tribal amalgamations that formed the backbone of the pagan Rus' multi-racial alliance readily explains not only a Magian presence in Rus', but the intense paganization that characterized the years of the 10th Century rather than the 9th Century. There are a few potential reasons why they may have adopted this stance:

1. The Silver Bulgar Magi decided to stay on among the eastern Slavs, Alano-Bulgars, Finns and Norsemen because they liked the lifestyle, and because of population pressures in Bulgaria. The Alano-Bulgar enclaves once found in Central Russia and the lower reaches of the eastern Ukraine, must have swelled to even greater proportions, under the weight of the Silver Bulgar arrivals.
2. Having been summoned to the region by the Ros, Finns, Slavs and Alano-Bulgars, the Norsemen arrived in northern Russia, near Novgorod, hoping to build upon the successes of earlier Danish attacks on the Slavs and Kurlanders. They sensed easy pickings, if only they could build a pagan army from scratch. Once armed to the teeth they could invade Tsargrad (Constantinople) and other wealthy locations around the region, and get very rich in the

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meantime. According to this scenario, the Bulgar Magi would have sensed that they too could become far more powerful by staying in Rus' and cooperating with the Russes and their planned formation of the Rus' State.

3. The Silver Bulgars might have been part of a combined Ros-Finnish-Norse force that was to enter the Balkans following the 9th Century AD Norse-Slav military assaults on Byzantine possessions. Accordingly the Bulgars were to act as reinforcements if the Norse-Slav flotillas came to grief, or even to secure the area if Constantinople fell into pagan hands.

4. Following the Islamicization of their homeland the Silver Bulgars had nowhere else to go. After all, their southern kin, the Balkan Bulgars, had converted to Christianity in 864 AD. For these northern Bulgar Magians, Rus' may have been the only viable alternative.

5. Silver Bulgar Magians may have agreed to enter eastern Slavia in company with Finns, Ros, Varangians, and other pagans brought in from Scandinavia, to deliberately unify all the eastern Slavs, in readiness for a pagan holy war against Byzantium. This very topic is covered not only in this book, but *Christianity's Greatest Controversy - Prelude to Genocide*.

A fair number of Magi were already living in Russia on the eve of the Bulgar arrival; but just how many, no one knows. They had inhabited Scythia at least from the time of Mithridates IV (reigned 128-147 AD) and even before that, during the age of Darius, and the Indo-Iranian intrusions of the preceding 1,000 years. There, in Scythia, they nurtured their olden mystery cults. One thing is certain though, this fresh infusion of Bulgar Magians probably meant the importation of potentially new ideas from Asia; new technologies, magic systems, temple designs, political agendas, not to mention chaotic internal migrations and warfare. From this came the assimilation and/or centralization of diverse local cults, some of great antiquity, under a combination of Norse and Bulgar guidance and control.

This hypothesized religious re-organization evidently enjoyed the support of the reigning Nordic Gothic royals, but might not have been wholeheartedly embraced by everyone. While the Magi were part of a greater college which perpetuated centralized Gathic or Zurvanite teachings, it should be remembered that they were attached to their people at a tribal level, and as a result of this, the Magi frequently became embroiled in the nationalistic or racial intrigues of the warrior lords who protected and funded them. According to authentic Magian teachings, the love of one's country and king was holy, and treason against them the fruit of *Ahriman* (the Devil). The Zurvanite Magi in particular belonged to various colleges, each of which was dedicated to the service of a particular idol. We know that this custom of divine service was observed among the *Volkhvy*. All this led to full-blown nationalism, and cults of individual localized gods, fully endorsed by the indigenous Magi, and perhaps gathered into a "pantheon" during the political consolidation phase brought

about by the Bulgar presence. Consequently disputes between the many Magus priests accompanied politico-religious developments of this magnitude.

The closest parallel to this factionalism can be found in the Orthodox and Catholic priesthoods of the post-conversion period. Although Catholic priests are part of a greater college, which espouses the *magisterium* under the leadership of the Pope, it should be remembered that there are German, English, French, Italian bishops, and so on, each of them serving the needs of their race, while still being part of a bigger institution. Similarly Orthodoxy has Russian, Bulgarian, Georgian and Greek priests, etc. During the Middle Ages especially, nationalism amongst clerics was a standard feature, and something that disassembled Church unity. The tribal consolidations that allowed the formation of the Rus' State may have occurred under circumstances less than agreeable to Magians throughout the various tribes. And from this much conflict arose, even among pagans of like faith.

With superior powers of organization, and the help of friends among the Finns, Rus' and Norse to their west, the Bulgarian Magi may have provided a fresh perspective for the scattered heathens. Bulgar leaders probably exploited inter-tribal disunity among the many camps of magicians on the steppes, by installing their pagan Khans (and Rus princes') as regional rulers; a dynasty of warrior-mages.²⁹²

Bulgar-Slav relations were at best complex during pagan times. Even so, some scholars have likened the role of the Bulgars among the Slavs, as analogous to the Norman overlordship of the Anglo-Saxons post-1066 AD.²⁹³ If the Bulgars had a position of prominence over the other pagan Slavs, this influence could only be attributable to their greater military might, or, as I believe, the presence of extremely high-ranking Magian religious dignitaries, if not the supreme head of all the Magi, or a combination of both.

The grandiose art (including engraved sphinxes), masonry and architecture which the Silver Bulgars left behind on the Upper Volga not only reveal the skills once used in constructing the royal buildings of Zoroastrian Sassania, or Persia, but carry the influences of Indian and Alanic craftsmen,²⁹⁴ and all of this in the shadow of the Ural Mountains. A similar set of circumstances probably existed in Bulgaria prior to its Christianization. The Danubian brothers of the Silver Bulgars had Sassanian-style temples also.

Accordingly the numbers of idle Magian-Bulgar, stone-craftsmen already present in Rus', or in transit through Russian territory, must have been huge. This if nothing else can explain the lateness of the 9th Century AD temple-construction phase in pagan Rus'. There the buildings were erected using finely cut and dressed ashlar, the blocks so deftly hewn and interlaced that only the slightest gaps separated the mortarless stonework. These increasingly Slavic-speaking Silver Bulgar immigrants had deep ties with Balkan Bulgaria, Khazaria, Central Asia and Baghdad, to which the Russes and Bulgars were clandestinely commuting in the 9th and 10th Centuries AD.

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Magi of the Achaemenid era usually kept their holy fires in lofty towers, normally equipped with a belfry, rather than domed pavilions. There, in the high places, they performed their most impressive ceremonies in honour of the sun. Throughout Slavia, such towers, mostly of ashlar or timber and shingle construction, appear to have been the prevalent form of pagan temple. A meticulous examination of architectural terms in the region reveals that Eastern European heathens knew building arts that originated in Persia. Looking eastward we detect the point of entry for their craft; the Caucasus.

At the higher reaches of the Kuban river, in the old Caucasian motherland, one finds Humarin Gorodishte, a city practically 900 x 500 meters in area, guarded by a keep and some twenty watch towers.²⁹⁵ A square-set building was situated there, somewhat similar to a Magian fire temple.²⁹⁵ Much the same could be said for a kindred construction found at Pliska, Bulgaria, near the royal palace.²⁹⁵ Nowadays a considerable number of stone towers can still be seen in the Caucasus, the more ancient of them built by the Persians. Unfortunately the recent Chechen conflict has taken a severe toll on the remaining towers, which had otherwise stood the test of time, and centuries of conventional warfare. Many fell victim to Russian shells as they combated Muslim separatists who have been trying to take over the area.

Another plausibly religious site in Olden Russia would be Majackoe Gorodishte, a towered structure raised atop a fortified 80-metre-high hill, constructed from well-crafted ashlar blocks.²⁹⁶ It was situated on the northern Russian plains, not far from where the Tikaya Sosna and Don rivers meet. Its very name gives reason to suspect the presence of *Al-Madjus*. There one finds a large number of Bulgar runic insignia comparable to what one would find inside the Khazarian realm, but including pentacles and swastikas (an ancient Indian and Iranian solar motif), plus a variety of animals, particularly deer and steeds.²⁹⁶ These, I believe, were tribal standards. Similar images were found in relief on ceramic shingles at a handful of sites, situated in the Crimea.²⁹⁷ Bident and trident signs are often encountered too, signs readily linked with the Alanic and Russian royals who struck similar diagrams onto their coinage. They only began to appear during the 8th-9th Centuries and lacked any historical

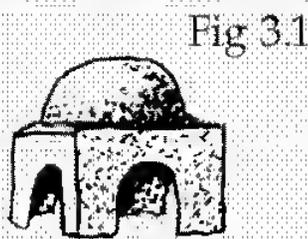


Fig 3.1

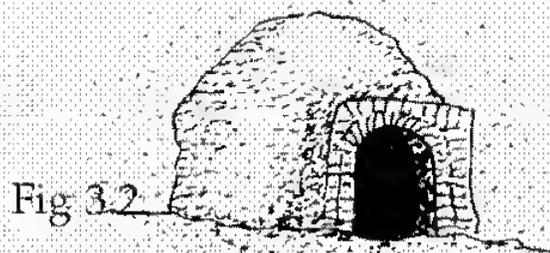


Fig 3.2

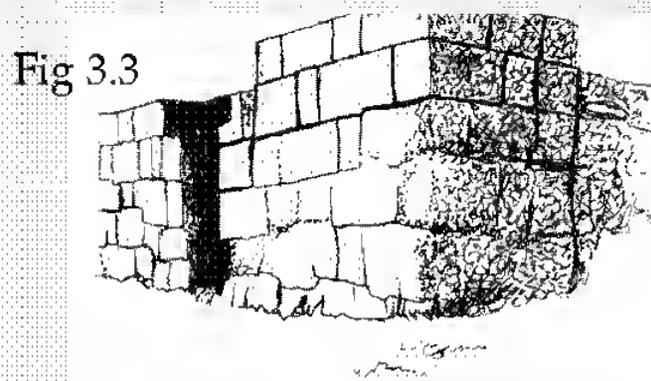


Fig 3.3

Fig 3.1. Sassanian dome-topped *chahartak* fire temple, used by Orthodox Zoroastrians. Fars, Persia.

Fig 3.2. A crudely similar building located at Ufa, Russia. In legend this building was the resting place of the bull-headed pagan god Tur.

Fig 3.3. A wall section from Pliska Bulgaria. The same square-set building technique

precedent in that area, nor was the practice known to the Byzantines. The constructions are associated with the 8th-9th Century Saltovo-Majack culture. Necropolises accompanying such ruins resembled those of Zlivka; in other words, they were excavated grave pits, sometimes accessible by steps, or indeed lidded.²⁹⁷ Therein lay the skeletal remains of Caucasians devoid of any Asiatic physical traits.

These archeologically significant tower constructions appear to have been mentioned in Mediaeval Islamic sources. Based on what Al-Masudi had learned in the writings of the philosophers (presumably of those who worked in the Arab academic institutions in Baghdad) he stated,

*"There are stories about this (Slav) temple (on a very high mountain), about its fine construction, about the arrangement of the various types and colours of gemstones (found there), and about the holes made in its upper story, and how they deposit precious stones into the holes in order to observe the ascension of the sun (sunrise)"*²⁹⁸

Remembering that the study and application of optical theory was on the frontiers of science during the 10th-15th Centuries, one wonders what pioneering techniques were employed in this heathen observatory, which specific gemstones were set in various portions of the building,²⁹⁹ allowing the gaze of the gods and heavenly lights to move about the tower's upper story. Drawing upon accounts of other pagan temples in the region they were probably emeralds, sapphires, carnelians, chrysolite and crystal.³⁰⁰ Depending on the number, colour and shape of the gems used, and the manner in which they were mounted in relation to each other, you can visualize it being something like a 'laser-light' spectacle, with multi-coloured beams of light piercing through the "eyes" of the tower, dancing across each other as the sun laboriously lurched over the horizon. The priests then foretold the will of the supreme god by interpreting insignia carved into the temple, as they were struck by the incoming sunlight.^{300a}

Masudi did not go on to compare it with anything in Baghdad. It would have been an obvious comment, yet one not found. This indicates that Arabs did not possess techniques even vaguely similar to those used in Slavia. As the pagan observatory was sited on the top of a lofty mountain, their heathen astronomers plausibly understood the affect of altitude on starlight, as Ptolemy had explained.

That the Russes knew of glass or gem "eyes" is greatly supported by the Old Russian word *glaz* ("glass spheres"), which appeared in the Russian Hypation (Ipat'ev) manuscript under an entry for 1114 AD.³⁰¹ If it were not for Masudi's testimony, we could be forgiven for thinking that they learned of such things under the new education system initiated by the Russian Church. *Glaz* is related to the Polish *glaz* ("a stone", or "rock") and *glazny* ("smooth", "sleek", "dextrous"). It also meant "a stone", "a sphere", or "an eye", whereas the Slavic *glaz*

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meant "a ball" or "a globule".³⁰¹ Glass blowing technologies are suggested by these words. And since they have no connection with Gothic, Greek, Latin or Arabic words for "glass", we can deduce that their art of glass-making had been present in Germany and Slavia for some time. Unless a Western or Eastern etymology can be found for these many terms, the words evidently originated in a Slavo-Germanic linguistic context to describe processes imported into the area, or independently invented within that same region.

A pagan origin for the "eyes" is found not only in the Old-High-German *glas* ("amber" or "glass"), the Norwegian *glosa* "to sparkle", or "to flash", the Old-Low-German *glaren* ("to flame", "to glow"), and the Middle-High-German ("resin").³⁰¹ These are evidently cognate with the English word *glass*.

From this we might guess that the special gem-eyes Al-Masudi described in connection with the pagan observatory were gemstones, pieces of amber or resin, globules of molten glass, or even hollow glass-blown spheres filled with liquid.

In *Chips from a German Workshop (Vol III)* the once-famous German sanskritist Max Muller reproduced the following oral lore from the region of Pomerania and Rugen, the former seat of the high fanes of Wendish paganism. In places throughout the following poetry, Christian glosses have been superimposed over the original fairy traditions:

From "What the People Tell - Old Busum"

Old Busen sank into the waves;

The sea has made full many graves;

The flood came near and washed around,

Until rock to dust was ground.

No stone remained, no belfry steep; All sank into the waters deep.

... At times, when low the water falls,

The sailor sees the broken walls;

The church tow'r peeps from out the sand ...

Then hears one low the church bells ringing,

Then hears one low the sexton singing;

And from the poem *Vineta*;

"Lights are gleaming, fairy bells are ringing,

And long to plunge and wander free,

Where I hear the angel-voices singing,

In those ancient towers below the sea."

Part of this oral lore preserves ancient traditions concerning the heathen bell towers, and

cities built over the waters, accessible only by boats and bridges built far out into the water. Towers had, in times past, belonged to the old faith.

There is certainly archeological and historical evidence for such constructions, most of which I provide toward the end of this book. In various parts of Scandinavia for instance, maritime archaeologists have found the remains of tower structures built offshore. In the fore-Caucuses the stone and ashlar towers of the pagans can still be seen there, so too linguistic, historical and archeological evidence of towers in Slavia.

The Russian words *gadat'* ("to tell someone's fortune") and *gadaniye* ("fortune-telling") preserve the Magian ancestry of pagan Russian horoscopy, for they are built from the root word *gad*, which probably comes from the Pahlavi word *gadman*³⁰² (meaning "the allotted destiny"). Russian zodiacal divination therefore had a historical connection with Magian prognostication, perhaps as early as the third century AD, and continued long after the conversion until comparatively recent times. Even in the 20th Century, the Zoroastrian Parsees still require the construction of a natal horoscope after the birth of a child.³⁰³

Considering post-conversion attempts to eradicate heathenism, it comes as no shock that there are no existing historical accounts of Russian sorcerers formulating horoscopes, though other data, mostly folkloric, allows for such an assessment. When a child was born in heathen Rus' few parents avoided a hurried visit to the local Magus or *koldun*, to have their child's natal chart drafted using the arts of natal horoscopy. Thus could they learn which cosmic influences governed the whole of their child's life. Planets poised on the ascendant (a planet's "dawn") or descendant (a planet's "sunset") at the exact time of the severing of the umbilicus, at the latitude of the child's birth place, were thought to have a lasting and definite affect on the child's future behavior and innate abilities. These were to be particularly watched for, and where their influence was baleful, guarded against through the use of amulets designed to counteract their harm.

After viewing the heavens and consulting their personal archive of birch bark scrolls (containing notes about prevailing celestial positionings), the typical pagan Slav astrologer probably sought information in the *Rozhdenik* almanac (an expurgated Russian heathen text on astrological nativities, no longer extant). After cross-indexing the necessary information from *Rozhdenik*^{303a} with entries found in the extinct pagan treatise *Ostrologiya*,^{303a} the astrologer proceeded to determine the new-born's future lot in life, their destiny.

Surviving folklore about the Slavic zodiac places Khors (the Good Sun) at the center of a massive zodiacal kingdom. His rule extended as far as the eye could see, but was subtended by the twelve conventional zodiac signs, forming twelve separate domains, each ruled by a princess. Coincidentally there was a parallel tradition in Greek pagan gnosticism and Manichaeism portraying the sun signs as princess or maidens. This may or may not have been the origin of the Russian myth regarding the governance of princesses over the sun-

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signs. To the best of my knowledge princesses were not attributed to the zodiac by the Zoroastrians, however the celestial vault was inhabited by many masculine and feminine angels of varied patronages. Some were affiliated with particular constellations. Since Vladimir raised an idol of Khors in pagan Kiev, such folkloric beliefs have conceivably existed there from that time.

The following table compares the Russian zodiac names with the Roman, and includes their period of influence.

ROMAN	SLAVIC ³⁰⁴	PERIOD OF TRANSIT
Aries	Oven, Baran, Ares, Skop	18/4 - 14/5
Taurus	Telets', Bik, Tyr, Volos, Kvochka, Perun	14/5 - 21/6
Gemini	Bliznyuki, Bliznyata	21/6 - 20/7
Cancer	Rak	20/7 - 11/8
Leo	Lev	11/8 - 17/9
Virgo	Diva, Krilata Diva, Panna, Diva-lileya	17/9 - 31/10
Libra	Terezi, Vagi, Volopas, Divka	31/10 - 22/11
Scorpio	Skorpion, Vyedmid', Vedmedyuk	22/11 - 30/11
Ophiucus	Zmeinosyets	18/11 - 18/12
Sagittarius	Strilyets', Stribog, Perun	18/12 - 19/1
Capricorn	Kozerog, Koza, Pan, Khrest	19/1 - 16/2
Aquarius	Vodoliy, Mokosh, Mokosha, Vodnik	16/2 - 12/3
Pisces	Riba	12/3 - 18/4

Those readers familiar with the horoscopes that regularly appear in our newspapers and magazines may notice that the dates assigned to these signs differ from what they would normally expect. This is because over time a shift occurs in the signs. The transit periods listed here reflect the original dates for the star signs some 1,000 years ago.

When compared with the other zodiacs of antiquity, the Slavic zodiac was quite unique. Clearly this variant was born in isolation, though it had incorporated teachings from various schools of astrology, and subsequently underwent its own evolutionary path. Unlike the Indian fixed sphere of the zodiacs, the Slavic zodiac was a movable sphere, its format akin to that of the Greeks, Magi, Egyptians, and Romans, and in no way related to the Chinese zodiac (also known to the Bulgars).

Through a survey of Latin, Greek, Indian and Zoroastrian astronomical terms we find little evidence of the Persian astronomical and astrological names formerly used by the Zoroastrian astronomer-astrologers. Clearly the Magi of Slavia were beginning to use vernacular terminologies favored by the Romans, and conceivably by the cult of Mithras in particular.

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For example the Slavic word for Venus, *venyera*, comes from the Latin *venerius*. Likewise *jupiter* comes from the Latin *jupiter*. One Russian word for the moon, *luna*, comes from the Latin. If the Greeks were in closer contact with the Slavs than the Romans then it stands to reason that their word for "the moon" would be of Greek origin. How is it then attributable to the Latin word for "moon" (*luna*), unless it was a word imparted to the Slavs during pagan times, when there was a Roman presence on the steppe?

The Russian word for the sun (*solntse*), is related to *slntse* (Bulgarian), *suntse* (Serbo-Croat), *solnce* (Slovenian), *slunce* (Czech), and *slonce* (Polish). These are connected with the Lithuanian, Old Prussian and Latvian words *saule*, the Gothic *sauil* (or *sunna*), which appear closer to the Latin *sol*, than they do to the Old Indian *svar* or the Avestan *hvara*.³⁰⁵ This might indicate that the pagan Slavs and Balts derived their name for the sun from Roman, or perhaps even Mithraic sources which termed it *Sol Invictus*.

The Russian word for "a star", *zvezda* (which is roughly the same throughout all the Slavic nations) is believed to have been taken from the Old Ossetian (ie; Alanic) *zvestæ*, meaning "silver".³⁰⁶ However I have also noted a crude similarity with the Avestan Persian *star*, from which we get the English word *star*, and perhaps even the Old Norse *stara* ("to stare", or "to gaze"); a relic of the age of star-gazers.

The Russian word for astronomy, *astronomiya*, comes from the Latin and Greek.³⁰⁷ *Planeta*, meaning "a planet" is derived from the Latin and Greek.³⁰⁸ The Russian word for a comet was *kometa*, and has Graeco-Roman origins.

The Russian word for "astrology", *ostrologiya* most likely indicates that their art entered Russia and the Balkans with Hellenized Persians and Parthians, or via Greek and/or Roman pagan gnostic philosophers (such as the Neo-Pythagoreans and Mithraic priests), most likely drawn from earlier Greek-, Roman-, Magian-, Babylonian- or Egyptian-based treatises.

So the heathen intelligentsia of ancient Russia certainly seems to have included skilled astrologers and astronomers with a remarkable understanding of the heavens, achieved through their celestial observatories, gemcraft, books and inherited knowledge.³⁰⁹ The prior-mentioned observatories were apparently of Bulgar provenance, possibly built and operated in collaboration with the Goths. Inscriptions found at the site were predominantly carved in Bulgar runes, though Gothic runes were located there also, indicating the joint nature of the project. Etymologically, the inscribed wording found in these Bulgar buildings, contained terms of Iranian, Sumero-Akkadian, Assyrian and Sanskrit origin, thereby confirming the strong oriental roots of their astronomical and astrological craft.^{309a} Moreover, they tell us that these Magians held traditional Iranian cosmological views, with the sun as lord of the heavenly bodies, and Jupiter the Time God (perhaps with a similar nature to the Iranian deity Zurvan).^{309a} Amazingly many words had distinct Celtic parallels,^{309a} which may have been due to Central Asian Tokharian influence, or, indeed, to words left behind by the Celts

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prior to their westerly migrations further into Europe and the British Isles.

The following account of the Scythian Goths supplied by the Gothic Bishop Jordannes, if true, remains a written testimony to the former presence of other skilled pagan astronomers on Russian soil:

"Thus by teaching them ethics he (the heathen sage Dicineus) restrained their barbarous customs; by imparting a knowledge of physics he made them (the Goths) live naturally under laws of their own, which they possess in written form to this day and call belagines. He taught them logic and made them skilled in reasoning beyond all other races; he showed them practical knowledge and so persuaded them to abound in good works. By demonstrating theoretical knowledge he urged them to contemplate the 12 signs (of the zodiac) and the courses of the planets passing through them, and the whole of astronomy. He told them how the disc of the moon gains increase or suffers loss, and showed them how much the fiery globe of the sun exceeds in size our earthly planet. He explained the names of the three hundred and forty-six stars and told through what signs in the arching vault of the heavens they glide swiftly from their rising to their setting. ... You might have seen one scanning the position of the heavens and another investigating the nature of plants and bushes. Here stood one who studied the waxing and waning of the moon, while still another regarded the labors of the sun and observed how those bodies which were hastening to go toward the east are whirled around and borne back to the west by the rotation of the heavens".³¹⁰

Historical sources tell us almost nothing about the Bulgar priests who administered these religious centers in Rus' and Silver Bulgaria. Centuries earlier (towards the close of the 7th Century AD) the Bulgar city of Varachan, situated north of Derbend, was visited by an Albanian Christian bishop, on a mission of conversion.³¹¹ There he saw a special priestly class who sacrificed steeds before a holy oak (draping the horse hides and skulls from the tree boughs), though for the best part of the time they conducted their rites in timber buildings situated on the city's outskirts.³¹¹ Their religious observances appeared to have been a synthesis of Persian and Turkic traditions,³¹¹ with the Shamanic god Tengri considered the cognate of the Persian deity Aspandiat. Not a few shamans, physicians and diviners resided in Varachan.³¹¹ Most wore serpent charms of precious silver and gold.

Anyhow, the descendants of these eastern and Volga Bulgar Magi, in unison with the Nordo-Gothic princes, Finns and Slavs managed to militarily usurp control over the remaining pagan Slavs, who fell like dominoes. This allowed the sudden appearance of a single centralized Kievan Rus' religious pantheon possessing Iranian idols, one of which was an Iranian depiction of Jesus Christ. Yet for all this, it still encouraged older patterns of regional worship. In other words, the Nordic Russes and Bulgars collectively formulated, in stages, a binding matrix of Magian/Aryan gods and ritualism, from that which was extant in the lands of the Ros, or the Silver Bulgars near the Urals, complete with their indigenous

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Iranian idols. This "pantheon" was then imposed over the whole length of geographical Rus', culminating in Vladimir's temple construction phase (begun c. 955 AD) and the raising of the main idols (kaphishche) at Kiev (and Novgorod) c. 981 AD.

For a number of years I remained convinced that the idols and Magianism in Kiev were simply Bulgar imports. But as time passed, and the scope of my research deepened, I was astonished to discover the presence of additional Magian participants, who were not specifically attached to the Bulgars. In all likelihood these Magi advocated rallying the Slavic and Finnish tribes under the Nordic Rus' royals, who were themselves magicians of the royal blood. These pagan agitators were present to a greater or lesser degree among the Finns, Norsemen, Goths, Hungarians, Slavs and Bulgars. Small wonder the Muslim writer Zakariya al-Qazwini reported that the Burdjan followed the religion of the "*Magi(cians) and pagans*".³¹² The term Burdjan is believed to have applied to both Bulgars and Norsemen in his text.³¹²

The ends to which their brand new pagan Rus' army was directed bore some resemblance to the 9th Century AD viking conquests then taking place against the Christian Franks, Irish, Moors and Anglo-Saxons. During the 9th and 10th Centuries AD the nearby nations held their breath as the Slavs and Finns changed from stay-at-home agriculturalists, and herders concerned with inter-tribal bickering, into a formidable alliance that engaged in intensive military campaigns directed mainly against Christian Byzantium, the Eastern Roman Empire. Later they turned on even more of their neighbors and boldly projected their forces into the Balkans, the Urals, the Far-east and the Caucasus. These were expansive and extremely adventurous military operations against other regional adversaries, such as Islamic Iran, the Khazarian Jews and the Bulgar Muslims of the old Silver Bulgar homeland.

Something gargantuan was afoot in eastern Europe, a new nation was being born. Its spontaneous creation was not a matter for indifference, rather concern. Jews, Muslims and Christians looked worriedly northward, toward the vast steppe and forested interior of Rus', as the heathens they had hounded to death regrouped. What would they do next?

The Danubian Bulgars

Having visited the Danubian Bulgars personally, Abu Muslim testified that they were Magians; in effect followers of an ancient Iranian religion, which was at all stages headed by a hierarchy of Magus wizards. Here one finds even more Muslim evidence for European Magi. On account of this Catholic and Orthodox authorities saw the Bulgars as the greatest heretics of the age, deeming Bulgaria a major threat to the faith, "the mouth of Hades". Abu Muslim's report was subsequently reproduced by Al-Gaihani,³¹³

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\ "The Bordjans (Danubian Bulgars and Norsemen) are the descendants of Younan, son of Japhet.³¹⁴ Their kingdom is of importance and spread over a large area. They combat the Roumis (ie; the Byzantines), the Slavs, the Khazars and Turks, but their greatest, most redoubtable enemies, are the Roumis. It is 15 days march from Constantinople to the land of the Bordjan; their kingdom itself spans some twenty to thirty days march.

Each Borjan fortress is skirted by a hedge-like border that covers a sort of wooden net, creating a defensive wall built on raised ditchwork. The Bordjans are of the Magian religion, and possess no books at all. ... The Bordjans do not use denarius or dirhem; all their transactions, including contracts of marriage, use cattle and sheep as currency".

Every aspect of this account can be carved and diced, measured and weighed by the fruits of other academic disciplines. The last point raised by Abu Muslim and Al Gaihani is only partly correct. Archaeologists regularly find Islamic and pre-Islamic dirhems at most Bulgar sites (and throughout Russia and Scandinavia for that matter), therefore confirming their usage. Having said that, based on what is known of Mediaeval Slavic commerce, they may have used this coinage only to pay taxes and in formal trade deals. Archaeologists only ever attribute the presence of these coins to eastern trade; never to funds brought into Europe with post-exilic communities from the steppe.

During the same period, in Tadzhikistan and Uzbekistan (the same distance from the Caspian as Moscow) the dirhems bore inscriptions naming the local Islamic governor, the name of the Khalif, plus Islamic phrases (eg. Al Makhdi (760-761 AD), al-Ash'asb. Iach'ya (761-762 AD), Nasr (868 AD), Mukhammed (918-919 AD). Sassanian coins were absent, suggesting they weren't even in circulation in Islamic districts. This really can't come as a shock, for Sassanian dirhems always had a Magian fire altar, and the name of a Zoroastrian king stamped on the obverse. Muslims reactionaries were intent on replacing the old order, and consequently eradicated coins bearing images central to the Magian faith, replacing them shortly thereafter with images of the Caliph. Whereas for the same period, Eastern Europeans and Scandinavians often had Sassanian dirhems in their possession. These coins were frequently mounted on items of jewellery such as necklaces, and considering the fire altars thereon, their function was probably talismanic rather than financial, drawing down the protection of god's fire, and the supernatural might of long-dead kings.

Cattle were traditionally used as currency throughout Slavia. The Old Slavic *skot'* ("cattle") existed with slight variation in Bulgarian, Ossetian, Old Saxon, Gothic, Old Czech, Old Norse and Old Frisian and collectively denoted a person's wealth or means, though among the Slavs it particularly infers that large, horned cattle were their primary unit of currency.³¹⁵ A similar situation is found in the Avestan Persian *gaonem* meaning "riches" or "benefits" which has the root word *gao* "a cow", from which we get the English word *cow*.

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We shall now delve deeper into this priceless record of the Bulgars. Firstly, the fortifications described by Al-Gaihani should be identified with a range of massive fortified settlements and cities (some more than 50 hectares in area), the foremost being Majackoe and Cimljanskoe Gorodishte, excavated by Russian archaeologists near the Don River. The Bulgars built urban centers of like nature throughout the Balkans and Southern Ukraine from the mid-700's. Cities of this magnitude allowed them to house a burgeoning populace who dwelt in surface and dug-out tentwork, as they once did on the plains of the steppe. Most were encircled by ditches and wooden-lattice palisading, of the sort detailed by these Muslim writers, others by 15-foot-thick, rubble-filled walls of ashlar, white in colour. The stonework was quarried some distance away and, more likely than not, ferried down the Don on barges. Masonry of this nature tells us that Bulgar engineers were more advanced than most other Europeans, who were still constructing fortifications from logging at that time. Perhaps for this very reason their services were highly sought after. Two of their better-known clients were the Merovingian Magus-Kings of France, and the Khazarian Jews. Such Jewry was, by and large, party to unorthodox, often non-rabbinical teachings.

Necropolises and Zoroastrian Sassanian coinage associated with the Bulgar forts point to them having been driven from Northern Daghestan and the Caucasus during open warfare with the Arab Muslims in the 7th Century AD. Caucasian Alano-Goths represented a certain portion of the Bulgar population throughout that region, folk also shunted from the eastern homelands. Bulgars situated at the Cimljanskoe Gorodishte settlement are believed to have maintained relations with the Jewish Khazars. Perhaps for this reason the Magian Bulgars besieged its ruler, and destroyed the entire city. Cimljanskoe Gorodishte was gutted and most of its citizens relocated throughout Greater Bulgaria. While some Khazarian Jewish royals had plausibly been inducted into the rites of the Magi by virtue of their royal blood, as was the old custom, there were still philosophical clashes over the nature of the supreme god. This must inevitably have led to dissension with those Magian brethren who were party to the Jewish traditions. Surviving texts of the Magi certainly point toward the inevitability of a heated theological rift of this magnitude.

The absence of Bulgarian Magian written texts in Abu Muslim's original account is perplexing, since the Magi also preserved their religious and scientific teachings in writing. As it happens the Magi were extremely sensitive about the security of their holy books, for in the past they had seen many copies destroyed by their oppressors. Bulgar Magians may have been reluctant to compromise their existence by showing them to a Muslim for this very reason. The only other alternative is that these Magians were inheritors of the most ancient form of Magianism, perpetuated by oral teachings only. But in opposition to what Abu Muslim recorded, Al-Nadim said:

"The Turks, the Bulgar, the Blagha (Vlachs ie; Wallachians of the Carpathians), the Burghaz

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(a Bulgarian tribe), the Khazar, the Llan (Alans), and the types with small eyes and extreme blondness (perhaps meaning the Goths or Scandinavians) have no script, except that the Bulgarians and the Tibetans write in Chinese and Manichaean (a form of Middle Persian script largely used by the Manichees), whereas the Khazar write Hebrew...."³¹⁶

Here Al-Nadim only seems to contradict himself. On one hand he says the Bulgars were illiterate, and then he says they knew Manichaean and Chinese script. His comments suggest the restricted usage of two oriental scripts among the Bulgars, by a select class, possibly the Bulgar viziers; the wizards.

One range of characters these Arabs failed to mention with respect to the Russes and Bulgars is Avestan script, an antiquated form of writing once used by pre-Sassanian Magi, that flowed from right to left. Confirmation of its royal usage in Olden Russia unwittingly comes from Al-Nadim who, in the 10th Century AD, before the conversion of the Russes, states that he had personally seen copies of Russian script etched into white wood (perhaps meaning bark, with a wooden backing; the very same medium upon which the Magi recorded texts and documents).³¹⁶ He first learned of the Rus' script from an Armenian emissary who was returning home to the Caucasus after a mission to the King of the Russes. This Armenian even showed Al-Nadim an example of Rus' writing, which Al-Nadim subsequently reproduced in the Fihrist. (See fig 3.4). Al-Nadim was not the first Arab to note their use of writing. Ibn Fadlan ends his report on the heathen Rus' funeral on the Volga (c. 922 AD) by saying: "In the middle of it (the burial mound) they raised a large post of birch. Then they wrote the name of the man and the name of the king of the Russes on it and so went on their way".^{316a}

Fossilized words throughout Slavia further support the existence of eastern intellectualism in the region. The Russian word for "a book" is *kniga*, which they share with the Bulgarians and Serbo-Croats. Then there is *krijiga* (Slovenian), and *kniha* (Czech). These words are connected with *kuinig* (Old Turkic), *kuinov* (Eastern Bulgar dialects), *koniov* (Mordva meaning "paper"), *konyv* (Hungarian), *kiunigæ* (Western Ossetian ie; Alanic), and *knik* (Armenian). Ultimately these can be traced back to the word *kunnuku* (Assyrian meaning "to print {cuneiform}, seal or stamp").³¹⁷

The implications of this are obscenely obvious. What these words show is that higher Slavic learning during the pagan era most likely came via the Old Turkic (ie; the Bulgars), but the trail also led way back to Armenia and Ossetia (land of the Alans), and lastly Assyria. This seems in accord with the Caucasian ancestry of these folk. It was in no way attributable to Christian Greek or Roman missionaries. Without overly speculating, on the strength of these word correlations one might suspect that Assyrian knowledge had somehow filtered into Central Asia and Eastern Europe following the collapse of their state; the legacy of a dying civilization. Apparently Mediaeval Arabs had a book on this very topic. As with so

Fig 3.4. Example of Rus' writing supplied by Al-Nadim

Equivalent phonetic	E	M	M	M	U	D	K	E	N	K	R	UU
Avestan Persian	𐬀	𐬁	𐬂	𐬃	𐬄	𐬅	𐬆	𐬇	𐬈	𐬉	𐬊	𐬋
Avestan Persian characters reversed	𐬋	𐬊	𐬉	𐬈	𐬇	𐬆	𐬅	𐬄	𐬃	𐬂	𐬁	𐬀

- emmmud k enkruuR □ Ruurkne k dummmme □ Rurik ne k dumme. Likely English translation: "Rurik says no to the idea (or proposal)".
1. Being a communique from the Russians to the Armenians, the text originally possessed a political significance.
 2. The courier guessed the Arab would be unable to recognise what was written, and showed him the Rus' writing for the sake of curiosity.
 3. The emissary would not have shown the message to the Arabs if its contents were readable and highly sensitive.
 4. It was a diplomatic communique and may have been encrypted in some way. The triple letter suggests that this was the case.
 5. Of the 9 different characters used, 7 are almost identical to Avestan script, 1 more closely resembles the Pahlavi "n". Only the last character 𐬋 seems to have been twisted inside out. Most characters were inverted 180°. The Pahlavi insignia served to indicate that he was a trained priest.
 6. Avestan was written backwards, from right to left, as was this example of Rus' writing.
 7. Considering that Al-Nadim noted this during the 10th Century, it is unlikely that the Rurik mentioned was the father of the

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many other shunned titles it somehow disappeared into oblivion.

As you will already have read, there are more than enough hints that the Slavs and Norsemen were exposed to Brahminic and Avestan scholarship. Consider the following linguistic correlations. One Russian word for "to know" is *znat'*, which comes from the Avestan Persian *zan(a)*.^{317a} The Old Russian, Slovenian and Old Slavonic word for "knowledge" was *vest'*, which is like the Czech *vest* and the Polish *wiesc*. Another Slav word *vedat'* meant "to know something", but it differed slightly in form from *vest'*.³¹⁸ Considering that *vedat'* is related to the Old Indian *veda* (which is the same word used to describe the Vedic textual corpus of the Indo-Aryans) and *vida, vedat'* might have meant "to know the Vedas",³¹⁸ the religion of the Aryan forefathers. For this reason it might not be a coincidence that the Slavic word for "knowledge" *vest'* sounds phonetically similar to "Avesta" (the holy writ of the Magi). So perhaps *vest'* and *vedat'* represented two different traditions of knowledge; one Avestan the other Vedic.

A slightly similar set of words is found in the Old Icelandic for that matter;

Old Russian	<i>vest'</i> ("knowledge") ^{318a}	<i>vedat'</i> ("to know") ^{318a}
Old Norse	<i>visa</i> ("a verse", "a stanza") ^{318b}	<i>vita</i> ("to know") ^{318b}

Consider the Scandinavian meaning of *visa* in connection with the following related words;

OLD ICELANDIC

<i>visan</i>	"a direction", or "an instruction" ³¹⁹
<i>visir</i>	"a king" or "a leader" ³¹⁹
<i>visinda-bok</i>	"a learned book" ³¹⁹
<i>visinda-kona</i>	"a prophetess" ³¹⁹
<i>visinda-mathr</i>	"a soothsayer" ³¹⁹
<i>visindi</i>	"knowledge", "prophetic revelation", "magic" ³¹⁹
<i>vis-bending</i>	"knowledge", "intellect", "wisdom", "wise talk" ³¹⁹

LATIN

<i>administratio, doctrina</i>
<i>rex</i>
<i>liber, volumen, codex</i>
<i>vates, fastidicus</i>
<i>hariolus</i>
<i>scientia, vaticinari,</i>
<i>magicus</i>
<i>scientia, doctrina, ingenium</i>

What we see here is an elaborate inter-relatedness for words meaning wizards, sybils, kings, the utterance of stanzas, knowledge, wise sayings, prophecies, soothsaying, books and magic. Such a correlation is readily explainable by equating *visa* with Avesta, the Persian name for the Magian books of religious instruction, prayer stanzas, knowledge and wisdom. That the concept of kings was included in this word set under the name *visir* attests to the Persian and Asiatic ancestry of these many concepts.

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Even if one were to suggest that these words and concepts entered the Old Icelandic lexicon with translations of the *Old Testament* (that incorporated a pitifully inadequate amount of knowledge on old Babylon and the Chaldeans), we would still need to explain why they crossed over into Old Icelandic in a form other than Latin or Greek, in forms with a perceptibly Indian and Persian origin.

If you have books, then you must be able to write, and to write you need an implement. In the ancient world, feathers were sometimes used for this purpose. The word for "a feather pen" *pero*³²⁰ is the same in the Old Russian, Bulgarian, Serbo-Croat, Slovenian, Czech and Polish. These are related to the Latvian *sparns* ("wing") and Lithuanian *sparnas* ("wing"), which were in turn derived from the Old Indian word *parnam* ("wing" or "pen") and the Avestan *parena* ("pen"). If they used what is ultimately an Avestan or Old Indian word for "pen", does it then follow that the diverse Slavic tribes had been subjected to Magian and Brahminic tuition?

Let's take a look at the word meaning "to write" which in modern Russian is *pisat'* or *napisat'*. *Pisati* (Old Russian, Serbo-Croat), *psati* (Czech), *pisac* (Polish), *pisha* (Bulgarian) are related to the Lithuanian *piesiu* ("to draw") or *peisai* (Old Prussian meaning "to write"). The most convincing genesis for this word is *ni-pista* (Old Persian meaning "something which has been noted down"), or the Avestan *paesa* ("a decoration" or "an embellishment", and in the context of a manuscript "an illumination").³²¹

Based on our present understanding, mediaeval European writing systems came from three main sources; Greek, Latin, and the Nordo-Germanic and Hungarian runic traditions. However this certainly does not seem to be the case in Russia. The Russian for "a word", *slovo* (pron. Slova), comes from the Avestan Persian *sravah* ("a word", "a prayer", "the sacred text {the Avesta}").³²² It therefore differs from the Old-High-German and Old English *wort* "word", the Old Norse *orth* "word", the Gothic *waurd*, not to mention the Latin *verbum*, or the Greek *eirren*, or *rhemnae*.

Based on these examples, no linguistic connections between scholarship and the Avestan or Old Indian languages appear evident in the Germanic languages (apart from the Old Norse). No it was the Balts, Scandinavians, Bulgars and the numberless Slavs that appear to have had a common Magian/Brahminic intellectual infrastructure, employing Vedic and Avestan terms, and which seems to have been confined to their respective regions.

Having said that, the Hindu text *Agni Purana* mentions the existence of Hindu *sargas*, that is Aryan books (or oral compositions) containing creation myths, the genealogies of both gods and kings, and the general happenings of their times.⁴⁰ In remote ages they had been propagated by those well versed in the time-worn oral traditions, but later they were written down. These may have been precursors of the Norse *Sagas*, which had precisely the same function in pre-Christian Scandinavia as Indian *Sargas*. The potential correlation between

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Saga and *Sarga* is given added credence by the existence of Old Norse words denoting sages, sagacity, knowledge, wisdom, witchcraft and sorcery, derived from eastern etymologies. These were related to the Old Indian *vita* and therefore connected with the word *veda*. So it would seem that Aryan sagas and vedas were known in Scandinavia, long before their conversion to Christianity in the early Middle Ages. Some of this knowledge may have been Magian; consider the existence of the *Magus Saga*. The Hindu *Sargas* belonged to a greater body of teachings which included information on the astrological sciences, the *Puranas* themselves, plus law codes, and works related to Indian linguistics and vocabulary, not to mention religious doctrines on penances and ritualism.⁴⁰ Accordingly the Hindus and Buddhists, like the Magi, husbanded an extensive catalogue of inherited learning, which was maintained by successive waves of wise Brahmins and used to educate their societies generation by generation.

You may ask how it was that these alternative intellectual cultures disappeared from the face of Europe. This is what happened in Hungary shortly before 1,000 AD. The Christian King Stephen I ordained the following for his Magyar subjects:

"Upon the council of Pope Sylvester II we have decided that the ancient (Hungarian) runic characters, and that (additional) pagan method of writing which proceeds from right to left, used in Hungary by people and clergy (Magian-Christian priests, as found in Christianity's Greatest Controversy) of the Szekler and Kun provinces, shall henceforth be forbidden and will be suppressed throughout the country, and superseded by Latin writing".³²³

The remainder of the edict defined how Stephen's plan was to be implemented. Clergymen who persisted in using heathen writing, or disseminating pagan texts or sundry inscriptions were to be defrocked and excommunicated, plus fined. Rewards were given for surrendered texts, to induce priests and the laity alike to abandon the pre-existing learned culture of the pagan Hungarians. All contraband documentation was thenceforth to be immolated, and chopped apart by the sword. In concluding, the document trumpets *"with their destruction all longing for past traditions and all memory of paganism shall cease".³²³* And so a new age surpassed the old. On those incandescent piles of timber, past realities entered the realm fable, becoming bed-time stories for credulous children, and a bunch of old wives' tales.

Current historical interpretations are clear on one point. Pagan Russians did not know how to write until the arrival of Byzantine Christian clergy, who in a relatively short space of time taught them cyrillics. As with the misinformation or disinformation being spread by various academics in relation to the early Magian texts, not a few Rusists zealously champion a proposition that the pagan Slavs were illiterate. As you have already seen, it is fundamentally wrong to endorse their conclusion once balanced academic considerations

are applied to the question.

Al-Nadim attributed Turkic literacy to the viziers who served their respective kings. In seeking to communicate with other regional monarchs, the great kings of Turkland (therefore including the Turkic Bulgarian royals) summoned viziers into their presence to scribe the necessary communiques. These were often carved into a war arrow.

*"if he (the Great Turkish King) desired to write to a lesser king, he summoned his vizier (from which comes the Albanian and Alanic word Wizzi and the Old High German Wizzo, all of which meant "a sage" or "wizard") and ordered the splitting of an arrow. Then the vizier traced on it characters understood by the Turkish nobility ..."*³²⁴

Carving and splitting the war arrow was known in Scandinavia too; its origins may be eastern, Turkic in fact. The Norse *Ynglinga Saga* itself admits that Odin and his people formerly inhabited Turkland, but later migrated to Scandinavia via Germany and Scythia:

*"south of this mountain ridge (the Urals) it is not far to Turkland (the Caspian, Iranian and Central Asian region), where Odin had great possessions"*³²⁵

In a quote from several pages ago, Al-Nadim includes blondes in his list of races whose ethnicity was predominantly Turkic, or at least culturally affiliated with them. These olden Turks were nothing like today's Turks, having red hair and blue eyes; that much is known from coloured Buddhist tapestries, found at Turfan. Some of these Turks were probably blonde.

In an even more remote epoch this was definitely true of the inhabitants of Eurasia. In China's Tarim Basin approximately 100 corpses have been found in recent times, mummified by the dry sands and winds. These 3,000-4,000 year-old corpses were Caucasian and had blonde or brown hair.³²⁶ A number of them sported tattoos and owing to the solar nature of some pictures, it has been guessed that their bodies bore Iranian motifs connected with homage towards the later Persian sun God Mithras.³²⁶ So at the very least they were sun-worshippers. They pre-date the white, Buddhist, Indo-European-speaking Tokharians by some considerable amount of time, and for want of a better word these Indo-Europeans were Aryans.³²⁶ From their well-preserved clothing we know that roughly 3,200 years ago these Caucasian inhabitants of Asia had practically the same tartan clothing as Europeans of the same period,³²⁶ a similar *"twill weave wool with a blue, white and brown plaid design"*.³²⁷ On the basis of these finds it is difficult to conclude whether or not blondes originated in Asia or in Europe.

Millennia later, having ridden into the Balkans from the Central Asian and Iranian region around 680 AD, with hordes numbering several hundred thousand strong, the Bulgars chose the Danube area as a suitable homeland. Troubles naturally erupted between them

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and the Slavs as a consequence of this. Using their superlative organizational skills, the Bulgars successfully harnessed the loyalties of the local Slavic inhabitants, thus giving rise to a formidable Bulgar state on Constantinople's western extremities. The Danubian Bulgars and their Silver Bulgar brothers originally spoke Turkic, which is somewhat different to the Slavic languages. The burgeoning number of Slavs inhabiting the very same stretch of the Balkans demanded that Danubian Bulgars speak both Turkic and Slavic when conducting their daily affairs. Between 680 and the mid-850's they were bi-lingual, but at the end of that period,^{326a} Turkic fell from official usage, though it may well have been spoken by the average citizen of Bulgar extraction. In this same era, Silver Bulgars of the Urals persisted with the use of Turkic only.

The Silver Bulgars' had contacts with the Finnic Chud and Ves tribes, tribes that by some coincidence were also involving themselves in the business of forming this new and powerful Rus' state. Whether it was in Bolgar (the capital of Silver Bulgaria) that Rurik and the Norsemen first met up with the Silver Bulgar Magi, or whether they already had extensive ties with them is uncertain. I tend to believe they already knew each other fairly well, and am willing to speculate that based on later events, that the enhanced contacts of the period were attributable not only to trade, but more importantly to politico-religious developments organized by the Magi of the various tribes. Prince Oleg the Sage's name appears on the wall of an underground stone temple at Bushivs'kiy, so there appears to be a concrete link with some Norsemen and Magians who used a quasi-runic, quasi-glagothic script.³²⁸

For a start, the mere fact that there were Slav temples at all indicates they were influenced by unusual religious practices, since many European pagans predominantly used open air groves. As this temple inscription bears Oleg's name, it signifies that it must have been constructed during his period of rule, which came to an end in 910 AD. The Magus depicted on its wall is shown offering up a libation before a (sacred) tree, declaring himself to be Oleg's sacrificer, named Mirobog³²⁸ In the Slavic his name means "God of the world", "God of Peace", or perhaps even "God of the Mihr fire", a divine priest who acted as the tender of god's son, Svarozhich, the fire of peace.

A few years earlier Oleg "the Sage", as he was known, is said to have overseen the construction of the wheeled ships allegedly used in the 907 AD attack on Constantinople. Whether he used his own knowledge to achieve this feat, or whether he used the ingenuity of his advisors is uncertain. Certainly the name Oleg is cognate with the Old Norse Helgi, which means "the Holy (one?)", though some say it is derived from *ulug*, a Turkic word for "great". If Oleg was a 'great sage', even a 'holy sage', then what was the origin of his sagacity? We repeatedly read of sages throughout the *Rig Veda*, Pahlavi texts and the Avesta, and in these sources the sages were holy men, the Magian and Brahmana scholar-priests. The

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modern Russian word for "a sage" is *mudrets*, which comes from the Old Russian *mudr'* and the Old Slavonic word *madr'*. These words ultimately come from the Old Indian word *medha* (meaning "thought", "wisdom" and "understanding") and the Avestan words *mazdra* or *maz-da* (meaning "to retain something in your memory"). Similarly linked are the Slavic words *m'd'r* (Bulgarian), *mudar* (Serbo-Croat), *madry* (Polish), *modar* (Slovenian) and *moudry* (Czech).³²⁹ To this list of linguistic similitudes we might add the Old Norse terms *visdoms-madr* (literally "a wise man", meaning "a sage", "a soothsayer" or "a prophet"), and *visinda-madr*, "a soothsayer".³³⁰ Behind these many word correlations it is possible to speculate that the pagan sages of heathen Russia were the recipients of Vedic and Avestan knowledge during a yet to be determined era, and not only them, but the sages of many other races throughout the region. Since the Central Asian technology which Oleg might have used to design and construct the wheeled ships most likely came from Iranian sources, it probably follows that he was more likely to have been a Magian sage rather than a Brahmin.

So, we have an Oleg, who could well have been a Magus intellectual himself (or even a Brahmin), we have his retinue which contained camps of attendant *Volkhov* Magi and soothsayers, and we have a glagolitic-style temple inscription. These runes were not used by the Norse, but are thought to have been used by the *Volkhov*, and are only known to have been utilized by the Bulgars, Magyars, Vlaks and Moravians. Thus, the *Volkhov* architects and masons who built this temple pre-910 AD were either Bulgars, or Rus' *Volkhov* who were Bulgar affiliates, or other non-aligned *Volkhov* from Bohemia and Moravia. Again I have not read information on the temple's precise design, so I can't compare it with what Stoyanov mentions on the constructions of the Silver Bulgar Magi near the Urals. I know at least one of them looks every bit similar to the dome-topped fire temples of Zoroastrian Sassania.

So, as legend has it, the Slavs, Finns and Varangians were amalgamated into "one people" by a Dane, Riorik, and his two brothers Sineus and Truvor plus, as you have seen, Magi in need of reliable warriors. Henceforth came into being the mightiest race of eastern Europe, a nation which would forever determine the destiny of those peoples who lay in close proximity to it; they would be the Russkie, the men of Rus'. The northmen had scored a great coup. In one swoop, they were party to the mustering of the last great pagan army in existence, but ultimately they were sorely needed to hold Rus' together. Now that they had permanent safe passage downriver to Constantinople, the mother city of all riches, they could lay prolonged siege to her and reap substantial rewards.³³¹

The Rus' princes and Khagans continued to have repeated dealings with the Norsemen in those few years prior to the conversion period, though not always to their benefit. Most of Vladimir's contact with the Varangians concerned a large group of Huscarls, perhaps the very ones whose aid he had enlisted in Scandinavia to help him out during the bouts of bloody warfare between him and his brothers.³³² Upplanders are mentioned in the *Primary*

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Chronicle, so they were most likely Swedes from Uppsala, the province in which the main Swedish pagan temple was located. It would be nice to know if these Varangians had intended to go Byzantium before they left Scandinavia, looking for imperial service, or whether they deliberately came to Rus' to meet up with the Rus' princes, and only headed off to Byzantium once they had outdone their welcome among the Slavs. The question is very difficult to answer, but could help us understand Norse motives in the area. Anyhow, when the Huscarls and Vladimir parted ways, the Huscarls headed on to Tsargrad seeking the employ of the Emperor, and high adventure. But hot on their trail was a communique to him imploring him to officially snub the trouble-making Huscarls, warning them never to return home via Rus' territory. After all, their interference had sparked a wave of warfare and royal fratricide.

Following the departure of the official Norse party, Vladimir then went on to raise up Perun and a range of Iranian and Aryan idols in Kiev,³³³ but strangely not a single Norse god (such as Odin) would stand atop that hill.³³⁴ Vladimir's uncle Dobrynia then went north to Novgorod and brought an idol of Perun there at his nephew's command.³³⁵ The level of cultural-religious cooperation between the Norse and the Rus' is curious; appearing almost transitory in some ways. In many respects the Norse involved in this whole Russian episode, were probably only reluctantly there, or "trying their luck" on the Russian stage, sensing "big opportunities" for power and silver. And yet there are some concurrences in Norse and Rus' administrative terms and religious beliefs.

In their capacity as advisors to the Rus' royal bloodline the Norsemen truly left their mark on Russian history. Their contributions to Rus' culture were more qualitative than quantitative, namely a neutral army to provide order, and a legal system. The word *veche*, a city council which empowered all free citizens to democratically vote is phonetically similar to the Russian *veshch'*, which means "thing", perhaps even "the thing". In Old Norse the word for such a legal council is *Thing*, which in their case is also the word for "a thing" or "the thing". In both Rus' and Norse versions, the *thing* and the *veche*, the free citizens had the right and the power to refuse the ascendancy of princes, or kings if they considered them unworthy, or unjust leaders. This calls to mind the philosophies of the white Magi who believed that wrong-doers had no place on the throne; despite being stalwart royalists, the act of dethroning an unjust ruler was seen as a holy duty; to let them reign meant abetting their despotism and evil. The fact that Saxons had institutions similar to the *Thing* adds further weight to the sort of common cultural ancestry spoken of in the *Ynglinga Saga*. This might not sound like such a big deal, but the Norse presence truly aided regional pagan unity. Yet paradoxically it gave rise to the greatest single Russian dilemma, the problem of royal ascendancy. It helped set the stage for the gut-wrenching civil wars of the 11th Century AD, as princes jostled for a chance to be the *Velikiy Knyaz'* (the Grand Prince). Whatever

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Scandinavians did stay behind in Rus' still played a vital role strengthening Kiev's grip over the countryside. Without the order that they brought to this land of lawlessness, it is difficult to assess what the political fortunes of the Rus' and Bulgars may have been. My guess is they would have fared very poorly.

The Royals who ruled Rus'

According to Professor Vernadsky, several co-existent princely bloodlines pooled forces to form the Rus' Rurikid royal dynasty - that of the Norsemen (Rurik), the Asii (Alans), and Slavs.³³⁶ The Bulgar high-born must, of necessity, be added to his list, in no small measure. Seniority among them was undecided at first, but by Vernadsky's reckoning from the reign of Khagan Svyatoslav, only Rurikids had the right to hold supreme power. Some dignitaries went by the Central Asian title *Khagan*, whereas others were known as *Knyaz'* or *Velikiy Knyaz'*. These two classes of royal title serve to differentiate between those princes of Nordo-Gothic stock (*Knyaz'*), and those of more eastern ancestry (*Khagan*).

This coalition of princes from diverse ethnic backgrounds, was hailed by their subjects as Sun-princes, the sons of Dazhbog (ie; sons of the Slavic sun God).³³⁷ Some Norse kings must have belonged to this lineage, considering that the term *Doglingr* "a king, a descendant of king Dag (*Dag* {meaning "the day" in Old Icelandic} comes from the Iranian word for the sun).³³⁸ One such son was the mythical king Agni from Uppsala, his name akin to the Hindu fire god *Agni*. Perhaps the Swedish king Agni was a personification of the Aryan fire god, a son of the sun.

Sun-Kings had probably lived in Europe for countless generations, dating back to the incursions of the Indo-European *Riks* (kings who were like the sun), or the time of Roman domination, when Mithraic legions transported their Iranian creed all over the continent. But, as with the Hungarian royals, a good many of them may have traced their origins to Khorezm, which, in the language of the *Avesta* means "The Land of the Sun" - *Khvar-zem*.³³⁹

The Russian *Golubinaya Kniga* ("The Book of Deep Wisdom") states "We have a white Czar (king), a king over other kings".³⁴⁰ "Nobody is as god-like, as his royal majesty (the Tsar)", who was also called "the white Czar" or "the red-sun".³⁴¹ Of them it was also said "The sun shines in the sky, and the Russian Tsar' (shines) on earth".³⁴¹ "Without the Tsar', the people are waifs, the land a widow".³⁴² The term Tsar', in these instances, is of later usage, though the concepts associated with them were pagan, with a distinctly Arthurian feel, and far more ancient.

In this respect they were not dissimilar to the Japanese emperor, who until comparatively recent times was seen as a divine being, a Sun-King. The similarity between the Japanese and pagan European royals is not due to Atlantis or universal consciousness, but the widespread primordial influence of vedic traditions, largely transmitted throughout the east and west by way of Buddhist missionaries and shamans.

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The varied use of *Knyaz'* and *Khagan* (both meaning "a prince") by various members of the house of Rurik is barely commented upon by Rusists (those who study ancient Rus'), yet this point is of extreme importance. The fullest significance of the Khazarian, Turkic and Rus' term *Khagan* can only be seen by analysing the nature of Turkic royalty, and similar Asiatic, and more specifically Turkic and Persian words. From the 6th Century AD, Turkic leaders were called *Kaghans*³⁴³ (from the Chinese *Ke-Kuan*, meaning "great leader"), and those of the royal blood known as *Beg*.³⁴³ *Beg* is linguistically affiliated with Azeri and Turkic words like *bag*, *bak*, *baj*,³⁴⁴ which have the same meaning also. At this point a linguistic connection becomes apparent between the Russians, Norse, Persians and Turks. *Beg* is probably related to the Old Norse *bog* ("an important person"), and the Slavic *Bog*, and Avestan *Baga*, both of which meant "a God".³⁴⁵

The concept of wealth was integral to Turkic notions of godliness and lordship, a theme also found in the Norse *Ynglinga Saga* in relation to the religion of Odin, who, we are told, had connections with Turkland. The same could be said for the Slavic. Slav words like *bogatiy* (denoting "wealth") were related to the Avestan Persian *Baga* ("a Lord" or "a God").³⁴⁶ It is also connected with the western Slavic word *bog* (meaning "property", "birthright", "fate", "lot", and the Old Indian word *bhagas*, which has practically the same meaning. In Latvian the word *bagatigs* meant "princely". I am unable to confirm a potential relationship between these words and the Old Icelandic *att-bogi* "family lineage".³⁴⁷

Turkic power resided in their warrior class and the affluence of the Khagans.³⁴⁸ Turkic linguistic correlations seem to indicate that their shamans and Khagans belonged to a certain bloodline. *Kan* (the Turkic word for "bloodline") was related to *Khan* ("a leader").³⁴⁹ By implication Khagans had a similar bloodline. Other Asiatic royal titles are riddled with these same connotations. For example *Bogdykhan* (Chinese for "the Emperor") is a composite word formed by adding the suffix *Khan* onto *bogda* and *bogdo* (Mongolian and Kalmik words meaning "greatness", "heavenly", "holy", "a saint" or "saintly").³⁵⁰ The Persian word *Faghfur* is found in the Chinese as *Baghbur* "son of Heaven".³⁵¹ The cult of these "sons of heaven" centered upon the idols of their kings, which were assiduously worshiped by their subjects. Al-Nadim reports that many Chinese Emperor-worshippers fainted in the presence of his idol, trembling in fear and admiration.³⁵¹ *Boga* and *Buga* were Mongolian words for "a shaman", and it is more than likely that these came from the Avestan *Baga* ("a god")³⁵² At various points in this book you will discover that the apparent interchangeability of these terms was attributable to blood-Magi who were performing a shamanic role in Inner and Outer Eurasia.

The noble Khazarian Jewish bloodline of the Cohens (Hebrew: "a priest (of the temple)") might be linked with, or derived from the title *Khan* (as used by Turkic Bulgarians), or *Kaghan* (as used by Khazarian and Rus' rulers). This may have stemmed from the close

affiliations the once-Turkic Khazars' had with the Turkic Bulgars, who were major participants in the foundation of the Khazarian state. Inevitably the title and function of *Khagan* lived on among the Jewish converts.

Vernadsky believes that the term *Knyaz'* (prince) was derived from the Gothic word *Kunnigs*. He further noted that many Gothic kings and princes chose to end their names in the Slavic suffixes *-amir* or *-imir*.³⁵³ But, if we are to accept his use of the word *Kunnigs*, then *Knyaz'* could just as easily have come from *Konungr*, or *Kununghr* and *Kunungr* (the western and eastern Norse words for "a king" respectively). The only problem with this is that the title *Knyaz'* was by no means confined to Russia and the Germanic speaking countries. The existence of the royal title in Poland, Central Europe and the Balkans, lands far beyond Norse sway, yields other possible interpretations.

Behind correlations in the words *Knez* (Bulgarian: "elder"), *Knez* (Serbo-Croat and Slovenian: "a prince" or "a count"), *Knjez* and *Knez* (Polish: "a Lord" or "a priest"),³⁵⁴ we find clues that a *Knyaz'* was both a prince and a lordly priest. Another possible comparison with *Knyaz'* is to be found in the Old Norse word *Knyja*, which meant "to beat or flog". *Knyja* is not however recognized as being linguistically related to *Knyaz'*, though the superficial resemblance is interesting. But if we did assume that there was a conceptual relationship between *Knyaz'* and *knyja* it is possible to infer that a *Knyaz'* originally meant a princely priest of royal blood, tasked with scourging recalcitrants. In the Magian book of *Vendidad* flogging criminals was the preserved domain of the white Magi, the Wise Kings. If a *Knyaz'* was a white Magus-Prince, then he would also have been a "flogger", a dispenser of sacred royal justice, which removed the stain of chaos from society, through the enforcement of law and order.

In like manner, the white pagan Slavic priests of Central Europe were known as *Bieloknyazi* (literally "the white princes").³⁵⁵ Thus, on the strength of probabilities, any Russian royal bearing the title *Knyaz'*, was a white wizard. Since Norse pagan, pagan Slavic and Magian religious thought seem closely related, it is possible that a *Knyaz'* was a Magus-prince, in both Russia, Central Europe, the Balkans and Scandinavia.

There are no historical records of elaborate Norse and Germanic ties with the Serbs, Croats and Czechs in the Balkans, besides that of the Goths. Therefore the widespread linguistic ties must belong to a more remote pre-recorded period, or are indicative of the movement of Slavic royal personages and titles into Scandinavia and Germany. While it is believed that the oldest form of *Knyaz'* lies in the Germanic *Kuningiaz*, I am greatly inclined to favor the hypothesis that the term moved westward from the Slavic lands, if for no other reason than the fact that the Magi must have been in Russia before they migrated to Germany and Scandinavia. This is a logical assumption since the migratory route from Iran into Scandinavia and western Europe leads directly through Russia, Central Europe and the

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Balkans.

Magian Bulgar princes were also a major, perhaps even dominant component of the Rus' royal family. St Vladimir, son of Svyatoslav, was originally known by Bulgarian versions of the name (Vladimir' or Vladimer'), *instead of the Russian Volodimer', which only appears in one instance throughout every existing manuscript of those early times.*³⁵⁶ Not very Nordic for a senior Rurikid prince! In fact, it's not very Russian! It is also noteworthy that Vladimir's father Svyatoslav refused to live in Kiev, and instead moved his court to Pereslavyets in Bulgaria, which was in his words, "*the center of his realm*".³⁵⁷ On face value it would seem that some of the Khagans, such as Svyatoslav and Vladimir, may have been Bulgars. And if that was the case, then Vernadsky's assertion that only (Nordic) Rurikids had the right to the post of Grand Prince following the death of Svyatoslav would be incorrect.

One other piece of information worth adding can be found engraved into a border marker on the Byzantine-Bulgarian frontier. The stone was raised in 904 AD (ie; contemporaneous with the Russian Buzh temple inscription) and duly witnessed by one Theodore on behalf of the Bulgars.³⁵⁸ Interestingly Theodore's official title was written in the same manner as that of Mirobog, Oleg's principle Magus sacrificer. Compare *Theodorou Olgou tarkanou* (Theodore, Oleg's Commanding officer or Champion) with *Mirobog zhrets Ol'gov* (Mirobog, Oleg's Sacrificer). The word *tarkhan* was a Turkic, Bulgar or Alanic word meaning a high ranking officer, or even the warrior-champion of their people. Among the Alans and Turks, the heroic *tarkhan* did battle with the champion of the opposing army, to settle disputes with minimal bloodshed. As you will see, they can be equated with incarnate battle-angels, like Persian *yazatas*. In 1022 AD such a one-on-one fight occurred between Mstislav the Rus' Christian prince of Tmutorokan and the still-pagan Alano-Gothic ruler of the Kasogians, Rededyia.³⁵⁹ The blind Varangian prince Haakon (who dressed in a robe of spun gold) who allied himself with Vladimir' (c 1024 AD),³⁶⁰ may have had a name derived from the word *tarkhan*.

The pagan Rus' aristocracy consisted of *Boyars* (originally termed *Boyarin*, *Barin*, *Bohyare*, and *Bolyarin*). As with the Rus' royal title *Khagan* or *Khan*, *Boyar* happens to be a Bulgarian Turkic word.³⁶¹ There is a noticeable absence of Norse aristocratic terms like *Yarl* in Kievan Rus'. If Rurik was a Norseman of some kind, as stated in the *Primary Chronicle*, he was one often surrounded by the Turkic Bulgar nobility.

From depictions found on Roman ritual fire shovels and Persian wall reliefs, we know that *Sol Invictus* (the Roman Mithraic sun God) wore a golden crown spiked with thorns of sunlight, as did the kings who performed his sacerdotal functions on earth. In Mithraic art *Sol Invictus*, the Good Sun, was sometimes represented as a fresh-faced young man with a luminous halo and golden crown, carrying an orb and scourging rod in his hand.³⁶² The closest parallel to this can be found in Mediaeval depictions of kings, who not only wore

golden crowns but carried a rod and orb in their hand, only by this time the orb bore a cross on it.

Two emblems of the Magi were more closely related to the European monarchs than anything else; the double headed eagle and the trefoil - the clover or *fleur-de-lis* (which saw usage in Babylon and Egypt). The double-headed eagle was linked with the Aryan Hittites, and the Seljuks, but later found its way into the royal arms of the Russians, Germans and Prussians.³⁶³ The earliest possible adoption of these Mesopotamian images may be traceable to royal marriages that took place in ancient Scythia. There is at least one instance when Assyrian royals inter-married with Scythian monarchs, as in the case of Esarhaddon's daughter.³⁶⁴ Even as late as the Middle Ages some European royal *fleur-de-lis* were trefoils of the most archaic form. Stripped of artistic embellishment they were the same as what can be found engraved into ancient Assyrian or Egyptian monuments.³⁶⁵ This older type of trefoil appeared similar to a trident; yet another point of similarity with the Rus' royal tamga (heraldic insignia).³⁶⁶

The double-headed eagle was used by western European royals too. It was embossed onto things such as Mediaeval English royal trade weights, the drinking horn of a Bavarian Emperor (15th Century AD), and a number of coats of arms. It was also the primary emblem of the Romanov dynastic bloodline (for all intents extinguished by the Communists at the murder of Czar Nicholas and his family).

Pagan saints - the Iravashis

Saints were an authentic tradition both before and after the coming of Christianity. There are numerous examples from the Middle Ages which show that pagans professed that some departed souls, especially those of kings, became saints, and could aid the living after death, through the power of their life's works. Consequently, Christianized monarchs such as the Emperor Charlemagne devised elaborate laws to thwart the continued worship of these pre-Christian saints. In Rus', Prussia and Poland especially there is every reason to believe that the concept of saints originated not from Christianity, but the Magian sphere. I say this because the Russian word for something sacred or holy, or a saint (*svyatoi, svet, sveta, sveto*) comes from the Avestan language of the Magi, rather than the Latin (*sanctus*) or Greek (*hagios*). The Old Russian and Old Slavonic was *svyat'*. The same saintly terminology was common to other Slavs also; *svet, sveta, sveto* (Bulgarian, Serbo-Croat, Slovenian), *svatu* (Czech), *swietu* and *sventa* (Polish), *sventas* (Lithuanian), *sventa* (Old Prussian). They come directly from the Avestan words *spenta* (meaning "holy" or "saintly") or *spanah* (meaning "sanctity"). *Svyat'* is also connected with the Old Indian word *svantas* meaning "thriving" or "prosperous", but clearly the meaning is much closer in the Avestan.³⁶⁷

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Svyatets was another Russian word meaning "a saint" or "a holy man",³⁶⁸ and possessed the female variant, *svyatsa* ("a holy woman"). It is also found in the Lithuanian as *sventikas*.³⁶⁸ Such holy ones were no doubt white Magian holy saints.

Another lesser used Russian dialectal word *svyatosh* (which comes from the same root meaning "a saint" or "holiness") paradoxically meant something "unclean" (perhaps meaning "defiled"), or "a demon". Was *svyatosh* a corruption of the Rus' pagan word for a saint? I believe so, and what is more, I am convinced that it originally meant an anti-saint, the powerful remnants of a black Magian soul or warlock, that, according to the white Magi, transformed into demons and serpents upon arrival in the Abyss, and which were capable of returning to plague the earth with gross misfortune and vengeance.

Such is the possible origin of a Norse myth recalling serpents that attacked the roots of the holy ash tree in unison with the destructive Nithhogg.³⁶⁹ These serpents had once been mortals,³⁶⁹ only after their death, they aided and abetted the destruction of the Norsemen's most holy icon. I venture to guess that these myths were started by Norse *Al-Madjus*. Another option is that *svyatosh* was a slang word used in the Christian era to demonize the pagan Saints.

By striving with all one's might on behalf of the good an individual became one of the holy immortals, one of the white *fravashis*. Together with the *yazatas* (Iranian winged genii) they formed the vanguard of the sun's shock troops and sentries. The Asii (Alans) undoubtedly payed homage to the ancient Magian *yazatas*, for the Ossetian word denoting "angels" and "spirits of the mystical world" was *Izaed*, and therefore related to Magianism not only linguistically, but spiritually.

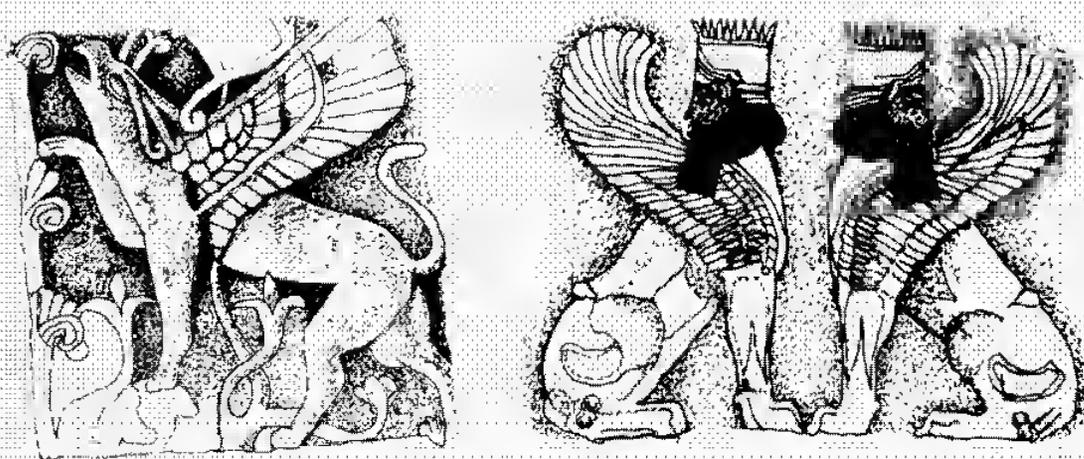


Fig 4.1 Mesopotamian griffin, and Fig 4.2 Persian dynastic archangels otherwise known as *yazata genii*

After deviously slaying the arch-heretic Mazdak and his supporters at a feast, the Persian King Chosroes was referred to by the additional title *Anoshirvan*,³⁷⁰ which signified that he had earned a soul that cannot die. Evidently through this act of crushing the heterodox, he was, as it were, "canonized" in the eyes of true Magians, becoming a powerful white *fravashi*.

Dying in battle, or laying down one's life for a good cause was another sure way of becoming a holy *fravashi*. The Norse in particular held similar beliefs to the Magi on this subject; being killed in action was no disgrace. On the contrary it was the highest possible honour one could achieve, for the fallen were often the best men, personally selected for

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death in battle by Odin.³⁷¹ Odin needed as many good warriors as he could lay his hands on, so that they could one day accompany him during the great heathen apocalypse of Ragnarok. In Magian lore, such men would have been seen as holy immortals, the warrior sentinels who awaited the attack of the fiendish legions, beasts, serpents and anti-heroes that were to rage across the star bridge, to assault the walls of heaven. In the Norse Valholl fallen vikings feasted, made merry and honed their combat skills in readiness for the big day. To fetch them, Odin sent warrior maidens, the valkyrie, the "choosers of the slain". Among the Slavs the mythological, winged, quasi-animalian women known as *Vila* performed a similar function.

Like the Magi, the pagan Russians believed that there was no reincarnation; one's ancestors became quasi-deified and continued to live on in the afterlife, supplying assistance to the living.³⁷² According to Magian doctrine some souls were far greater than one's ancestors, these were the kings of old, saintly Magian *fravashis* (holy heroes), and black Magian anti-heroes, the black *fravashis*. As in Magian times, the ancient Russes payed homage to fallen champions and *Volkhov* Magi, honouring them with an idol. This observance was evidently a continuation of an old Achaemenid and Parthian practice outlawed under the Sassanians.

Fravashis figured heavily in the Iranian (and presumably the pagan Rus' and Norse) mind, for during the final apocalyptic battle, the black *Fravashis* (those who were alive in death) would join the black angels and that living death *Ahriman*, as they pushed forward to assail the heavenly fortress, built around the devil's escape hole. The sentinels on those battlements were angels and white *fravashi* saints, heroes of goodness (such as kings) who would one day charge out of heaven's gates, falling in behind their Saviour (*Sraosha*) in his solar chariot, heading a column of mounted angels with spears, ready to slay the Fiend and his contrary legions.³⁷³

" Ahura Mazda prepared another rampart, that is stronger, around the sky, which is called "righteous understanding". And he arranged the guardian spirits of the righteous who are warriors around that rampart, mounted on horses and spear in hand, in such manner as the hair on the head; and they acquired the appearance of prison guards who watch a prison from outside, and would not surrender the outer boundaries to an enemy descended from the inside".³⁷⁴

We know that the pagan Slavs erected idols dedicated to the Magi,³⁷⁵ so the original Rus' pagan saints might simply have been ancestors, or someone of far greater potency such as a fallen chieftain, battle-hero or Magus.

White Iravashis

Odin's religious system (of the *Aesir* ie; the Asii, the Alans) required the worship of chiefs and royals as gods. His followers made votive offerings not only to him, but to the twelve other chieftains of the race of the *Aesir*. Even before Odin had died ~~fully~~, it seems that his servitors and venerators placed all their trust and hopes in him, and the power that dwelt within him. For his word was all power; all life, all death; as he willed it, yet so would it be.

"His enemies dreaded him; his friends put their trust in him, and relied on his power and on himself. ... People sacrificed to Odin and the twelve chiefs from Asaland, and called them their gods, and believed in them long after". ³⁷⁶

It was only after his death that the cult of Odin more fully developed, for he had, like all good heroes, taken his place high in the heavens, his soul having been taken there by the far-reaching cremation smoke.

"Odin died in his bed in Swithiod (Scythia?, Russia?, Sweden?); and when he was near his death he made himself be marked with the point of a spear, and said he was going to Godheim (the home of the Gods), and would give a welcome there to all his friends, and all brave warriors should be dedicated to him; and the Swedes believed that he was gone to the ancient Asgaard, and would live there eternally. Then began the belief in Odin, and the calling upon him. Odin was burnt, and at his pile there was great splendor. It was their faith that the higher the smoke arose in the air, the higher he would be raised whose pile it was; and the richer he would be, the more property that was consumed with him". ³⁷⁷

Odin's cremation rite appears Aryan in style, especially the marking of his body with a spear point, following his peaceful death in bed. Aryan *Ksatriyas* (warriors) were not permitted to die a peaceful death, it was damnable and inglorious, for their salvation was to live and die by the sword.³⁷⁸ But if they died peacefully after surviving all their combats, they could still attain the salvation of warriors if a friend or relative scarred their corpse with a weapon.³⁷⁸ The Norsemen likewise held that a serene death was a degrading and unfitting end to a man's life.

Some of Odin's kindred had power over the fertility of nature. During the reign of Njord the lands were fecund, and the people thrived. And it was at that time that all of the man-gods passed away, leaving their followers to worship them with blood-sacrifices.³⁷⁹

"In his days were peace and plenty, and such good years, in all respects, that the Swedes believed Njord ruled over the growth of seasons and the prosperity of the people. In his time all the diar or gods died, and blood-sacrifices were made for them". ³⁸⁰

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"When it became known to the Swedes that Frey was dead, and yet peace and good seasons continued, they believed that it must be so as long as Frey (or perhaps his skeleton) remained in Sweden; and therefore they would not burn his remains, but called him the god of this world, and afterwards offered continually blood-sacrifices to him, principally for peace and good seasons".³⁸¹

Traditions concerning the living-gods of the heathens continued for some time. In the Middle Ages European sorcerers and diviners had their own pagan relics.³⁸² Conceptually they were exactly the same as relics of the Christian saints. While pagan relics can in no way be considered Christian, the line between them was in some cases fairly blurred. The case of St Brigit is a good example. She was a pagan Goddess in Ireland, but by the time the transition to Christianity had occurred, she was still being venerated, though this time as a Christian saint. By my reckoning this glaringly illustrates a Christian faith being a product of the transformation or renovation of the pagan Magian faith (ie; conversion!), rather than an alien creed thrust upon them against their will. In Christian times the glaringly good Brigit had found her niche as a Christian saint carrying a cup, and accompanied by a milking cow, which hints that originally she had been a divine white *fravashi* who was greatly loved by the people; in short, a pagan white saint. The blood or body parts of dead kings, like those of the apostles and the saints exuded powers of good fortune and healing, to help the people in their times of need.³⁸³ Similar customs appear to have been present among the Scandinavians.

The utilization of black necromantic relics (such as the bones of the ungodly), was wholly different from using white pagan relics; in fact an act of apostasy. White pagans and Christians, were on common ground where black relics were concerned. If the Magian texts are anything to go by the white Magi would have been much preoccupied with denouncing them too, and executing the witches responsible. The wise Magi were just as committed to the eradication of evil as the Church was, and perhaps even more heavy handed.

Black fravashis

According to Magian dualistic doctrine, black fravashis appeared in three main forms;

1. Demons, *khrafstras* and snakes sired by *Ahriman* as he brooded in the Abyss.
2. Homosexuals, transvestites, corpse-burners, criminals (brigands, murderers) and bastards, who through the strength of their wickedness, and the grief which they had caused to the innocent, became transformed into demons in the after life; the living dead. The most powerful of them however, were believed to be homosexuals or disciples of the devil, who had been executed by the authorities for their crimes, either summarily, or through proper legal channels.

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3. Criminal black Magus priests and priestesses, who in this life were already considered to be incarnate demons.

While the white Magi became deified through the goodness of their deeds, black Magian intercessors became demons by doing wrong. In *Shayast La-Shayast* XV:23 ;

"It is declared, that of him whose begetting is owing to the demons, of him who commits sodomy, and of him who performs the religious rites of apostasy of none of the three do they restore the dead (ie; they are not resurrected), for this reason, because he whose begetting is owing to the demons is himself a demon, and the soul of him who commits sodomy will become a demon, and the soul of him who performs the religious rites of apostasy will become a darting snake".

In Chapter XXXVI of the *Book of Arda Viraf*, Arda spoke of the many suffering beings he saw tortured in the underworld, after he had journeyed back from there, bringing a message for the living. They resembled the serpentine Naga beings known to the Hindus;

"I also saw the soul of a man who stood up, in hell, in the form of a serpent like a column, and his head was like unto a human head, and the remaining body, unto a serpent. And I asked thus: 'What sin was committed by this body?' Srosh the pious, and Adar the angel, said thus: 'This is the soul of that wicked man who, in the world, committed apostasy; and he fled into hell, in the form of a serpent'".

Similar views seem to have been current in Mediaeval Rus'. In *Yngvar's Saga* the Rus' pirates who attacked Yngvar's flotilla were termed "human devils".³⁸⁴

Centuries earlier Procopius saw Domitian and Justinian as "evil demons, and what the poets called scourges of mankind ... who had assumed human forms, and become something between men and demons, and thus convulsed the whole world".³⁸⁵

In *Yngvar's Saga*, a noisy demon is said to have materialized before Soti, one of Yngvar's men. He warned Soti that "Dragons ate the body of the king and his daughters, and it was into dragons that some people believe they were transformed".³⁸⁶ Perhaps apostasy is insinuated in this passage.

A major teaching of the Magi was that sodomy was not only demonic, but it actually turned the perpetrator into a *Daeva*; it deified them, but in an infernal way, making them deathless gods of the underworld. For this reason white Magians were highly homophobic, and given to killing rather than discriminating against homosexuals.

"O Maker of the material world, thou Holy One! Who is the man that is a Daeva? Who is he that is a worshiper of the Daevas? that is a male paramour of the Daevas? that is a female paramour of the Daevas? that is a she-Daeva (she-devil)? that is in his inmost self a Daeva? that is in his whole being a Daeva? Who is he that is a Daeva before he dies and becomes one of the unseen Daevas after death.

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Ahura Mazda answered: "The man that lies with mankind as man lies with womankind, or as a woman lies with mankind, is the man that is a Daeva: this one is the man that is a worshiper of the Daevas, that is a male paramour of the Daevas, that is a female paramour of the Daevas, that is a she-Daeva, that is in his whole being a Daeva: this is the man who is a Daeva before he dies, and becomes one of the unseen Daevas after death: so is he, whether he has lain with mankind as mankind, or as womankind".³⁸⁷

The Iranian *Sad Dar* text adds "it is necessary to practice abstinence from committing or permitting unnatural intercourse. For this is the chief of all sins in the religion; there is no worse sin than this ... and it is proper to call those who commit it worthy of death in reality" ... "And Aharman, the evil one, becomes more joyful, owing to this practice, than owing to the other sins ... for the soul itself of that person becomes extinct".³⁸⁸

Under white Magian law, killing homosexuals had redemptory and salvific effects; for every one a believer slew in the act they would have one of their death sins fully expiated.³⁸⁹ The above references also hint that some of the black Magi were transvestites. It is known that cross-dressing was practiced by the heathen Finnish "Shamans", but unfortunately we know not why they robed themselves like women. Cross-dressers may have been present (to an unknown degree) in Scandinavia, at Uppsala during the pagan era, if Adam of Bremen's reference to the unmanly behaviour and effeminate gestures of their priests is trustworthy.

The Magian anti-saints (living mortal-demons), were worshiped by certain segments of Iranian society, as the following Iranian scripture states; "The ceremonial worship of those worthy of death, which they do not perform by way of renunciation of sin, is the ceremonial which is demon worship".³⁹⁰

Human skeletal remains were repeatedly used in necromancy by Mediaeval *maleficii* (ie; black magicians) according to Hincmar.³⁹¹ These were, I believe, the remains of black *fravashis*, that is, the mortal remains of deceased black witches and warlocks, whose undying souls, or much rather phantoms, were at the beck and call of their summoner.

Crime was for them a ritual act. It was a long standing tradition that thieves and brigands could gain magical protection while in the act of robbing homes by procuring the body parts of an executed criminal, preferably one who had been put to death for committing murder.³⁹²

For our purposes, the trial of Anne Marie de Georgel in 14th Century France is particularly illustrative, for "she had not ceased to do evil, practicing all manner of filthiness".³⁹³ Together with her life-threatening cauldron rites, during which cadavers were boiled, she was supposed to have "frequented the gallows-trees by night stealing shreds of clothing from the hanged, or taking the rope by which they were hanging, or laying hold of their hair, their nails or flesh".³⁹³

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Whippings were apportioned in Estonia, to three offenders caught making off with the clothes of a hanged man in 1526.³⁹⁴ They did so to enhance the amount of sales made by their brewing business.

In Europe shavings from a hanging tree, or a gibbet were believed to heal a number of remedies, such as ague or aching teeth. Any rope which had been used to hang someone, be they a criminal or a suicide was deemed most lucky. Executioners made quick money on the side by selling nooses to patrons wanting good fortune. In England right down to the 19th Century, only moments after an executed criminal had been cut down, the menfolk made a mad scramble up the tree or gallows to get their hands on what remained of the hangman's rope.³⁹⁵ I contend that this was a form of white pagan relic, which in their eyes, was used to sacrifice the criminal. Although it could be construed as a black relic, but it depended upon the interior disposition and motives of the person who acquired it.

On the other hand, any body part of a criminal could have served as a black relic if it were exhumed and treated in the right manner. These relics may have aided the tempest-conjurers, for it was also once held that on hanging day there would be atmospheric disturbances of some kind.³⁹⁶

Warlocks and white witches alike opened and removed the contents of specific graves to reach even greater heights in the magical arts. Acquiring the body parts of certain people gave them this power.³⁹⁷

Based on the results of excavations in Britain, one archaeologist has speculated that Anglo-Saxon graves were frequently opened and emptied for reasons other than financial enhancement, either to carry away grave goods (as was witnessed during the Rus' funeral on the Upper Volga), or to steal skeletal remains.³⁹⁸

Corpse exhumation and mutilation continued beyond the pagan era into the Mediaeval period. I personally have no doubts about the factual existence of the necromancers during the Middle Ages, and long before that. The year 1318 AD led to the uncovering of a large society of male necromancers, amongst whom were no less than eight men of the cloth. They had tomes of spells, magical mirrors, and various magical imagery which they employed in the summoning of evil angels (if they were black Magi then these angels might have been warlock *fravashis*). The accused were deemed part of an organized society of necromancers, which Professor Cohn regards as merely a long-standing Church jargon, rather than a factual account.³⁹⁹ I sway to the contrary view, that they were, in reality, part of a widespread cult, a religion much detested by both the Church, the Muslims and the white Magi.

The 1320's saw a spate of French witch trials in which clergy were implicated. In France in the year 1326 AD, two clergy were tried by a Cardinal for the crime of practicing black magic. Most interestingly they were found to have been amputating the limbs or severing

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the head of any criminal that had been hanged by the authorities for crimes. These were, I am willing to bet, regarded as black relics, for it is mentioned that the body parts were seen as storehouses of Satanic spiritual power, which enabled the malefactors to unleash maelstroms and death magic. Sometimes incidents of corpse decapitation might have been misconstrued as necromancy, when in fact they were penitential rites carried out by white Magi.

The practice of harnessing black fravashis probably originated in the pre-Zoroastrian arts of the Chaldeans, Akkadians and Sumerians, which continued long after the dissolution of their respective societies. Before the ascension of Orthodox Zoroastrianism the more ancient Magi probably performed these ceremonies, as Lenormant intelligently deduced last century. Such rites were simply elements of the mystical melange then plastered all over Iran and Mesopotamia. The following is an Akkadian conjuration designed to defend the reciter from ill-omened happenings, to protect one from death. It required the assistance of certain types of souls, souls made infamous by misdeeds:

*"He who in the gaol dies of hunger, he who in the gaol dies of thirst, he who being hungry in a pit beseeching (is therefore reduced to eat) dust. He who in the earth or in the river perishes and dies, the female slave who possesses no master, the free woman who has no husband, he who leaves an infamous memory of his name, he who leaves no memory of his name, he who in his hunger cannot recover, he who falls ill and cries at the beginning of an incomplete month, Spirit of the heavens, conjure it! Spirit of the earth conjure it!"*⁴⁰⁰

*"The consecrated prostitute with the rebellious heart, who abandons the place of prostitution, the prostitute of the god Anna, who does not do his service ... Spirit of the heavens, conjure it! Spirit of the earth, conjure it!"*⁴⁰¹

Other demons could be summoned to come to the conjurer's aid:

*"Painful plague, violent plague, plague which never leaves man, unrelenting plague, the lingering plague, malignant plague. Spirit of the heavens, conjure it! Spirit of the earth, conjure it!"*⁴⁰²

Magus, the Rosetta stone of European paganism

This book is the product of one very major inference; If the Rus' pagan priests, and those in other parts of Europe, were Magi, then they must have employed a fair portion of the religious rites recorded in the *Avesta* and Pahlavi texts. It's a logical enough assumption. In talking of the Magi we are dealing with an ordered religion complete with its own priesthood, theology, texts, rites and teachings. Such an inference is about as watertight as saying mediaeval Christians, Jews and Muslims used the Bible, *Torah* and *Qur'an*. For this

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reason I will repeatedly employ passages from the Avestan and Pahlavi scriptures as an aid to understanding the paganism, folklore, words and mythology found in Eastern and Western Europe. Time and time again you will find in these texts multiple layers of customs, gods, words, beliefs, religious feasts and ritual equipment also found among the heathen Russes, Finns and Scandinavians.

Ritual is one area that can be gainfully employed in any historical reconstruction, mainly because they have such long lifespans, and are highly resilient to any kind of change. As a rule of thumb, rituals often have accompanying holy books which have survived, and this is a big windfall for the researcher, because we can access the pagan mind on a level that would normally be quite impossible. Just as the Vedas are a valuable means of delving into the Aryan/Indo-European psyche, the Magian texts also permit us an understanding of Magian ethics, social structure and ritualism. But are comparisons between Magian scripture and 10th Century AD Eastern and Central European pagan Magian customs utterly futile; were they the same in the 10th Century AD as they are today?

Firstly you have to remember that Magianism is supposedly the world's second oldest organized religion. According to the late James Darmesteter, the same *Yasnas* sung by modern-day *Mobeds* (Orthodox Zoroastrian fire-priests) in Bombay (and America and elsewhere), were most likely the same ones used in ancient Persia and India, almost unchanged after the passage of 1,000 years! The 20th Century Parsee *Mobeds* are for all intents and purposes Gujarati-speaking Indian citizens, yet they still recite the *Yasna* ceremonies in the same Persian jargon handed down to them by their long-exiled ancestors.

These inferences are all the more easier to make once you realize that the Magi stringently adhered to their customs, traditions and ritualism to the very letter, just the same as Orthodox or Catholic priests do their best to propagate the rituals and teachings of the early Church. Even today the Indian Parsee *Mobeds*, through rote-learning, memorize half the voluminous *Avesta* before they're 20, just by the strength of their intellect,⁴⁰³ pretty outstanding wouldn't you say! And what is even stranger, is that they did so without understanding much of its contents because it was originally written in Persian! What greater proof could you need that it was possible for the Magian pagans to have pursued their faith across ages fairly free of corruption and without them ever having needed to put their teachings in writing. Yes, you have it, a religion without a need for written religious texts. But the minimum prerequisite for the suitability of mnemonic lore is a system of priestly education with an intact infra-structure.

According to Moulton, the Parsee priests he met in the 19th Century AD had little or no understanding of the wording for the *Yasna* rituals, but were simply conforming to the rigid rules of exactitude practiced by their peoples from the time of their arrival in India in the 10th Century.⁴⁰⁴ For this reason I contend that for the most part the Magian texts are so unchanged

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over the last 1,000 years that they do provide a relatively reliable window through which to view the Magianism of a millennia ago. Accordingly the European Magi probably performed rites similar to those of the Magi in India.

Despite the Magian tradition of committing their holy texts to memory, many of their hymns and religious law codes were nonetheless written down in tetrads (small prayer books). Furthermore, the word *tetrad* also happens to be the Greek pagan gnostic word for a small book, and the Russian word for an exercise book. The use of the word *tetrad* in Russia is at least datable to the 11th Century AD⁴⁰⁵ if not before. Moreover, the Russian word for "a prayer" *molitva* comes from the verb *molit'* meaning "to implore or entreat". This word came from *moliti* (Old Slavonic, Serbo-Croat), and *modliti* (Old Slovenian, Czech) which carried the same meaning. These are linked with the Lithuanian word for "a request" *malda*, which in turn came from the Hittite words *mald* and *maltai* meaning "to ask".⁴⁰⁶ Thus elements of Russian paganism have linguistic features stretching back even into Aryan Hittite times.

Volkhov - The Russian Magi

The Mediaeval Persian poet Khaqani (a Muslim) admits that the pagan Russians were Magians, by calling the Russian people Simurgs, that is, worshipers of Simurg,⁴⁰⁷ the fertility-bringing, bird-like god of the Magi - the Griffon-bird, otherwise known as the bat (see p. 276). While some have been tempted to attribute Russian Simurg-worship to an informal absorption of Sarmatian Iranian customs by the Slavs, this avenue is blocked by the fact that the Russes had a coherent pagan priesthood in Mediaeval Russia, which may have resembled that of the Wendish *Flamens* (fire-priests).

In the Russian language the word *Volkhv* (a Russian pagan priest) is directly translatable as "a Magus" rather than "a sorcerer".⁴⁰⁸ Sorcerers were only petty magicians when compared with the awesome supernatural might of the Magi. The female form of *Volkhv* was *Volkhva*, a Magian priestess. I personally believe it comes from the Pahlavi Persian *uaxw* ('a Lord').

Volkhv is also found in Russian translations of the New Testament, when referring to the Three Wise Kings, the Magi enunciated in the *Book of Matthew*.⁴⁰⁹ The oldest of the original Ancient Greek Gospel manuscripts uses the term *Magos*.

Variants of the term *Volkhv* are also found in the Bulgarian, Slovenian, Finnish and Estonian tongues, meaning "a magician", "a fortune-teller", "a Magus" and "a witch" respectively.⁴¹⁰ This suggests that *Volkhvy* were known in the Balkans, Central Europe, the Baltic and Finland also. There were among the *Volkhvy*, magicians of varied special ranks,⁴¹¹ sorcerers and sacrificers who performed the ordinances of the pagan ritual order. In this we find hints that they belonged to an organized form of paganism, a religion. It was probably very elaborate, for they were literate, and possessed their own learned culture. In olden

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folklore the *Volkhov* were astronomer-astrologers, wise men, sorcerers, and custodians for the "black books".⁴¹² These tomes contained legal procedures and text, spells, and ancient written lore, including ancestral epic legends.⁴¹³ Succinctly, the Russian heathen priesthood acted as guardians for ancient pagan knowledge and wisdom, and were possessors of special powers; just as the Magi were.

Since the Russian *Volkhov* were supposed to have been Magi, they were by inference a unique brahminic-style priesthood, one born from the Aryan traditions, but which came to differ from the brahmanic priestly lines because their blood was of royal Magian extraction (and consequently traceable to King Mingochir or Manuskihar). So, like the Magi, the *Volkhov* priesthood could only be entered by selected individuals possessing the blood inheritance of the Magi, which had been perpetuated by next-of-kin marriage throughout that same line of ancestors. It was they who performed a different range of arcane ordinances and magic born long ago in Medea. They owned amazing knowledge which, like the Brahmans, they held as their domain alone, by birthright. To "know and rule" was their niche in life, just as others came into the world to push a plough, or to fight. With esteemed learning, they became masters of warriors and serfs. Under them, the pagan Rus' had as their "state-religion" the rites of the Magi, those who wielded planets and nations.

The Mediaeval Muslim chronicler Al-Nadim stated that in pagan times learning was the preserved domain of the sages. The right of an individual to be accepted for training as a sage was determined by the nature of their natal horoscope, which had to display celestial portends of their future intelligence.⁴¹⁴ This is of course a reference to the selection of pagan gnostic priests. Although Magi were required to have the requisite bloodline before they could undertake priestly training, it is nonetheless plausible that an auspicious horoscope would have aided one's chances of acceptance.

An uncertain number of *Volkhov* were connected with the Russian princes.⁴¹⁵ As a matter of fact some Rus' royals were themselves recorded as having a *Volkhov* bloodline, as for instance the mother of Vseslav of Polotsk.⁴¹⁵

Magu, the spiritual power possessed by the Magian line was probably known in Olden Rus'. In Russia, a land once ruled by the *Volkhov* Magi, the word for "powerful" and "mighty" is *moguchiy* (pronounced maguchiy). Predictably *Magu* forms part of the root word, phonetically speaking. Together with the Finnish *Volkhov* shamans, the Rus' *Volkhov* were renowned for their ability to enter an ecstatic trance that allowed them to gain supernatural knowledge of things to come, of matters that concerned their followers.⁴¹⁶ So tried and true were their mystical abilities that the people placed every faith in their prophetic utterances and spiritual guidance.⁴¹⁶

A similar connection with power and divinity is found in the Old Icelandic *megn* (noun. "strength") and *megn* (adj. "strong" or "mighty"), as well as *megin-hyggja* ("wisdom").⁴¹⁷ This

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power was manifest magically in certain runes, the *megin-runar* ("the mighty or powerful runes").⁴¹⁷ Then there was *magnast* ("to increase in power"), *magn* ("strength" or "power") and *magna* ("to charm", "to make strong by magic").⁴¹⁸ We also find the terms *as-megin* "the strength of the gods",⁴¹⁹ *as-megir* "the sons of the gods",⁴¹⁹ and *goth-borinn* ("born of the gods").⁴²⁰ Such terms may once have applied to the Magus-priests of the Norse *Al-Madjus*.

Some experts on European witchcraft believe there are significant similarities between European and African witchcraft.⁴²¹ North African warlocks gained their powers from a mystical ability known as *mangu*. It is tempting to perceive any likeness between *magu* and *mangu* as purely coincidental. Yet the Magi frequented certain parts of northern and north-east Africa looking for balsams, frankincense and other vital aromas required by their ritual ordinances. Perhaps through their agency native Africans came to inherit *Magu*, by interbreeding with them. That is not to say that such a union was holy in Orthodox Zoroastrian opinion. In fact Magian scripture speaks of negroids as belonging to the dark side. Not only was their skin black, but they were skilled in black magic, owing to their alleged origin in the sexual union of a demon and a wicked witch (a priestess skilled in black magic). Hence the origin of the Old Icelandic term *heljar-skinn* ("negroid" or "dark-skinned", literally "hell-skin" or the "skin of the damned").

Entourages of Russian *Volkhv* served their respective lieges in a variety of governmental and administrative roles.⁴²² An excellent parallel is found in the Magi, for they aided the Persian kings by scrupulously attending to matters of law. They versed the people in it, and passed sentence on oath-breakers, criminals and the like. As judge, jury and executioner it was their duty to consummate the dictates of law by carrying out the floggings and executions in person. Being sagacious, Magi formed the nucleus of a king's advisory committee. Thousands of kilometres away, and in an earlier period, we hear of many "round-eyed" *Myag*² at the Chinese Imperial court.⁴²³

Following his journey through Rus' Ibn Rusta (an Arab geographers travelling in pagan Rus') commented that the pagan Rus' Slavs were ruled by priests (Doctors) who the Slavs deemed to be living gods and judges, whose decrees were simply not to be questioned.⁴²⁴ If a *Volkhv* requested that such and such a sacrificial offering be made, it had to be given; irrespective of a person's wishes. These living gifts were then sacrificed on a hanging tree. In ancient Persia, it was the Magi who performed such hanging sacrifices.⁴²⁵ Looking for the closest possible historical precursor for pagan Rus' religion it is difficult to go past the Magi, or even the pagan gnostic philosophers and Chaldean sorcerers, in some respects.

From *Volkhv*, the words *volshestvo* ("magic"), *volshchnik* ("a wizard" or "a sorcerer"), *volshchnitsa* ("a sorceress"), and *volos* ("hair") are derived.⁴²⁶

The Estonians used another word when denoting "a magician" (*maag*). The Russian equivalent to the Estonian *maag* was *mag*, which also meant "a magician or wizard". The

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Russian terms *ved'ma* ("witch"), *koldun* ("sorcerer") and *volkhv* ("Magus") illustrate three specific classes of magician in Russia,⁴²⁷ but an improper usage of these words can sometimes make it difficult to distinguish between the three within a given text. This is something that a researcher must be mindful of at all times. The same can be said for the Estonians. The Estonian term *noiakunst* meant "magic", or literally the arts of the *Noid* ("sorcerers"). Once again a distinction is made between magic and sorcery, a distinction found not only in Russia, but across most of Europe. More specifically *noikunst* is derived from *Noid*, which in Estonian means "a sorcerer" rather than *maag* (an Estonian term for "a magician"). *Noid* is cognate with *noai'di*, meaning "a Lappish shaman".⁴²⁸ Thus *noidkunst* was related to Lappish sorcery and shamanism, not the arts of the Magi.

Mag and *Maag* undeniably emanated from the Old Persian word *Magus*, which applied to the priestly class of the Magi, and more specifically the Sassanian term *Mog*, used from the 3rd Century AD onwards. *Magus* penetrated into Greek (*Magos*), Latin (*Magus*), Arabic (*Al-Madjus*) and German (*magishch*).⁴²⁹ In some cases the term was no doubt deemed applicable to any given sorcerer. And yet there are a great many instances where it is used in what could conceivably be, its proper context. For instance in mediaeval Western Europe, blood Magi are spoken of by name, often in connection with the royal houses, especially those of the Franks.⁴³⁰ In other words Magi of a certain bloodline were frequently found in royal company.

Considering that the Hungarians were known as Magyar (pronounced Major), their word *magerka* (a white felt hat) might be related to Magianism, given that the white Magi wore tall white mitres. This is more than reasonable considering the Khorezmian ancestry of the Hungarian Arpad dynasty and their heathen Magyar bonfire priests, who went by the name *Magoch Magus*, an unswerving reference to Hungarian Magian fire-priests.

Magi may have resided in Northern Britain too. Adomnan wrote of the Pictish heathen priests in Scotland, calling them Magi.⁴³¹ They in particular served as advisors under their king Broichan.⁴³¹

We could be forgiven for thinking that these concurrences are just a coincidence or a mistranslation, if it were not for the fact that there were substantial elements of Magian religion present in Slavia and other parts of Europe in ages past.

The Celts seem to have formulated their own words for Magi - *draoi* ("a druid", "a Magus") and *ban-draoi* ("a druidess", "a witch"). Druidic white magic (*pireog* or *piroige*) was dedicated to protecting man and beast, and aiding the production of dairy produce like milk, butter, cheese and cream. *Draordeact* (*maleficia*) was baleful sorcery utterly contrary to *pireog*.

In the mediaeval Russian *Primary Chronicle* it mentions that the pagan priests which Oleg "the Sage" consulted were of two varieties; *volkhvy* and *kudesniki*.⁴³² The words *Volkhv*

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(masculine singular), *Volkhva* (feminine singular) and *Volkhvy* (plural) translate directly as "Magus". Now if they were Magi then theoretically they must have been one of the historically known classes of Magi. So we must look for further evidence of the Magi who worshiped the Iranian deities if we are to validate the picture so far emerging. We will now examine a variety of information which enables us to make this identification.

Despite the fact that *Volkhv* cannot be derived from the Russian word *volk* ("wolf"), based on our current understanding of morphological change in the Russian language, there was more than likely a connection between the two words, for the *Volkhvy* could reputedly turn into wolves. Consider the following terms, all of which mean "a wolf" - *vl'k'* (Old Russian and Bulgarian), *volk* (Slovenian), *vlak* (Serbo-Croat), *vlk* (Czech), *vilk* (Polish), *vilkas* (Lithuanian), *vilks* (Latvian), *wulfs* (Gothic), *varkas* (Old Indian), *vargr* (Old Norse) and *varga* (Avestan).⁴³³ *Volkhv* might also be linked with the Hittite (*ualh*) and the Etruscan (*velkh*), words meaning "to hit or strike someone or something".⁴³³ This last analogy might have some substance when you consider that Magi often bludgeoned their sacrificial offerings with a cudgel, and inflicted penitential scourgings on the unworthy.

And then we have a broad selection of common pan-Slavic words meaning "a werewolf" (*volkolaka* (Russian), *vovkulak* (Ukrainian), *v'rkolak* (Bulgarian), *vlakodlak* (Serbo-Croat), *volkodla* (Slovenian), and *wilkolak* (Polish)).⁴³⁴

These terms applied to men who could adopt the shape and mannerisms of a wolf. According to Professor Ginzburg many European werewolves fought against demons, on behalf of creation and the fertility of the fields. The wolf-folk repeatedly featured in Russian folklore from the Middle Ages right through to the 19th Century, and the *Volkhvy* were widely implicated as wolfmen.⁴³⁴ *Volkhvy* sometimes gathered in their own small societal groups, leaving homes and families, and heading out into the forests in wolf form, to run with the pack.⁴³⁵ In the Tul' region, one tradition has it that they transformed into wolves for a full seven year period. But they could also change shape at certain crucial moments in their lifetime.⁴³⁵ At other times it was for the duration of a curse placed upon them by enemy sorcerers.⁴³⁵ Generally speaking though, Rus' *Volkhvy* inherited their shape-changing ability from ancestors past, who were themselves sorcerers.⁴³⁵ The notion of hereditary lycanthropy (Russian: *oborotnchestvo*) was so integral to Russian lore about werewolves that they were seen as a specific breed of humanity.⁴³⁶ Wearing wolf-skins was a known feature of Russian shape-changing,⁴³⁷ and this, doubtless to say, facilitated the *Volkhv's* transformation, taking them beyond the realms of a simply spiritual state. Appropriately attired, they had become physically transformed into wolves, in real life. The factual existence of such garments is confirmed by the Polish word *vil'chura* ("a wolf-skin coat").⁴³⁸

The word *Volkhvy* also appears to be connected with the Russian term *volshchestvo* (meaning "magic"). This interrelationship between the word for "wolf" and the word for

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“magic” might even signify that the *Volkhov* Magi were practitioners of the dreaded wolf sacrifice first detailed by Plutarch; the ultimate ceremonial invocation of the infernal, which was recorded in antiquity as having been performed by the Zurvanite Magi. If this was the case then the word *volshestvo* might indicate that the *Volkhov* practiced “wolf magic”.⁴³⁹

So we have Magus sorcerers who were connected with both wolves and magic. In an attempt to unravel the true nature of the Slav pagan priests we must then turn to Magian scripture, for it is here in *Bundahishn* that we hear of demon-creatures akin to *khrafstras*, the “wolf-species”, which incorporated every breed of cat, including the lion, and certain men.^{439a} In the *Zend-Avesta* and the Pahlavi texts there are a number of references to two-legged wolves, princes, idolators and sacrificers, long situated near the Zoroastrian heartlands; “demons with dishevelled hair”, the “men of iron”, “servants of the infuriate spear”. Later in this book we will examine the contents of *Bahman Yast III*, a Zoroastrian text which gives us a very clear description of a nation of people who practiced the ancient art of devil-worship. In these references we find compelling evidence that a certain proportion of the Rus’ *Volkhov* may in fact have been the same two-legged wolves and sacrificers mentioned in the Persian texts. If this is so then we might associate the *Volkhov* with the Medean/Zurvanite Magi found in classical texts. On the strength of evidence, a *Volkho* was an evil Magus by name and by nature.

The dark arts certainly seem to have found their way into Eastern Europe. What Helmold mentioned about Wendish (Western Slav) paganism hints at dualistic doctrines and the accompanying ceremonies. They offered a libation to the god of goodness, and the demon responsible for misfortune;

“The Slavs, too, have a strange delusion. At their feasts and carousals they pass about a bowl over which they utter words, I should say of consecration but of execration, in the name of the gods - of the good one, as well as of the bad one - professing that all propitious fortune is arranged by the good god, adverse, by the bad god.

*Hence, also, in their language they call the bad god Diabol, or Zcerneboch, that is, the black god.”*⁴⁴⁰

The black Magianism of the devil-worshippers might have penetrated rather deeply into Europe. The white Magi spoke of the “vexation owing to various degrees of promise-breaking”.⁴⁴¹ By breaking solemn oaths, one could perform unhallowed witchcraft, evil, maelific magic. And it is here that we discover the nature and psychology of the European warlock. The English word “warlock” originated from the Old High German words *wærloga* or *wærlogan* during the Middle Ages. These words meant “to lie”, “to betray”, or “one given to performing black magic”. In England this became *wærloga* (Old English), and *warloghe* or *warlach* (Middle English), meaning “one that breaks faith”, “a scoundrel”, or “a devil”.⁴⁴² Thus we might suspect that quite apart from their use of harm magic, that warlocks were

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also involved in crime, covenant breaking and most likely devil worship. Once again we find a major parallel between the doctrines of the Magi and the beliefs of European witches. The warlocks probably emulated the impropriety of *Ahriman* and Chernobog, the 'Father of Evil and Lies'.

The Old High German words *wærloga* or *wærlogan* might be in turn be related to the Slavic word *volokh*.⁴⁴³ *Volokh* denoted a Rumanian of the *Volokhi* tribe that resided near Transylvania, in a region which later came to be known as Wallachia (just near Bohemia). This tribal name is perhaps linked with the term *volokha* which means "a shirt" or "an animal hide".⁴⁴⁴ Could it be that the Slav *Volkhvy* were *volokhi* warlocks that dressed in animal hides, perhaps a wolf (*volk*) pelt?

Some linguists doubt a relationship between the Old Icelandic term *Volthva* (later *Volva*) and the Russian words *Volkhv* or *Volkhva*. I, on the other hand, believe the phonetic similarity is of a sufficiently high order to consider a connection between the pagan Russian prophetesses and the Norse *Volva* who were portrayed as sybilline prophetesses and witches in the Sagas.

The heathen Norsemen associated wolves with murderers. Their *hel* was home to such miscreants, a "sunless" place where wolves gnawed at the bodies of the damned;

*"I saw a sunless hall, North-facing on a dead man's strand,
A poison-dripping roof above, a wall of worming snakes all round;
There waded through its marshy wastes wolf-like and murdering men;
There Nithogg suckled on damned flesh, the wolf gnawed human flesh: need you know more?"*⁴⁴⁵

In the Old Icelandic a *vargr* is both "a wolf", "evil-doer" "a fugitive criminal", which is cognate with the Slavic word *vrag*, meaning "enemy" or "a devil".^{445a} These ultimately came from the Iranian *varga* ("wolf"), as did the following Old Norse kenning (a saying) "*Varga i Veum*", which meant "a wolf in a Holy place". The latter saying, which is of some antiquity, most likely refers to defiled persons entering holy sites. And it was not a term of endearment.

From the testimony of the Arabs who saw these pagan Russian priests, one recorded function of the *Volkhvy* was to sacrifice animals and human beings.⁴⁴⁶ In Rus' the *Volkhvy* priests strung people up by the neck on a hanging tree. We know they frequently chose their victims by sortilege (the casting of lots), and yet at other times the victim was a criminal. In any case the Old Icelandic word *vargtre* (literally wolf-tree) reveals the significance of the wolf-tree, the hanging tree upon which criminals (ie; "wolves") were strung up until their life was extinguished. Apprehended criminals and black magicians were themselves summarily hanged by the authorities in the post-conversion era, as is evidenced in the *Primary Chronicle*.

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Iranian Magus priests executed non-royal criminals in a roughly similar way, draping the flayed remains of executed criminals from a tree top. During a dispute between the Persian king Pacurius and the Armenian leader Arasces, the Magi intervened to determine whether or not the vassal had violated his solemn treaty oath with the Persians.⁴⁴⁷ It was a concealed matter, and the Armenian was unlikely to compromise himself willingly, so until he confessed the Magi could not punish him. To effect a complete admission of his guilt "the Magi, after putting the whole tent under a spell by means of some magic rites, bade the king" to try and elicit the truth from Arasces.⁴⁴⁷ The spells worked, and the hidden lies which were made under damning oaths leapt forth.⁴⁴⁷ "Then at length the Magi passed judgment against him as having violated the treaty and the oaths". Arasces was incarcerated for his part in the conspiracy in the Prison of Oblivion (an eternal dungeon from whence there was no return), whereas Bassicius, not being of the royal blood, was flayed and had his straw-packed skin hung in a tree.⁴⁴⁷

Thus we have two contradictory views of the wolf-priests; one as agents of creation, the other servants of evil. It is my contention that *Volkhov* of uncertain number cleaved to the white or black side, while others might have performed both white and black rites. In Russian folklore the *Volkhov* did not incline entirely toward white magic, for at least some of them toyed with the black arts, and this made them dark witches.⁴⁴⁸ Helmold tells us as much.

A clue as to whether the *Volkhov* knew black magic may reside in a form of magic which the Norsemen (and perhaps even their *Volva*) practiced, which was called *seithr* magic, which normally required the the recital of a song, but it might also include the incision of runic characters into a variety of objects, be they stone, a wooden pole, or a piece of bone. The power of the *seithr* rites stemmed from *ergi*, that is ritual inversion, or indeed perversion. In Scandinavia *seithr* was considered unmanly, often because the magicians dressed as women while performing the spells. Though Vasmer claims such correlations are untrustworthy, I suspect that *seithr* might be related to the Slavic word *setovat'* which meant "to complain of something" or "to lament something". *Setovat'* is derived from the Old Russian noun *seta*, meaning "grief or sorrow".⁴⁴⁹ The Serbo-Croat word *sjetovati* ("to wail or mourn over the loss of something") is related to *sjeta* (which like the Russian meant "grief" or "sorrow"). These are also connected to the Gothic *sair* ("an ache" or "pain"), the Old Irish *sair* or *soeth* (meaning "suffering" or "hard labor"), and the Old Irish *sathar* or *saethar*. Moreover we find in the Lithuanian *saisti* and *saichiu*, meaning "to tell the future" or "to prophecy", in addition to *saitas* ("an amulet").⁴⁴⁹ Coincidentally the Italian word for Saturn (that maelific planet) is *seta*. Based on this wide range of terms, it's difficult to believe that *seithr* was specifically Scandinavian in origin. As you will read, dark wizardry was directed towards causing not only defilement throughout the biosphere, but grief, lamentation and suffering to those who

served the lord of creation. Only in the Lithuanian and Old Norse languages can we linguistically link the concepts of suffering and mourning with ritual magic with any certainty, though I believe *seithr* was originally known as far south as the Balkans. If for arguments sake the *Volkhov* were wolf-priests and practiced *seithr* grief-magic through ritual inversion and perversion, it is likely that they ritually interacted with the evil principle, either occasionally or as a rule.

Naturally there are certain problems associated with dating the origin of the *Volkhov* priesthood, but the writings of Herodotus mention a civilization of Scythian Ziggurat-building magicians on the steppes (c. 500 BC), whose customs and magical practices bore all the hallmarks of a Babylonian or Assyrian society, that had been liberally immersed in Persian secular and religious customs. If they were Magi, then they were living in Bronze Age Russia.

The words *zhrets'* (Ukrainian) and *zhrets* (Russian), although translated as "priest", unequivocally signify the person as a "sacrificer".⁴⁵⁰ When all is said and done the word *zhrets'* (Old Slavonic: *zh'r'ts'*) had an Indo-European genesis, so perhaps the nature of their sacrificial duties belonged to an Indo-European forum too. Interestingly, Lenormant delineated between a *Magus* and an *Arthraoan*, on the basis of one being a sacrificer (whether by clubbing or strangling the victim), and the other a fire priest.

The two primary Slav gods were polarized enemies, a Black and a White deity, one a lord of heaven, the other the ruler of the Underworld, both of which were subordinate to the four-faced father of the Gods Svarog, the shining god.⁴⁵¹ This resembles Zurvanite dualistic doctrine, a pagan trinity which formed during the Persian Achaemenid era, and allowed for the performance of white and black magic throughout their society.

If there was a factual inter-relationship between Rus' paganism and Zurvanism, that would make the Russes descendants of Magian Zurvanite heretics evicted from Central Asia and Iran during or before the 3rd Century AD, for worshiping demons and Aryan idols, and who constructed elaborately decorated temples to house the *daevas* idols and the holy fires. Such a migration would coincide with the one described in the *Ynglinga Saga*. At the very least the Russes were inheritors of Magian Zurvanite teachings.

Under the Zurvanite variant of Magian cosmology the spiritual war going on between the two brothers *Ahriman* and the Good Sun, came about as a result of a dare.⁴⁵² On that fateful day when *Ahriman* lay down the challenge to his father and brother, the supreme god granted both sons vestments of power, which conferred upon them miraculous abilities. To the black son was given the black and fiendish robe of *Az*, the power of evil, the planets and harlotry.⁴⁵³ And to the white son he granted a dazzlingly white garment of perfect goodness and truth.⁴⁵³ As the ages progressed these two gods mustered their own specialized priesthoods and granted them the right to wear the robes of their respective master. And so

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it came to pass that the priests of the Black God earned the right to wear ritual clothing the colour of ash, or the black garment of *Ahriman*, while the white priests donned the snowy white robe of *Ahura Mazda*. From this arose an enduring spiritual duel between the rites of white and black magic.

The Magian Rus' *Volkhvy* probably absorbed most of the Brahmans, sages and bards of the much older Indo-European order, those who served the cults of *Agri* and *Soma* (which were worshiped by the Slavs as *ogon'* and *Sima*) on a regional basis. At the very least they exerted a far greater influence over the pagan Russes than the Brahmans did. That much can be guessed since the Rus' heads of state patronized Magian idols such as *Simurgh*. The ready absorption of Slavic Vedic devotees by the Magian Rus' royals was probably attributable to the fact that Zurvarites allowed for the worship of both *Ahura's* and *Daevas*, and hence assumed the appearance of an Avestan religious movement, which had an accumulated wealth of Vedic ritualism and terminology, such as Indra worship.

Without Magi no Persian could offer sacrifices; who but them was empowered by the gods to do so? This is another major point concerning the *Volkhvy* Magi ... the pagan Russes believed the *Volkhvy* were the only ones capable of making offerings to the supreme gods on behalf of the people.^{453a} Without the Magi, mankind was cut off from the creator, his servant gods, and any hope of mystical aid in the struggle for survival epitomized by the *Khorovod* (a sunwise dance of life) and the *Smrtno Kolo* (a counter-clockwise dance of death), an anti-perambulation.

The rituals that the white and black Magi performed were inexorably linked to the drinking and pouring of libations; the life-sustaining milky *Haoma* in the case of the white Magi, and the corrupted *Haoma* libation of *Ahriman's* black Magi called *Az*. Linguistic evidence suggests that the Russian Magus sorcerers mixed drinks of a similar nature, draughts which unleashed magical powers that caused events of their choosing to transpire in this world.

Only a handful of Russian words begin with the root *char-*; *charodyeika* ("a female sorcerer") and *charodyei* ("a male sorcerer"), *chary* ("magic" or "spells") and *charka* ("a cup" or "a goblet"). And in the Ukraine we find *chari* ("spells", "magic" or "witchcraft"), *charivnik* ("a sorcerer" or "a magician"), *charivnitsya* ("a witch" or "an enchantress"), *charuvati* ("to bewitch" or "to charm someone"), *charivnist'* ("charm"), and *charka* ("a cup" or "a goblet").⁴⁵⁴ From both the Russian and Ukrainian one can discern that white sorcery and black witchcraft were intrinsically linked with cups or goblets.

Using Greek, Persian and Hindu religious texts we can infer that these word survivals are a reference to the pouring of libations to invoke the aid of gods, perhaps by the Magi or Neo-Pythagoreans. These libations took the form of mead, but they could be beer or wine, or, as I contend, *Soma* and *Haoma* (the holy drinks of the Hindu Brahmans and Iranian Magi

respectively, fully discussed in my previous work *Before the Burning Times*).

The fact that the above mentioned terms are virtually identical in Northern Russia and the Ukraine means that the libations may have represented a uniform body of religious rites performed in the north and south of the country. Thus the *charivniki* were white magicians or evil warlocks who wielded cups, and with those same cups, they performed libations, dances and songs, which gave rise to sorceries and enchantments. The Old Russian word *chara* ("a cauldron") was derived from the Old Indian *carus*, but is also cognate with the Old Irish *coire*, and the Old Icelandic *hverr*, all of which meant "a cauldron". Presumably all these terms shared a common genesis, one rooted in magical ritual. Another opinion is that *chara* stemmed from the Eastern Turkic word *chara* ("a large bowl or cup").⁴⁵⁵ Considering that the Rus' cauldrons bore a Vedic name it is plausible that they might also have been employed in rites of adoration to the *Daevas*. The Russian word for "spells" (*chary*) seems phonetically linked with the cauldron (*chara*). The same could be said for the words *char* (Old Slavonic, Serbo-Croat, Czech) meaning "sorcery", and *chara* (Slovenian) "magic".⁴⁵⁶ Since both the Brahmins and Magi used cauldrons in their magical rites, linguistic evidence for the custom might be equally found in the Vedic or Avestan. But as it happens these words are best equated with the Avestan *chara* (meaning "the means" {by which something is accomplished}), and the New Persian *char* or *chara* ("the means {by which something is accomplished}", "to help or aid", "craftiness or slyness").⁴⁵⁶ We are thus presented with a root word like *char-* that was linked to cauldrons, large cups and bowls, utensils which, on the strength of linguistic evidence, were undeniably used to perform magical ordinances, that were, one might guess, conceptually connected with acts of goodness, as well as ruses and deception. The existence of the Russian word *charusa* ("an impenetrable bog or swamp") might also indicate that chalices and cauldrons were used to carry out black sorcery in the vicinity of bogs. In a number of places around Europe cauldrons have been excavated from bogs by archaeologists. Slavic linguistic correlations between demons and bogs intimates that there was a connection.

Perhaps these words are also related to the Russian verb *charandat'* which meant "to spit (phlegm or mucous)". According to Vasmer the word *charandat'* was obscene, that is one with profane or malign connotations. On this basis we might suspect a connection between black magic and the act of spitting mucous into wash water. Ibn Fadhlān saw a band of Russes do this very thing in the upper Volga region.

Slavic vocabulary connected with the performance of magic is derived from a Magian rather than brahmanic milieu, but shows evidence of a vedic influence. This provides us with further evidence of an ancient Zurvanite Magian presence among the Slavs. And due to the survival of these ancient arts, cauldrons continued to be integral to the performance of European witchcraft beyond the Middle Ages if witch trial records are anything to go by.

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The Polish *Czar* (pron Char, meaning "a sorcerer") cannot be linguistically equated with the later Russian word *Czar* (pron Tsar) meaning "a ruler".⁴⁵⁶ Despite this variation in the initial letter of both words, there may have been a factual connection between magicians and the Russian royals. Consider the Czars and *Bieloknyazi*⁴⁵⁷ (the white sorcerers of the pagan Slavs, which in literal terms meant "the white princes"). Even during the Russian revolution the Czars army was called "the White Guard".

The white Magi

The essence of what the holy wizards professed is embodied in the following passage of Magian scripture;

*"And the speaking of Ahura Mazda thus: "I am he whose thoughts are good, O evil spirit! he whose words are good, and he whose deeds are good; the sky is my garment, which was first produced from that substance of the worldly existences which is created as the stone above all stones, that is, every jewel is set in it; good thoughts, good words, and good deeds are my food, and I love those of them who are in that place through good thoughts, good words, and good deeds".*⁴⁵⁸

From this prose arose the stereotypical image of wizards clad in glistening white robes decorated with stars, moons and other astronomical imagery. The white Magi were born to serve society as sacrificers, tasked with nourishing the fertility gods and angels of creation during formally organized feast days. Such were the priests and priestesses of life, hope and prosperity, the guardians of Order, Truth and Justice. This, the life-affirming creed of the white Magi, might well be preserved in the Old Russian word *zhivoi* ("live" or "living"), which was derived from the Vedic and Old Persian.⁴⁵⁹

These were the wise, well-meaning, good-thinking, well-armed priests and priestesses of the creator, who served Him and *Spenta Mainyu* (the Holy Spirit) by arousing the people to willingly side with good over evil, for they believed that evil in its many forms had to be directly confronted and defeated in this material world.

Without the white Magi, *Haoma*,⁴⁶⁰ the milky libation that sustained the celestial fertility gods, would disappear from the face of the earth and humanity would be left all alone, robbed of immortality and the Magi's magical artifices forever. Although Magus priestesses inherited their extensive magical powers via the proper bloodline and baked the holy unleavened *dron* loaves, they were not under any circumstances allowed to make *Haoma* sacrifices; this was the role of the male priesthood.

The basis for pagan feasts (which were offered to the gods) can be found in the writings of the Alexandrian Christian theologian Origen, who mentioned that the pagan divinities needed to be fed their sustenance by man if they were to survive at all. In the role of "white priest" the Magus donned the sacred white robe to perform sacrificial ordinances of

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“supreme piety”, namely the tending of Svarog’s holy fires (the *svarogichi*), which burned as eternal flames in their fire temples and groves. Their duties included presenting the sacred and life sustaining drink *Haoma* to the White God and Svarog. The holy libation was drunk from various types of vessels like goblets or cups, but more especially from rhytons and drinking horns, signifying the pre-existent bull. These objects were sometimes capped at one end, allowing the drinker to sound the horn once the *Haoma* was spent. *Haoma* was extremely holy in nature, a drink deigned to bring life, food, happiness, plenty, virtue, strength and protection against the destructive blows of Black God, the abysmal fiend who daily attempted the destruction of the world through disease, carnage and pests. Other offerings to the White God (the Good Sun) were the fruits of the earth, their toils, their money, their hopes and love. The vessel in which the sacrifice was usually delivered was, so to speak, a cornucopia, a horn of plenty, a holy grail. In Zoroaster’s scheme of things the yellow *Haoma* was considered to be a filthy drink, but nonetheless a pre-figuration of Zoroastrian *Haoma* and the white *Haoma* dispensed during the banquet of the final *Sayoshant*.

The black Magi

If the white Magi were devoted to doing good, then their enemies the black Magi, *Ahriman*’s devilish apostolate, felt the opposite way;

“The grumbling of the evil spirit (Ahriman) thus: “I am he whose thoughts are evil, O beneficent spirit! he whose words are evil, and he whose deeds are evil; what is dark is my garment which is very thick, with lower corners here, so far as many go, it is still darker; evil thoughts, evil words, and evil deeds are my food, and I love those of them who are in that place through evil thoughts, evil words and evil deeds”.⁴⁶¹

Militant black Magi were the descendants of magicians who patronized a god of time and his son, the god of the underworld. Among the Slavs these militant black magicians were called *Garabancias* (and possibly the *Volkhov*), so presumably they served Chernobog, the Prince of the Underworld, and by inference *Angra Mainyu* (the Unholy Spirit), and the seven planets. *Ahriman* lovingly bestowed miraculous supernatural powers upon those who loyally rendered unto him the sacrifices. According to Plutarch certain Magi versed in the dark rites offered the “wolf-sacrifice” of *omomi* (*Haoma*/Hom) to the Evil One, the living sin that had come into the world. Evil and wrongdoing was the spiritual drink that sustained the Black Lord, an unwholesome brew of vice, greed, cowardice, idolatry, lust and harlotry, rebellion, lies, and slander. This libation of lawlessness was known as *Az*, and it was drunk from a “black” chalice. The black priests were known by their works ...

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"The craving for the fiend, the assistance of the fiend, and the gratification of the fiend by him who is an apostle of the demons". ... "the persuader to evil and the organiser of distress" ... as well as "confusion owing to his speaking deceitfully in the world, and the connection with him of an awful and swift death" and "the wicked follower and assistant of theirs in defeating righteousness, and also in destroying the greater religiousness of the world and making the soul wicked in the end".⁴⁶²

"The apostasy of apostates being a religion produced by Aharman ... apostasy and priesthood, and the apostates and priests, are fraternal opponents, and whenever the priesthood and multitudes of the priesthood are triumphant multitudes of the apostates of apostasy perish, and when the multitudes of the apostates of apostasy are bold, the priests of the priesthood are weak".⁴⁶³

The white Magian *Sudkar Nask* mentioned the ill-favored destiny of "A human being when he contentedly reverences a demon in spiritual lordship and priestly authority".⁴⁶⁴ Here the activities of the devil's priesthood are mentioned, and next we read of their wicked ceremonials, blasphemous recitals, and their greedy, wanton, stench-filled, ill-favored inner predispositions. These maelific arts stood in complete opposition to the well-disposed fertility ceremonies of the holy Magus wizards; as explained in the *9th nask Baris*, which "contains particulars about ... the ill-advisedness of falsity, stinginess, and ignorance ... the blessing and cursing, the good will and ill-will of the good ritual and evil ritual, the good statements and evil statements ... and of the evil thought, lust, wrath, unrighteousness, and many other demons".⁴⁶⁵

The Book of *Yasna* contains more evidence of the beliefs of the demonolators who raged against the 'white' religion of *Ahura Mazda*...

"...and for the encounter with, and the dislodgement of the Kayadhas, and of the individual Kayadhians, male and female, and of the thieves and robbers, of the Zandas (possibly meaning the Zandiks, the worshipers of the Drugs ie, devils), and the sorcerers, of the covenant breakers, and of those who tamper with the covenants. Yea, we sent it forth for the encounter with, and for the overthrow of the murderers of thy saints, and of those who hate and torment us for our Faith, and of those who persecute the ritual, and the tyrant full of death".⁴⁶⁶

Having examined the likely etymology of the English word "warlock" it is interesting to note that Magians associated 'covenant breakers' with sorcerers and devil-worshipers. These devil-priests were warlocks in the true sense of the word, practitioners who bastardized standard white Magian ritualism. Their maltreatment of the rites was made manifest by "yelling, united assault, evil food, and other affliction owing to the wicked in the earlier half of the night".⁴⁶⁷

In Iranian religion crime and infernal ceremonial irregularities formed the nucleus of the devil's arts "owing to theft and terror, obstructing the roads, the dread of the wayfarers, and the disturbance of prisons".⁴⁶⁸ This was due to "the devil and disgrace, foreign magicians and those who act after their proceedings (ie; their ceremonies and assemblies) and become committers of crime ...

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and we are told of their crime".⁴⁶⁸ In other words individuals left their ceremonies hell bent on criminal behaviour. The inspiration for these misdeeds irradiated their hearts from unspiritual mentors in the underworld below:

"for of those seven evil-doers (the arch-demons), one was Az-i Dahak by whom (evil) witchcraft was first glorified; he exercised the sovereignty of misgovernment, and desires a life of the unintellectual for the world. One was Azi Sruoar, by whom infesting the highway in terrible murder, frightful watchfulness of the road, and devouring of horse and man were perpetrated. One was Vadak the mother of Dahak, by whom adultery was first committed, and by it all lineage is disturbed, control is put an end to, and without the authority of the husband an intermingling of son with son occurs. One was the Viptak (the originator of sodomy) ... carrying on a practice which effaces and conceals the race of the living".⁴⁶⁹

Demons such as these were destined to be challenged by all good white Magians throughout their daily lives. The great Iranian hero Keresasp petitioned Ahura Mazda;

"Grant me, O Auhamazd heaven or the supreme heaven! for I have slain the highwaymen who were so big in body" ... "And if those fallen highwaymen had not been slain by me, Aharman would have become predominant over thy creatures".⁴⁷⁰

Nikadum nask contained further information on "highway robbery, and of the cursing owing thereto".⁴⁷¹

The mere concept of a religion (or a sub-component thereof) dedicated to the performance of evil in its purest form, is one which many have difficulty comprehending. Such a creed seemingly defies all rational thought, and for this very reason a number of academics in the field of witchcraft won't accept that a religion of evil could ever have existed. And yet there was a logical basis to this cult, for it expounded black Magian doctrines that inquisitors later termed "the Luciferian doctrine", elements of which were recorded dating back to the Mediaeval Rus' period, in Roman times, and in the scriptures of the Magi.

In addition to paying homage to *Ahriman's* demon children, the black Magi made further sacrifices to the idols of the ancient *Daevas*, the old Aryan gods which they added back into the Zoroastrian cosmological view. This became the very reason for their exile from their former Persian homelands, where they were considered devil-worshippers, the enemy of goodness. By living a "deviant, criminal and corrupt" lifestyle, one fed the Dark Lord, invigorated and strengthened him with the "unholy manna" of Az, just as *Haoma* sustained the Russian sun god Dazhbog (*Ahura Mazda*).

During Chernobog's "mysteries" the black Magi probably wore black or grey robes and pointy or rounded headdress of similar darkness. From Plutarch's description of the wicked

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Magi, we can infer that *Volkhvoy* wishing to enact evil sorcery performed an inverted *Haoma* ritual. So they dug a pit or hole, where the sun cannot shine, and concealed there the blood of a slaughtered wolf mixed with the pulverized remains of a plant called *Omomi* (a corruption of *Hom* or *Haoma*, the Magi's sacred immortalizing plantstuff). They then called upon the powers of the Unholy Spirit, and all the powers of Hell. Otherwise they buried some other sacrifice, or roasted flesh in the sacred fire (an act forbidden to traditional white Zoroastrians).

The black Magi were also responsible for making sacrifices to the *daemones* of the atmosphere, which gave them the power to raise storms. They often times did so by releasing the smoke of various fumigants "such as seared blood or incense" into the air.⁴⁷²

It is possible that throughout history the black Magi deliberately became members of other religions, but their very presence was masked by a clever deception. The secret implantation of black Magi into other religions allowed them to defile holy things and, even better, to corrupt the orthodox teachings of varied religions through an injection of heresy. The white Magi professed that heresy and apostasy were vile religious dogmas of the black Magi, that is they disseminated a religion of false religion or perverted known rubrics through ritual inversion. Such Magi would have practiced their rituals in secret, or influenced other faiths to such a degree that they acquired an undercurrent of evil, and a need to worship demons. In its most evolved form dualism erupted in host religions as the dark god attached itself like a leech, and fed off it. Based on the discovery of a number of magical gems, it is highly likely that some of these Magi were to be found among the priests and sacrificers who served the religious needs of the Neo-Pythagoreans, Gnostics and Mithraic brotherhoods. As you will see in my next book, some were also quite at home inside the Christian community.

The Volkhvog's role in society

The *Volkhvoy* Magi together with the Slavic pagan gnostic philosophers formed the inner sanctum of the pre-Christian intelligentsia. Collectively they were the focal point of their society, prodigies who devoted their lives to studying the movements of the celestial bodies and their affects upon the existence and behavior of all matter on this planet. The ancient "sciences" which they had inherited from their forebears facilitated these daily observations of the heavens. Being Magi, the *Volkhvoy* would have believed that all the celestial bodies and zodiac were imbued with definable qualities, energies and personalities which when positioned in various ways created a myriad of effects that manifested themselves upon the earth, influencing both fate and the elements. The Slavic zodiac is indeed the same as that once found throughout Greece, Rome, Egypt and Iran, and still consulted in western society until this day.

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The Magi and pagan philosophers further preached that all matter was composed of combinations of four pure elements; earth, air, water and fire, which according to the white Magi it was man's duty to protect from the pollution of other dissimilar elements. Thus white Magians strived to prevent the defilement of these elements at the hand of *Ahriman*, the unholy witches and demons who were hell bent on mutilating the world of creation.

Various combinations of these main elemental essences produced various effects readily observable in nature throughout the year. After all, nature was merely the dynamic interaction of elements, through which the life, death and prosperity of all was governed. Without light, water, fire, air and earth, nothing could ever exist.

In Magian doctrine mythologized entities and spiritual beings personified these elements. The prosperity of these spirits was of paramount importance; if they were offended or destroyed then the side effects could be catastrophic. Crops could fail, blizzards would become more severe, cattle could die or fall barren, and the earth would turn fallow. To this end the Magi ensured that the proper range of prayers and sacrifices were offered to the various life-dispensing divinities and their antithesis, the rapacious demonic vitae.

Whilst many nature cults preferred to retain the magic of the spoken word by oral tradition, the *Volkhov* are thought to have possessed their own form of writing which was used to record their spells, religious festivals and rites. *Volkhov* utilized the *Ruxski pismeni* for such purposes, scripts probably known only amongst their *Volkhov* colleagues, plus the Moravians, Balkan Slavs and the Bulgars.

In real terms, the *Volkhov* played the most significant role in the socio-religious hierarchy of the early heathen Russian tribes. They helped administer tribal law, taking into full account the way in which a tribe had to fit into its environment. They provided anesthetics and medicine, and performed surgery (perhaps including scientific autopsies, and invasive brain surgery, skills not unknown to the Medean Magi) and embodied a direct link between mere mortals, the gods and their minions.

Due to the fact that so little was written about the heathen priests of Eastern Europe during the early Mediaeval period it is difficult to ascertain whether or not these priesthods possessed subordinate offices, just as the Magi once did. For example, was there an internal ranking among the black priests, or the *Magoch Magus*, the *Bieloknyazi* or the *Rasdi*? Since many of these priests were supposed to have been Magi, and due to information that has survived concerning the Rus' *Volkhov*, it is easily tempting to think so. We shall shortly look at compelling evidence which shows that the *Volkhov* religious structure closely resembled that of the Magi. But first I must examine data relating to their approximate numbers in Slavia, because it helps us make even more informed guesses about the Magian priesthood in Eastern Europe.

Calculating precisely how many Magus priests and priestesses lived in Russia is a

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difficult proposition. At the peak of the *Volkhov's* reign in Rus' their Magi were apparently so numerous that they were present in each and every settlement throughout Rus'; that is a staggering number.⁴⁷³ This need not be an overly dramatized figure, since the Magi taught that each settlement, and indeed each house, should have a holy fire. In private homes though, the flame was maintained by householders rather than priests or priestesses.

From *ogon'* (Russian: "fire") comes the Russian word *ognishche*.⁴⁷⁴ In Russian the suffix *-ishche* means "a shelter". Thus an *ognishche* was a building, or perhaps even a pavilion, specially allocated to shelter a fire, rather than a simple hearth or oven. In pagan times these fire houses, were evidently part of the Russian "fire cult"⁴⁷⁵ which according to folklore, was once present throughout most of Russia, and according to later opinion, in Lithuania too.⁴⁷⁵ The Norsemen had fire-houses also, calling them *Elda-hus* ("fire house"), which came from the word *Eldr* ("fire").⁴⁷⁶ These fire houses were of course additional to whatever fires they kept in their own homes, and might have served as places where rituals were performed, such as the grove cabins kept by the Finns. In myth the living-god Odin is described as "the long-haired friend of the altar fire".^{475a} For this reason, his brand of sorcery, and the religion he supposedly spread among the Germanic and Scandinavian peoples, obviously incorporated aspects of asiatic dualistic fire worship.

As recently as last century the inhabitants of Vilnius could still show you where the eternal fire burned, and where the pagan priestly attendant once lived.⁴⁷⁵ In the case of Vilnius, folklore recollects that there was only one fire-priest, or at least that is what it had been reduced to after Christianization.

Fire-houses were traditionally established near tracts of arable land, and, again according to Russian folkloric tradition, were, since the age of Rurik, maintained by the settlements.^{475a} Considering the avalanche of Magian data contained in the *True History of Wizards and Witches*, especially where Russia is concerned, one can guess that these fire-houses were connected with the religion of the white Magi then resident in Russia.

One figure no doubt linked with the fire cult was the *ognishchanin*. Some translate *ognishchanin* as "a bailif", others as "a hearth-keeper".^{476a} However *ognishchanin* is more correctly associated with the term *ognishche* ("fire-house"), which differs from the word *ochag*,^{476b} the Russian word for "a hearth". Accordingly an *ognishchanin* was more properly a "fire-house man", one who played some special sacerdotal function at a fire-house, or was specially appointed to administer a fire-house. In Old Persia such a person would have been called an *Arthraoan* (a wizard charged with maintaining the holy fires), which literally meant "a fire man".

While every home had their own fire, that still did not make a given resident an *ognishchanin*. That an *ognishchanin* was more greatly valued than ordinary folk is evidenced by Mediaeval Russian laws, which though tailored for Christian society, were still

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nonetheless survivals of older pagan laws. One could escape punishment for killing a person by paying the family a sum of money. So under their legal charter it became necessary to establish what specific price should be paid to them in silver ingots (*grivna*):

Officer of the prince	80 grivna ⁴⁷⁷
Prince's steward	80 grivna ⁴⁷⁷
Prince's farm manager	12 grivna ⁴⁷⁷
Prince's farm overseer	12 grivna ⁴⁷⁷
Stable master	80 grivna ⁴⁷⁷
Tutor/nurse	12 grivna ⁴⁷⁷
Laborer	5 grivna ⁴⁷⁷
<i>Ognishchanin</i>	80 grivna, but if the <i>Ognishchanin</i> had been killed near

a barn or cow-shed the offender was to be slaughtered without mercy, pursuant to Article 21; no payment in lieu was acceptable. A sub-clause invoked the death penalty for killing the *Ognishchanin's* lowly assistant steward under the same circumstances.⁴⁷⁷

The only other mandatory death penalty was Article 40, which provided for the summary execution of thieves caught near a barn.⁴⁷⁸

Clearly an *ognishchanin* was roughly equivalent to a prince's many officials in terms of blood-price, but to kill either him, or his lowly assistant (ie; the sorcerer and his apprentice) near a barn or cattle enclosure drew down a horrifying penalty from the prince.

Since *ochag* ("a hearth"), comes from the Turkic,⁴⁷⁹ certain aspects of Russian fire-lore may have had some sort of Turkic ancestry, perhaps Bulgarian, and hence Magian Bulgarian. All things considered it is, without question, traceable to the Asian continent.

Land-owners and ploughmen also performed ancillary duties in relation to the maintenance of fire-houses. These people were known by names which indicated their duties as tenders of various classes of fire. The prior-mentioned fire shrines were especially common throughout the forests of Northern Russia, but were also established on the steppe as well, over a period stretching from Rurik's time until as recently as last century. That there were so many of these fire-houses in antiquity suggests an intact and extensive infrastructure for the Russian pagan priesthood, the Russian Magi. Magi traditionally celebrated fire ceremonies in towered belfries, structures once built by the heathen Russians too, and for similar reasons.

If, based on this evidence, the number of *Volkhovy* allotted to settlements in pagan Rus' were true, there might have been thousands of blood-Magi interspersed throughout the Russian clans. So let us examine the question of numbers, to see if there is any basis for this. For a start the 6th Century Sassanian King Chosroes II had some 12,000 fully-trained Orthodox Zoroastrian fire priests at his command.^{479a} After factoring in the number of trainee

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Magi studying in the Herbadestan seminaries we can probably double that number. That's without including the Magi of older pre-Sassanian schools and traditions. In the earlier period of the Magian faith, when the more grandiose fires of Persia burned on lofty places, and at the heights of the temples, a group of eight priests and initiated deacons performed the *Haoma* ceremony. From the 7th Century AD the numbers of Persian priests were drastically reduced due to the intensity of the Islamic Jihads in Central Asia, and the murder of priestly Magi. Subsequently the number of fire-priests required to perform the ceremony was reduced from eight to two; a desperate and unpalatable measure introduced to save the Mazdaean religion from total collapse. The following is a schematic layout of a Magian fire altar, and the placement of each Magus participating in the rite.⁴⁸⁰ Ever since the 7th Century AD, every time a Zota Magus (in Central Asia and India) began the roll call of the priests, the assembled attendees were reminded of just how perilous the situation had become for their faith. Before those turbulent years of the Muslim conquests, when the people gathered for the *Haoma* ceremony (on the solstices and equinoxes), the *Zota* called for a priest to fill each position, in turn. He would mention the post of say *Asnatar*, and the Magus who fulfilled that office would say, "I will come". The *Zota* would do so for each of the seven other ceremonial offices at the altar until all eight members had assumed their correct position at the altar.⁴⁸¹ Then the congregation, the saints and all the faithful departed were invited to attend.

However in the centuries following the time of the Muslim conquests, the *Zota* summoned each Magus priest into position, but there would be a deathly silence ... until only one voice replied, that of the *Raspi*, who answered on behalf of Magi who no longer existed (because most of them had been brutally slain or abandoned the priestly vocation), and filled the roll of every other office bearer. He busily fed the fire, brought the milk and water, cleansed the equipment and so forth. From Lozko's description of the Russian *Volkhvy* ceremonies, it is fairly certain the Rus' Magians followed a more archaic form of the *Haoma* rite and employed the older number of eight Magus priests in the performance of the *Haoma* ceremony. Because Rus' Magians had no such problems ensuring that these positions were manned, it suggests there were probably more Magi living in Russia and the Baltic in the 10th Century AD than there were in Islamic Central Asia and Iran! In olden times the Magi were known to have used the larger "crew" of deacons and priests at the bigger ceremonial fires, and it is possible that the same number of Magi were required at the smaller hamlets and settlements.

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HAVANAN

HE WHO BRINGS THE HAOMA FILLED MORTAR, AND STONES TO THE ALTAR. HE SQUASHES AND STRAINS THE HAOMA.

RATHWISKAR

HE WHO ASSISTS IN THE WASHING AND PERFUMING OF THE WOODS, AND HELPS MIX THE HAOMA.

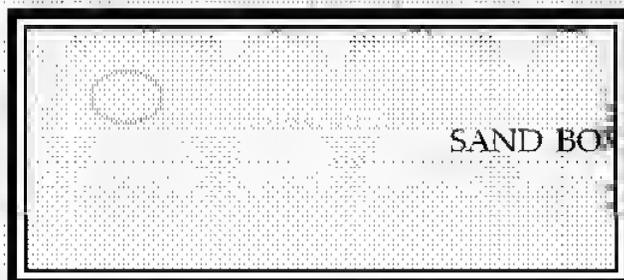
ATAREVAKHSH

THE FIRE-TENDER WHO GATHERS, DRIES AND PURIFIES THE SACRED WOODS, THEN BRINGS IT TO THE YASNA CEREMONY. HE FEEDS THE FIRE THROUGHOUT THE CEREMONY.

ZOTA

HE IS THE HEAD PRIEST WHO PERFORMS THE OFFERING ACCORDING TO THE DUE RITES. HE BEGINS THE CEREMONY BY CALLING ALL THE PRIESTS INTO POSITION, THEN THE CONGREGATION.

MORTAR



ALTAR

SROSHAVAR'Z

THE MAGUS WHO READS PARTS OF THE YASNA, AND OTHERWISE ASSISTS THE ZOTA IN PERFORMING THE HAOMA CEREMONY.

FRABARDAR

HE WHO BRINGS THE PROPER EQUIPMENT TO THE ALTAR AT THE PROPER TIME, SUCH AS THE STRAINING RING, CAULDRON, MEAT ETC.

ASNATAR

HE WHO CLEANSSES ALL EQUIPMENT USED DURING THE CEREMONY.

ABERAD

HE WHO BRINGS THE PITCHERS OF SACRED WATER AND MILK TO THE ALTAR TO BE MIXED WITH THE HAOMA JUICE.

THE POSITIONING OF MAGI AROUND THE SAND BOX AND HOLY FIRE ACCORDING TO THE OLD ORDER OF THE RITE.

Offices of the subordinate Magi

The pagan Rus' religious ceremonies used a number of auxiliary staff and priests who performed vital roles in the performance of these rites. The Russian offices⁴⁸² were similar to those of the Magian *Haoma* priests, and were as follows;

- 1 Head priest
- 2 Assistant priest and reader
- 3 Tender of the fire, wood collector and purifier
- 4 Equipment bearer and usher
- 5 Sacrificial-gift bearers
- 6 Cleansers
- 7 Plant gatherer
- 8 Temple guardian

TENDER OF THE FIRE, WOOD COLLECTOR AND PURIFIER

The Slavs had priests who performed the role of fire tender, wood collector and purifier, which would make their functions equivalent to those the Magian *Atarevaksh*. Such a priest might have been known in Slavia as a Sobimir. We know that an *Atarevaksh* was charged with chopping, examining and purifying timber to feed the eternal flame during the five daily ceremonies. The Magi considered it sinful to place flawed kindling into the holy fire,

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and so wood had to be inspected thoroughly before it was lovingly fed into its consuming flames. Even kindling for the campfire or home hearth had to be checked for imperfections. Wood that was rotting or green, or being eaten by worms and other parasites, was never suitable to place on any fire. The Magian text *Visparad* mentions that the wood had to be well dried, so the Magi would probably have collected their timber a year or so before hand and left it to stand, allowing it to dry out and mature enough to be used as fuel. In his *Geography*, Strabo calls this type of Magus *Pyraethi*.⁴⁸³

EQUIPMENT BEARER AND USHER

The Slavic ceremonial role of equipment bearer and usher was similar to that of the Magian *Frabadar*. Frabadars ensured that all the proper equipment was brought to the *Haoma* ceremony, and at the appropriate time of year, ushered one family at a time into the temple to receive the holy drink. He probably also maintained good order during the ceremony.

SACRIFICIAL-GIFT BEARERS

In Slavia this ceremonial position equated with that of *Aberad* Magus. The *Aberad* brought pitchers of milk and holy spring water to the altar during the *Haoma* ceremony. At other times of the day the *Aberad* relieved devotees of the gifts they wished to bestow upon the gods, and brought them into the inner sanctuary, into the presence of their deities.

CLEANSERS

1. The heathen Russian cleansers probably had a role similar to the *Asnatar*. This type of cleanser served in the office of washer and baptizer, tasked with purifying every piece of ritual equipment used by the Magi officiating at a given ceremony. In this connection we find a superficial similarity between the Magian title *Asnatar* and the Old Norse term *Suthnautar* (those who shared meat at the Norse pagan assemblies).⁴⁸⁴

In Old Icelandic we also find *ausa*, which meant "to sprinkle" or "to pour".⁴⁸⁵ This meaning appears in two contexts clearly connected with pagan rites. One was "pour it over the ash tree" and the other usage was intertwined with baptisms or sprinklings with earth or water. For this reason I suggest that *ausa* was distantly related to *asnatar*.

2. Another form of Magian cleanser was known as a *Rathwiskar*. Whenever buns, pancakes, woods, green twigs or plantstuffs were to be burned as sacrificial offerings, they had to be doused with a little spring-water in order to purify them, and left to dry for a short while on the altar, close to the fire. This purification of offerings was carried out by the *Rathwiskar* cleanser, who also assisted with the straining and mixing of the *Haoma*. Besides these ceremonial responsibilities, such a Magus was also required to consecrate the sacred spring water and perform the *Bareshnum* ceremony for penitents.

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ASSISTANT PRIEST AND READER

The Magus who filled the role of *Sroshavar*'z was the Zota's assistant priest. In Iran and Central Asia (following the 7th Century) this role was taken over by the *Raspi*, the new word for an assistant priest, who had to single-handedly carry out the ritual tasks originally assigned to a total of seven subordinate offices during the *Haoma* ceremony. In pagan Rus' however, he would have only been required to undertake the duties of a *Sroshavar*'z. Before the ceremony began, the reader recited, and sung elements of the Gathic hymns, which moved the officiating *Volkho* and much of the pagan congregation to tears.

PLANT GATHERER

Russian plant gatherers were probably Magi fulfilling the traditional role of *Havanan*. The *Havanan* was tasked with gathering the *Haoma* plant and bringing it to the altar during the *Haoma* ceremony, carried inside the mortar used to squash it. He also brought the *varesa* (the straining ring with bull's hairs attached), and the straining cloth used to wring the last juices from the pulpy mass remaining in the mortar. On a normal day, the *Havanan* also gathered local medicinal herbs, and made trips to major trading centers abroad as required, where he could get the sorts of precious woods, herbs and spices needed by the entire community. They were normally accompanied by merchants while doing business overseas. We know the Norsemen had the word *Hver-gaetir* (Old Icelandic: "a cauldron-keeper" or "a cook")⁴⁸⁶ but have no evidence that it was used in a ritual context.

FIRE GUARDIAN

Armed fire guardians normally stood watch at the entrance of temples and sanctuaries, to prevent the desecration of the sacred precincts.

CHOIR

Following the lead of the reader, and at times prompted by the head priest, the polyphonic refrains of the choir swung into action, allowing the crowd to become immersed in the mood of the moment, and mentally prepared to receive the drink of immortality. The choir was probably composed of *Ehrpats*, accompanied by musicians.

The hierarchy of The Magi

In pagan Rus' rulers had their own personal Magus sacrificers. In one Rus' temple we find the glagolitic inscription "Az esm' Mirobog, zhrets Ol'gov" which means "I am Mirobog, Oleg's Sacrificer".⁴⁸⁷ Zoroastrian and Zurvanite law prescribed that every pagan ruler sponsor and protect his own Magus, who would become the principal sacrificer for his settlement and all who lived in it. Naturally, the more important the settlement, the more prestigious the Magus needed to perform the required ceremonies, on behalf of their

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sponsor. Because the fullest range of traditional *Volkhov* "clerical" terminologies never survived the transition to Christianity, and because they were essentially a Magian "mystery" priesthood, reliable Persian terms are used here as a point of reference. However, as with the subordinate initiates, the *Volkhov* internal rankings may well have been known by more Slavicized names.

EHRPAT

An *Ehrpat* was an elder, deacon, theologian, scribe and/or tender of god's fire. In the eastern world, the *Ehrpat* wore a rounded turban as headdress, which was normally of white cloth. Whether they wore them in pagan Rus' or not is not recorded however. Turbans were fairly common in the Volga area, especially among the Finns, but from a historical perspective it is difficult to evaluate whether this adoption of the turban was a result of Muslim or Zoroastrian influence.

ZOTA

The *Zota* Magus was the head priest of a given ceremonial group, who offered up the supreme sacrifice of the *Haoma* on behalf of the people. He summoned together the priests and congregation to begin the ceremony, and ensured that all ritual observances were performed to the letter, free of defects in their execution.

DASTUR / RATU - HIGH PRIEST

"it is necessary to maintain the religion by rule (dastur), and to practice obedience to the commands of the high-priests; and every duty that people perform they should perform by their authority. For it is declared in the good religion, that, if they accomplish as many good works as the leaves of the trees, or the sand-grains of the desert, or the drops of rain, which they do not perform by command of the high-priests, or to their satisfaction, no merit whatever attains to their souls, and for the good works they have done they obtain sin as a recompense. While such a one is living it is not proper to call him righteous, and when he dies he does not attain to heaven, and not a single archangel comes near him. He does not make his escape from the hands of the demons and Ahriman, and he does not obtain a release from hell. Because duty and good works attain to the soul on those occasions when they perform them with the authority of the high-priests and those acquainted with the religion, and when they give them one-tenth of those good works".⁴⁸⁸

A *Dastur* was the Magian high-priest of a given district, roughly equal in status to a Christian bishop, an office bestowed upon them by a *Magupat*. They were also termed *Ratu*. Great temporal and spiritual power lay in their hands. As with all Zoroastrian/Zurvanite priests, *Dastur* wore a pointed mitre or rounded hat. Only a *Dastur* could light the holy flame in a temple, or restart the lower-grade altars which had to be snuffed out and re-lit annually.

I believe the term *Rotu*,⁴⁸⁹ which referred to a pagan Slav religious brotherhood, might

have been derived from the word *Ratu*. If so the *Rotu* was probably a college of *Ratu Magi* residing in the Balkans in the post-conversion era.

MAGUPAT

The office of *Magupat* was roughly similar to that of a Christian archbishop or metropolitan. He ruled over a number of *dasturs*, their *Volkhov* communes and settlements. The highest ranking *Volkhov* were known by the title "Doctor", and, according to Professor Vernadskiy, probably resided in Tmutorokan in the Caucuses. It is probable that the *Volkhov* rank of Doctor was equal to that of *Magupat* (the official title used by the Eastern Magi). Moreover the Zurvanites also had a sect of Magi known as the "Doctors of Islam". So there could be a plausible connection between the *Volkhov* Doctors and the Doctors of Islam who formerly resided in India

MAGUPATAN MAGUPAT

The *Magupatan Magupat* was a supreme Magus, of comparable status to a Christian patriarch or pontiff. Amongst the Magi there were probably only ever five of them at any one time; one for each of the original Magian "patriarchates". Whether they were reduced to two in number as the Muslims destroyed three of their major Patriarchates is hard to say, but nonetheless a logical assumption.

The pagan Russes also had a supreme Magus, who stayed close to the *Velikiy Knyaz'* (Grand Prince) at his main seat of power, as his constant companion and confidant whenever he travelled.⁴⁹⁰ He was regarded in those days as the principal "Sacrificer of the Realm". But who was he? Whether the *Velikiy Knyaz'*s prime Magus was formerly known in Roman times as the *Pater Patrum*, the Mithraic pagan *Pontifex Maximus*, is pure conjecture, but one worthy of very serious consideration. In support of this conjecture, Ptolemy's c. 150 AD world map utilizes his own brand of cartographic notations. Conspicuous is the depiction of five large Magian-style fire altars, and two sets of columns; the only holy sites appearing on his world maps. They were situated in Libya (Are Neptuni), Babylon (Are Herrulis or Herculis), Medea (Are Sabee), Russia (Alexander's altar) and one site in the Southern Ukraine - Are Caesaris, ie; Caesar's altar⁴⁹¹ (which is depicted in a manner identical to a royal Persian fire altar). Why, in 150 AD, were there no temples worth drawing on the Greek /Roman/Indian mainland, but only in Russia and the east? Why was Caesar's Altar located in the Southern Ukraine, and not in Rome? Clearly Ptolemy, one of the most famous scientists of the ancient world, saw these as major world cult centers, perhaps the most important, at least in his eyes.

And there is an even more tantalizing option. Since all Magi were blood relatives, the *Magupatan Magupat* of Rus' may even have been the venerable Patriarch of all the Magi (known as the *Peer-e-moghaan*,⁴⁹² or *Masmoghan*, which means "the Great Magian") whose

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former seat of power lay in the heavily fortified Iranian city of Rai, from whence he ruled the entire Magian world. In ancient times this Magian "godfather" most likely acted as a mediator between all cult variants, trying to iron out any disputation that arose when sects started stepping on the toes of other groups. The *Peer-e-Moghtazan* might have relocated to Russia after having been squeezed out of the traditional Magian homelands of Persia, Babylon or Silver Bulgaria by the violence of the Muslim onslaught. Yet it is far more likely that such an eminent personage migrated to China with the greater part of the Magian royals. Liaisons between the Magi and the Chinese were already well developed by the time Magian Iran was destroyed. Even before 1,000 BC, numerous Magi are believed to have been employed at the Chinese imperial court, serving predominantly as expert astrologers and doctors.⁴⁹³ The Chinese once wrote of them using an ideogram resembling the sign of the cross, an insignia later energized and popularized by Christianity.⁴⁹³

During the Middle Ages one of Rome and Byzantium's gravest political and religious concerns was the existence of a Bogomil Anti-Pope⁴⁹⁴ in the Balkans, a key figure whose name cropped up time and again in matters relating to heresy. Perhaps the "Supreme Magus" who formerly resided among the Rus' later re-emerged in Mediaeval history as the untensured Anti-Pope mentioned by Stoyanov, he who had shifted into the Balkans following the conversion of Rus' to Christianity. There he welded the heretics and magicians into a single coherent Bogomil movement, by an agreed oath of brotherhood. His success in achieving this can perhaps be attributed to the fact that he as the only truly common link between all the various cults, and an extremely unifying force amongst the pagan elements. But, did so many organized cults join forces under the *Rotu* following a formal council, during which a planned collaboration or amalgamation of Magi and heretics was discussed, and formally figured out between all parties? Or would it be a haphazard amalgamation that would take centuries? Could such a hypothetical council have been in any way linked with the military pact being organized between the Bulgar Prince Vladimir-Rasate and the Frankish Magus-King Arnulf? Many questions still remain.

As early as 1075 AD, Adam of Bremen spoke of an organized pagan priesthood, complete with monastic-style raiment and their own pagan "Pope", then operating among the Prussians and Balts. This priesthood included god-priests⁴⁹⁵ who were comparable in internal status to a Christian bishop. I believe that Adam's observations are nothing less than a description of a Zoroastrian or Zurvanite *Magupatan Magupat* and his *Dasturs*, very likely saturated with exiled *Volkhov*, plus substantial elements of the indigenous Baltic Magus priesthood.

But what variety of Magian did they represent? Did they favor good over evil, or evil over good? From Adam of Bremen's accounts of the Old Prussians, and his high praise for them,⁴⁹⁶ one gathers that they were the epitome of "white" or Zoroastrian piety, with moral

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standards perhaps even in excess of the surrounding Christians. They drank holy milk or mead according to their station in life, and prized goodness, peace and hard work in the fields above all else. If this was the case, then they may even have had their own Zoroastrian priesthood, which would never have fully integrated with the white and black Magi of the Slav Zurvanites, who would have been responsible for the idol temples in the lands of the Germans and Western Slavs. An unknown number of heathen Baltic priests were in no way allied to the "white" Magi. For there were among them diviners and necromancers garbed in dark, hooded "monastic" robes, perhaps indicating they were black priests, those who interceded before the infernal deities, bringing tithes. Indeed the *Treaty of Christburg* relates that the Balts had predatory priests who greatly lauded the crimes and infamy of their followers.⁴⁹⁷

Whether these Baltic sorcerers, were in any way linked with the Mediaeval dualistic Balkan Christian heretics (such as the Bulgar Bogomils and the Massalians) is likewise unknown.

A strange turn of events occurred throughout the Baltic beginning some time around 1400 AD. Under siege from the Church-inspired task force of Teutonic knights, the Balts accepted a pagan Pontiff to discretely rule over the entire region, instead of a king.⁴⁹⁸ This meant a swap to theocratic rule, whereas previously this had never been the custom. Only uncertainty surrounds this man. Where had he come from .. Bulgaria? Rus'? or had he always been there? Or, was he only one of many high ranking pagan priests (magupats), spread out over several nations? In the Baltic there was still talk of these man-gods in the 16th Century! This much is certain. If this pagan High Priest of the Balts turns out to be the same as the religious leader of the Russes, or equal to the Bulgar Anti-Pope, it most likely indicates simultaneous (or even a moving center of) pagan operations in the Balkans and on the German frontier. It may well be that the very presence of these divine-figures (who were the glue holding the old pagan faith together), was one of the extenuating factors prompting the Teutonic knights to occupy the Baltic in the first instance. The mobility of the black and white Magian presence is telling. We see them in ancient Rus', Finland, Scandinavia, Hungary and among the Bulgars. That they milled in the Baltic region during the 13th Century helps validate an actual movement of "heretics" and witches (some of whom were engaging in devil-worship) into the Holy Roman Empire, something revealed by inquisitorial authorities in France, Germany and Scandinavia. They proved to be the motive for German killing sprees in the Baltic ... a kind of anti-heresy, "Christian Jihad"; Rome's last ditch attempt to force the Magi and Magian-Christians back out of Europe.

So came the Northern Crusades. Hostilities broke out against the Polish pagans during the Wendish Crusades of the mid-12th Century and progressed on to the anti-Prussian Crusades as Catholic Germans steamrolled their way eastward. The fighting was very

bloody, on both sides of the fence! Beginning in 1226 AD and ending c.1274 AD, the subjugation of the Prussians was finally accomplished, allowing the Germans to pierce far into Baltic heathendom. Victory for the Teutons was complete and utter. Everywhere insurrection was violently quelled, regardless of the cost. After decades of combat, the once densely inhabited area of Samland was reduced to a pocket of little more than 20,000 inhabitants. The Magi, the intercessors of pagan society, were earmarked for annihilation by sword and fire, and with their demise would come the fall of state paganism.

Priestly accoutrements

The Magi required a wide range of apparatus for both ritual and magical purposes.⁴⁹⁹ Almost all the Russian magical apparatus described below (with the exception of the sword, ring, and trident) were used by the average mediaeval European Magus. In the following range of equipment, it is almost impossible for archaeologists to prove that a given artifact was crafted for ritual usage alone. After all, none of them have flashing neon signs, which highlight their original magico-religious usage for the untrained eye. Be that as it may, there are many items that could, without doubt, have been used by Magians in their ceremonies, especially when one considers the Magian presence in Rus', and distinct archeological parallels for such equipment in Iran. Without a foreknowledge of this historical context, interpretations which dub a given artifact as magical are often seen as wildly speculative. Yet it should be remembered that something as seemingly mundane as fire and cattle were worshiped in Slavia. No archaeologist could ever grant spent ashes and bovine skeletons a religious interpretation on the strength of a find, unless they were ritually altered in some observable way. Only interpolating linguistic and historical sources readily allows for such interpretations, a practice many archaeologists are loathe to indulge in, believing that it somehow detracts from the scientific nature of their discipline. On the contrary, cross-disciplinary activity provides very useful interpretative tools. As you are about to see collectively it confirms what folklore has long told us all along, that European witches were once living beings, folk reverencing a plethora of spirits and gods with pointy hats, brooms, cauldrons and other paraphernalia.

THE ROBES OF THE MAGI

As you have already read, the white and black Magus priests received robes of magical power from their respective gods; their priestly weapons in the cosmic war between good and evil. Without these garments the Magi were unable to fight the spiritual war, or offer up sacrifices for the people, since divine power was imbued within the fabric itself.

In Aryan tradition, the power of a Brahman came from a sacred thread slung over his shoulder. For the Magians it was such a thread, spun by virgins and woven into their white robes, that gave the white priests their "white" magical abilities. Considering the principles

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Fig 4a.



Fig 5.



Fig 6.



Fig 9.



Fig 10.



Fig 7.



Fig 8.



Fig 11.



Fig 4. The god Apollo-Mithras-Helios-Hermes.

Fig 5. An unknown Parthian with beard and conical mitre. Perhaps a Magus.

Fig 6. Assorted Medean headgear.

Fig 7. Mediaeval heretics were often portrayed in this fashion.

Fig 8. Metal plaque from pagan Scandinavia. I believe it represents a caftaned Magus priest or priestess bearing a conical *hawan* libation cup.

Fig 9. Pointy hats were worn by the Scythians of Bronze Age Russia.

Fig 10. Medean bonnet.

Fig 11. Parthian royal attire, both male and female.

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of ritual inversion, the black robes worn during the performance of infernal sorcery were probably spun by temple prostitutes, who, according to the Magi, were affiliated with the devil-worshippers.

Volkhvy robes consisted of a full-length white garment with extremely full sleeves and a large hood attached to it, though it is possible that it might be a bonnet with a large veil draped down the back. Though similar to the vestments worn by Zoroastrian priests, these robes were embroidered on the front and did up at the sides by means of studs^{499a} (a feature of Parthian dress).

Magi dressed like priests of the Brahmin caste, who traditionally wore a clean linen shirt, carried a staff, and encompassed their lengthy locks of hair with a head ring. Beards of some length, and plaiting were the norm amongst them. While moving about rural provinces they dressed in *"the skins of fawns or gazelles (or, I suspect, ibex)"*⁵⁰⁰ A slightly different tradition existed in Russia, for there the *Volkhvy* Magi donned wolf pelts. Assyrian artwork depicts the more ancient Magi in varying terms, but commonly as men wearing calf-length pointy-tipped boots, pointed headdress, headbands and leopard-skin cloaks.⁵⁰¹ These ancient Magi are also depicted in artwork with lengthy robes, and a stole (a scarf-like length of cloth) draped around the neck (which hung down the front of the robe).⁵⁰²

Magian headdress varied. It could be a turban, or headwear either dome-shaped, pointy or flat-topped. A 1,000 BC weather-mummified Caucasian (presumably Iranian) corpse chanced upon in Eurasia may confirm one element of black Magian attire. A female found wore *"a 60 cm high black, brimmed conical hat identical to the witch's headgear of European folklore"*.⁵⁰³ In the 500 BC mound-covered Celtic "prince tomb" of Hotchdorf, the interred royal wore a pointy white hat made of birchbark.⁵⁰⁴ He was, by my estimation, one of the white princes, and a Celt for that matter. A wagon was also found within the buried death-house, together with a cauldron (which contained mead remnants) and drinking horns.⁵⁰⁴ His body, bedecked in gold (including a torque), lay on an elaborate bronze divan supported by six effigies, each with a wheel between their legs.⁵⁰⁴ Though unmentioned in the source, there seems to be a remarkable resemblance between the imagery found on the couch and Scandinavian bronzework of the same period.⁵⁰⁵ Perhaps these dress codes enjoyed wide popularity, for some 1,700 years later, in the 13th Century AD, the Russians of Galich were described as wearing *"felt caps, pointed and very high"*.⁵⁰⁶

According to Strabo, *"most of the (Magian) people wear a double tunic that reaches to the middle of the shin, and a piece of linen cloth round the head; and each man has a bow and a sling."*⁵⁰⁷ He also mentioned the linen shirt worn beneath their over-shirt.

From linguistics especially, we can deduce beyond all doubt that Magian ritual dress was worn in Mediaeval pagan Rus', and well into the Christian period for that matter. The Magian treatise *Shayast La-Shayast* provides details on the precise design and manufacture

of the mandatory white Magian holy *kustik* belt and sacred linen shirt mentioned just previously.⁵⁰⁶ One style of shirt had two halves (a shirt and a "skirt" or apron. If pleated, some might even liken it to a kilt), and the other was a single pattern smock. We find potential evidence of both styles in Russia. In Novgorod for instance, a pagan metallic wand was excavated surmounted by a figure that seems to be wearing a pleated kilt of some kind. A one-piece smock was excavated on the Swedish Isle of Birka c. 9th Century. It was of Eastern Slav genesis⁵⁰⁹ and of the same style that continued to be worn throughout much of Russia and Slavia, even until this century.

In so far as the shirt is concerned we do not find a word survival of *sapikih*, which was used in Sassanian times when referring to the Magian sacred shirt. What we do find though is a much older Persian word *kurta*. The name of the Russian knee-length linen smock (*kurtka* or *kurta*) comes from the Old Persian word *kurta*, a term once used to describe Persian holy shirts.⁵¹⁰ It was to be found in the Turkic as *kurta* ("a short dress or skirt") not to mention Parthian and Soghdian ("a shirt"). We also find a similar connection with the Old Norse words *kyrtill* ("a shirt") or *kyrtle* ("a tunic").⁵¹¹ *Kyrtill* and *kyrtle* were either Slavic loan words picked up in Russia and transported into Scandinavia with Russian immigrants, or were used by Magian Norsemen (perhaps such as those who attacked Moorish Spain) when referring to their sacred shirts. Another Old Norse word for a shirt was *serkr*, which apparently comes from the Greek, and therefore a different cultural tradition.

Building further on this argument, Mediaeval Russian males also wore a knee-length overgarment known as a *svyato*⁵¹² (which is cognate with the Slavic words *sventa* or *sveta* ("holy" or "saintly")). The word *svyato* evidently originated from the Avestan Persian *spenta* (a word also meaning "saintly" or "holy", and which referred to the Magus saints), rather than the Latin *sanctus* or the Greek *hagios* (which applied to Christian saints). For this reason I suspect Russian men wore a Magian holy outer garment over the top of their *kurta*. Since they trussed themselves about the waist with the obligatory sash belt, it is plausible that the linen shirt went ungirdled, and the belt was worn around the *svyato* instead. Nevertheless they might have worn two sash belts, one securing their shirt, the other their *svyato*. It is my contention that these varied holy shirts were worn by Magian Turkic tribesmen (probably Bulgars), Russians and many other Slavs, plus an undetermined number of Norsemen too.

Zoroastrians (and presumably Zurvanites) considered it sinful to take off the shirt and sacred girdle (*kustik*) because of their efficacy in providing protection against the *drugs* (demons). It was a crime punishable by whipping to walk more than a few paces without the belt on. So when Magians changed their clothing, and re-girdled, they did so in a stationary position. Accordingly the Magian sacred shirts often became very dirty, owing to the fact that they were removed only with great trepidation. Is it a coincidence that another Russian word for "a shirt", *rubashka*, comes from the root word *rub*, which implies they were

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grubby in appearance? Well they were heavily soiled in Leo the Deacon's account of the Russes he encountered. Only Prince Svyatoslav's white smock was free from the ingrained sweat and dirt that so tarnished the clean appearance of his many Rus' troops. In the colder months it was evidently worn under clothing, with its hem left hanging out, giving the impression of a dress, apron, or even a kilt, which had been attached.

Magian scripture tells us that the *kustik* belt's protective power lay in a magical thread sewn into it. Pagan Russes also wore this type of "uniform" (a white smock and belt) and considered it obscene to remove their sash belt,⁵¹³ which was of the same dimensions as the Magian *kustik*. What is even more overwhelming is that the Russian word for "a sash" or "a belt" is *kushak*, and therefore similar to *kustik*. *Kushak* is also the Turkic word for "a belt", so it is possible that the concept of a *kushak* sash belt was imported into Russia with the Turkic Bulgars, but I am more inclined to think that it was a term mutually inherited by both Slavs and Turks. Consider also that the Russians have the word *poyasnit'*, which means "to put on a belt". The root word in this case is *yas* or *po-yas*, which suggest that a person became enlightened or illuminated through the act of putting on a belt. Due to the apparently Magian nature of the Russian attire, the source of this light and wisdom was most likely the sun, the divine *Ahura Mazda*. Thus *poyasnit'* was "to become enlightened", or be a true Mazda-yasner (ie; white Magian) by wearing the belt.

The Russian word *beliy* ("white") and the Lithuanian *baltas* ("white"), could be related to the Old Icelandic *belti*, as well as the Swedish, Danish and Norwegian word *balte* (all of which mean "a belt").⁵¹⁴ Here there appears to be a connection between "white" and "belt". I perceive this Nordo-Balto-Slavic phonetic connection as arising from the interrelationship between white Magians and the all-important *kustik* belt.

Russian and Finnish pagan priests probably wore a *kebenyak* also, a hooded overgarment or cape. The term is derived from the Turkic and Kirghiz words *kebanak*.⁵¹⁵ These I link with the verb *kebovat'* (Russian: "to perform sorcery", "to tell the future"), a variant of which is found in the Finnish/Saami languages. In Saami a *kobbat* was "a summer garment", and related to the word *kobenyak* ("a hood", "a hat", "a bag", or "a sack").⁵¹⁵ Thus there appears to be a link between magic and a hooded garment, in the Russian language particularly. Based on the Turkic affiliations with these words, such a magical garment was probably imported into Russia from Eurasia, together with other oriental religious traditions.

Russians wore caftans just as the Magians once did. *Sarafan* (Russian: "a caftan") comes from the Turkic *sarapa*, or the Persian *serapa*, which meant "a garment of honour", or "a ceremonial garment".⁵¹⁶ Doubtless to say these were not Christian ceremonial caftans, but Magian (Turkic shamans and Buddhist monks wore safron robes, rather than the more impressive Magian caftans, during their rites). As in Magian times the Russian caftan was traditionally worn with a girdle.

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Russian women commonly wore a pointy tiara-like headdress known as the *kokoshnik* (so called because it resembles a cock's crest), which secured a veil in place. Strabo tells us that "Persians wear turbans not unlike those of the priestly Magi". From other accounts we know that the full attire consisted of a colourful caftan worn over a linen shirt (*kurta*), plus a turban of sorts (worn by *Ehrpats* especially). Turbans not dissimilar to those of the Magi were worn by Finns all along the Upper Volga, presumably as far north as the lands of the Volga Bulgars. As for Russian usage they seem absent from written sources, but are seemingly depicted in manuscript illuminations.⁵¹⁷

As in Scythia, Mediaeval Russians continued to wear pointed hats, often lined with fur along the rim.⁵¹⁸ Similar hats were worn by Magians. In Russia the lavishness of a hat was related to the wearer's social status.

The name *shober*⁵¹⁹ (which applied to Russian coats of Persian design) was linguistically derived from the Arabic.

Foot cloths were commonly worn in Russia, providing adequate extra insulation against the biting coldness of their frigid environs. Since Magians were required to wear two shoes at the same time on each foot, foot cloths might also have represented the second shoe. There is also a striking similarity in the boot style preferred by Mediaeval Russians and the Magians.⁵¹⁸

MASK

The Rus' *Volkhov* had to wear masks to perform their ceremonies correctly.⁵²⁰ Because they were Magi, then the type of mask that Lozko refers to would probably be the Magian mouth veil. A mask, handkerchief or veil of cloth was traditionally worn tied around the mouth of any Magus who stood in the presence of the holy fire, ensuring the priest did not desecrate the sacred flame by breathing on it.

In the *Primary Chronicle* we discover that some Rus' pagan priests performed their ceremonies or pantomimes wearing comedy masks. The Magi simply did not wear comedy masks during a traditional *Haoma* ceremony, so this might mean that there were other pagan priests in Rus' who were not Magi, and who performed rituals that were essentially Buddhist or pagan gnostic in nature, perhaps Dionysian, Mithraic or Neo-Pythagorean. Nonetheless the Magi did perform divine comedies, a form of spiritual theatre during which important religious and mythological events were portrayed. By emulating the actions of the gods they believed they could bring about the same series of miraculous events in day to day existence.⁵²¹

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CUPS AND HORNS

The drink of immortality was always held in an ornate vessel of some kind. It could be a cup, a rhyton (a drinking horn), a gold or silver "chalice", or a ritual bucket (for mead). In connection with this, a great number of conical glass cups have been unearthed in mediaeval pagan settlements throughout Rus' and Scandinavia. This style of drinking vessel resembles the glass *Haoma* cups of the Magi (called *hawan*). Similar libation cups can often be seen in the hands of people depicted in Pecheneg funeral statues, and on the wall reliefs of the Iranian *dakhmas* (death houses) and Darius' royal monuments, or even on Assyrian reliefs.

Glass goods were a luxury item during the pagan era, in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe, appearing mainly as bowls, small beads, bangles, and of course these conical cups. Linguistics sheds some light on the ethnicity of the glass-blowers who crafted them. The Old Russian word for "glass" *st'klo* is cognate with *st'klo* or *tsklo* (Bulgarian), *steklo* (Slovenian), *st'klo* (Old Czech), *szklo* (Polish), *staklo*, *sklo* or *tsklo* (Serbo-Croatian).⁵²² Therefore Slavs applied similar terminology when referring to the produce of this specialized trade. The Balts evidently shared the same technology considering their use of the words *stiklas* (Lithuanian: "glass" or "a phial") and *stikls* (Latvian: "glass").⁵²² These many words originated in the Gothic *stikls* ("a goblet", "a cup", or even "a chalice"), and the Old High German *stechal* ("a wine cup").⁵²³

Goths were the only Europeans to fashion glassware outside of the Roman empire during the 4th Century AD. Archaeologically this "Chernyakov glass" tradition was distributed across a broad expanse of land, spanning between the Ukraine, through the Carpathians (where the main Gothic glass production center was situated), Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Czechoslovakia, and Scandinavia (where the heaviest imaginable concentrations of these artifacts are found).⁵²³ In short, we find Gothic glass goods in geographical regions that share a common linguistic inheritance regarding glass and glassware. These were also areas where ethnic Goths dwelt. In the Gothic and Old High German it more specifically denoted a drinking cup, or more particularly a libation cup or chalice.

Owing to its similarity with the previous words, the Old Icelandic *stikill* ("the pointed end of a horn")⁵²⁴ enables us to guess that the Goths crafted pointy glass drinking horns (perhaps for ritual usage, but at the very least for drinking bouts); again something already known to archaeologists. This might account for the presence of these same vessels in Slavia, Germany and Scandinavia over a broad time expanse, even into the Mediaeval pagan era. They could also be found in Anglo-Saxon England as well. Since the Goths had their own pagan priesthood, of either a Magian or pagan gnostic persuasion this explains why these Gothic glass conical horns (fig 12.1) so closely resemble Magian *hawan* libation cups.

Aryan-pagans used horns, or wooden and ceramic cups to hold the ritual drink *Soma*,

the foremost sacramental libation of the Hindus. For them, *Soma* was the "cup of clarified butter", a cup which was usually placed at the head of a devotee after they died.

The drinking horn mount shown here (fig 12.2) is of triangular shape, and can be identified as Medo-Scythian.⁵²⁵ That is, it originated in the milieu of the Magi and Scythians. It played a similar function to the triangular mounts on a horn found at the 6th-7th Century AD royal Anglo-Saxon site of Sutton Hoo, in East Anglia. Other artwork, seemingly Medo-Scythian in nature was also discovered at Sutton Hoo.⁵²⁵

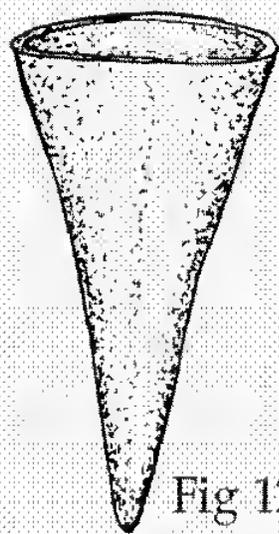


Fig 12.1



Fig 12.2

In Achaemenid times there were four distinct types of drinking vessel, three of which were incapable of being placed down without spilling the contents.⁵²⁶ These were rhytons (drinking horns), short metal cups ending in an animal head, and conical beakers.⁵²⁶ Libation buckets were the last type of drink receptacle, and were made from metal or ceramics.⁵²⁶

Sassanian Zoroastrian rhytons were large in comparison to their earlier Parthian and Achaemenid variants, characteristically terminating in an equine sculpture.⁵²⁷

For their part the Medes decorated their drinking apparatus with the typical ram's head motif. The depicted rhyton (fig 12.3) comes from the Koban region of the Caucasus, not far from Russia. The Koban exemplar was of Medean manufacture, and therefore used by Magians in that region, or brought there as pilfered booty. Owing to the close connections between Persia and this area, it is more likely to have been used for its original purpose, rather than simply transported there by accident.

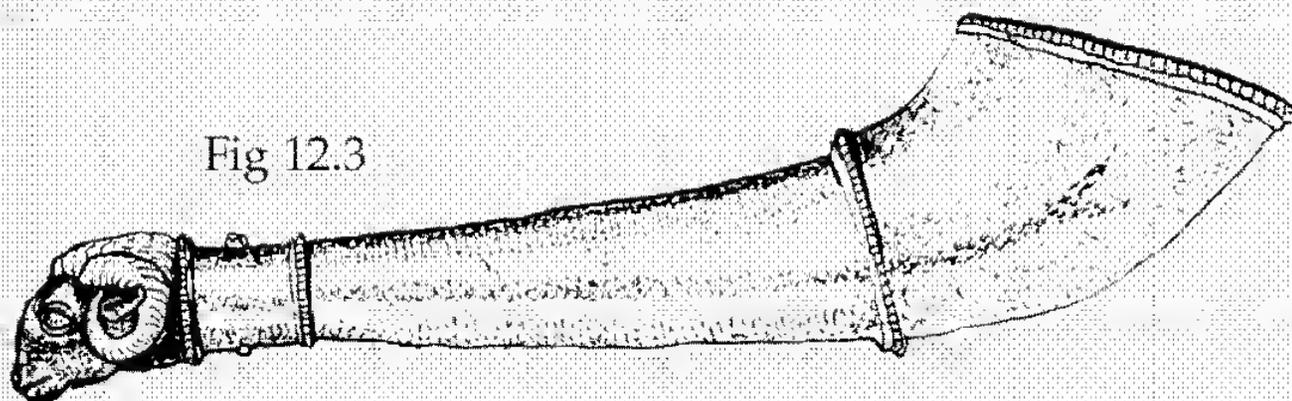


Fig 12.3

BAR SOM TWIGS

During a *Haoma* ceremony, the officiating Magus priest held a bundle of magical twigs in his left hand, and a single twig in his right as a prayer was recited. *Barsom* twigs opened a connection between the physical and metaphysical world, and were traditionally made from tamarisk twigs, though at some point during the past 1,000 years the Parsees have variously used pomegranate twigs, or metal wands. The magnificence of a given *Yasna* (*Haoma*) ceremony was determined by the number of *barsom* twigs used; the larger the bundle, the more powerful and glorious the rite. For the duration of the ceremony the *barsom* twigs rested upon a *mah-rui*, a metallic wand stand with crescent-shaped ends. *Barsom* twigs were originally cut from the tree with a knife as the *Ashem Vohu* prayer was uttered, and subsequently blessed with holy water during a ritual known as the *khub*. These twigs were gathered together and bound up a prescribed number of times with a *kustik* belt or date palm leaf (fig 13).

Fig 13



In all these ritual faggots resembled brooms, making it highly noteworthy that the word for "a broom" throughout various parts of Europe was *besom*. So there is clearly a linguistic association between Magian *barsoms* and European *besoms* (brooms, and indeed European witches' brooms). Many wands were burned in the sacred flame, but following a typical *Haoma* ceremony leftover *barsom* twigs were issued to the faithful to take back to their homes, for use during the blessing of meals, during the Magian grace. Consecrated green *barsom* twigs were kept on a high shelf in Zoroastrian / Zurvanite homes to impart protection to residents. These had to be sufficiently far from the ground to prevent women from accidentally defiling them by coming too close to the *barsom*, while menstruating. Eastern Finns were known to have kept similar "twigs" in their Lud cabins, and in just the same manner, but we cannot connect them with *barsoms* linguistically. The Norsemen used lot-twigs, naming them *hlaut-tein*.⁵²⁸

STRAINING CLOTH

The Magi needed to strain the pulverized *Haoma* plant within the mortar to extract its life-saving essence. The *Haoma* straining was often the longest part of the preparation, and was carried out by a Magus performing the role of *Havanan*. To sieve the pulp they used linen, lace or woollen cloth spun, and woven on the looms of virgins and spinsters. Similar kinds of cloth were known in Rus', either manufactured on their own looms, or imported. The looming of wool and the making of lace were highly specialized tasks, requiring adequate looming facilities and skills. In Western Europe, the best of these workshops existed in Spain, England and Flanders. The importation of woollen cloth to Rus', from the Flanders area, is

known from the archeological context, so there was definite maritime contact between Rus' and the Lowlands during the pagan and early Mediaeval era. We have no historical evidence that cloth was used in a ritual context in pagan Russia however, but being Magian they no doubt did so.

Although unspecified by Lozko in her details of *Volkhov* ritual equipment, the *Haoma* strainings performed by the Rus' Magi may have required the use of a large, often unclosed, ring made of precious metal, to which between three and seven lengthy strands of hair from the tail of a white bull were affixed. Such a ring (which the Magi called *varesa*, or *waras fulivan*) could only be used as long as the bull lived, and had to be reconsecrated for use before each ceremony. The heavy *Varesa* rings, designed of precious metal, were supposed to be discarded once the bull had died.

Varesa rings were depicted in ritual scenes engraved on Mithraic gems, providing proof that Roman Mithraism and certain Egyptian rites contained common features of Magian ritualism. They also resemble a ring shown in the hand of a horned dancer embossed on the well-known libation horn unearthed in Denmark. Throughout the Celtic and Germanic world large numbers of what seem to be torques have been found in votive deposits. Were these torques just exquisite pieces of jewellery, or could they have been discarded *Haoma* straining rings? If some of them were straining rings, then the eyelets at each end of these many torques may have been used to attach and anchor the lengths of tail hair.

BLESSED RODS

The Magi also had a type of rod with a piece of iron running down the center, and a cut gem at one end. It may have closely resembled the "wand" remains unearthed at the Sutton Hoo burial.⁵²⁹

The Magus' rod was supposed to have been surmounted by a cut diamond, (which were probably used for astronomical purposes, possibly for the drilling of shafts through rock, crafting talismanic gemstones, or shaping other substances considered too hard for metal tools. Some astronomical devices in the *Almagest* required precision cutting and drilling to achieve the proper results.

The Magi were supposed to have maintained the lapidary skills of ancient Babylon. One account of Simon the Magus' miraculous abilities (from St Clement of Rome) states that he could bore through solid rock as if it were mere clay (no doubt the action of a diamond tipped drilling rod).⁵³⁰ Engraved gems were sometimes found in the keeping of witches during the Inquisitions, so these magical rods were quite possibly used to execute these mystical etchings.

Norsemen probably used magical rods, for the term *tein-vondr* "a wand" or "a rod" exists in Old Icelandic,⁵³¹ as does *spa-gandr* ("a divination rod").⁵³²

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Special rods were also used by the heathen priests during the tending of the sacred fires, to heap the ash in a special way, and shift sacred woods into position for combustion.

CAULDRON AND TRIPOD

The cauldron was a quintessential item of Magian equipment, needed to boil the milk, holy spring water and *Haoma*. Cauldrons were also used by the Aryans to boil the horse sacrificed during the *Asoamedha* ritual. Mediaeval Europe experienced the return of cauldrons (once widely used during pagan times). If one lends credibility to the sort of details that emerged during the witch trials, cauldrons were being employed by the white and black "witches" during their assemblies. The ceremonial use of these cauldrons⁵³³ by both groups of witches is not so much evidence of "Hubble, bubble, toil and trouble", but much rather the ongoing performance of Magian (or even Aryan pagan) sacrificial rites during the Middle Ages.



Fig 14.1

As discussed, *chara* was the main Slavic word for "a cauldron", and linguistically it preserves the connection between magic and the cauldron, not to mention the oriental origins of these concepts. We find another Russian term for "a cauldron", *kotjol* (and variants of it), mutually shared by the diverse Slavic and Germanic-speaking nations. Some have guessed that it came from the Latin word for "a basin", *catilus*. This is where the English word *kettle* comes from.

Other utensils were needed to contain the holy butter (to fuel the fire), spades, cauldrons and diverse plates and bowls. The Old Russian word *chasha* meant "a cup" or "a bowl".⁵³⁴ The same word was found in the Bulgarian and Serbo-Croatian. It also appears as *czasza* (Polish), *chishe* (Czech), and *kosi* (Old Prussian),⁵³⁴ not to mention a few other independently evolved forms found in the Baltic region. There is a similarity between these words and the Old Indian *casaka* ("a cup" or "a goblet") and the Armenian *chashak* ("an eating utensil"). To

this I will also add *tashta*, Avestan for "a bowl" or "a saucer", vessels used during the *Haoma* ritual.⁵³⁴ Thus, bearing in mind the Magian presence in Rus', it may well be that the word *chasha* (and its variants) entered into the Baltic, Russian, Bulgarian and diverse Slavic lexicons with terms like *dron tashta* ("a dron platter used in Magian services") and *surakhdar tastija* (a straining plate with nine holes punched in it, again used in the *Haoma* ceremony).

A number of artifacts found in Scandinavia and northern Russia display not only Russian manufacture, but substantial Sassanian Persian stylistic features. For this reason they may have been ritually used, but it is impossible to prove they had anything beyond secular use.

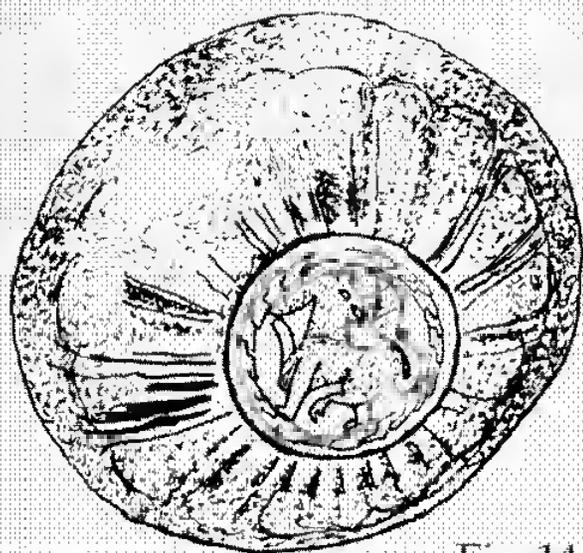


Fig 14.2

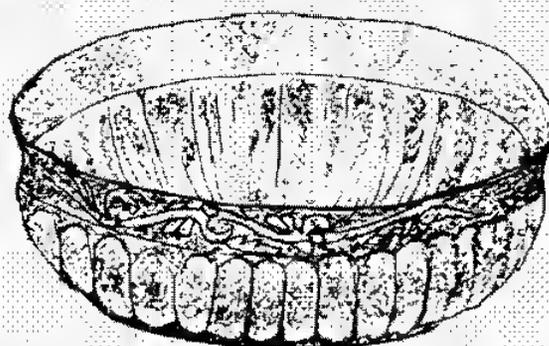


Fig 14.3



Fig 14.1. A panel from the Iron Age Gundestrup cauldron, Jutland, Denmark. Note the elephants, griffons and menacing wolf or dog, as well as the head band and torque worn by the figure shown. Considering the smallness of their ears, the elephants depicted were most likely of the Indian variety.

Fig 14.2. Sassanian or Romanesque-style bowl, Uppsala Sweden, 11th C. AD.

Fig 14.3. Sassanian-style bowls from the Russo-Scandinavian region, 10th C.

WANDS

Wands were sturdy wooden sticks, or precisely carved bone objects, both of which tapered upwards into a slender point, and were used by the Magi and various pagan gnostic sects to direct magical forces and cosmic energies. This they believed could alter events in this world, or bring about certain outcomes. Wands were made from a variety of woods⁵³⁵ most likely cut from a tree within the sacred grove, not just any tree. According to descriptions of the Rus' wands published by Lozko,⁵³⁶ their shapes varied. On the basis of their general shape, some could be loosely compared with the 6th Century (Swedish)

Lindholm wand,⁵³⁷ but Lozko mentions that they were often ornately incised with intertwined zoomorphic creatures, or creatures with hands, nor do they appear to have been etched with runes or similar characters.

Magical badges of office

Much of the mage's "miraculous" magical apparatus was contained in his or her own pagan reliquary. For many pagan Europeans these heathen reliquaries were small cupreous receptacles in which they respectfully held swastika and runic amulets, varied animal teeth, amber, and precious gemstones (with talismanic virtues).⁵³⁸

Other styles of reliquary could be found, in various shapes and sizes, from cloth bags and animal skin pouches, to chests. For instance at least one wolf-shaped pagan reliquary has been found in Europe.⁵³⁹ The shape of this particular pagan reliquary might be purely coincidental, yet it could also indicate that some of the pagan magicians operating in early Mediaeval Europe were related to the pagan priests of the Slavs, the *Volkhov* "wolves", or indeed *Volkhov* who had migrated onto the continent following the conversion of Kievan Rus'. *Volkhov* of either sex (especially women) probably used the same sort of magical paraphernalia as the Magi.

MORTARS

Sacred metal and stone mortars were operated by the *Havanan* during the course of the *Haoma* ceremony, to crush the sacred *Haoma. Toloch'*, the Modern Russian word meaning "to crush" comes from the Old Russian *tlku* and *tolchi*, meaning "to push something around", or "to strike", "to smash", "to sound something", or "to spurt out".⁵⁴⁰ Variants of it can be found in the Slovenian, Ukrainian, Belorussian and Serbo-Croat.⁵⁴⁰ Now I suggest that the correlation between "to strike", "to smash", and "to sound" is derived from one element of the Magian *Haoma* rite. In it the *Havanan* pushes the *Haoma* around inside the mortar, smashes the sacred plant with the pestle, thus causing the life-giving *Haoma* essence to spurt out. Upon completion of the *Haoma* crushing, the Magus repeatedly struck the mortar with the pestle causing a metallic ringing to sound.

The Old Russian, Bulgarian, Czech and Serbo-Croat word for "a mortar" was *stupa*, or minute variations of the same word. In the Slovenian it was *stopa*, and in the Polish *stapa*. These are supposedly related to the Middle-low-German *stampe* and the Anglo-Saxon *stampe* and the Old High German *stampf*.⁵⁴¹ *Pest* or *pestik*, the Russian words for "a pestle", can also be found in a variety of other Slavic languages.⁵⁴² The ancestry of the word is uncertain, but it might be the Old Indian *pinasti* ("to grind something into a powder") or *pistas* ("ground" or "crushed").⁵⁴²

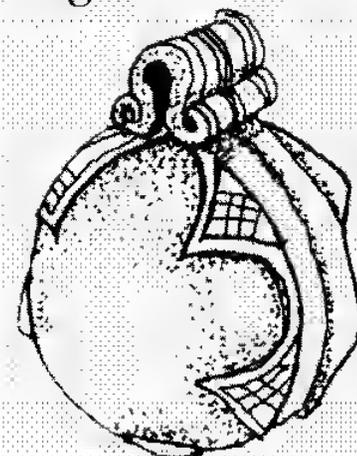
TONGS AND LADLE

The Russian word for "a ladle" is *chepak*, and the verb *chepat'*. It is remotely possible that *chepak* is connected with the Avestan *chamach*, the ladle used to pour butter onto the sacred flame. The Russian for tongs, *shchiptsy* might be related to *chipyo*, the Avestan word for the set of tongs used to feed the holy fires, and turn the combusting fuel.

CRYSTAL

Since *Volkroy* are believed to have known the arts of lapidary, and kept books on the subject of crystal-gazing we can assume they used crystalline prisms or balls to see spectres or portends of the future. The crystal ball shown here (fig 15.1) was found in Gotland, and worn around the neck like jewelry.

Fig 15.1



In distant Britain, crystal balls were found in the graves of well-to-do Anglo-Saxon women, together with silver spoons that had been pierced in the bowl numerous times.⁵⁴³ I believe these spoons were either used for ritual straining, or similar to the fire spoons used by magicians, when placing offerings of incensed wood into the holy fires. As in Persia wooden sacrificial chips were probably placed into holes that pierced the bowl of these spoons. Such devices enabled fire-tenders to hold offerings over the holy fire without burning their hands. A similar device was chiselled into a Mithraic statue of Kronos, though the head was not spoon shaped in that particular example. As with the Gothic crystal ball illustrated, Anglo-Saxon crystal balls were mounted inside strips of metal, which wrapped around them, and permitted them to be slung from the belt.

Crystal balls were used by the Celts too. The druids habitually carried crystal spheres known as "Serpent eggs"⁵⁴⁴ which were believed to impart various powers. Being caught with one inside the Roman capital was enough to get you executed. A great many centuries later we find a man crystal-gazing in a 1499 AD woodcut, with a dog lashed to his arm.⁵⁵⁵ Dogs were of course esteemed by the Magi for their ability to keep evil at bay!

MIRROR

Polished metal or glass mirrors had long been used by pagans as a reflective surface in which to look for demons and the souls of the dead during necromantic communal seances, or to summon friends, relatives, and heroes from beyond the grave. We know that heathen Russes had written works on this form of divination. Mirrors were used for magical purposes in the ancient world, and at least one fancy bronze mirror was found in Ireland. While the mirror was used for reasons of vanity, it is also possible that it served as a necromantic device.

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LENSES

It has been hypothesized that lenses were used by the pagan Rus' astronomers during star-gazing sessions,⁵⁵⁶ or to scrutinize the face of the moon or sun for important signs. They probably had further application in specialized handcrafts, particularly the fashioning of exquisite jewelry. Those who have seen the minute detail achieved by the heathen goldsmiths and enamellers (eg. beads of gold only 10 microns wide), in Scandinavia especially, will have few doubts they had some means of magnifying objects.

TALISMANS

In the ancient world talismans were produced by diverse means, especially low and high magic. In Iran, when a young person came of age, the Magi gave them a small bag of amulets which they wore around their neck, just in front of the throat. This they believed would provide protection against harm. Pagan Russian mystical wards and amulets often bore esoteric images of animals.⁵⁵⁷

One particularly interesting talisman was a disk recovered during the Novgorod excavations. This circular plate of bone was etched with a 9-rayed solar disk being smothered by a dragon (an image also common to the Baltic area), and lacking any written inscription. The real meaning of the motif found on the disk, I believe, can be found in the Magian text *Dadistan-i-Dinik LXIX*. The causer of eclipses was Gokihar, a large 'beast of the apocalypse' with a long head and tail,⁵⁵⁸ a creature destined to be flung down upon the earth preceding the Resurrection. Every so often it would devour the sun. This may have been a magical device to cause or prevent eclipses, or designed to free the sun from Gokihar's jaws. Lead scrolls were often used in Greece and Rome to lift fevers, or for the etching of permanent curses, following which they were buried. At least one lead scroll was excavated at Novgorod.

WORD

From pagan Rus' we have no mention of the *Volkhov* wielding a sword during their rituals. But the most famous of the Rus' magicians were all warrior princes, and thus did carry them. Originally the Magus sorcerers used their magical iron swords (with boxwood handles) to gain control over spiritual entities which they had summoned.

Clues as to whether the *Volkhov* Magi once wielded swords of dazzling iron can be found in the words *mech* (Old Slavonic), *mich* (Ukrainian), *mech* (Bulgarian), *mach* (Serbo-Croat), *miecz* (Polish), *mekeis* (Gothic), *mækir* (Old Icelandic), *mece* (Old English), *maki* (Old Saxon), *miekka* (Finnish).⁵⁵⁹ These are believed to have come from the Latin word *masto* ("to kill" or "to cut someone's throat"), though they might also be related to the Middle Persian word *magen*, which specifically means "a sword".⁵⁵⁹ The Middle Persian *magen*⁵⁵⁹ connection seems particularly strong in the case of the Teutonic languages. If the European Magi were sword-

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bearers we are able to identify them not as Brahman or Zoroastrian Magi, but as the Zurvanite dualist Magus-wizards who had been run out of Central Asia many hundreds of years prior.

STYLI

Lozko mentions that the Russes had sharpened bone or metallic implements decorated by various images.⁵⁶⁰ These enigmatic pointed instruments are actually of uncertain usage, but may have been wands, lancets or writing implements.

Since writing was deemed an almost magical pursuit, it may be that these wand-like objects were used as styli to etch birch scrolls and wax or clay tablets. From the Novgorod excavations we know that mediaeval Russians wrote on birch bark scrolls by etching characters onto their surface. Many of the styli⁶¹ found there had a spade-like end, used to smooth the surface of frequently-encountered waxen tablets (known as *tsery*).

Lozko also tells us that these implements possessed images at one end, in various poses. Since Slavs were recorded as having body scarring and tattoos it is equally possible that these objects acted as blood-letters, or were used to tattoo marks onto a devotee's body. Certainly Balkan pagans spilled their blood to satisfy cloud demons, for the release of one's blood seems to have had a quasi-necromantic function, serving as an offering to the demons. Maybe the crowning images depict a demon who derived its feeding-rights from a particular instrument?

MEDALS AND MEDALLIONS

The pagan Russes wore medals or medallions of precious metal, hung from the neck or pinned to clothing. These were used during the performance of sorceries, or served to protect the wearer. Some medallions took the form of eastern coinage, even Sassanian dirhems. Others were belt plaques of the sort used to decorate status belts and riding equipment throughout the Russian steppe and Central Asia. Medals were also commonly worn by Gypsies,⁵⁶² people perhaps of Magian bloodlineage.

GEM AND JEWELLRY TALISMANS

The pagan Russes apparently possessed magical talismans made in the form of fibulas, brooches, gems, buckles and other items of an aesthetic nature. These were normally etched with solar or lunar symbols, or cosmological montages composed of "totemic" animals.

It is difficult to assess what these Russian objects actually signified, but in classical magic, gem talismans were sometimes engraved with animal images. These were precious stones or crystals allied to each of the seven planets through "astral magnetisms" drawn down from the celestial sphere using closely-guarded rituals. Stones were usually tumbled, rubbed, cut, ground and incised with writing and commanding magical symbols, usually

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in the form of strange animals like lions, dogs, gods, asses, eagles, bears, bulls and serpents (just to name a few things). These engravings enabled the bearer to control the energies flowing from a planet which the gem was allied to, by virtue of the type of gem used, and the variety of magical signs drawn on it. Such energies could be re-directed to effect the aims of ritual magic. Talismanic jewels were just some of the badges of office handed over to a pagan gnostic, Mithraic initiate or Chaldean sorcerer after their initiation.

THE WHIP AND SCOURGE

In *Chips from a German Workshop*, Max Mueller examined Aryan words relating to punishment. He amply demonstrated that they preserved fossilized religious notions about punishment; it was a form of spiritual purification. According to the Magi, suffering bodily chastisement for the sins of the flesh was to take place in this world and the next. Iranian holy books⁵⁶³ prescribed how many lashes were to be meted out for each offense or sin. These floggings were to be incurred for even minor transgressions like impure thoughts.

Two different types of whip are mentioned by the Magi; the *Aspahe-astra* and the *Sraosho-karana* (Zoroastrian terms). The first was a horse whip, the second a fearful scourge.

The Old Russian *chertu* and *cheresti* ("to cut") came from the proto-Slavic *ch'rto and *ch'rsti.⁵⁶⁴ These are traceable to the Lithuanian *kirtis* ("a blow"), the Old Indian *kartanam* ("a cut"), and the Avestan *karantaiti* which relates to cutting. Moreover *chertu* and *cheresti* are related to *cherta*, the Old Russian word for "a line".⁵⁶⁴ One might guess that this correlation related to the cutting of lines with blows, even more so because the root of the aforementioned Avestan progenitor word *karantaiti* formed part of the word *Sraosho-karana*, the title for the Magian scourge. We also find the word *cherchega* (meaning "a whip" or "to flog or lash"), also known in the Old Russian as *ch'rchega*.⁵⁶⁵ *Cherchega* had evil connotations, perhaps indicating that such whips had fallen from grace in Christian times, though such an instrument would naturally be scary in its own right.

The Magian scourge was originally invented to slaughter snakes thereby earning the name "*furious serpent-scourge*", and its appearance varied by "*the length, glitter and weight of the weapon*".⁵⁶⁶ The penalty for assault and other offenses against someone's person was measured in terms of wounding, the severity of which had to befit the crime.⁵⁶⁷ Penalties were normally expressed as a 1/4, 1/2, 3/4 or a full wound, which would be inflicted on the criminal. The wealthy could avoid retributive wounding by paying silver dirhems; blood money no less. Small wonder then that scourges saw service in Ancient Rome, where Persian Mithraism previously flourished.

Good deeds merited boons, or graces that alleviated the pains inflicted on souls in the afterlife, and reduced one's own period of suffering during the 3 day ordeal of purgatorial molten metal, which was to occur at the end of time. More serious affronts to goodness, that merited death, were not to be carried out without the permission of a *dastur*. Only the Magi

conducted scourgings or executions, but in the next passage we discover that other royals probably played a similar role in remedial punishments, for their scriptures mention a nask;

*"about where there is a household, village, communal or provincial petitioning for the royal chastisement of sins affecting the soul".*⁵⁶⁸

Penal scourging was commonplace in Rus' during pagan and Christian times. Beatings were not only a penance, but a cleansing, and at the same time a form of exorcism, that unseated and chased demons from the host within whom they dwelt. In many places rods or staffs were sometimes used for this purpose.

Until last century the Eastern Finnish tribes of the Votyaks and Mari performed expulsion rituals aimed at purging their settlements of demons, often around New Year.⁵⁶⁹ Participants rigorously beat dwellings with staffs. The sturdy rods, now infected by the presence of evil, were thrown into a flowing river to be carried away from the settlement.⁵⁶⁹ Dispensing with evil in a river is also found in the Russian *Primary Chronicle*, where the Christians thrashed the pagan idols with staffs of iron, and threw their effigies into the swift currents of nearby river. The Finnish custom is likely to be fairly old, unless of course they sought to emulate the behaviour shown in the aforementioned Chronicle, which is doubtful.

PRAYER BEADS

The Magi, Buddhists and Hindus used prayer beads during acts of personal worship. Very often they were a magical string threaded with seeds. With the beads passing nimbly through their fingers the Magian faithful offered prayers of worship to the angels, archangels and *fravashis* by the *Srosh Yast*, *Farvardin Yast* and penitential prayers. These prayers were extremely repetitive, offering worship to ancestors, saints, *Yazatas*, *Sraosha* and so on, with each intended recipient of the prayer being addressed individually.

In an archeological context it is not an easy task to distinguish between a necklace and a chaplet of pagan prayer beads. Pagan Slavs had strings of coloured glass beads which are interpreted nowadays as necklaces. The beads were of three kinds, plain round beads (the most common), followed by beads encircled by ribbing, and the third trend was beads with diverse impressions and creative coloration. Such beads were found at Novgorod throughout every cultural layer, from the earliest to the latest.

Another type were the *limonky*, little yellow lemon-shaped beads which abruptly disappeared during the 11th Century in Novgorod.⁵⁷⁰ This was either due to their loss of popularity, the loss of the technique used to manufacture them, or even that they had some pagan significance, which saw them forced from public usage. This last option would still not account for their sudden end (even though they were associated with pagan burial mounds), mainly because the level of paganism was so great that the people would have

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been inclined to disregard, for the most part, any moves to ban them by the Church, if they were an integral part of the old faith. There would need to be an analysis of these Slavic beads whenever they are found associated with skeletal material, but I am unaware of whether any such specific studies have been done. If they were associated with both male and female remains, and in locations which would lead one to conclude that they were not worn about the neck, then I believe it might indicate that they were in fact chaplets rather than simply necklaces.

If Saxon paganism hypothetically had Magian or Indo-European roots, as it seems, then we should expect to find chaplets there also. Many objects were imported by the Anglo-Saxons of Britain from overseas,⁵⁷¹ things such as (rock) crystal balls (which were even used by the druids), and beads of amber, crystal, amethyst and garnet. Many such items originated in the Baltic area, but entered Britain via the Merovingians in France.⁵⁷² Archaeologists have confirmed that the number of beads to a string varied greatly, and that they were worn as necklaces. Anglo-Saxon bead strings were probably necklaces, unless chaplets were worn.

With the rise of Christianity, Christian missionaries might have combated the pagan chaplets by introducing the Catholic Holy rosary, or Orthodox prayer strings, which directed the newly converted towards acceptable forms of Christian prayer.

A century after the conversion of the Russes to Christianity, the pagan priesthood could still draw an immense following. In a *Primary Chronicle* account pertaining to the late 11th Century we hear of a miracle working pagan magician (who was regarded as a god) making his way into the thriving heart of medieval Novgorod, hoping to win the people over. Only a short while after arriving he immediately drew much of the populace to his side. It was a bold venture, walking into such a great city, but he did so. Clearly the people still placed much hope in him and the other *Volkhvy* still at large. The enormous civil disturbances which stemmed from his mustering of the closet pagan Novgoroders was only halted once he was put to death in front of his followers. Now for some information on Celtic and Asiatic Magi.

The Celtic and Gaulish Magi

The Celts who once lived in the Balkans and Central Europe, and whose linguistic cousins, the Tokharians, lived in Asia, as far east as the Tien Shan mountains, had an organized pagan religion. Their druidic religious customs seem very much like those of the Magi. This is hardly surprising when you consider that the Celtic word *draoi* (ie; "a druid") translates as "a Magus". Druids studied in special pagan colleges, they had similar gods, and most importantly a formal dualistic religious calendar (which is nowadays termed the Coligny Calendar, after the place where the bronze plates were found). Pliny virtually

admits a druidic connection with Persia.^{572a}

The druids had special altars called *cromleac* or *fanleac*, and many were no doubt dedicated to good forces. Yet some of them were capable of procuring curses. This was achieved by walking anti-clockwise around the altar stone (ie; in the opposite direction to the sun) uttering the desired malediction, while holding a fragment of the stone.^{572b} It is probably no coincidence that in Gaul, where the druids once brandished enormous power, that the most important pre-Christian temple was the Grand Shrine of *Argentomagus*⁵⁷³ (which means "Silver Magus"). The site was used for the ritual slaughter of herd beasts over a very long period, and ultimately destroyed by the Christians. And then there was *Rouen* (formerly called *Rotomagus* ie; "a wheeled Magus"), *Durnomagus* and *Nijmegen* (*Noviomagus* ie; new Magus), all of which were situated in lands populated by the Franks.⁵⁷⁴

Here again many have fallen for a "red herring". Through 20th Century eyes they applied our currently poor understanding of the term Magus, and perceived that Magus really only ever meant "a sorcerer", when it actually meant just that, a Magus, a priest or priestess of a religion once centered about Iran, but by no means confined to that area.

Then again, druids had a very great deal in common with the Greek pagan gnostic Pythagorean philosophers,⁵⁷⁵ and many similarities to the Hindu Brahmans; that much is known. So perhaps Magian druids were only one segment of the overall druidic population, even more so if the term druid related to the "religious caste" of Celtic society. In typically Eastern style, the Celts had four main castes, headed by the druids, and the royal warriors named *Riogh*, which stems from the Sanskrit *Rig* ("sun"). In India, where very little changes, Muslim and Christian clergy are loosely considered as part of the Brahman caste. Although they are not Hindus, such a classification simply serves to signify that they are holy men.

Nevertheless the druidic philosophical outlook may have been formed in the bowels of Parthia, with the result that they espoused an accumulation of Magian, Hindu, Buddhist and pagan gnostic thought. It should be recalled that in the late 3rd Century AD, the Celts (and presumably their druids) invaded the Balkans, especially Greece, where they sacked the Temple of Apollo and the Delphic Oracles (where the power of the Pythonian genius dwelled strongly).⁵⁷⁶ Pagan gnostics are unlikely to have demolished holy sites of this significance, and so we have cause to equate Celtic paganism with a conglomeration of oriental faiths, probably Magianism. Their race migrated westward into Europe, eventually ending up in Gaul and Ireland - new lands for an old people. It is perhaps on account of this that the Celts knew philosophies similar to those of the ancient Greeks. Perhaps the Celts first learned of the existence of Ireland from the Greeks (whose astronomer scientists were allegedly visiting there perhaps as early as 400 BC) and decided to settle there. Other Celts peopled the east, serving as mercenaries in Syria, Asia Minor and Alexandrian Egypt.

The druidic religion was connected with the Far-East from earliest times. There was a

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holy oak situated in Galatia (Turkey) where Celtic leaders met every year, a pivotal gathering attended by a council of 12 leaders and several hundred figures delegated to participate.⁵⁷⁷ Yes, they came to Turkey from as far away as Ireland. Two locations in Olden Rus' carry the title Galicia, perhaps indicating that they were locales linked with Galatia, and hence with druids. Druids wielded ultimate power over the masses in Ireland, and at the same time their unquestionable authority was recognized as far away as Carthage and Asia Minor.⁵⁷⁸ Druids voyaged across many warring Irish counties free of molestation, healed disputation between foreign kings, and could journey to regions as remote as the Ukraine with little trouble.⁵⁷⁹

The druids tonsured the front half of their head, and left the rest long, a custom which the Augustinian missionaries sent from Rome to the Celtic Church described as "the tonsure of Simon Magus". The Celtic name for this tonsure was the *berrad mog*,⁵⁸⁰ perhaps stemming from the Iranian priestly title *Aberad*, that is the Magus, or indeed *Mog* who brought the sacred water and milk to the altar when *Haoma* (the white Magian drink of eternal life) was mixed.

On the other hand there are only two recorded instances in which druids were mentioned as living gods. This does not necessarily mean that druids weren't seen as living gods by their underlings. Only a few surviving historical references made it through from that period.

Siberian and Asiatic Magi

Magianism and shamanism (esp. Buddhism) share a number of common features, and these allow one to make inferences of vital significance, not the least of which is an admission that the two were somehow factually related to each other.

Clear evidence of this synthesis is found in *Qormusta* (ie, *Ahura Mazda*), the lord of the Tengri celestial divinities known to the Mongols.⁵⁸¹ It is said that he threw his eternal foe, *Erlik Khan*, from heaven, and imprisoned him in the underworld. During the end times, *Erlik Khan* would bring the onset of chaos and calamity, by emerging from this prison in company with iron hell-riders to lay waste to the world. Neither *Qormusta* nor the Buddhists will be able to defeat him.

It is difficult to date, with any certainty, the time frame for shamanism's assimilation of dualistic Iranian beliefs and practices, or indeed whether they had always been present since prehistoric times. What we do know is where it happened: Eurasia and Central Asia, and to this I will add European Russia. For this reason Magi came to be known by less-Persian terminologies in Central Asia and the European fringes;

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Russian	<i>Volkho</i>	"a Magus" ⁵⁸²
Russian	<i>Volshebnik</i>	"a wizard" or "a sorcerer" ⁵⁸²
Finnish	<i>Velho</i>	"a Magus" ⁵⁸²
Turkic	<i>Vehi</i>	"a protector", "a (pagan) saint"
Bulgarian	<i>VI"khva</i>	"a magician" ⁵⁸²
Estonian	<i>Volu</i>	"a witch" ⁵⁸²
Slovenian	<i>Volhva</i>	"a fortune-teller" ⁵⁸²
Old Norse	<i>Volva</i>	"a Sibyl, witch, prophetess"
Old Irish	<i>Draoi</i>	"a Magus", "a druid"
Turkic	<i>Buyu</i>	"spell, magic"
Turkic	<i>Buyucu</i>	"magician, sorcerer"

Rasdi Rasdis were asiatic shamanic white Priests. If Rasdi was derived from Raspi (a white Zoroastrian priest.) then this kind of shaman was an ancestor of Magi who had fled Iran into shamanic territories to escape persecution at the hands of Muslims.

The intermarriage of dualism and shamanism might have originated in that blurred epoch when prehistoric animism evolved into formal pagan religion. *Magu* (the Magian spiritual power) might thus have been a form of shamanic ecstasy. However, dualistic animism is not universal to shamanism, and mainly confined to the Urals and Siberia.⁵⁸³ Because of the close geographical proximity of this area to Iran, the Iranians are the obvious source of their dualism, especially when one considers the substantial level of Iranian linguistic material found among not only the Finno-Ugrians, but the Mongols⁵⁸⁴ (which of itself intimates Indo-Iranian cultural ties with the Mongol Shamans).

The most archaic Buddhist temples paradoxically prove to be the most exquisitely executed of all, hewn from immortal substances like granite. Outwardly they replicated the forms of local Indian temples (of wooden construction), but strangely show the influence of Iranian stonemasons.^{584a} These particular masons probably built the temples for the Buddhists in the first place, or, at the very least, were responsible for introducing their construction techniques into the Buddhist religious community.

In spite of this it is still possible to assert that Indo-Iranian religion originally had shamanic roots. Perhaps *Magu*, the magical ecstasy of the Magi, was derived from the shamanic ecstasies of antiquity, but differed from primordial shamanism in that it had accumulated around it a formally codified religion complete with its own holy texts and mystical regime.

Darker aspects of the craft radiated out from Mesopotamia. Based on a whole host of Neo-Assyrian wall inscriptions, and the discovery of goat skulls, and the wings of noble birds and buzzards at Zawi Chemi Shanidar (which are datable to 10-9,000 BC),

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archaeologists have inferred that certain Babylonians and Assyrians were dressing in ritual costumes which allowed the wearer to appear as an anthropomorphic winged-goat entity.⁵⁸⁵ Such imagery might have represented a demi-human deity or spirit, or may even have been a very early Assyrian-style portrayal of *Ahriman*, and a range of other very powerful demons. This might lead one to suspect that mankind's earliest organized religion (that of the Babylonians) was a direct outgrowth of prehistoric shamanism, a form of (radical dualistic) animism which they would later implant into their progenitor over millennia, as cultural ties between adherents to shamanism and Iranian religiosity were upheld.

But then again, *Magu* may have been a separate form of ecstasy, closely related to that of the shamans, and which came to have an influence on shamanism, owing to a vigorous insemination of Magian beliefs. This seems all the more certain considering that it can be shown that Shamanism was modified by a range of southern customs and beliefs, especially from Iran.⁵⁸⁶ The birth of dualistic animism might be traceable to the centuries following the Islamic conquests of Central Asia, which obliterated Magian culture and presumably smashed into oblivion the Central Patriarchate of Khvaniras, the Northern Patriarchate of Vorobarst, the Eastern Patriarchate of Savah, and the southern one of Fradadafsh. Large bands of roving Magian inhabitants inevitably cascaded into the surrounding countries, where Muslims had not ventured at that point in time.

Indo-Iranians and the people of Mesopotamia are regarded as having played an immense role in the formulation of the more formalized Shamanic beliefs, not only in Siberia, but in Central Asia.⁵⁸⁷ For instance, Pre-Buddhist Tunguskans believed in *Buga* as their supreme god, a deity whose very name is certainly derived from the Iranian *Baga* (god), and thus similar to the Slavic word *Bog* (god).⁵⁸⁸ These tribes had their own shamanistic sacrificial priests who performed rites for the appeasement of *Buga*, but interestingly their prehistoric shamanistic counterparts did not pay homage to *Buga*.⁵⁸⁸ Therefore, two strains of shamanism existed side by side in the Tunguska region. The shamans of the heavily dualistic Iranianized variant were probably hereditary, as was the tradition among the *Magi*.⁵⁸⁸

As with the *Magus-Kings*, the great khans were sons of heaven; gods no less. In the pastoralist communities of Central Asia, Magian holy sites took the form of tents.⁵⁸⁹ In the case of the asiatic shamanic traditions, the domed yurt tents represented cosmological features. The roof was the vault of heaven, the central support post, the pillar-axis that supports heaven.⁵⁸⁹ In the middle of the tent stood a nine-step birch ladder that reached up through the smoke-hole, the heavenly aperture. By ascending the ladder the shaman exited the aperture, his soul flying skyward into the celestial region.⁵⁸⁹ Shamans made their spiritual journeys to the underworld in like manner.⁵⁹⁰

These customs inevitably seeped over the Urals into Russia, with the Finno-Ugrians. One

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curious facet of Finnish shamanism is that it was, by and large, hereditary, which is a substantial deviation from the normal means by which shamanic power was acquired.⁵⁹¹ Lapps, Votyak Finns and the Ostyaks held that shamanism could only be inherited by birthright, however the shamanic vocation only became active at the behest of the Greatest Supreme God.⁵⁹¹ In other words if you did not come from specific bloodlines, you could never enter states of shamanic ecstasy. However full blown mystical shamanism would not develop in every member of that family line, but only in those whose calling had been signalled and actuated by omens from the omnipotent god.⁵⁹¹

Considering that the druids allegedly originated in the east, and met frequently in Galatia, Turkey, it is no small coincidence that Eurasian shamans and the druids possessed a dualistic cosmological view. Both believed in the existence of an inverted tree of life, which in both cases grew upside down, with its roots in the heavens and whose trunk and foliage pierced down into the underworld.⁵⁹² This is, to my mind, fairly conclusive evidence for a "Tree of Death" which belonged to the counterworld, and which was the topsy-turvy opposite of the "Tree of Life". This mystical teaching is also reminiscent of the Kabbalistic Jewish tree of death, so it must have been of some antiquity. Bear in mind also that the Celts marked the progress of time, not by the passing of days, but the passing of nights. Thus to them, sunset was the beginning of each new day, not sunrise.⁵⁹²

The Buryat tribes of the Urals, like the dualistic Magi, also professed that the cosmos was a war zone between two groups of opposing factions of gods, one white and the other black, one good the other evil.⁵⁹³ These deities resided in three respective cosmic zones; the celestial realm, the underworld, and this world (the place where a mixing of the two forces occurs).⁵⁹³

Magian similarities exist even further eastward, among the Mongols. The supreme god of the Mongols was not given direct worship by the masses; instead, idols subordinate to him received homage.⁵⁹⁴ These were not made of wood, but from felt, silk or stuffed hides.⁵⁹⁴ Mongols bowed to the south in adoration of these idols, and offered them the hearts of beasts sacrificed to them, which were later eaten.⁵⁹⁴ Any form of disrespect to the idols was punishable by death. A captured Russian Christian prince was threatened with martyrdom for refusing to prostrate himself in front of the Mongol idols. For this transgression the outraged Mongols wished to execute him by kicking him in the heart, but thought it better to slit open his throat from ear to ear.⁵⁹⁴

The *Tatar Relation* states that the Mongols believed that their armies and their religion would be destroyed by the Christians, and that whosoever remained after that battle, would convert to the faith of the area in which they settled.⁵⁹⁵ A variety of other superstitions were recollected by the friars, including the importance of killing those who had touched the wagon in which their idols rested, or spat food on the ground, or spilled milk deliberately, or defiled their hut.⁵⁹⁵ The pollution of one's living quarters could only be alleviated through

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employing a magician who understood the way to cleanse the location.⁵⁹⁵ Such a magician might have been a Magian cleanser, or similar.

Mongols advocated that a man should take the wife of his brother, if he had been killed.⁵⁹⁵ This custom was of course similar to that of the Magi, and forbidden by the Church. Mongols were not however endogamous. Crime, adultery and rebellion were punishable by execution.⁵⁹⁶ Such beliefs closely resemble facets of Magian scripture.

Despite this the Magi might also have been a powerful Iranian off-shoot of the Aryan/Indo-European brahmanic priestly caste, that resulted from a past religious schism concerning the *daevas*. Like the Brahmin priestly caste the Magi were supposed to have considered themselves Aryans⁵⁹⁷ as is stated in the Pahlavi texts and the notes of Herodotus.

The Magian priesthood, which claimed direct descendancy from King Mingoichir and the Kayan kings,⁵⁹⁸ attained full religious hegemony in Persia (Iran) through successful power-plays under Cyrus the Great, and brought about the transformation of traditional Zoroastrianism, by incorporating the lofty philosophical beliefs and ritual customs of the Medean Magi.⁵⁹⁹ It should be stated at this point that the Medean Magi were not linked to the bloodline of Zoroaster's Zoroastrian priesthood. As I have mentioned so far, these Magus priests penetrated Zoroaster's white priesthood and in time turned infant Zoroastrianism into a religion based on the Zurvanite trinity, which held as its main deity the etherically unknowable time god of the Medean astronomers (who ruled over a white son, a black son, and all creation), plus an aggregate of Aryan gods, including the *daeua* Indra.

Finns living near the Volga and the Urals seem to have had some knowledge of the Rus' and Bulgar Magi also. These Finns of the Mordva tribe (who were known to have partaken of raw flesh feasts) were noticeably different from some other revered inhabitants of the area, who roasted their meat. These folk the Finns called *Mos-chum*; the men who were as gods,⁶⁰⁰ a race of wizards who lived under ground. References to the *Mos-chum* might be allusions to Magian interaction in an intrinsically shamanistic environment, leaving behind the seeds of their venerable culture, in the form of dualistic animism.

Perhaps these wizards were the same as those encountered by Mongols somewhere near northern Russia, who went beneath the earth to escape the light and sound of the sun. There they supposedly played music and made merry until after sunset.⁶⁰¹ Strange behaviour for people living in an Arctic wasteland where nothing grows, wouldn't you say? You'd think they'd be only too happy to feel the warm glow of the sun, but they weren't; they hid from it. Drawing on Magian scripture, these northern wizards may have been apostles of evil.

Koldun - The Sorcerers

In the Russian language we have another series of related words concerning sorcery - *Koldun*⁶² (masculine), *Koldunitsa* (feminine) and *Kolduny* (plural). *Koldovat'* is the verb stemming from this, meaning - "to perform a spell or act of sorcery." Other words in nearby regions seem allied with the Russian word *Koldun* - *kaldune* (Middle High German): "entrails"; *calduna* (Latin): "the warm entrails of a slaughtered animal"; *kaldoun* (Czech): "goose entrails"; *koldun* (Polish): "a type of pie made from a mixture of meat and cheese"; *koldibai* (Russian): "to be limp or lame". *Koldyga* (Belorussian), *koldygats'*, *kal* (Armenian), *halts* (Gothic) all carry the same meaning of "limp" or "lame". Accordingly one might suspect that the rites of the *Kolduny* included the ritual slaughter and disembowelment of an animal (or human) victim, from whose entrails the sorcerer or sorceress proceeded to make predictions about the future, or unleash magic.

A solution for the problematic question of the Russian *Kolduny* sorcerers may well exist in the voluminous works of the Muslim encyclopedist Al-Nadim. In the impressive *Fihristi of Al-Nadim*, he wrote of the *Al-Kaldani*,⁶³ a 10th Century Arabic word relating to the dualistic Chaldean astrologers living in Iraq at that time, and throughout preceding centuries. In that part of the world, two different terms were applicable to them. The Chaldean sorcerers of Harran were specifically known as *Al-Kaldaniyin*, whereas the Chaldean "Sabeans" of Southern Iraq were called *Al-Kaldani* (Arabic: *Al* - "the", *Kaldani* - "Chaldeans"). Another Arabic form of the same word *Al-Kaldaniyun* was much more general in nature, and referred to the many dualistic cults operating throughout the Eastern Islamic world (such as Magi, Manichees, Marcionites and so on).⁶⁴ As you will recall, one would have expected 9th Century Cordoban sources to employ this last term relating to the Norse *Al-Madjus* attacks on Moorish Spain, but instead they veered from this fuzzier label and repeatedly wrote the aforementioned *Al-Madjus* in connection with both the attacks and al-Ghazali's subsequent diplomatic mission to the king of the Magi in European waters.

The similarity between the words *kaldani* and *kolduny* is certainly compelling. Moreover, the mid-19th Century Russian folklorist Maksimov used one further word, *koldun'ya* (nominative plural), which varied from *kolduny* (nominative plural).⁶⁵ We do not know whether the difference between the two words concealed divergent meanings known only in their day. If for instance *al-kaldani* was to *kolduny*, as *al-kaldaniyin* may be to *koldun'ya*, they may have denoted Chaldean Sabeans and Harranian Chaldeans respectively. Coincidentally Aramaic-speaking Chaldeans still exist in Iraq and Iran nowadays, but they are Apostolic Christians, and in no way practitioners of the ancient heathen Chaldeanism described over the next few pages.

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Anyhow, during a campaign against the Byzantines, Caliph Al Ma'mun encountered a very large group of *Al-Kaldani* as his invasion force made its way westward.⁶⁰⁶ Upon interrogating them to determine the nature of their religion, the Caliph was greeted with a certain degree of indecisiveness, and no straight answers. He asked them whether they were Christians, Jews, Muslims, or Magi, to which the answer was no in each case. Al-Ma'mun arrived at the realization that they were members of a race of Chaldean idol-worshippers, who a generation previously, in the time of his father, were known as the *Ashab al-Ra's*.⁶⁰⁶ At that the Caliph threatened to liquidate every last one of them unless they became *dhimmi*s by conversion to either Judaism, Islam or Christianity by the time he had returned from his war on the Greeks.⁶⁰⁶

The *Al-Kaldani's* lack of response to the questions posed by the Caliph is telling. Either they felt threatened by the prospect of having to reveal to the Caliph exactly who they were, or their priests prohibited them from revealing the core teachings of the Chaldeans to the non-initiated, or it was philosophically difficult to explain the nature of their faith to the Caliph in a few words or less with an army standing all around them.

Sensing the imminent peril they were in, a large number of these idol-worshipping Chaldeans converted to Christianity, a somewhat lesser number became Muslim.⁶⁰⁷ They were required to dispense with their smocks and long hair (including a lock of hair from each side of the head, similar to the peots worn by Jews), though paradoxically they still continued to wear their holy belts.⁶⁰⁷ This type of hairstyle was not unknown in Rus'.

Al-Nadim went on to say that a Sheikh (who was somehow linked in with the many Magians serving in the Caliphate's governmental apparatus) formulated a solution for the *Al-Kaldani's* predicament by suggesting that they tell Al-Ma'mun that they were Sabeans, just to save their necks. That is because Sabeans were one of the few religions deemed acceptable in the Koran, on account of their ancestry to Abraham (Ibrahim) and "people of the book".

"Believers, Jews, Christians, and Sabeans - whoever believes in God and the Last Day and does what is right - shall be rewarded by their Lord; they have nothing to fear or to regret".⁶⁰⁸

But fate intervened. With the strange death of Al Ma'mun on his way home from the Byzantine campaigns, the newly Christianized pagan Chaldeans automatically reverted to their old faith in droves, while those who adopted the Islamic faith were unable to abandon it for fear of the drastic reprisals that would certainly have ensued.

"Moreover those among their number who had become Muslims were unable to recant, as they feared they might be killed. They continued, therefore, to be masked by Islam".⁶⁰⁷

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Al-Nadim further stated that these particular Muslims (and we might guess Christians) resolved to continue observing the ancient rites of Chaldean magic and ritual enshrouded in secrecy, despite the risk that this entailed. To facilitate this they formulated their own peculiar marital codes, designed to conceal and protect Chaldeans living in Muslim countries. The *Al-Kaldani* wed womenfolk who were still adherents of the old faith, but in the east anyway, the menfolk of the *Al-Kaldani* were to outwardly adopt the faith of the area in which they lived (these Chaldean converts they called *Banu Ablut* or *Banu Qaytaran*).⁶⁰⁹ Thus it was predominantly the women who worshiped the gods of the old faith in the manner of the Chaldeans. If a significant proportion of the mediaeval and renaissance witches practiced the Chaldean rites, this last point might explain the disproportionate number of European female witches indicted compared with male wizards and warlocks in varied geographical regions.

The situation was remarkably similar in Russia. According to popular folk tradition there, the arts of the *Kolduny* were passed on in a matrilineal fashion, mother to daughter and so on.⁶¹⁰ Where the mother gave birth to a son and a daughter, the son was raised as a sorcerer, whereas the girl became a witch. If for some reason these witch-wives could not hand down their knowledge they suffered immense torment.⁶¹¹ The early mediaeval Russian *Primary Chronicle* states; "even down to the present day women perform magic by black arts, poison, and other devilish deceits".⁶¹²

Despite the fact that witch-wives or spae-wives feature in certain Norse Sagas relating to pagan times, it is difficult to establish any firm connection between the *Al-Kaldani*, the Russian *kolduny*, and the following Old Icelandic *spa-maeli* ("a prophecy"), *spa-dis* "prophetess" or "a spae sister", *spa-mathr* ("a prophet"), *spaleiks-andi* ("a prophetic spirit").⁶¹³

In Rus' those with *Kolduny* ancestry who were unwilling participants in the craft, and wished to avoid their family duty to continue with the arts, frequently turned themselves in at the monasteries.⁶¹⁴ There they lived on as remorseful penitents together with anyone found performing miracles throughout the wider community.⁶¹⁵ This probably explains the means by which Chaldean arts entered the 'Orthodox' Christian monasteries, something known to have occurred in Christian times. Where a penitent relapsed, there was every opportunity to teach what they knew of these rites to fellow brethren, since Chaldeanism was a form of pagan gnosticism. It was no doubt on account of this that Orthodox Christian commentators reported an upsurge of shunned Chaldean magic and devil-worship within the Byzantine monastic system.⁶¹⁶

Anyhow Abu Zurarah and another sheikh stamped out the practice of marrying Chaldean women in Islamic countries. These were prohibited liaisons, forbidden wives. Despite their intense opposition to these sorts of mixed marriages, the Hurranian Islamic jurists continued to witness sizeable groups of these Chaldean Sabeans locally.⁶¹⁷ According

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to Al-Nadim, those Chaldean Sabeans who had converted to Christianity or Islam, still continued with the old rites (including dualistic magic) right down to the 10th Century AD at least, when his *Fihrist* was written. But were the *Al-Kaldani* really Chaldeans or Sabeans? Although Al-Nadim's account of the naming of the *Al-Kaldani* as Sabeans is about as straightforward as you can get, I remain intrigued that Ptolemy situated an Are Sabea (Latin: The Sabean Altar) in Mesopotamia in his 2nd Century AD atlas, *Geographia*. Nor is it easy to understand why the "Alphabet of the Kings" (which resembles Sabean characters) is the script most frequently used by mediaeval alchemists and magicians.

One Nestorian Christian eschatological text records the presence of Chaldeans alongside the Buddhists, Christians and Zoroastrians of Central Asia.⁶¹⁵ Thus they confirm what Al-Nadim adequately explains; that Chaldeans were alive and well during Islamic times, and what is more they were expecting the arrival of a saviour named Bel.⁶¹⁵

It is equally plausible that the religion/philosophy of the *Al-Kaldani* was not a survival of the old Chaldean rites, but a cross-pollination of Magianism and the philosophies and sciences of ancient Greece which had taken place as early as 400 BC, but centered on the period 300 BC-200 AD. Linkages of this kind probably became a whole lot more formalized following the arrival of the exiled Greek Philosophers at Harran in the 6th Century AD after the closure of their Athenian school of philosophy. By that time there would already have been centuries of interaction between the Magi and the philosophers inside Mesopotamia.

What may well have developed in Iraq is a dualistic philosophical religion which carried features of Greek pagan gnosticism and Magianism. Unlike Magianism, the creed of the Chaldeans was a proselytizing faith, meaning that the cult possessed apostle priests who were tasked with spreading the sect's doctrines throughout mankind.

Their principle temple complex, once located at Harran, was destroyed during the 13th Century Mongol conquests, though the Chaldeans had already been thrown out of their temples centuries before that.⁶¹⁶ Their main holy site was converted into a shrine dedicated to Ibrahim, and the remainder of the Chaldean shrines swapped over to Islamic usage.⁶¹⁶ It is plausible that the *Al-Kaldani* (ie; the *Ashab al-Ra's*) migrated elsewhere between 7th and 10th Centuries AD, and rebuilt some, if not all of these temples, at other locations. Since *Al-Kaldani* and *Kolduny* are so similar in both name and nature, I theorize that the Rus' *Kolduny* sorcerers were the descendants of heathen *Al-Kaldani* banished from the Abassid Caliphate, or who eluded the Mongol decimation. Just a quick look at any map confirms that a journey from Harran or Chaldea (in provincial Byzantium) to the vast expanses of Russia is relatively short.

In the *Sumerian Wonder* Professor Francisco Jos Badiny provides intriguing research on the Magyars (Hungarians), providing evidence that their language contains important Sumerian and Akkadian elements. Yet a century before him, Lenormant was busy

highlighting the apparent similarity between these ancient tongues, and a variety of words found in a broad spectrum of Finnish languages, to which the Hungarian is linguistically relegated. These words are likely to have been preserved from very ancient times, but might have been bolstered by additional arrivals of magicians from the Near East during the Islamic age. Considering this, it is possible that Mesopotamian/Chaldean magical traditions were used by segments of the Slavic, Magyar and Finnish community. Indeed Orthodox Christian clergy were livid about the Chaldean rites they frequently encountered in their part of the mediaeval world, practiced by wayward parishioners and by monks in particular.

As discussed in *Christianity's Greatest Controversy*, Prester John, the eastern Magian Christian superhero, waged war against a federation of princes, whose ethnicity was Persian, Medean and Assyrian.^{616a} The latter alliance was traceable across centuries, at least from the time of Cyrus the Great. Under this gracious Medean patron Assyrian culture was not only tolerated, but resurrected from the dead with his blessing, following its demise at the hand of the Babylonians. Old allegiances survived. Assyrian royals still had a certain degree of autonomy in the 7th Century AD, and were still on friendly terms with their former liberators, the Magi and Persian nobility. If a large portion of the Bulgars and Magyars were Magians, it necessarily follows that some of their monarchs might have had a very ancient Assyrian pedigree.

There is some anecdotal evidence for this. At the turn of the 8th Century AD, Byzantium was twice crippled by the weight of Muslim besiegers, with the second stranglehold broken only with the aid of Tervel, the Bulgar Khan. If the Byzantine Emperor thought he had found a new friend in the Bulgars, he was sadly mistaken. Barely one hundred years later, around 811 AD, Constantinople recoiled in horror as the unstoppable Bulgar army of Khan Krum went on the rampage throughout Byzantium's Balkan provinces,⁶¹⁷ defeated successive Emperors, and inflicted upon them the ultimate indignity; they slew Emperor Nicephoros, and made a golden cup from his skull, from which Krum guzzled his libations.⁶¹⁷

The name Krum (a name also used by Franks and Celts) is, I believe, cognate with the Slavic root word *grom-*, which I think aptly describes the personal qualities of any man named Krum. Consider the following Russian words - *grom* ("thunder"), *grom-it'* ("to annihilate", "to smash asunder", "to ransack", "to rout or defeat an enemy", "to flay"), *grom-ko* ("loud"), *grom-ada* ("something massive or enormous"), *grom-ykhat'* ("to rumble"), *grom-ila* ("a robber", "a house-breaker", or "a stand-over man"), and *grom-ozdit'* ("to tower above"). Little wonder the Eastern Church saw Krum the Bulgar as an embodiment or revisitation of the terrifying Assyrian conquistador Sennacherib (of the House of Sargon), whose name originally meant "*the God Sin (the Moon God) has compensated the brothers.*"⁶¹⁸

Sennacherib's self-congratulatory commemorative stone columns have survived. They

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show him slaying prostrate war prisoners. These were just some of a number of Assyrian royal stela (engraved memorial stones) which still bear victory inscriptions boasting of stone victory columns draped in bloodied human skins, of cairns of decapitated enemy heads, of prisoners being burnt alive, of the sacking and razing of cities with fire, of the flaying or impaling of victims. Such comments are in no way a mischievous diabolization of their war activities; *these were victories written in stone by their own royal decree*, and we might guess indicative of the terror which the Assyrian rulers wanted to live in the hearts of their enemies.⁶¹⁹

So serious were the setbacks experienced by the Byzantine military in their encounters with this new menace, that Byzantine citizens felt inclined to call on supernatural aid. During a ceremonial mass held by the Patriarch with the aim of lifting the Bulgar siege on Mesembria, soldiers disrupted the service by encircling the tomb of the deceased Emperor Constantine V with the hope of conjuring him forth from his sleep in the sepulcher, to once again lead their forces into battle.⁶²⁰

At the Battle of Adrianople the Emperor's forces greatly outnumbered those of the Bulgars, since he had mustered troops from even the most far flung eastern provinces, in the hope he could crush Krum once and for all. Spearheaded by Macedonian troops the initial engagement went well for Byzantium, in fact beyond all expectations. However at the very moment Emperor Michael was poised for the kill, he had to watch in shock as the sizeable Anatolian contingents, commanded by an Armenian relative, ran off the battlefield, for no reason whatsoever, leaving the Macedonians to be slaughtered. It has been theorized that these troops, the Emperor's most battle hardened, merely pretended to panic, when in reality they were part of an elaborate plot which at its height saw the abdication of Emperor Michael I Rhabde in favor of Leo V, the very commander of the forces who quit on him!

Krum was no ordinary ruler, but a priest-king of vigour and martial achievement. The well-encamped pagan forces of Krum, this "New Sennacherib" as they called him,⁶²¹ choked Christian Constantinople for many long months. As the heathen war bands stood waiting beyond the battlements of the Holy city, Krum performed very elaborate human and animal sacrifices outside the gates of the city (giving benedictions to his troops in Assyrian style by sprinkling them with river water using bound foliage). This must have greatly demoralized the incarcerated Byzantine populace. If news that Krum was laying waste to all Constantinople's surrounding extra-mural suburbs, setting them ablaze and slaughtering almost every living thing was causing concerns inside the city, then reports that he was preparing siege weapons and gantries to breach the city's comprehensive defenses were even more worrying.

You may ask where they obtained their siege technology; the know-how to build engines capable of breaching Constantinople's walls? A proto-Bulgarian inscription found at Preslav

confirms that they had siege towers, and canopies⁶²² suitable for protecting sappers and ramming crews. Proto-Bulgarian terms for fortified defenses, especially ditchwork allow one to conclude an Iranian origin⁶²² for their military engineering. Bulgar camps built during the 7th Century AD were admirably protected with palisading mounted on raised mounds some *40 meters thick*. The most notable of them can be found at Nikulicel, Dobrudzhan, the Danube and Bessarabia. Since these words are flavored by Central Asian Turkic language,⁶²² we know that they developed these engineering skills in and around the Caucuses, and Tajikistan. Even more amazingly their word for "a helmet" has a Sumero-Accadian etymology.⁶²² So what you may say, but the Bulgar helmets were stylistically similar to those worn in Mesopotamia some 3,150 years prior to Krum's time, during the reign of Sargon himself.

Although the siege lifted with Krum's mysterious death, the Bulgar threat persisted, and repeatedly came back to haunt successive Byzantine Emperors until this people was eventually baptized into the Christian fold by a mixture of swordsmanship, diplomacy and missionary zeal. As with much of eastern and western Europe, the Church's attempts to convert the pagans began with the conversion of the king to Christianity, at least nominally, and following this it was hoped that paganism would die as subjects followed suit. Bloodletting was sure to follow where a Bulgar royal drifted into the arms of Christian preachers. Malamir, son of Khan Omurtag murdered his brother Enravotas for daring to convert to the alien Christian faith.⁶²³ Around 893 AD, Khan Boris tried to introduce Christianity to his subjects. His attempts to eradicate idolatry, temples and pagan sacrifices met with only limited success, and he endured increasingly militant opposition for his troubles.⁶²⁴ It would seem that despite his adoption of Christianity, paganism was particularly well enshrined within the upper strata of Bulgar society, and *well supported* by the community. Eventually he ended up having to exterminate most of his boyars (nobles), who rose up against him to the last, but not until after they had worked the entire countryside into a lather of civil disobedience. Khan Boris even had to put out the eye of his own son, Vladimir-Rasate, after he was discovered trying to re-kindle and trigger a full-scale pagan resurgence, by forming a formal military-pact with the Carolingian King, Arnulf.⁶²⁵ We know that Arnulf and Vladimir had plans for booting the Greeks out of Bulgaria, but whether he was party to the young Khan's plans to resurrect "*the rites of paganism*"⁶²⁶ is hard to pin-point. If European royals were in any way Magianized, we might easily understand the recurring phenomenon of royals relapsing into the pagan faith, something which occurred in England, Bulgaria, Russia and similar places. Vladimir-Rasate of the Bulgars, Vladimir I of Kiev and Eric the Victorious were just some of the factual and rumoured backsliders. And in Essex, King Sigehere "*began to restore the derelict temples and to worship images*"⁶²⁷

Chaldean customs and traditions

The key teachings of these Chaldeans, equally descendants of Abraham, were conveyed to Al-Nadim and a number of other Muslim authors, and committed to paper. By the *Al-Kaldani's* reckoning the created cosmos was the product of a single deity who was boundless, omnipotent, unfathomable and practically unknowable.⁶²⁸ This high god, who they referred to as the "Great Power", had sent forth a range of apostles (namely the Chaldean philosophers).⁶²⁸ These apostles were charged with taking his message to the rest of the world, and acted as custodians for a whole range of pagan gnostic magical, philosophical, scientific and religious doctrines.

Besides the Great Power, the other principle deities of the cult were Agathodaemon, Hermes Trismegistus, and Arani (Heron).⁶²⁸ Hermes Trismegistus was a tutelary god possessing unparalleled wisdom, philosophy, intelligence and knowledge of the sciences. Hermes' discourses were taught to those seeking philosophical enlightenment and can be found in a variety of Hermesian texts, such as were found among the Nag Hammadi treatises unearthed in Egypt in the mid to late 1940's.⁶²⁹

Like the priests of old Babylon the *Al-Kaldani* pursued wisdom, revered goodness and abhorred any form of wrongdoing. They were prohibited from engaging in sexual immorality or crime.⁶³⁰

The *Al-Kaldani's* eschatological views were similar to those of the Magi. Like the Zurvanite Magi, they believed that the suffering of the departed souls of wrongdoers was only to be temporary; some 9,000 years in duration. Unlike the Magi (who believed *Ahura Mazda* didn't want to kill his children, simply chastize those enarmoured by evil-doing, by the power of kings, their soldiers and officers) Chaldeans believed the "Great Power" was prone to fits of anger and mercy at the same time, but would transform into a god of mercy alone, at the end of the 9,000 year period. The latter point was a fundamental belief of the Zurvanite Magi.⁶²⁸

Maintaining personal purity was of some importance to the *Al-Kaldani*. They practiced purificatory ablutions, and were required to undergo a gruelling 30-day regime of fasting, in addition to further fasts. Like the Magi, they believed that contact with menstruating women brought defilement. So there were periods when they couldn't enjoy conjugal relations.

The *Al-Kaldani* had their own peculiar range of food taboos, which appear to have drawn upon Jewish, Muslim, Magian and Neo-Pythagorean teachings. For instance pigeons, swine, asses, taloned birds and dogs were not to be eaten, nor were beans, lentils and several other plants.⁶³¹ Beans, lentils and pigs were widely cultivated in Russia as early as Scythian times, and were probably eaten by most Russians. However this is not to say that there were

others in pagan Rus' who did not eat these things, folk such as the *koldunny*.

Unlike the Magi, the *Al-Kaldani* did not believe it necessary to marry one's kin,⁶³² and were required to observe strict morality within marriage, for example confining their sexual activity to procreation alone. Therefore the cult was not Magian in nature, though in truth it carried many outward similarities. Even those Arabs who had some understanding of Magian lore may have found it difficult to distinguish between Magi and Chaldean Sabeans. Though they were not specifically incestuous or given to marrying their own kind, it was often the case that they did so. The Chaldean mode of dress at first glance seemed Magian. They wore lengthy hair, with a lock on each side of the head, and a specific kind of robe or tunic (perhaps one could even call it a type smock).⁶³³ Their characteristic hairstyle may have led onlookers to guess that they were Jewish magicians, descended from Abraham (as the Sabeans were). Accordingly Chaldean temple sites in Europe might have earned the title of synagogues. Witch trials in which Jews were convicted of sorcery need to be looked at fairly closely, for the defendant might have been a Kabbalist, or a Judaized Chaldean.

Chaldean ceremonies

The most powerful ceremony of the Chaldeans was termed "the Mystery of the North".⁶³⁴ One had to face toward the north, and in particular towards the pole star, while performing an elaborate daily schedule of prayers, which included stretching prostrate on the ground a prescribed number of times, at morning, noon and night.⁶³⁵ This was done in adoration of the God of the North who was both prince of demons, and father of the many genii and devils which he dispersed across the face of the earth in a prior epoch.⁶³⁵

The Chaldean devils (*daemones*) brought a wealth of good fortune to those who worshiped them by invoking the name of the supreme god. Having recited the divine name the *daemones* were compelled to come and render service to the summoner. The belief that devils were luck-bringers is fully in accordance with the Neo-Pythagorean and Chaldean ritualism detailed by Iamblichus in *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Assyrians*, and was a feature of Russian folk belief concerning devils. Chaldean theory required that *daemones* be conjured to live inside stone and wooden idols, in order to bring divine power to the effigy.⁶³⁶ And what should we find in the *Primary Chronicle*, but magicians stating that their demon gods were "black of visage, winged and tailed ... mount up under heaven",⁶³⁷ obedient to the supreme god of the Christians. This could be interpreted as a childish attempt by the chronicler to ridicule their religion, but it could be a reference to Chaldean *daemone* worship, explained in a very abstract or relative fashion. Nestor also tells us that the Rus' pagan idols were beaten with rods to punish the demons living inside them. Again this may provide clues for the perpetuation of the telestic art of idol crafting in pagan Rus'.

In *Europe's Inner Demons* Norman Cohn claims that any talk of factual, organized devil

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worship is pure nonsense, because in a number of cases witches sought to control demons, not by doing evil, but by doing good. On account of their purity they were able to call upon the divine name for help when summoning up and bossing about *daemones*. It is a very good point that he raises, but unlike Norman I see Chaldean philosophy as the basis for these particular trends in witchcraft and devil-worship. This avenue is something that Cohn had never even considered. As stated, Chaldeanism was but one form of witchcraft.

Sabean Chaldeans paid some attention to the worship of the planets, to whom they offered ostentatious animal, and even human sacrifices. Normally prayers were given as offerings. For example, prayers were recited on behalf of the sun as it entered the ascendant, descendant, midheaven and *imūm coeli*.⁶³⁸ Specific Chaldean beliefs about the planets were noted by Plutarch,

"The Chaldeans declare that of the planets, which they call tutelary gods, two are beneficent, two maleficent, and the other three are median and partake of both qualities".⁶³⁹

Al-Nadim said one of their less savory rites included the killing of a young baby during Ab (August), though attendance and participation in the ceremony was optional. Only certain Chaldeans celebrated the northern mysteries. During the proceedings a child was reduced to powder by grinding up its body and bones, then mixing the powdery remains with a specially concocted libation.⁶⁴⁰ The desire to commit evil acts might not necessarily have been the motive for the sacrifice. It could just as easily have been a display of love and piety toward their god, at least equivalent to that of Abraham, who was prepared to sacrifice his own son to the Most High God. This is what Nadim preserved in relation to a Chaldean August rite;

"They slaughter the boy and then boil him until he disintegrates. Then the flesh is taken and kneaded with fine flour, saffron, spikenard, cloves, and oil and made into cakes as small as figs ... This takes place every year for those who observe the mystery of the north. No woman, slave, son of a slave girl, or lunatic eats it (the cake) or watches the slaughter of this child ... The priests burn whatever remains of the bones, the organs, the cartilages, the veins, and the jugular veins as an offering to the gods".⁶⁴¹

The similarities between the rites performed by these pagan Chaldean practitioners, and the ceremonies of the "People of the Little Keg"^{641a} (a western Mediaeval group of Christian heretics) are quite amazing, and probably no coincidence.

At no stage were Chaldean sacrifices to be made in the name of the supreme god. Instead everything was to be delegated and apportioned to the subordinate deities which the Great Power had created to implement his will throughout the future.⁶⁴¹ This is another point of similarity with the pagan Rus' rites, for they did not make offerings to Svarog directly.⁶⁴²

Animals were ritually slaughtered in batches of 7, 8 or 9 (depending on the month of the

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sacrifice) for each of these lieutenant gods, most of them burned alive.⁶⁴³ Herd beasts were the main creatures sacrificed, as well as birds of various kinds, especially the cock.⁶⁴⁴ Having cut the throat of the victim the dead or still-twitching offering was incinerated; in no case was the sacrifice eaten. The effusion of blood from the open neck wound was the crucial moment of the ritual, and accordingly the name of the god being invoked or worshiped was recited as the blood began to flow.⁶⁴⁴ Whether blood geysered forth from severed arteries, or simply trickled gently from a puncture wound, the effect was the same, an outpouring of life-giving power. In Chaldean ritualism, bloodletting provided energy for magical rites. The Greek philosopher Pythagorus wrote of such details long before the Arabs. After studying Chaldeanism he *"was shocked at all the blood-shedding and killing"* required by their art.⁶⁴⁵

It came to the attention of authorities during mediaeval witch trials, that certain rites of black witchery demanded the slaughter of chickens, dogs and cats, and blood effusions were a feature of these ritual killings.⁶⁴⁶ However, the witches could just as easily achieve the same or similar results by pricking themselves.⁶⁴⁶ Lancashire witches pierced their bodies to get bloodflow; *"witches as have sharp bones given them by the devill to pricke them ... their devill receiveth bloud from the place, pricked with the pin"*.⁶⁴⁷

The Chaldean ritual for killing bulls and other such creatures was to liberally pour wine over the head of the victim.⁶⁴⁸ The reaction of the victim to this outpouring served as an augury as to the acceptability of the sacrifice.⁶⁴⁸ The severed head was scrutinized for portentous signs, which were gleaned from the way the head, tongue and eyes moved.⁶⁴⁸ Following this the sacrifice was incinerated, and the rapidity and completeness with which the offering was consumed by the flames served to indicate the attitude of the god towards the offering, or served as a reply to the person's request for divine aid.⁶⁴⁸ During the Rus' funeral on the Upper Volga, Ibn Fadhlān noticed that the pagan onlookers were extremely pleased with the manner in which the death ship, the sacrificed concubine, dog, cock, horses and cattle were consumed by the flames; the conflagration quickly devoured the ship leaving only a small wispy vortex of smoke rising up into the heavens.⁶⁴⁹

The other Arab name for the *Al-Kaldani* (*Ashab Al-Ra's*)⁶⁵⁰ which shares a phonetic similarity with Rus' or Ros) was derived from the fact that their religion possessed a talking head, severed from a man whose countenance resembled that of the god Mercury. If such a person was found among members of the cult during their travels, they captured and slew the individual, but not before subjecting them to various planetary rites. The snatched victim was manipulated in such a way as to prompt Mercury to enter into the person's head. This was achieved by skillfully stretching the victim's neck as long as they could before the act of beheading. Following the completion of this ritual the head was able to prophecy.⁶⁵¹

The *Al-Kaldani* had a major temple constructed for each of the planets, each with a specific geometric design; some were circular temples, others oblong, others square, pentade-

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shaped or triangular.⁶⁵² At Harran these temples existed in a clustered group, situated just near a holy mountain, from which celestial phenomena was observed by the Chaldean astronomers.⁶⁵² According to Al-Masudi every temple had its own basement area which contained a number of idols through which the priests spoke to assembled devotees by means of tubing.⁶⁵² One site in Harran served as a center of initiation for Chaldean boys who were making their rite of passage into manhood.⁶⁵²

Their feasts, especially those dedicated to the God of the North, followed a specific calendar of observances, which Al-Nadim went on to detail at some length. This sacrificial regime was dualistic in nature, and conceptually similar to the pagan Rus' dualistic ceremonial calendar, with white and black days.^{652a} At specific times of the year demonolatry was practiced in addition to the worship of idols consecrated to celestial deities. On the 27th and 28th of August "*they have mysteries, offerings, slaughters and burnt sacrifices to the north, who is the greatest god, as well as to the devils and the jinn whom he has controlled and scattered, giving them good luck*".⁶⁵³ On May 1st the *Al-Kaldani* adored the sun, whereas on the 2nd they made offerings to a Lord of Devils, under the name Salugha. Another feast was held in honour of a time god, who is best equated with Zurvan or Kronos. Each day of the week was dedicated to one of the five planets and two luminaries, each a divinity. For example Sunday was the sacrificial day assigned to the sun god Helios. According to one Russian Chronicle, Helios was another name used by the Russes (or at least a certain proportion of them) when referring to Dazhbog, the sun God.

Monday was the day of the Moon god Sin.

Tuesday was dedicated to the planet Mars under the name Ares.

Wednesday was the day of sacrifice to Mercury under the name Nebo.

Thursday was the day of sacrifice to Jupiter, who was also called Bal.

Friday was the day of the planet Venus under the name Belit.

Saturday was the day of the planet Saturn under the name Cronus.⁶⁵³

Fossilized remnants of the Chaldean weekly calendrical observances survived into the modern era, coming by way of the Germanic nations. Sunday (the day of the sun), Monday (the moon's day), Tuesday (the day of *Tiwaz* {the Germanic war god}, probably derived from the Chaldean divinity *Ta-uz*), Wednesday (Odin's day), Thursday (Thor's day, Thor being the Scandinavian thunder god), Friday (the day of Frey. However I believe it comes from his sister's name, Freya, the goddess of sex and love, who can otherwise be equated with Venus), and finally Saturday (the day of Saturnus, the Great Maelific, who can also be equated with Satan). The same assignation of days can also be found in French and Italian.

In the Chaldean list you may have noted a number of deities worshiped not only on the steppes of Russia during Scythian times, but also in ancient Britain. These gods also

appeared in the Jewish apocryphal *Book of the Secrets of Enoch*.⁶⁵⁴

The Chaldean god *Ta-uz*, was worshiped by women alone, who lamented that he had been killed and his body ground to powder beneath a mill stone. Such was their love for him that an emulation of this tragic event may have been the basis for their annual baby sacrifice, which took place less than a month later, in August. Accordingly the infant sacrifice might have been akin to that which Abraham was prepared to make for love of his god, only in their case the priest followed through, and *Ta-uz* was the recipient.

One of their most spectacular and lavish feast days was dedicated to the Goddess of Beauty and Love, Venus, who they addressed by the name *Belit*.⁶⁵⁵ An elaborate floral-clad shrine or grotto was erected during the festival to house the idol, and in front of which many different kinds of animals were slaughtered.⁶⁵⁵ She was not the only female god of importance. Another goddess that received adoration was a certain mistress who ruled over the herds. She was associated with goats, and possessed her own herd. On the last (30th) day of every passing month, a special gathering was held, at which the presiding priest ascended a 9-stepped raised rostrum. Members of the congregation filed past the raised priest and were repeatedly whipped with a switch of tamarisk,⁶⁵⁶ a plant traditionally used by Magi for their barsom twig wands. All present were implored to go forth and multiply in great numbers with a view to regaining the prestige their religion once enjoyed.⁶⁵⁶ The faithful were urged to go out into the world to gain sovereign authority and rule over peoples of every nation, and were tasked with destroying Churches and Mosques in their area.⁶⁵⁶

"Then he preaches a sermon to them, in which he calls (prays) for all of them to live, to increase the number of their offspring, and to gain power and superiority over all nations, that their sovereignty and days of rule may return to them and that the congregational mosque of Harran may be destroyed, as well as the Greek Orthodox Church and the market street known as the Women's market. Before the Byzantine kings uprooted them when they conquered (Harran), it was in these places that their idols used to be".⁶⁵⁶

After the priest alighted from the raised dais, he collected a small quantity of silver coinage from every person present (to bolster the temple coffers) and then proceeded to share out the ritual feast. Splinters of pine wood were burned at this time.⁶⁵⁶

The rites of February particularly concerned the adoration of demons and the God of the North.⁶⁵⁷ Priests indulged in theurgic rites evidently cajoling the planets into action.

Al-Nadim stated that some devout Muslim translators who worked on recording the Chaldean mysteries did so in a biased and lacklustre fashion, with the result that the *Al-Kaldani* were misrepresented on a number of points. He went on to say that a primary Chaldean text in common usage among the *Al-Kaldani* was a much more faithful account of their mysteries, and the basis for his *Fihrist* entries concerning their faith. For example Al-

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Nadim stated that the *Al-Kaldani* held Aristotelean views on the nature of physical existence, and beliefs close to those contained in the book *Meteorologica*.⁶⁵⁸ One of their primary religious texts was *Discourses of Hermes on Unity*,⁶⁵⁸ which means that it was similar to certain items within the Coptic Nag-Hammadi cache of pagan gnostic texts.

The *Al-Kaldani* had a treatise which detailed the rites, incantations and operations used to create magical knots, as well as talismanic images and devices, incised gemstones, or amulets from the body parts of various animals (eg; the wing bones of certain birds worn slung around the neck).⁶⁵⁹ Al-Nadim further claimed to have seen the specially incised signets and gemstone seals which they carried, and had explained to him some of the basic premises of such devices.⁶⁵⁹ In *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Assyrians*, the pagan gnostic philosopher Iamblichus made mention of rites not dissimilar to those specified by Al-Nadim. Whether or not Iamblichus' work was similarly twisted by Mediaeval Islamic copyists and translators who translated it into the Arabic is open to debate, but I personally doubt it.

The Old Russian word *Edukar'* ("a doctor of teaching", or "a knowledgeable person") has hazy origins, but is thought to have stemmed from the Iranian word *Yadu-kara* ("sorcerer"), the Middle Avestan *Yadu* ("a sorcerer" or "a magician"), which still continued to be perpetuated in the New Persian as *Jadugar*.⁶⁶⁰ In all probability the *Yadu-kar* were the sorcerers portrayed in the *Avesta* as performing the infernal mysteries of *Yatukih*, magical rites directed towards *Ahriman*. Therefore we might guess the presence of Iranian devil-worshipping sorcerers in pagan Russia who practiced Chaldean idolatry, and Chaldean intellectual culture.

Since the *Edukar'* can be identified with the *Yatukih* on phonetic grounds, I incline towards the view that in a number of instances the black Magi were actually Chaldean academics, and that the Chaldean "Mysteries of the North" was simply another name for *Yatukih*. So we have a Russian "Kolduny connection" with the *Al-Kaldani*, and a Russian "*Edukar'* connection" with the *Yatukih* sorcerers condemned as evil wizards in Orthodox Zoroastrian texts. This suggests that dark wizards were chased off by the Byzantines and white Magi, and were probably living in rural Russia. Perhaps for this reason the Russian *kolduny* and the black Magi were widely reported to have worn lengthy dishevelled hair and ragged beards.⁶⁶¹ One type of Russian *Koldun* was the *Baal'nik*, who made special consecrations using incantations.⁶⁶² We might therefore make a connection between the Russian *Baal'nik Koldun* and the headman of the *Al-Kaldani's* temple of Baal (perhaps the Chaldean Jupiter). It may well be that these Russian Chaldeans were descendants of the "Assyrian" devil-worshippers who the Magi claimed were "uprooted" from Asia Minor by the Byzantine Emperors. There they lived alongside the Magians and many other types of pagan living in exile. The *Fihrist of Al-Nadim* corroborates the Magian texts with regard to the displacement

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of the Chaldeans, perhaps confirming the historicity of Zoroastrian reports of anti-Chaldean Byzantine military campaigns conducted inside Anatolia.

Whereas in bygone years the Chaldean priests, priestesses and head men had practiced their magical rites free of harm, their extremely ancient faith had to slide from public influence and view after Babylon and Assyria fell to Medean and Persian troops. If it was to have any chance of maintaining its autonomy, anonymity would be their foremost asset in the struggle to preserve the religion. They were survivors. So, as white Magian, Byzantine Christian and Islamic religions sequentially inherited governorship of the Chaldean homeland, each had to contend with the pagan resilience of the locals. Amid repeated waves of failed conversions (which saw Chaldeans feign membership of these newer religions, all the while "unrepentently" and vehemently clinging to Chaldean sorcery and philosophy), waves of repression were unleashed against them to rid Anatolia of their worrisome presence. Despite Islam's ascendancy to ever newer heights of popularity, the Arabs still had them loitering about Harran in the 10th Century AD, but in diminished numbers. Obviously many had genuinely converted. Yet one cannot help feeling that the reason why late Mediaeval Islam did not suffer from the same frenzied outbursts of witch trials as the Roman Catholic Church, is because the *Al-Kaldany* had been forced to leave the area or abandon their religion, and those who did remain had no rights under Muslim law anyway. The later destruction of Baghdad and Harran by the Mongols may have caused further emigration of Chaldean and Muslim refugees from the war-ravaged zone.

In other words Chaldean religion was still largely intact as late as the 10th Century, clandestinely practicing their arts throughout Muslim Egypt and Arabia⁶⁶³ on some scale. Al-Nadim's testimony corroborates, if not verifies, what Iamblichus, the Greek pagan gnostic said of them. In accordance with Chaldean pagan philosophy, devils and spirits could be summoned and commanded by invoking the name of the supreme god. Exactly who this high god was, and what name he should be summoned by, depended of course on the prevailing notion of the supreme godhead in the area in which they lived. Throughout the Muslim world Chaldeanism had a distinctly Islamic flavor, while in Christendom Western European witches tailored their arts to reflect the Christianization of their society. There they drew down the power of the holy Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Al-Nadim had the following things to say about the Chaldeans found among the Muslim flock. Witness the Islamicized face of Chaldeanism!

"The exorcists and magicians assert that the devils, Jinn, and spirits obey and serve them, being directed by their command and their prohibition. The exorcists, who pretend to observe the sacred laws (of Islam), claim that this is because of obedience to Allah ... Thus invocation is addressed to Him, and oaths by the spirits and devils are by His help, with the abandoning of lusts and by consequence of religious practices.

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Moreover, (they claim) that the jinn and the devils obey them, either because of obedience to Allah ...

The (other) magicians assert that they enslave the devils by offerings and prohibitive acts. They (claim) that the devils are pleased by the committing of acts which are forbidden and which Allah ... has prohibited. Thus the perpetrating of things such as abandoning prayer and fasting, permitting blood, marrying forbidden women, and other kinds of evil actions is also pleasing. This is common practice in Egypt and the nearby regions: the books which are written there are many and extant ... A person who has seen this (state of affairs) has told me that there still remain men and women magicians and that all of the exorcists and magicians assert that they have seals, charms of paper, sandal, jazah, smoke and other things used for their arts".⁶⁶³

Thanks to archaeologists we have a series of ancient pre-Zoroastrian Chaldean tablets, entitled the *Wicked Spirits*. They contained expulsions and shielding formulae designed to protect the practitioner, some of which took the form of imprecations. In this respect Al Nadim's exposition of Mediaeval Chaldean magic and demonolatry can be vindicated. Foremost among the offending spirits were three species of demon known to the Chaldeans as *Utua*, *Gigim* and *Maskim* (from lowest to highest potency).⁶⁶⁴ Of the *Maskim* it was said:

"On high they bring trouble, and below they bring confusion. Falling in rain from the sky, issuing from the earth, they penetrate the strong timbers, the thick timbers; they pass from house to house. Doors do not stop them, bolts do not stop them, they glide in at the doors like serpents, they enter by the windows like the wind, they hinder the wife from conceiving by her husband; they take the child from the knees of the man; they make the free woman leave the house, where she has borne a child. They, they are the voices which cry and which pursue mankind".⁶⁶⁵

Many of these beings lived beneath the earth, under water especially, and far beneath the sea in particular. Another fragmented tablet describes this underworld known to the Chaldees. It called it the "*foundation of Chaos*",^{665a} a jail from which there is no escape, where there is no food to speak of save the dust, where no light comes, where dirt-speckled aerial demons, in their multitudes, fly thickly, even so far as licking the ceiling of the underworld's vault.

Al-Nadim went on to describe Chaldean engraved gems, plus stone and bead talismans throughout much of the Middle-East, although he adds that they had been "*rendered vain*". Iamblichus already told us of these things long prior, but Al-Nadim knew of their mediaeval presence first-hand. Additionally, as a result of these arts, many specialist treatises dedicated to the Jinn and demonology could be found in their keeping throughout much of Arabia, often quite detailed.

As this section draws fast to a close, I must draw your attention to comments made by some writers on the topic of European witchcraft. They say that witchery was largely a

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fictional phenomenon scraped together by a number of mediaeval Catholic clergy, built on older stories and plenty of imagination. As further proof of this they proclaim that witchcraft did not exist in the Middle East, or in Orthodox Christian countries. This is simply untrue. Sadly, whatever Russian Orthodox Church texts concern contemporary paganism are hardly explicit, adding hardly anything to our search for what actually took place in pagan Russia. Their pens were far more busy recording the glorious ascension of Christianity, the magnificence of their rulers, the conversion of their race, and the path towards inward moral reform. Be that as it may, the Chaldeans are mentioned in the sermons of Klim Smolyatich, but only in terms of their weakness when compared with god. Klim's homily is more likely to have been a moral lesson for his parishioners rather than a direct reference to local Chaldeans.

On the other hand, Russian folklore greatly supports my contention that Chaldeans were present in Slavia. In the folk tale *Prince Vladimir's Quest* (which rivals the official account of the conversion polemic contained within the *Primary Chronicle*), Vladimir sends three observers Mladan, Oleg and Vachtan to discover a new faith for the Russian people.⁶⁶⁶ This faith was to replace their homage of the many gods which inhabited their environs, and their excessive reliance on the stars and astrology for guidance.⁶⁶⁶ They visited many places and were unsatisfied with what they saw until they ran into a dwarf.⁶⁶⁶ He advised them to go far to the east into Mesopotamia, to the city of Babylon, the city of the seven hills.⁶⁶⁶ Upon arrival they discovered black-clad worshipers prostrating themselves before metallic or stone idols, as females garbed in black danced around a censer emitting a plume of thick billowing smoke.⁶⁶⁶ All the while a choir uttered unnerving discordant chants as an accompaniment to the proceedings.⁶⁶⁶ Their primary god was a female, who I associate with the black mother, Geh, the great whore, mother of dark witchcraft (as described in the Magian texts). Having felt themselves deceived by the dwarf the three Russians made off. Eventually, they had a dream of a holy maiden (the Virgin Mary) who guided them to the City of the Sun, which surprisingly turns out to be Constantinople, the city where they would find the light, truth and joy which Vladimir sent them in search of. Behind this tale we find the story of their unrequited search for a new faith in Babylonian religion. Their City of the Sun was not Khorezm (a former homeland of the Croats, and the Hungarian Arpad dynasty. Iranian: literally "The Land of the Sun") as one would suspect, but Constantinople. Whether the real version of the myth lay at Khorezm, but was later shifted to Constantinople the further they entered the Christian era is debatable. The search for the City of the Sun reveals an underlying strata of heliolatry superimposed over Christianity - such were the beliefs of the *dooveriye*, the pagan Christians.

A 13th Century Chaldean-style spell scroll unearthed by archaeologists in Novogorod confirms the existence of the dark craft in Russia beyond all doubt. The spells were written

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backwards in the form of prayers to the Virgin Mary, making them "anti-prayers".⁶⁶⁷ These were the sort of pagan observances so frequently condemned by the Russian Church as unholy.⁶⁶⁷ But their relative absence in relation to the 150,000 other scrolls unearthed there show that, in the cities at least, it was not widespread. Having said that, only 10% of the old city has been excavated so far.

On top of that we have a number of *zmeiovik* medallions (designed to be worn!) featuring the cross of Jesus on one side and the head of a medusa-like fiend on the other.^{667a} The latter is quite plausibly a depiction of Ahriman, since a similar relief is found in Persia, in the form of the Evil One being crushed under the hooves of Ahura Mazda's steed.^{667b}

Likewise there can be no mistaking the intended symbolism of a deliberately manufactured inverted cross found in Scandinavia. The principles behind the object in question seem related to *ergi*, an art of ritual inversion theoretically connected with infernal wizardry.

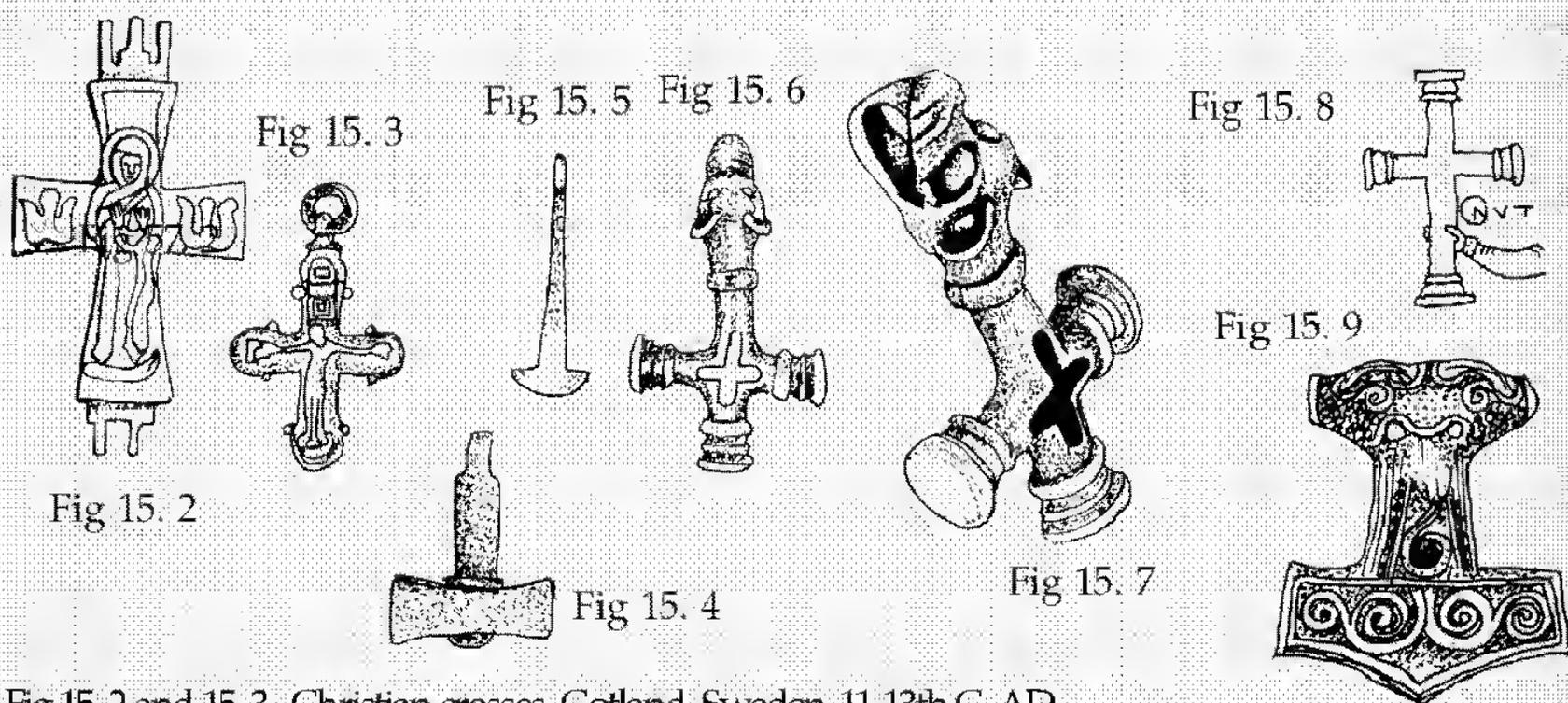


Fig 15. 2 and 15. 3. Christian crosses, Gotland, Sweden, 11-13th C. AD.

Fig 15. 4. Plain "Thor's hammer" amulet.

Fig 15. 5. Plain "Thor's hammer" amulet.

Fig 15. 6. Inverted cross found in Iceland and dating to the Norse pagan era, the 10th C. AD.

Fig 15. 7. Side projection of 15. 5.

Fig 15. 8. The Christian Danish King Canute's cross.

Fig 15. 9. Stylized Norse hammer amulet, headed by a horned creature.

The situation was far different in the countryside. For example in the Russian district of Penzen, *kolduny* supposedly used candles, aspen and wands of witch-hazel during their devotions. As with the *Al-Kaldani*, Russian *kolduny* were allegedly practitioners of ritual inversion.⁶⁶⁸ They were notorious for attending Church services and then disrespectfully turning their back on the priest and iconostasis where Jesus, Mary and the Saints are portrayed in religious art. Profanities were supposedly the order of the day at Easter time.⁶⁶⁸ They recited the Easter resurrection prayer backward then began yelling obscenities.⁶⁶⁸ The

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unholy consecrations of the Russian *kolduny* (termed *porchi*) involved necromancy, devil-worship, desecration, and even performing the dance of St Vitus.⁶⁶⁹ For this reason I am inclined to identify Rus' black Magians as heathen Chaldean *kolduny*. The Mediaeval anti-witch treatise *Malleus Maleficarum* states "it can be said that the devils deputed to work are not in Hell, but in the lower mists"⁶⁷⁰ Clearly a Chaldean explanation was posited by Kramer and Sprenger for the abilities and activities of devils, as professed by the witches.

It would seem that they were blasphemously mocking not only Christian rites, but Magian pagan ceremonies still extant in Russia. On *Velikiy Chetverg* (ie; Holy Thursday) *kolduny* held their own fire ceremonies during which aspen was burned. Fellow sorcerers and sorceresses soon converged on the scene of the fire requesting to receive portions of this ash from the ringleader.⁶⁷¹ The Old Russian word for *aspen* (a species of poplar tree) was *osin*, which bears a superficial resemblance to *yasen'* ("the ash tree"), and therefore *yasna* (the name of the Magian *Haoma* ritual). Even though Russian *kolduny* used the ashes of burned poplar for magical purposes, there is no reason to include it as a candidate for the mantle of *Haoma* on the strength of this linguistic correlation, ostensibly because it does not resemble the plant described in the Magian texts.

In Rus' bread, salt and water were desecrated at other times and strategically flung in certain locations, especially near cross-roads. Eggs or a knotted bundle made from a shirt, belt, cross, chain and coal, were put there too.⁶⁷² Whosoever retrieved these things (which are especially identifiable with Magianism) would be afflicted by disease generally speaking, and through them, the *kolduny* brought diseases and plagues into the villages.⁶⁷² The depositing of bread at cross-roads is probably indicative that Magians left consecrated loaves at cross-road shrines by their priests and priestesses. Hence the desire to pick them up, and eat of them.

Kolduny slept during the day, and come night time they set off to be about their business, carrying a staff with an iron crook at the end.⁶⁷³ They mostly dressed the same, with a sheep-skin jacket girthed by a belt-sash (*kushak*).⁶⁷³ Their countenance was terrible, their grin that of a wolf, their eyes vulpine.⁶⁷³ To have them look at you was all the worse owing to the powers of witchcraft that flowed from those eyes. This the peasantry called "the wolf gaze".⁶⁷³

Russian sorcerers could astral travel, or in other words, make their soul leave their body and send it on journeys. At other times they mutated into animal form.⁶⁷⁴ *Kolduny* used iron blades, cats, frogs and snakes as aids to performing sorcery, in addition to poplar ash.⁶⁷⁴ These were classic features of black Magianism, if we are to believe the Zoroastrian texts. *Kolduny* displayed further black Magian features described in the Avestan and Pahlavi texts. *Kolduny* rendered cattle lame by rubbing their hand along the beast's back.⁶⁷⁵ Moreover they destroyed the crops raised by the peasantry out of hatred for bread and cereal grains, and to make their austere lives even more troubled.⁶⁷⁵

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They performed another rite eminently feared by the peasantry. According to it bread was broken on its right and left side, then twisted into a knot.⁶⁷⁵ The ripped and knotted loaf was not sprinkled with salt (as would normally be the case in any white Magian or Russian household), but was instead intentionally despoiled with ashes, dirt from a grave plot, egg-shell, and old grain.⁶⁷⁵ The ash used in the ritual was to be taken from the hearth of the intended victim, who was to be attacked by the black magic of the unholy loaf.⁶⁷⁵ This bread caused poverty and fires on the person's property, and made their cattle drop due to sickness. It could even lead to death. It was widely believed throughout Belorussia that such a rite would prevent a harvest across many fields.⁶⁷⁵ A conceptually similar ritual was known in Western Europe, and featured in an undetermined number of European witch trials.

In the Sarapyl' district, in the Vyatka region of Eastern Russia, *koldumy* apparently laced wine and beer with a specially prepared incense. The tainted draught caused mental disorientation, rendering whomsoever had imbibed the drink unable to find doors. Where *koldumy* managed to make a person drink wash-up water, the victim was supposedly drained of their strength.⁶⁷⁶

Koldumy had a good side as well; for a price. Russians who believed themselves vexed sought the services of another *koldun*, who performed counter-magical rituals, to relieve the burden imposed on them by the enemy sorcerer.⁶⁷⁷ Wedded couples often had them protect the family home using diverse rituals.⁶⁷⁷

As stated earlier, evil witches were notoriously present in the far north of Russia, particularly near the exceedingly frigid White Sea. Folklore remembers them as black of visage, perhaps negroid or Indian, or perhaps simply allegorically black in heart and body.⁶⁷⁸ Their infernal powers came to them in a reversed version of confirmation, when the spirit of evil entered their body, in the form of demons, traditionally embodied as toads, frogs and serpents.⁶⁷⁸

Evidence for European Chaldeanism appears in Western sources too, mainly in the form of spell scrolls written in Chaldean and Hebrew.⁶⁷⁹ The 1376 text *Directorium Inquisitorium* provided unmistakably Chaldean details about certain witch-rites. After laying face down on the ground many times, and with songs, "they lacerate their own flesh (to draw blood). Out of reverence for the demon or by his instructions they wear white or black vestments. They worship him by signs ... burn candles or incense, they sacrifice animals and birds, catching their blood".⁶⁸⁰ The famous protestant theologian Calvin, did however think to brand Western witches as Chaldeans, drawing, in places, from *Old Testament* passages.⁶⁸¹

"He (God) hands the Chaldeans over to be impelled by Satan, having chosen them as His ministers for this task. Satan with his poison darts arouses the wicked minds of the Chaldeans to execute that evil deed ... and befoul them by the crime".⁶⁸¹

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Consider also the details recorded in 1376 (by the Inquisitor Nicholas Eymeric) concerning the arts of the witch-heretics at Aragon, France.⁶² He mentioned ;

Bloodletting, animal sacrifices (by burning), collecting the blood of the sacrifices, invoking demons, paying homage to demons through their chastity.

Wearing robes either black or white in colour, as a given demon required.

Using propitiatory hymns, incenses and aromas for unholy purposes.

Kneeling before demons.

Using sigils and unidentifiable words to worship particular demons

Burning candles.

Conducting rituals similar to Baal worship.

Pagan holy sites

What we know of the former heathen holy sites of Europe, provides us with clues that they were of varied pagan faiths, which included eastern dualist paganism (Magianism), animism, pagan gnosticism (Mithraism, Chaldeanism, Neo-Pythagoreanism) and Aryan paganism. The Aryan origin of their words for fire, their holy flags, the Hindu-style form of their idols, their grove cults, and the Indo-Iranian names of their gods, suggests a need to indulge in a comparative religious study, that expands upon similarities between Vedic and Magian religion, and European paganism. In doing so one is able to make informed guesses about the nature of European pagan religious sites, to paint in details otherwise erased or omitted by Christian or Muslim sources.

This approach does have one shortcoming. Due to a relative scarcity of Pan-European historical source material for each given sub-topic, dating to between 500 and 1,000 AD, it is by no means easy to confirm that these additional conjectured details were actually present across all of Europe. Sometimes folklore is all we have to go on. In most cases we cannot definitively authenticate the Pan-European nature of a given analogous custom, where comparable details are no longer to be found in other European countries. Considering that many features of Magian religion should be readily noticeable in the archeological record, only a greater commitment to archeological exploration will bring us a better understanding of what actually took place. Even then, we will never be able to recover the full picture. As in Asia, European pagan holy sites fell into five main categories; temples (fixed or mobile), groves, holy springs, holy fires and idols. With the coming of Christianity, public modes of heathen religious expression were no longer permitted. The new order, whether Christian or Muslim, set about dismantling whatever sites still remained operative, or where possible commandeered them for Christian or Islamic usage respectively.

More importantly, this section proceeds to divulge evidence that these heathen faiths

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were remarkably well organized, so much so that pagan adherents from other "christianized" countries made their way to Rus' and the Baltic on religious pilgrimages during the 10th Century AD and before.

Khrami - pagan temples

In bygone ages, the pagans could see their fenced off grove and the trees within them. On days when an oblation was to be made to the gods a high priest would cross over the boundary fence, and enshroud the tree in the holy tent.⁶⁸³ There he was alone with the heavenly gods. As temple-making became more common, people incorporated the concept of this private inner sanctum into their building design. Under Aryanism, a sacred post or pillar was raised inside the groves to tether the steed prior to its sacrifice. In Zoroastrian/Magian texts, four wooden pylons were said to delimit the boundary-line of the inner-most sanctum, and were encased by a mesh of interwoven thin wood slats, or even woven basketry which prevented entry into the pagan "holy of holies", yet allowed worshipers to see the holy fire within, and witness the ceremonies taking place. Sanctuaries were also found in any Christian church or chapel, although in Russia it was appended to one end of the nave, rather than centrally located, and skirted by a *trapeznya* porch.^{683a}

Large sums of money were invested in their construction. At Gutzkow, Poland, 300 marks of silver was the sum recorded as having been raised and set aside for building a temple there.⁶⁸⁴ Upon completion it proved so breathtaking in appearance, that the Gutzkowians refused to demolish it when their people were eventually converted.⁶⁸⁴ Other sources of temple-building revenue consisted of donations from abroad, tribal taxes, votary contributions collected from those seeking intercessions, and of course war booty. The high fane of Rugen was financed in just this manner, or so it was noted.⁶⁸⁴

Khram construction

According to a linguist by the name of Makhek, the Old Slavic word for "a temple" (singular *Khram*", plural: *Khrami* is supposed to have been derived from the Hittite word *Karimmi*, which also means "a temple".⁶⁸⁵ One cannot overstress the implications of this, for here we find that the pagan Slavic word for "a temple" came from the language of the Hittites, an Aryan people, and there are *no surviving Persian or Old Indian parallels*.

The reconstructed hypothetical Old Eastern-Slavic word *khorm", though linguistically dissimilar to *khram* by a minor degree, apparently gave rise to other related words throughout Slavia, many of them quite specialized, others more general.⁶⁸⁶ These include the Russian dialectal words *khromina* or *khoroma* ("a roof"), *khromishchik* ("a carpenter"), as well as the Ukrainian word *khrom* ("a corridor"), *khromi* ("a porch").⁵ Then in the Serbo-Croat we have *khram* and *khrama* which meant "a house" or "a temple".⁶⁸⁶ In the Slovenian *hram*

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signified "a construction, "a dwelling", "a home", "a temple", and much later in history "an apartment", and Czechs used the words *chram* or *chramina* ("a temple" or "a church").⁶⁸⁶ *Chromina* was the Polish word for "a hut" or "a cabin". Related to these last few words is the Latvian *karms* ("a construction") and the Old Indian *harmyam* ("a fortification").⁶⁸⁶

From this we can infer several things. Firstly that *khram* originally denoted a pagan temple in eastern and southern Slavia. Secondly that many folk in western and central Slavia had lost the pagan meaning of a *khram* and began using it to describe any kind of building whatsoever. Alternatively these same people still worshiped in heathen *khrami*, but due to their isolation from more major Eastern Slavic cult centers, they had to content themselves with conducting pagan religious gatherings in private homes. The situation was much the same in Scandinavia, for *St Olav's Saga* tells us that a major cult site for Thor was situated on a farm, in a barn. And lastly, in Russia and Poland the word entirely lost its pagan affiliations after the conversion, thereafter meaning "a Christian church". This probably means that local bishops chose to commandeered and renovate pre-existing heathen buildings, during the conversions, recycling them for Christian usage. The very same thing happened in England.

So how is it that Mediaeval Slavic pagans had preserved a word for "temple" once used by the Indo-European Hittites some 2,000 years prior to their day? Let's face it, *the word had survived the passage of 2,000 years in the Slavic, in the same context (ie; not only the survival of the word, but its use to describe temples which Slavs in fact built)*. If the word *Khrami* had not been in Slavia for 2,000 or so years, a relic of the ancient Indo-European migrations into Europe, then it was surely imported there by people who had kept Hittite temple-building alive for that same period. Pagan Slav temples evidently had a Mesopotamian or Aryan origin.

Since the Bulgars are the only other non-Slavic race to equate *khram* with a heathen temple, it's possible that that the Bulgars taught the ultimately Hittite word to the Slavs, together with the know-how to make them. Since *khram* was not used by the Volga Finns or Bashkirs, and cannot be found in other Turkic languages, this leads me to believe that the word was indigenous to Slavia, and had been there from remotest antiquity.

So what were Aryan temples like? From the *Agni Puranas* we know that Aryans believed they could redeem up to 21 generations of their ancestors by building or financing the construction of temples and pavilion shrines.⁶⁸⁷ Temples were ideally of exquisite craftsmanship, for they were intended to shelter the holy *Daeva* idols.⁶⁸⁷ Their general appearance and structural integrity was to be well maintained by regular upkeep, if the good fortune promised by the *Puranas* was to materialize.⁶⁸⁷ It then followed that the destruction of a temple robbed its former builders and sponsors of the spiritual graces received through their act of devotion.⁶⁸⁷

Indian pagan temples varied in both shape and size.⁶⁸⁸ They could be square, circular, elliptical, octagonal or oblong.⁶⁸⁸ Doorways were an integral structural component, and were

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traditionally embellished with the effigies of angels and divine guardians, carved into the lintels and posts either side of the entrance.⁶⁸⁸ Further ornamentation consisted of intertwined branches and foliage.⁶⁸⁸ The temple's architectural form was seen as a representation of the divine being to whom the temple was dedicated, with specific structural features embodying certain part of the god's body.⁶⁸⁹ For instance the fairly standard towering vault and cupola represented the divinity's head and neck.⁶⁸⁹ Such notions seem apparent in the Old Russian *p'rst*, the Bulgarian *pr'st*, the Serbo-Croat, Czech and Slovenian *prst*, the Polish *parst*, all of which meant "a finger".⁶⁹⁰ These are related to the Latvian *pirsts*, the Lithuanian *pirstas*, and Old Prussian.⁶⁹¹ These Slavic words are cognate with the Old High German word *first* ("the ridge of a roof"), or the Latin *postis* ("a post"), the Old Indian *prstham* "a backbone", "the spine of a mountain", or "a summit".⁶⁹⁰ *Stolb* (variously meaning "a post", "stairs" or "a ladder" in diverse Slavic tongues) is equated with the Latvian *stilbs* "the lower part of the hand or foot".⁶⁹¹ That further correlations between names for architectural features and body parts are not easily discernible, indicates that such similarities are purely coincidental, or had mostly dissipated with the passage of time.

Anyhow, the Brahmins wrapped a special thread around various parts of an Aryan temple, including the exterior. Once built, all that remained was to sanctify the building by a prescribed set of hallowing rituals, and chisel sacred images into it. Such an unusual detail as a string encircling a temple seems replicated in Adam of Bremen's mention of the Swedish temple at Uppsala, which was girded by a golden chain.

To consecrate an Aryan temple doorway "(a piece of) gold should be placed beneath the door (frame)".⁶⁹² It is impossible to guess whether or not such a custom gave rise to a later Norse pagan tradition. At various Scandinavian sites, archaeologists have located carnelian shards and golden embossed foils (termed *goldengubber*) buried under post holes. Owing to their widespread distribution archaeologists guess the foils served some magical purpose, perhaps sealing a marriage, or guaranteeing fertility at the site. They variously depict heterosexual couples, same sex couples (perhaps men hugging each other, or perhaps homosexuals) or a person and an animal. Some of these golden foils carry the image of a bear embracing a woman. This last motif may be related to Gothic mythology, which traces their ancestry to progeny once generated by the union of a young lass and a bear.⁶⁹³ Considering that golden magical foils are frequently found in the foundations of houses, these bear and woman foils may have been Gothic amulets designed to bring fertility and heirs to the married couples dwelling in a given Gothic household.⁶⁹³

The Aryans usually placed a large golden metallic disk inside their newly completed temples, but only after the due consecrations had been made.⁶⁹⁴ These temple disks represented the sun, and were thus objects of cult veneration.⁶⁹⁴ This calls to mind an account concerning the Wends, who slung a so-called "golden shield", on a wall inside Yarovit's

temple.⁶⁹⁵ Perhaps it was really a solar disk of the type described in the *Agni Puranas*. Judging by Herbord's spartan description of the sanctuary's interior, little else was found there. Maybe Wolgast was more austere than other Wendish sites, but judging by the number of villagers thronging around the temple as the Christian troops first entered to violate the sanctuary, the pagans might have been expecting their arrival. If so pagan priests could have spirited away most of the temple's valuables just in time. Nevertheless the locals were visibly awe-struck as the sacred device passed by, victoriously held aloft by the Christian freebooters. Though in opposition to this conjecture, Yarovit was held to be a war god that Herbord equated with Mars.⁶⁹⁵ Evidently his name was derived from the Slavic *yariy* ("violent", "fierce", "furious").

To further inaugurate an Aryan temple the Brahmins placed a stone altar there, and lit the holy fire of *Agni* upon it. Next the temple's principal idol was put in place, seated on its own stone pedestal. Following this a flagstaff was blessed and erected next to the idol of the divine being, in order to negate the effects of the evil spirits.⁶⁹⁶ Once hoisted, the flag "*surrounds the neck of the temple (the vault's interior) and it wafts the wind around the globe (the cupola's interior), altar and image*".⁶⁹⁶ An Aryan temple banner required purification too, and could only be used after it was bathed and consecrated. The silken flag was either of "*a single or variegated colours*", and traditionally bore an heraldic depiction of military arms.⁶⁹⁶ The *Agni Purana* adds, "*It should be adorned with cowries and small bells*".⁶⁹⁶ Once all this was complete, a flag-raising ceremony took place, accompanied by great pomp and reverence, the faithful solemnly reciting hymns as the unfolding banner made its heroic ascension to the top of the mast. If worshiped with piety the temple flag could remove the stain of one's sinfulness, and bestow boons upon the assembled devotees. Kings were the primary providers of temple flags. It was a pressing duty that they avoided to their own personal detriment.

"By the offer of a banner one goes to heaven and becomes a strong monarch on the earth".⁶⁹⁷

In the Aryan tradition idols could also be housed inside a temple, or outdoors safely sheltered by a pavilion shrine, or in the halls of those who wished to earn the spiritual merits attached to sponsoring the erection of an effigy.⁶⁹⁸

The faithful also needed to dig holy tanks, reservoirs or wells near the new temple, to pool the sacred waters.⁶⁹⁹ A post was driven deep into the well's bottom, and a consecrated effigy, plus gold, were committed its bottom.⁶⁹⁹ The spiritual graces flowing from well construction were profound. As sacred cattle lapped its waters, the sins of the one who commissioned the digging and lining of the well were taken away - "*He never goes to hell*", so said their scriptures.⁶⁹⁹

The style and decoration of pagan Russian *khrami* varied depending on the precise form of worship normally conducted there. Just as there was immense variation in the

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construction and decoration of the later Christian churches, pagan temples most likely acquired their own "feel". The more lavish and impressive *khrami* no doubt attracted greater volumes of heathen pilgrims on sacred festivals (and more prestige for local tribespeople).

Since most available descriptions of the pagan Wendish temple interiors come from some of the very people who sacked them, we should ask how reliable their recollections were? If Mediaeval Christian writers were in any way keen on diabolizing the pagans, they could have had an absolute field day describing the insides of the heathen temples. There was simply no better moment to revel in classic demonic clichés. Instead, we find very little of this, and predominantly lucid descriptions of what was seen inside. For example at Rethra ... "a great temple had been erected to the demons, the chief of whom is Redigast. His image is ornamented with gold, his bed bedecked with purple".⁷⁰⁰ Thietmar added that the effigy was actually gilded wood, embellished by engravings, perhaps writing, though it is highly unlikely that Redigast was seen as demonic by pagan Wends. This was Thietmar's own embellishment. Purple cloth was draped over the walls,⁷⁰¹ and flags placed inside,⁶⁹⁹ though it is difficult to guess how closely this practice resembled that of the Aryans. Carved images (set with animal horns) were erected outside, near the exterior of the Rethra temple.⁶⁹⁹ In all we are presented with a picture of pagan Slav holy sites every bit similar to those described in the Hindu *Puranas*.

Lotus shaped mounds?

In Hindu (and presumably Aryan) religious art, the *Daeva* idols were very frequently found seated (in the lotus position) or standing on a lotus flower pillar. According to the *Agni Purana* the faithful worshiped weaponry and sundry deities atop flower-shaped mounds, in the center of which was an idol of Indra. In 1951 Russian archaeologists excavated a flower-shaped mound at Novgorod, which is believed to have acted as a pedestal for Perun's idol, originally brought there by Vladimir's uncle Dobrynya. Holy fires once blazed there also, burning in the center of the flower, and at the tip of each petal.⁷⁰² All things being equal, this Novgorod religious site was probably a Zurvanite or Aryan pagan *daeva* temple dedicated to Perun,²⁶⁵ or in other words Indra.

As you will have seen Celtic pagan idols were sometimes found seated with their legs arranged in the so-called lotus position, a religious posture adopted during meditation in India.⁷⁰³

Towered temples

As you will recall, Aryan temples frequently possessed a lofty vault.⁷⁰⁴ The situation was much the same in Slavia. By far the most impressive of the Slavic *khrami* were immense (square, octagonal or circular) wooden towers, roofed by a pyramid-like cupola made from aesthetically pleasing rows of oak shingles called *lemekh*.⁷⁰⁵ *Lemekh* is a word common to all

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the Slavs, despite minor phonetic variations, and appears traceable to the Lithuanian word *lentesis*.⁷⁰⁵ These shingled temples⁷⁰⁶ probably resembled the fire temples of the Magi, and coincidentally were not unlike Western Church bell-towers to look at.

In other instances, heathen Slav towers had octagonal spires, or *shater* "tent rooves" (pronounced *shatyor*) as they called them. These cupola-towers apparently existed before the 989 AD conversion to Christianity, and their design was faithfully incorporated into early Russian churches.⁷⁰⁷ High towers were therefore elements of pagan Slavic architecture.

Linguistics lets us infer that *shater* tent rooves (or at the very least Magian tents) were employed over a large area; Slavia, Serbo-Croatia, Bulgaria, the Uighur Empire, Azerbaijan, and the vast Turkic lands of Central Asia, as far away as the Altai region of Siberia, in the Asiatic Far-East. The true origin of *shatyor* is the Persian word *chatr* ("a barrier" or "tent"), and the Old Indian *chattram* ("a barrier").⁷⁰⁸ *Shatyor's* impressive distribution might be evidence that Magian or Magian-Brahminic temple building skills had decentralized from the Iranian region, and had diffused northwards, eastwards and westwards over an exceptionally vast region. The Achaemenid holy city of Pasargadae (which translates as "the encampment of the Persians"), was tent-shaped in its overall layout.⁷⁰⁹ Such a design was simply a translation of their tented holy sites into more lasting materials, which were suitably decorated with the exploits of kings by teams of carvers.⁷⁰⁹ If for arguments sake Achaemenid Magians had come to settle in Russia, either immediately, or after a lengthy period of habitation in Northern and Central Asia, we might expect that they engaged themselves in similar activities. Accordingly one might find groves, anthropomorphic household utensils, griffons, highly decorated temples, seals. And we do. Though one point of difference between Achaemenid Persia and Slavia was the Russian use of wood rather than stone, perhaps on account of its plentifulness. The relatively treeless realms of the Achaemenids and Magi never provided the Persians with a suitable quantity of timber for use in temple construction. For this reason, building in wood may have been cheaper to make in time and money (no stone to import and dress), and what is more, the wood was very holy. Expatriate Persian craftsmen in Slavia probably delighted in a pleasant change from stone. Achaemenid architecture originally showed Egyptian and Mesopotamian decorative influences (ie; humans with animal heads and other animalian body parts, lions, griffons),⁷⁰⁹ far in excess of the expected Greek influence, which was nonetheless present.⁷⁰⁹ Be that as it may, the vast majority of the Magian religious sites appear to have been in the form of outdoor gardens (transected by flowing creeks of crystalline purity), free-standing pavilion-shrines, as well as raised platforms set atop hills.⁷⁰⁹

Our most enduring problem is the desolation of the old Slav temples, on account of which we are unlikely to discover the fullest range of artistic themes that once adorned them. This is a pity, for they were described as exquisite even by the Christians who came to destroy

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them. Nor can we compare anything other than chance discoveries of well-preserved fragments of carved panels. Nevertheless, Russian holy groves and temples can be admirably equated with Iranian holy sites. All the more so because a number of Scandinavian and Slavic artifacts (whether excavated or mentioned in mediaeval historical sources) resemble those of the Persians. Accordingly we see a translation of Persian motifs like lions and griffons cascading out of Iran and into Northern and Eastern Europe. Such motifs are found in their wood carvings. In a Slavic context, the tent-roofed cupola design is thought to have been an outgrowth of a feature common to Slavic fortifications.⁷¹¹ A firm relationship between religious towers and fortified sites is validated by archeological excavations and historical accounts pertaining to Rugen, which depict the main temple there as securely guarded not only by men-at-arms, but defensive works.

Another Old Russian word for "a tower" commonly used in pre-Christian times was *vezha*, which is similar to the Slovenian *veza*, the Polish *wieża*, and the Czech *vez* or *veze*, which in almost all cases mean "a tower". *Vezha* perhaps originated from the Avestan Persian verb *vaza*.⁷¹¹ What is more certain is that these correlations emerged from the proto-slavic *vezha meaning "a mobile home", or "a portable tower". Historically speaking, Slav towers were more often than not portable, and for this reason only infrequently covered in external cladding. They could be readily dismantled, transported about on a wagon and re-assembled at a new location.

We know from Poland that the Western Slavs preferred to build their temple towers on the top of hills or mountains, but due to the lack of high ground in Russia, it is less likely that they followed this custom. These temples contained idols, treasure and holy fires which were so valuable that in one case we know of (the Western Slav cult center of Rugen) they were guarded by 300 armed riders. Archaeologists and surviving historical accounts allow us to guess that the Rus' pagan temples resembled those of the Western Slavs in many respects.⁷¹² In his 10th Century text *Fields of Gold*, Al-Masudi informs us that many Slavs were demi-pagans, part Christian and part sun-worshipers. They were, so to speak, heretics. He provided descriptions of their Slavic temples (or possibly even heretical churches), but did not state if he saw them personally:

"And another temple was built by one of their kings on Chornaya Gora (Black mountain) - miraculous waters encircle it, multi-coloured and varied, with well known uses. In it they had a great idol in the form of a person, like an old man with a stick in his hands, with which he moves the bones of the dead from the grave (ie; he re-animates or resurrects the dead). A picture of various ants is situated at his right foot, and at his left foot are pictures of black, winged ravens, and other black winged images ...".⁷¹³

"And they have another temple on a hill surrounded by the sea Inside it was lined out with red coral and green chrysolite. In the midst of it was a great tower, and under it was the

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idol, which had parts crafted from four kinds of precious stones: carnelian, crystal, sapphires, and green chrysolite, and its head from many carats of gold. Young girls stare at another idol which stood opposite it, bringing it sacrifices and incense. The building has been attributed to a sort of sage that was there in olden times".⁷¹³

Archaeology, historical sources and Slavic folk traditions tell us that their idol houses were lavishly adorned with graven images of the divine beings.⁷¹⁴ The pagan idols venerated by Khagan Vladimir and the Kievans were located on the hill not far from the towered palace (in the *Primary Chronicle* text recorded using the word *terem*).⁷¹⁵ *Terem* was the Old Russian word for "a tower", "a cupola" or "a palace". It was related to the Serb term ("turret"), the Bulgarian *trem* ("a porch"), the Serbo-Croat *trejema* ("a hall"), and the Slovenian *trem* ("a roof"). Vasmer does not list an Old Indian or Avestan correlation for these terms, but records that they might have come from Greek and Roman words which meaning "a beam" or "a girder".⁷¹⁶ Considering the supposed Greek or Roman origin of *terem*, the means of making such a construction might have been copied from Roman and Greek frontier defensive posts long observed by the ancient Slavs, or taught to them by captured Roman war prisoners, of which there were once many.

There were two other Old Russian words for "a tower", namely *syn* and *sun* (which meant the same as "son", and was therefore in all probability somehow related to "the sun"). *Syn* originated in the Dunai-Bulgar tongue, and is also traceable to the Old Turkic, where it meant "a statue" or "a grave marker".⁷¹⁷ Here we have possible evidence that Russian towers housed idols consecrated to the gods, and effigies representing ancestors who had passed on. What is more, the data suggests that the Slavs learned how to make these idol-towers from the Magian Bulgars and Turks.

Lastly there are the words *chertog* and the later *cherdak*. The Old Russian *chertog* ("a building's interior")⁷¹⁸ originated in the Persian *chartak*: *char* ("four") *tak* ("high", "a balcony" or "a porch").⁷¹⁸ Perhaps it originally meant "a high or four-storey tower". In Sassania, a *Chahar Taq* was, more specifically, a domed pavilion that sheltered a Zoroastrian fire altar.⁷¹⁹ Clearly a certain proportion of the Bulgar and Slavic Magians were Orthodox Zoroastrians beholden to post-Karterian ideologies, iconoclasm and dogmatism. The following table is a synopsis of words relating to towers and temples in Slavia. These same words are in no way to be found throughout the Germanic tongues.

Term	Meaning	Origin	Distribution of cognate words
<i>khrami</i>	'a temple'	Hittite	Eastern and Western Slavia, the Balkans
<i>shater</i>	'a pyramidal cupola'	Persian/Old Indian	Eastern Europe and Eurasia
<i>vezha</i>	'a tower'	Proto-Slavonic	Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Slovenia
<i>terem</i>	'a tower'	Greek/Roman	Russia, Bulgaria, Serbo-Croatia, Slovenia

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<i>syn</i>	'a tower'	Bulgar/Turkic	Russia, Bulgaria
<i>cherdak</i>	'a balcony'	Persian via the Turkic	Russia
<i>chertog</i>	'a building's interior'	Persian via the Old Bulgarian	Russia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Central Asia

To match their cosmological view, the pagan Russians and Balts made towers of some considerable height. These main towers were divided into three levels; the upper "observation deck", holy fire and pagan belfry, the ground based inner sanctum where ceremonies were performed, and the subterranean level.

Many Slavic and Baltic tower temples were round, but others were square shaped, constructed around four central pylons.⁷²⁰ According to Darmesteter, this was the principal form of Achaemenid Mazdean temple design, so this may be further evidence that Slavic temples were based on Persian designs of some antiquity. Dome-topped fire temples supported by columns were however atypical of the Sassanian period,⁷²¹ rather than towers, no doubt the result of Roman craftsmanship reluctantly provided by war captives from missing legions taken in warfare against Rome. A building of similar design is still to be found in Russia.

If the Slavs had Magi, and they had towered temples (with architectural features derived from the Iranian), then it is likely their towers were styled in a manner similar to a typical Magian fire temple. You see Magians once kept their fires atop towers to keep the flame out of harm's way. This being the case, Slavic *khrami* towers probably possessed a sand box, stone hearth or pedestal somewhere on the upper storey, on which burned the holy fire, the eternal fire of ages (ie; Svarozhich, or son of God). In fact the modern Russian term for an eternal flame is *Vechnaya Plamya*, literally "the centuries-old flame". Judging by the account of the Slav temple at Rugen, one could also find the war banner and primary idol of the settlement inside the temple.⁷²² The idol was sited on the ground floor level of the temple, in front of which was a sacrificial fire pit. The placement of idols inside fire temples was never acceptable under Orthodox Zoroastrianism; only the more ancient varieties of *Daeva* and *drug*-worshiping Zurvanite Magi observed this practice. Therefore the Slavic towered fire temples were, in all likelihood Magian Zurvanite temples, run by Zurvanite dualist Magus-wizards, or Aryan pagan holy sites administrated by Brahmins.

The Slavic war banners might have had a three-fold role. Firstly as a means of heraldic identification for specific military units, thus facilitating greater control of one's fighters on a crowded battlefield. Secondly to show archers the prevailing wind direction and approximate velocity. And thirdly to discover whether or not the *fravashis* (the Magian saints) were accompanying them into combat, and hence signal the likelihood of victory during battle. The following scripture would of course only apply to non-Zurvanite Magi, for it refers to battle against the *Daevas*. Whether the Zurvanites had a similar teaching is

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unknown, nor do we know who the *fravashis* would have been directed against in Zurvanite doctrine; against the *Ahuras* or the *Daevas*?

*"We worship the good, strong, beneficent fravashis of the faithful; with helms of brass, with weapons of brass, with armour of brass, who struggle in the fights for victory in garments of light, arraying the battles and bringing them forwards, to kill thousands of Daevas. When the wind blows from behind them and brings their breath unto men, then men know where blows the breath of victory, and they pay homage unto the strong, beneficent fravashis of the faithful, with their hearts prepared and their arms uplifted."*⁷²³

While there are only scant references to the Slav war banners, there are a number of recorded instances in the sagas where Norse battle standards bore a raven motif,⁷²³ and the way in which they moved about divulged the outcome of a conflict before it had even started.⁷²³ For example the raven banner carried for Ragnar Lothbrok was woven by his daughters, and it portended victory if it flew strongly, whereas a limp pennant augured defeat.⁷²⁴ As you will recall the sons of Ragnar (from Dublin) are guessed to have been willing participants in the *Al-Madjus* attacks on Cordoba and North Africa, so accordingly they may have believed in the same banner-lore as the Magi. Magyar standards carried the same sorts of motifs too, ravens with meat in their beaks. Considering that Hungarians had heathen fire priests known as *Magoch Magus*, and call themselves Magyars (pronounced majar), their raven image should be seen in a Magian context, signifying swift death to their enemies.

As with the Mazdean temples, the *Volkhvy* chose the upper storey of these towers as the preferred location for the flame, for not only was it the highest point overlooking the surrounding landscape, but it afforded some protection to the holy fire, which in times of war could be susceptible to attack. Vernadsky mentions that Slav temple's could only be directly accessed via the roof (using ropes), and when there, the pagan priests had to hold their breath.^{724a} This was most likely a reference to the Zoroastrian/Zurvanite belief that human breath could contaminate the holy fire, and when tending it Mobeds had to wear a mask over the face. We know that the *Volkhvy* also wore masks, plausibly for this reason.

One Mediaeval Western writer spoke of a "lighthouse" situated in one of the Baltic countries, a lofty tower with a fire burning brightly at the top. Perhaps this was a lighthouse, but it might also have been an eyewitness account of a holy fire burning on the upper storey of a Magian tower.⁷²⁵ Consider this. It was situated south of the town, and in a small cemetery. The archaeologist (Flipowiak 1986) called it a beacon to guide shipping. But how could it be when it was not situated on the coast, but further inland on a river. It is unlikely that river craft would need a lighthouse for guidance, when they simply follow the river's course. That is unless it served to warn approaching helmsmen of navigational hazards. Unfortunately I know of no further details in relation to the structure of this tower. From the

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writings of the Magi, we know that the holy fire was the most important and vulnerable possession of a given settlement, the focal point of the people's public ceremonial life, since only it was capable of transporting their sacrificial gifts back to the Creator and heavenly gods. If the holy flame was in danger of capture, the ash-filled fire urn could be removed and transported to the safety of some secluded location, however this option would only be considered in the gravest of dire emergencies, when there was literally no other option.^{725a}

MAGIAN BELFRIES

Slavic *Volkhovy* used bells to ward off evil in the surrounding lands, and were known to have worn them on their person, or mounted them in bell towers, where the bells hung from the ceiling by means of chains.⁷²⁶ The bells might also have been in separate bell towers.⁷²⁷ This practice is in accord with Magian fire temple constructions, which had four bells slung from the ceiling by chains, and which were rung during prayer sessions, when the holy fire was being fed.⁷²⁸ By Moulton's reckoning the Parsees had adopted the practice from the Hindus,⁷²⁹ and not all fire temples had them. Magian bell towers were most likely modelled on early Hindu towers, or, less likely a later post-exilic tradition, acquired in India. Considering that Iranian mosques were often refurbished fire temples, it necessarily follows that many eastern minarets are vestiges of the ancient wizard towers, or otherwise modelled on them.^{729a}

The more archaic Old Russian word for "a bell tower" was *zvonitsa*, which was derived from the Old Russian word for bell *zvon* (Old Slavonic, Serbo-Croat, Slovenian and Czech), *zvonets* (Bulgarian), and *dzvon* (Polish). Then there is the Latvian *zvan*s and the Lithuanian *zvanas*. These stemmed from the Old Indian *svanas* ("a sound"), which also gave rise to the Latin *sonus* ("sound"). Thus we might think that Slavic and Baltic bell towers originated in the pre-Christian era, and had some kind of an Aryan genesis.⁷³⁰ Three pagan Russian first names banned under Christianity (*Dzvinka*, *Dzvenimira*, and *Dzvenislava*)⁷³¹ seem related to bells, and do not appear to have had a masculine form. This might indicate that women, perhaps female Magi, were tasked with ringing the temple bells. *Dzvinka* and *Dzvenimira* might have meant "bell-ringer", while *Dzvenislava* could have meant "Glory of the ringing bells". On the other hand, Russian folklore preserves information on the *kolokol'niy man* or *kolokol'niy myzhik*.⁷³² These were deceased male bell-ringers that wore pointy white or red hats, and sounded the bells in the dead of night.⁷³² *Kolokol'niye kyzhiki* were normally the souls of ancestors with supernatural powers and abilities.⁷³² They served inside the churches at night or on major feast days.⁷³² Upon the third striking of their bells, demons were struck down, or so they said in Novgorod.⁷³² Perhaps *kolokol'niye myzhiki* were the ghosts of Russian Christian monks returning from beyond the grave to dutifully sound the bells as they did in life. The inclusion of pointy white and red hats veers us from a monastic spectre though, instead suggesting they were the helpful apparitions of heathen bell-men. Another word

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balabolka meant "a bell" or "bell-ringer", and it was etymologically related to *balabolit'*, which meant "to chatter", or more likely the reflexive form *boltat'sya* meaning "to dangle" or "to hang around".⁷³³ The less archaic Russian word for bell (*kolokol*) evidently comes from the Old Indian *kalakalas* ("disorderly clamouring or cries", or "noise"). Doubtless to say *kolokol* reflected the chaotic peeling of different-sized bells rung in unison, bells of Indian provenance.⁷³⁴

Slavic temple sanctuaries were inlaid with lime, oak, boxwood and other fine-grained ornamental woods, and carved with celestial and mythological imagery of the highest standard,⁷³⁵ sumptuously decorated griffons, centaurs and serpents.³⁶ Such ornamental work is potential evidence for the continuation of ancient Greek or Mesopotamian religious practices inside Slavia. Slavic temple towers were used by their heathen astronomers as a platform to scan the heavens in search of the planets and other celestial phenomena.

In Russia, bell-towers were free standing, normally built at a distance from the main building,⁷³⁶ and this continued to be the case during Christian times. Some English bell towers crudely resemble the architectural model of a tower which was dug up by archaeologists during the Novgorod excavations.

Slavic temples came alive with the scent of floral garlands, perfumes, incenses and visually tantalizing reliefs, pagan "scriptural" writing, and paintwork. Notable was the inlaying of gems, coral and other precious objects into the woodwork, as was mentioned of a Balt temple.^{736a}

Some of the tower constructions found in Old Russia, the Baltic and the Ukraine might not have been temples at all, but much rather *astodans*, towers of the dead, known to the Magi as "Towers of Silence". The following is Moulton's account of a Parsee (Zoroastrian) *astodan*:

"A Tower (of silence) is a round structure of brick or stone situated on rising ground, a hill-top if possible. Inside its circular wall was a floor built in three sections - the highest, next the wall, for males, the next for females, the lowest for children. They slope down to a central well, with a circumference about half that of the outside wall. In the shallow receptacles provided, the corpse was laid, and the cotton clothes well slit up and down with scissors, care being taken that the head does not lie to the north, a quarter haunted by fiends"

As soon as the corpse-bearers had left the Tower, the vultures swoop down from their post of observation round the wall (on an outer ledge), and in half an hour there was nothing left but the skeleton. Quickly the bones dry, and the corpse-bearers enter again after some days, and cast the bones into the central well, where they crumble away".⁷³⁶

The underground places

The pagan Germans, Celts, Iranians, Buddhists and Slavs all dug out underground places. In various parts of Europe, archaeologists normally interpret them as food storage facilities. Some saw both religious and secular use. As you will have read certain pagans living in the frosty North reportedly spent much of their time living below ground to escape looking at the sun they loathed. Down in the burrowed hollows they revelled, playing drums and music until nightfall.

More sophisticated underground temples were constructed by the Slavs too. In pagan Rus' the base of a circular stone temple at Bug was excavated and found to possess a subterranean passage leading down into a circular room. This is the room in which Mirobog appears in a wall mural on bended knees before a sacred tree. In a Magian environment, such rooms most likely acted as 'caves' for performing necromancy and planetary invocations. That is because a white Magus would not even think about performing a *Haoma* libation beneath the surface of the earth. This would be an act of defilement; devil-worship.

So where did they inherit the practice of building subterranean temples from? If we are to assume that the cult of Mithra was not under-represented in certain parts of pagan Rus', we may have good reason to suspect that there were a lot of *Mithraea*, or underground vaults in Rus', in which the pivotal bull-sacrificing ceremony was performed, where a priest impersonating Mithra slaughtered the Bull of Creation. Roman *Mithraea*s were unearthed as a result of WW2 bombing in England, relics from Roman Briton. They have also been found right across Europe,⁷³⁷ and some huge structures in Central Asia would tend to resemble *Mithraea*, although they are generally assumed to have been absent there. Whether the below-ground portions of the Rus' temples served as *Mithraea* is anyone's guess, but generally *Mithraea* were built to a standard design, and were supposed to be rectangular rather than circular in nature, as was the case with the Rus' design. Greek Pythagorean gnostics used underground chambers as well (perhaps circular) in which they performed necromancy. The only clue that below ground temples ever existed in Rus' came when several were unearthed in Russia some time ago. It is amazing that any survived at all, because like the above ground temples, they too were earmarked for demolition by Russian Church authorities. Vladimir ordered his troops not only to tear down the temples, but to "dig them up".⁷³⁸

Zoroastrian scriptures linked the heretical devil-worshippers and their numberless idol houses with the use of hiding pits, or burrows. But is there such a link with the Slavs? Considering the many perceptible manifestations of quasi-vedic, quasi-Magian society, I Slavic pagan Zurvanites used some underground diggings for ritual purposes, or as *astodan* bone pits, and not just for storage, or sanctuary in the event of an attack.

Amphitheatres

According to one source, the pagan Russes possessed amphitheatres. They consisted of an earthen-mound (central stage), on which sat idols and an altar, all of which were surrounded by a semi-circle of benches or "pews" that faced the sanctuary, providing seating for in excess of 300 persons.⁷³⁹ Such sites may have been places of secular assembly, such as the *veche* council area excavated at Novgorod, which fits the general description of an amphitheatre. Having said that, Rus' pagan priests are recorded having used comedy masks, horns, harps and other mysterious rites during festivals at which they performed for the packed audiences of the post-conversion era.⁷⁴⁰

Traditionally amphitheatres were of Greek or Roman origin. Smaller venues in rural localities may have emulated the great amphitheatre at Pergamum or Epidaurus, where the pagan philosophers once preached and convened lectures before outlawed by Christian authorities. If the Russes built their amphitheatres to Roman specifications they may have been erected by Mithraic devotees, and if Greek they were probably built by descendants of Neo-pythagorean philosopher scientists banished from Athens in the 6th Century AD. By some coincidence the early mediaeval Northumbrian royal court in Yeavering (Britain) also had an amphitheatre.

The general Russo-Slavic word *skomorokh* specifically denoted a wandering musician *who acted as a comedian and a sorcerer*, while wearing Latin-style clothing. In the Old Polish we find the words *skomroszny* ("shameless" or "indecent"), or *skowrysny* and *skowrosny* ("happy" and "lively").⁷⁴¹ *Skomorokh* is believed to have originated from a Greek word which meant "a prank" or "a practical joke", but could also mean "a swindle" or "a deliberate act of deception". It is also apparently linked with the Latvian word *Samarags* which meant "someone who never keeps their word".⁷⁴¹

Since Slavic *Skomorokhi* wore Latin-style clothing and comedy masks during their ceremonial pantomimes, there is a distinct possibility that they were the descendants of actors who performed divine comedies in ancient Rome and Greece, thereby causing much scandal, and prompting their subsequent expulsion from the Empire. Their witty stage shows provoked outrage in the eyes of Pliny the Elder, who caustically attacked the manner in which they defamed the celestial gods, with the outrageous lies they invented. St Augustine further wrote:

"This form of propitiation of such gods as these - with all its lascivious impurity, its shameless, filthy corruption, and its actors whom the Romans, with a laudable, instinctive sense of honour, debarred from all political office and expelled from their tribes, marked as beneath contempt and condemned to outlawry". "On certain appointed festivals, scenes of shame, accompanied with cruelty, acts of dishonour and crime, attributed (whether truly or falsely) to

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the divine beings, were plainly and openly represented, consecrated and dedicated to those gods .. Those demons (the actors) admit that they are (made) unclean by delighting in such things. They avouch themselves as the promoters of lives of crime and indecency, by their crimes and misdemeanours, real or pretended, and by the public presentation of them..."⁷⁴²

Here Augustine candidly speaks about their impropriety, even within the pagan milieu, for many forthright pagans were similarly enjoined in their condemnation in the centuries following the birth of Christ. For it would seem that they blatantly mocked some of Rome's dearest gods, and what is more, professed to follow a criminal lifestyle (or so it was alleged).

During the ritual carnivals of the heathen festival calendar, *skomorokhi* musicians and actors went from place to place serenading the masses with their skillful orations. Their buffoonery, comedy and merry-making (most likely of classical Greek or Roman origin) no doubt provided an enjoyable dimension to the pagan carnivals, which the Christian priests viewed with exceptional disdain. When a *skomorokh* plucked the strings of his *gusli*, blew the pipes, or began a ballad or epic poem, an atmosphere of expectation wafted amongst the crowds of listeners and guests. The people jostled for a good spot to stand and awaited with glee, the songs and dramas of their forefathers. According to the *Primary Chronicle*, pagan impenitence was nowhere more visible, and openly flaunted than when these boys came to town, for the Churches stood almost empty, and wherever the clowns played, the congregated audiences wore the ground to bare earth!⁷⁴³ In short, the *skomorokhi* were almost single-handedly responsible for, not only hampering, but undoing the conversions of many early Mediaeval Russians!

Soyatilishche

Soyatilishche were shrines located in Slavia's villages, lesser settlements, and even out in the wilderness. True they had smaller dimensions than great temples, but were generally no less stunning in appearance. The not-so-rich placed tithes and sacrifices at these sites for protection against demons, just as hunters and woodsmen hoped for a similar insurance policy against unexpected blizzards, or sudden attacks by marauders, bandits, wolves or bears. Small shrines might only be a sacred tree, stump, tree hollow or bough, bearing recognisable mythological and religious engravings. Gifts were left in the most obvious location, to be collected and immolated by a resident or wandering Magus at a later date. In Old Russian another name for a small pagan temple or chapel was *bozhnitsa*⁷⁴⁴ (derived from the word *Bog* {god} and thus traceable back to the Iranian *Bag*). The word *bozhnitsa* implies devotional images and idols representing Iranian and shamanic gods, *yazatas*, holy saints, Magi, royals and nobles were housed within these shrines. Back in Magian Iran regional sacrificial pavilions of similar function were assigned their own Magus, referred to as a *Bagnapat* (meaning Master of a *Bagin* {bag shrine}). For this reason linguists have linked *bozhnitsa* with the term *gudhus* (Gothic: "a synagogue") or *godahus* (Old Icelandic: "a pagan

temple").⁷⁴⁵

It was revealed in writings derived from the council of Braga (in Portugal) that pagans in that part of the world were in the habit of building illuminated shrines near the groves and springs, which shone brightly (probably owing to the holy fire burning within, or due to large numbers of burning candles). Interestingly, these shrines were described as having walls of lattice construction, just as were the Magian temples and shrines, whose inner sanctum was a four-posted chamber surrounded by wooden lattice wall grilles, and for this reason the interior light sources were probably visible to onlookers.⁷⁴⁶

Pagan pilgrimages

The sort of temples mentioned in this chapter were major destinations for pilgrims, not only by Russians, but die-hard pagans from Western Europe, pining for their mead. They were also centers of great learning and medical treatment. Physical evidence of trade contacts suggests that many of these visitors were English and Frankish, though Adam of Bremen specifically highlights Hispanic and Hellenic folk converging on the Baltic in large numbers to consult necromancers, soothsayers and other occultists.⁷⁴⁷

Slav (and perhaps even foreign) initiates gathered at these institutions for tutelage in the finer arts of the *Volkhv*'s craft. These hierarchical colleges contained the intelligentsia of pre-Christian Rus', and progression through their highly regimented fields of study took many years to achieve, and brought great prestige. These were effectively Magian seminaries, where they learned Magian scripture and ritual (called *herbestans*), or *dibirestans* (where writing, astrology, natural science, medicine etc was acquired).^{747a} With the coming of Christianity, their written treasures were committed to the flames, ushering out an old era, heralding a new.

There are no existing records hinting at just how many temples flourished in pagan Rus'. Perhaps these massive temple edifices were found in almost every major *grad*, *khrami* dedicated to the tribe's patron god, and worshiped at a prince or chieftain's seat of power.

If we draw upon the case of Rugen, pagan troops were probably attached to Rus' temples or sanctuaries of note during major festivals, perhaps even at all times. They were probably tasked with crowd control, guarding the temple and other sundry duties like escorting of tithes and dignitaries from distant towns. Other temple buildings perhaps included accommodation for the Ehrpats (Magian students), study rooms, storehouses for food, furs, tools and other valuable commodities, inns, workshops, stables, apothecaries, smithies, studies, and libraries. People of every social class descended upon the temples and sanctuaries bearing gifts for their gods; bribes to stave off harm or perhaps even to receive a showering of luck if they had been especially generous. At these religious centers, the pagan priests were consulted by those seeking treatment not only for their kin, but diseased crops

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and livestock. Remedies, wards and phylacterys of every description were dispensed from their pharmacological drying rooms.

Fasting and donations of cattle and gold were features of Aryan pilgrimage ... "*who possesses learning, austerity and penance, reaps the fruits of pilgrimage*".⁷⁴⁸

Everywhere heathens could be seen in festive moods, prostrating themselves before carved or gilded statues of their favorite gods, normally on woven mats or prayer rugs to avoid kneeling on dead or defiled matter. At certain times of their festive year, gargantuan ceremonial bonfires were burned at major colleges on ritual hearths of set stone (ie; cairns of stones), consuming voracious quantities of sanctified timbers like birchwood and allowing the ready summoning up and worship of powerful angelic spirits and genii. These colleges were almost always sited in windy places, and wherever possible were situated on a promontory hill or at the base of a mountain near a large body of water, or preferably a river junction. Here the secret rites of the "Doctors" and *Volkhvy* brought to fruition man's highest possible level of interaction with the elements, a befriending of the sky, the trees, the grass, the water, the animals and all that existed. A pre-eminent council of *Volkhvy*, which presided in Tmutorokan, coordinated the Slav networks of fire, air, earth and water temples, as well as the colleges associated with the more prestigious temples.

At around the time of Charlemagne, according to Einhard (the Emperor's biographer), pilgrims making their way through Western Europe were routinely subjected to Church roadblocks, spot checks, body-searches and in-depth questioning by local priests and bishops accompanied by armed troops.⁷⁴⁹ Such details reveal a strong desire to control, and/or monitor the movements of pilgrims and "undesirable riff-raff". It had occurred to me that this was a strange way to treat pilgrims; pretty heavy handed. Perhaps the Church was dabbling in mediaeval police duties, but it may simply have been trying to verify whether people were actually on their way to Jerusalem and the Holy lands, and not some pagan cult center in Prussia, Rus' or Bulgaria. *Official reports were said to have been collated during these checks*, so this may have been an intelligence gathering effort, aimed at pinpointing and curtailing Franks sympathetic to paganism.

The mere existence of these pagan pilgrims further reinforces one major conclusion that is fast emerging from this work; that the pagans of northern, western and eastern Europe were far from informal gatherings of nature worshipers, instead being an organized religion controlled for the most part by the Magi, and which had roots in many countries. Why for instance did the pagan western Slav temple at Rugen (Poland) receive overseas financial donations, which were no doubt kept inside with the mass of gold bullion therein?⁷⁵⁰ Were these sin payments, a pious gift, or covert funding to help them sustain military operations against the Holy Roman Empire?

Pagan holy sites

From Mediaeval Christian sources we learn that Eastern European paganism could only thrive if the groves and springs remained uncontaminated by "unclean" races. Due to the remoteness of their nations from the great centers of Christianity and Islam, the Balts, the Finns and the Rus' were able to maintain the purity of these kinds of sites for centuries without them ever being chanced upon by dangerously nosy non-believers. For this reason, pagan villagers detailed a grove-keeper to guard a sanctuary's boundaries, as a sentinel against uninvited guests to their Holy of Holies. From accounts of the Finns we know that their grove-keepers were usually elders who lived in a cabin located next to the grove. During the times of the conversions, pagans had a right and duty to protect their springs from the sort of contamination that resulted from contact with non-believers. Former "brothers" and "sisters" who had started attending mass were *banished* (ie; *excommunicated*) from the pagan fellowship, and alienated.

In Vedic and Avestan tradition, banished individuals were prohibited from entering the holy places unless re-admitted to the pagan community, after being absolved of the spiritual defilement caused by their spiritual or civil transgressions. Banishment was the most horrendous punishment to be inflicted by the Magi, for it meant a ceremonial disowning not only of a person's body, but of their very soul. Magian banishment came into effect with the recital of the *yazad* curse (the 'Curse of the Wise'). From that moment, the banished criminal or wrong-doer was cut off from their society and religion. They had forfeited their right to enter holy places and springs, and indeed heaven. The wayward defaulters were now unclean, abandoned by the celestial gods and their own kin. Only demons remained.

Groves

As with their Aryan ancestors, the awe-inspired reverence of the Slavs and Balts for the *daevas* led them to make fenced in enclosures, within which the sacred trees flourished, perhaps living many hundreds of years. Although their rites are no longer practiced, we can look to the ancient Indian texts for clarification as to their supposed religious function. *Agni Purana* describes the Asian groves, which were established for more than just aesthetic purposes.⁷⁵¹ The Aryan scriptures promised that "The consecration of trees and a garden destroys one's sins and gets the highest merit",⁷⁵² and "Whoever causes to set up a pleasure grove stays eternally in the garden of Indra".⁷⁵³ Their lushly foliated boughs were gloriously draped in cloth and floral wreaths, their trunks washed with water. Serene tunes resounded throughout the grove from the instruments of players, as cows (that had been offered to the grove) contentedly grazed inside.

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Brahmins ritually consecrated a given tree, especially those devoted in honour of Indra, using butter, herbs and floral garlands.⁷⁵⁴ The tree was then bedecked in cloth, a custom that appears to have been practiced in various parts of Europe, until comparatively recent times.⁷⁵⁴ Following the dressing of the tree, oblations were offered to it, with a musical accompaniment,⁷⁵⁴ and a cow released there. Generally there was a shed or cabin of some kind erected nearby, which served to house a sacred flame.⁷⁵⁴

Similar grove customs were found *as late as the Middle Ages* throughout much of heathen Europe, and as with horses, and the Indo-European language, it appears that the Indo-Europeans were responsible for introducing them.

Prussians, like the Slavs, maintained inviolate groves and pastures, that were not to be despoiled by human hands;⁷⁵⁵

"Among very old trees we saw there the sacred oaks which had been consecrated to the god of that land, Prove (Perun/Indra). There was a courtyard about them and a fence very carefully constructed of wood and having two gates. For, besides the household gods and the idols with which each village abounded, that place was the sanctuary of the whole land for which a flamen (fire priest) and feast days and a variety of sacrificial rites had been appointed. On the second week day the people of the land were wont to assemble there for holding court with the ruler and with the flamen. Entrance to this courtyard was forbidden to all, except only to the priest and to those wishing to make sacrifices, or to those in danger of death, because they were never to be denied asylum. For the Slavs show such reverence for their holy things that they do not allow the neighborhood of a fane to be defiled by blood even in time of war. They admit oaths with the greatest reluctance, because of the avenging wrath of the gods".⁷⁵⁶

By inference, Helmold's description of a Slavic-Baltic grove indicates that some if not many were enclosed by a gate and wooden fencing.⁷⁵⁷ Fences were made of sharpened pailings, perhaps to deter trespassers. Eternal flames were sometimes found in them. For instance the pagan Lithuanian grove at Romove had an oak-fuelled eternal flame, that burned before a sacred oak.⁷⁵⁸

The idols of their beloved gods and "pagan saints" stood prominently beneath their leafy boughs, peppered with acorns, and shaded by luscious foliage. As you will shortly see, these were effigies of pagan warrior heroes and *Volkhov*, deified in death as they were in life. Here pagans came to commune with each other, and the *daevas* once widely worshiped in continental Europe before the advent of Christianity.

In pagan eyes, a grove was first and foremost the sanctuary of the World Tree (the European Mountain ash {Rowan tree} or the Golden Ash depending on one's devotions), and lesser trees, a microcosm of everlasting bounty and eternal life. Its fenceline marked the

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extent of an inviolate consecrated precinct. Neither hunting or trapping, nor the felling of trees, nor the picking of flowers, herbs and shrubs was allowed there. Devotees and pilgrims entered the sanctuaries escorted by a *Volkho* or *Volkhva*, through whose agency they tendered their tithes to the gods. Only those permitted entrance by the village elders could proceed into the groves, and even then they had to observe proper decorum.⁷⁵⁹

The Magi professed that a spark of god's divine fire dwelt in the wood of every tree and plant (birch and box trees in particular). The Magi called this internal "plant fire" *urvazist*, and it awesomely emerged during the combustion of wood in a holy fire. Since the presence of *urazist* was not as pronounced in animal matter as it was in plants, forests must have provided Magians with a vista of awe, stark imagery revealing the Creator alive within one's surroundings.

Throughout Rus' and the Baltic the oak (Perun's sacred tree) was the holiest of plants, but lime and birch trees were also highly revered. Box, oak, ash, willow, plum, cherry, apple and pear trees could also be found in Rus' groves, each individual tree being dedicated to a deity, whose presence lived inside that tree. A linguistic analysis of names for these trees indicates common terminologies for them throughout much of Slavia, Germany and Scandinavia. What is more, Oriental or Greek affiliations for these words, are only barely perceptible.

During ceremonial ascents into the Heavens (which mirror the tree ladders of the Finno-ugric shamans to the North), *Volkhov* of sufficient standing sometimes climbed these trees to the realm of a particular God,⁷⁶⁰ a type of "Jacob's ladder" if you like, an astral voyage only for the initiated. This shows that in some cases Russian priests were shamans, most likely dualistic animists.

During communal grove meetings on major feast days, a *Volkho* or elder entered the presence of the sacred flame, took the curtain which symbolized the inner sanctum of the Creator's presence, and surrounded the tree and himself with the partitioning tent cloth. Propitiatory oblations then took place in this inner sanctum, with bursts of *Haoma* or *Soma* steam (or even vapours from seared blood) wafting up through the leaves of the world tree into the very home of the gods.

European pagan groves were fenced in, partly to show the boundaries of their holy perimeters, but mainly to contain and shield the holy animals who lived there. This is another point of similarity with the Aryan groves, that were well stocked with cattle in ancient times. For instance Dano-Frisian holy grove sanctuaries penned the sacred cows who drank water from a spring that exuded miraculous virtues.⁷⁶¹ The Church saw it as their duty to desecrate such sites, perhaps drawing upon Islamic conversion methods, which, back in Iran, made much use of site defilement, tree chopping and the like.

The situation was probably much the same among the Finns. In the *Kalevala*, Ilmari's lady friend petitions the high god "I send my cows to the grove, the milk-givers to the glade" ... Look

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after them, O fair God, keep them, steadfast Creator, and keep them out of harm's way".⁷⁶² There the alder, rowan and willows kept a watchful eye over the milkers. A well of gold was found there too, providing watery "mead" to quench the cattle's thirst and increase their milk flow.⁷⁶² From the Finnish smith Ilmarinen's forge also came a "golden-horned" sun cow, with a solar disk mounted on its head.⁷⁶³ Such a creature was known to both the Egyptians and Indians, and was evidently most holy to the Finns.

Sacred black and white dairy cattle and the deer of the settlement, were probably left to graze freely there on the "pastures of the gods". Here animals could chew the grass upon which dew had dripped from the leaves of the holy trees. The milk from their blessed udders was therefore laden with heavenly dew from above. Sacred cows were milked daily by a female Brahmin or Magus, and their holy milk poured into pitchers and amphoras for use in the ceremonial concoction of the drink of immortality and new life. For instance in the Iranian we have the female name *Dogdo* ("One who milks cows"). Frequent milking was vital to prevent the unholy loss of milk, as the fattened udders of dozing heifers pressed into the ground. In doing so they enhanced a settlement's production of sacred cream and butter, so sorely needed as food for the holy fires. From the Magian perspective, cow's milk was a vital substance employed in *Haoma* making. Groves were lovingly tended by priests and priestesses who catered for the special needs of more vulnerable plants like fruit trees, some of which must have needed to be covered against frosts. Flowers and medicinal herbs grown in the sanctuary were touched by gods and angels, and so considered more efficacious than herbs grown in the wilds. Such plants were readily used by a settlement's herbalists to treat various ailments, whether for ailing man or beast.

Aryan custom dictated that groves be established by pious patrons, possibly using school children, who spent part of their day planting trees. For this reason settlements probably had more than one grove. Whether European pagan warriors, merchants and peasants maintained separate groves, to serve the needs of their respective feudal social classes is unclear, but in Britain, Ireland and Scandinavia there were a number of fenced enclosures at a given location. Personal enclosures may have belonged to particular families, for ancestral devotions.

At Yeavinger, the Saxon Northumbrians had a temple encircled by a boundary fence. Cattle skulls were displayed about it upon erected posts.⁷⁶⁴ The bones may have been the remains of their frequent cattle-sacrifices, or the skeletons of cows that died naturally inside the enclosure.

Certain trees continued to have pride of place in European folk tradition. In various parts of Sweden farmers kept a sacred *Bardhrad* (an ash, lime or elm tree that served as a guardian for the settlement) somewhere on their property, even until last century.⁷⁶⁵ They thought that impending misfortune would result from harming one of these trees in any way.⁷⁶⁵ As

matters stood the *Bardtrad* helped pregnant wives have trouble-free labor, but to obtain this assistance the woman had to hug the trunk.⁷⁶⁵

Sacred Springs

Pagan Russes regarded springs as very holy. Such a belief was held in common with most of Europe's pre-Christian pagans, and by the Magi and Aryans in particular, who perceived them as dwelling places for mighty spiritual forces, the goddess Anakhita especially. In some of the oldest Magian texts we read;

"The spring named Arvi Sura (Anakhita), O Spitaman Zarathustra! that spring of mine, purifies the seed in man, the fruit in a woman's womb, the milk in a woman's breast".⁷⁶⁶

"I will praise the water Ardvi Sura Anahita, the wide-flowing and healing in its influence, efficacious against the Daevas, devoted to Ahura's lore, and to be worshiped with sacrifice within the corporeal world, furthering all living springs and holy-helping on the increase and improvement of our herds and settlements, holy, and increasing our wealth, holy and helping on the progress of the Province, Holy as she is".⁷⁶⁷

"Let the saints' fravashis now draw near, those of the saints who live, or have lived, or those born, or yet to be born: yea, let them come near which have borne these waters up stream from the nearest ones that lie below as the outlet pours away.

Let not our waters be for the man of ill intent, of evil speech, or deeds, or conscience; let them not be for the offender of a friend, not for an insulter of a Magian, nor for one who harms the workmen, nor for one who hates his kindred. And let not our good waters which are not only good, but the best, and Mazda-made, help on the man who strives to mar our settlements which are not to be corrupted, nor him who would mar our bodies, our uncorrupted selves, nor the thief, or bludgeon-bearing ruffian who would slaughter the disciples, nor a sorcerer, nor a burier of dead bodies, nor the jealous, nor the niggard, nor the godless heretic who slays disciples, nor the evil tyrant among men. Against these may our waters come as torments. As destructive may these come, may they come to him who had done those first foul evils, as to him who does the last. O waters! rest still within your places while the invoking priest shall offer".⁷⁶⁸

By inference these Magian passages might have applied to the Russian water goddess Moksha, whose name was derived from Finnish terms meaning "a river". I say this because Anahita's other name was *Oksho*. This similarity may be purely fortuitous, and Vasmer certainly does not included it in his list of etymologies for Moksha.

Usually a natural spring was found somewhere inside a grove, with the water of the gods nourishing the roots of the holy trees and quenching the thirst of the sacred milk-givers who

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lounge beneath them. Wherever spring water welled up from beneath the earth, the ground was considered especially sacred to pagans. Holy water was not to be treated lightly, particularly after its blessing with religious formulas, since its ritual mis-handling constituted an act of devil-worship according to the Magi. Trespassers were to be carefully guarded against, and in Russia it was forbidden to speak while drawing water there.

Throughout much of Iran and the Orient, it was commonly believed that spring water possessed remarkable healing properties (perhaps owing to mineral content), and was therefore used to form the drink of immortality, sacred beer and the mead. In Europe, as in Asia, some springs were better endowed with the ability to heal and expel spirits and demons than others. One could tell not only by the luxuriant verdancy of the oaks and other plants, but by past 'miraculous healings', for here was the beneficence of the Gods for all to see. Consequently pagan devotees probably travelled considerable distances to drink, wash and commune at places of renown, for it was deemed pious to visit these wondrous shrines. Even nowadays pilgrims trek up the side of Iran's Mt Shand to retrieve holy water for healing their ailments. During the Christian era, overseas pilgrims came to Slavia and the Baltic from as far afield as England and Germany to walk with the gods once again. People hung wax simulacra, or cloth worn by the sick or infirm from the boughs of nearby trees, to obtain healing. Body part simulacra buns had already been in use by pagan Franks as early as the 6th Century AD.⁷⁹ In some places these Aryan customs lasted far into the future. Until this century the Lougharrow pilgrims of Britain tethered their cattle to a nearby tree, and tossed large chunks of butter into the lake water, much to the chagrin of the local bishop.⁷⁹ This custom evidently originated in Indo-European religiosity.

Since springs, creeks and rivers are natural topographical features, holy sites of this calibre would be notoriously difficult to see in the archeological record. Larger cult sites would be identifiable as holy springs surrounded by the remains of scattered temporary campsites (attributable to pilgrims intermittently visiting a site on certain feast days) and huts. Wheel ruts and log roads might also be discernible in their vicinity. The remains of wooden simulacra and stone effigies could be present there also, where soil preservation permits.

Holy fires

The most glorious of white Magian religious duties was the feeding of holy fires, the so-called *vahram* fires that existed throughout all major settlements. It was an act of unparalleled devotion to the creator;

"We would approach You two, O ye primeval ones in the house of this Thy Holy Fire, O Ahura Mazda, Thou most bounteous Spirit! Who brings pollutions to this Thy flame him wilt Thou cover with pollutions in his turn. But as the most friendly do Thou give us zeal, O Fire of the Lord".⁷⁹

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"I offer my sacrifice and homage to thee, the Fire, as a good offering, and an offering with our hail of salvation, even as an offering of praise with benedictions, to thee, the Fire, O Ahura Mazda's son! Meet for sacrifice are thou, and worthy of our homage, may'st thou be in the houses of men who worship Mazda. Salvation be to this man who worships thee in verity and truth, with wood in hand, and Baresman ready, with flesh in hand, and holding too the mortar. And may'st thou be ever fed with wood as the prescription orders.

Yea, may'st thou have thy perfume justly, and thy sacred butter (gum) without fail, and thine andirons (unleavened bread) regularly placed. Be of full-age as to thy nourishment, of the canon's age as to the measure of thy food, O Fire, Ahura Mazda's son! Be now aflame within this house; be ever without fail in flame; be all ashine within this house; be on thy growth within this house; for a long time be thou thus to the furtherance of the heroic renovation, to the completion of all progress, yea, even till the good heroic millennial time when the renovation shall have become complete. Give me, O Fire, Ahura Mazda's son! a speedy glory, speedy nourishment, and speedy booty, and abundant glory, abundant nourishment, abundant booty, an expanded mind, and nimbleness of tongue for soul and understanding, even an understanding continually growing in its largeness, and never wanders, and long enduring virile power, an offspring sure of foot, that never sleeps on watch, and rises quick from bed, and likewise a wakeful offspring, helpful to nurture, or reclaim, legitimate, keeping order in men's meetings, yea, drawing men to assemblies through their influence and word, grown to power, skillful, redeeming others from oppression, served by many followers, which may advance my line in prosperity and fame".⁷²

In an historical sense, the gist of these scriptural passages is corroborated by Strabo who stated *"And to whatever god they offer sacrifice, to him they first offer prayer with fire"*.⁷³ Consecrated fire was one of their most important religious symbols; each a holy site in its own right, each, like the jewelled firmament, a beacon of god's light. Strabo tells us that the Magi normally maintained their holy fires in the precincts of grove enclosures.⁷³ In practice the dwelling of a *vahram* fire varied from place to place, depending on the lifestyle of the Magian families.

Normally the holy fires burned inside a large metal urn, which, in mobile pastoralist communities (or among refugees fleeing the Muslim conquests), could be transported about in the back of a tent-covered wagon, sitting comfortably on an insulative sand-box. In larger fixed temple complexes, the containment urn stood proudly atop large stone dais' and altars, tended by priests, fire wardens, guardians and wood collectors. Different classes of Magi tended the holy fires, and through their loving reverence for the Son of God, brought protection and prosperity to the land and its people;

"it is necessary to properly maintain the sacred fire which they have established in a town or village. And at night it is necessary to make it blaze up once, and by day twice. For it is

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declared in revelation, that, if there had been no sacred fire, no one would have been able to go from town to town; because it is owing to the glory of the sacred fire that no one on the roads is able to commit an excess upon any one else".^{7A}

In modern Bombay, there is a Parsee fire that has burned continuously for over a thousand years, from the time the Magi arrived in India. But in more ancient times such life-spans would have been fairly typical of Magian fires in Iran and Central Asia. Until the coming of the Muslim Arabs and Turks in the 7th Century AD, and the subsequent exile of the Zoroastrians from Iran, the Magi had other supremely eminent sacred eternal fires, the heart and soul of their white religion. The most famous of these was *Farbag* (the priests' fire, Fars in Persia, or even Kabul Afghanistan), then *Gushnasp* (soldiers and the Magi, at Shiraz in Persia) and lastly there was *Burzen-Mihr* (for farmers and husbandmen, and it was situated at Mt Ganavad or Mt Revand in Persia).

As a result of Byzantine anti-Magian crusades and the advent of Islam, the fire urns of the Caucasian, Iranian and Central Asian Zoroastrians were progressively thrown down and snuffed out, their holy ashes kicked and scattered about the ground by Muslims and Christians alike. Thus died the fires, the sons of god unable to be re-lit in the history of the world, since the dasturs, the only ones able to re-kindle them, had been killed, or had fled.

Other lesser fires burned everywhere throughout the lands of Zoroaster's people, in every town and village, and hamlet, and house, but these subordinate flames did not even faintly approach the grandeur of the main fires, which attracted large numbers of prayerful pilgrims annually. The white Magian fire-priests were duty bound to shield the holy flames from any harm, especially that of evil-doers, who sought to defile the fires. The first act of any new Magus was to wander the countryside in search of a protector, a warrior lord who would accept him as his personal Magian sacrificer. In return, the Magus' defender would guard and watch over him, the holy springs, idols and most importantly the fires. And on account of meandering journeys, the Romans came to see the Magi in their midst as itinerant beggar-priests.

The white Magi believed that where *vahram* fires burned, so too was the presence of God, who was himself the most wondrous and beautiful of all fires. The pagan Slavs also believed that fire (which they called *Svarozhich* or *Svarogich*) was the son of god, a custom no doubt inherited from the Magi.

For the Magi keeping the Holy Fires burning in homes and temples was almost the greatest act of love one could ever have for the Creator. Pagan Slav customs and beliefs associated with fire were thus extremely close to that of the Zoroastrians and Zurvanites. But to the untrained eye something as meaningful as the holy fires were simply "heathen" and "devilish" bonfires! When establishing new Magian villages, a foundation fire was installed in a newly built fire shrine.^{7B} Such fires were often named after a prominent king or high

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born aristocrat, in particular those who had, in all piety, financed their construction.⁷⁷⁵

The 10th Century Arab annalist, Ibn-Dasta described the Slavs as "fire-worshippers", who bow down low before the flame.⁷⁷⁶ In the 11th Century Russian text *Slovi Khristolyubtsya*, the Slavic practice of offering prayers to the hearth fire, the Son of Svarog, (the Shining God) is described.⁷⁷⁷ Since Arab sources describe the pagan Russians as both "*Simurgs*" and avid fire-worshippers, we can deduce that the Russes had similar if not identical fire-rites to the Zoroastrians. Throughout the remainder of this section you will discover amazing similarities between these two fire-cults.

SAMOVARS - WERE THEY REALLY MAGIAN FIRE URNS?

Now it was the custom of the Magi that the eternal flame and ashes be contained within a large metal urn, roughly two feet tall, which they called *afrinagan*. They were not dissimilar to tea urns in form, and were traditionally mounted on sand boxes or stone pedestals cut in such a way that there was a stone foot at each corner of the pedestal's upper surface. These feet helped hold the urn in place.⁷⁷⁸ One archaeologist, the late Dr Spooner, apparently excavated a large number of these fire urns in Central Asia.⁷⁷⁸

Strangely, some classical Roman, Jewish and Greek altars resemble these fire urn pedestals. Certainly a fire is unlikely to have been lit atop the stone; fire and embers would have fallen out all over the place without being contained in something. For instance, one Roman altar dedicated to the guardian genius of the first Varduli cohort (complete with inscribed swastikas and the Germanic rune *Dæg* {*Dæg* meaning "fire" in both the Germanic and Iranian}) possessed a circular indentation in the top of it, which presumably held an urn or bowl of some kind.⁷⁷⁹ Fire urns continue to be used by the Parsee fire-priests.

Russians have long used metal samovars for boiling water, vessels that resemble old-fashioned tea or coffee urns. We might ask the question, was there ever a connection between *samovars* (Russian tea urns), and the fire urns the Magi employed to contain their holy fires? Archeologically speaking it is difficult to say. I have not read of samovars being excavated by Russian archaeologists in any of my source materials, though they might well have been. For a solution we must look towards comparative linguistics.

It has long been accepted that *samovar* is an obvious syncretization of *samo* (self) and *varit'* (which nowadays means "to cook" or "to boil") which would then make a *samovar* "a self-boiler". An obvious connection can be found in the Turkic *samovar* and *sanabar*, or the Tatar *samaur*, or *samuvar*, which also denote cooking urns. I believe that the Slavic and Turkic words had a similar genesis to the Russian *samovar*, and what is more, that *samovar* really came from *samo* + *var* rather than *samo* + *variti*, the traditionally accepted etymology.⁷⁸⁰ *Sam'* (from which comes *samo*) originated from the Old Indian *samas* ("the same"), and/or the Avestan *hama* ("the same").⁷⁸¹ The modern Russian word *varit'* is a verb which was formed from the noun *var* (which meant "resin", "heat", "hot embers", or "boiling water"). But in

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the Old Russian, Serbo-Croat and Old Slavonic, the noun *var* specifically meant "hot embers", whereas the verb *variti* (which had variants among the Slavs and Balts) meant "to boil".⁷⁸² Thus when determining the origin of the word *samovar*, in an ancient context, it is important that we distinguish between *var* and *variti*, because the two words are slightly different, even though they come from the same root word *var*. In the case of *samovar* the suffix *-var* need not necessarily carry a connotation of cooking, and, as mentioned, the noun did not possess such a meaning in ancient times, *only the verb*. Thus we arrive at a literal translation of "the very same hot embers" (instead of "self-boiler"), which could signify that the word *samovar* embodied the Magian ideal of a perpetual fire, whose embers possessed the age and unbroken pedigree of the glorious Aryan holy fires.

The inclusion of "resin" as an additional meaning for *var* is interesting. Unless this meaning preserves a custom of extracting plant resin by boiling, I suggest it relates to the Magian practice of burning incense and the the sweet *Haoma* (Golden Ash) resin to feed the fire. I incline towards the latter view because if the former were correct, one would also expect to see *var* meaning lamb, beef, porridge and any other foodstuff normally cooked by boiling, instead of a seemingly unlikely "resin". Moreover the Magian name for a holy fire was *vahram*. The Slavic *var* might come from this word. I am convinced that during pagan times the Slavs used *samovars* not just to boil water, but to contain the holy fires into which they periodically fed sandalwood and *Haoma* resin, the "sweet honey" of Magian lore.

Not only that, but in the Lithuanian we find it as *versme* ("a spring" or "a source"), which is reminiscent of *barsema* (a Magus wand which lay on a stand in front of the fire, and which were implements that acted as a source for the outpouring of their magical power).

Russian words denoting the ashen remnants of a fire, like *pepel*, *zola* and *prakh* do not seem to have an Avestan or Mesopotamian origin. Old Indian could be a source, but the phonetic connections are weak.⁷⁸³ The Old Russian word *palit'* meaning "to scorch or singe" rather than "to burn" seems related to *palka* (meaning "a wand") and *palets* ("finger"). And this being the case can we then say that the pagan Slavs formerly singed their wands next to the holy fire in accordance with the same Magian form of that ritual (ie, wetting the wands with holy spring water and leaving them to be scorched by the fire), which was performed by the Magian Rathwiskar? The ceremonial scorching of moistened golden ash branches caused the bark to rupture, allowing the ash sap to exude. The sap could then be put into the fire. Barsema wands were however made from tamarisk back in the old countries.

Palochka ("a small wand", "a baton" or "a rod") and *palka* ("a rod" or "a stick") are probably traceable back to the Old Indian *phalati* ("it is breaking/snapping", or "it is crackling/chapping"), and do not appear to have Avestan roots.⁷⁸⁴ If the Rus' were Magians then it stands to reason that holy fires were a significant feature of community and home life. It is quite true to say that in traditional Russian homes, the fire has always been of both

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practical and religious significance. Not only did they allow for cooking and home heating, but they acted as a gateway through which souls entered and left this world. There, in the fire, existed one's progenitor ancestors and future descendants.

The Slavic custom of opening the stove door the moment a family member passed away⁷⁸⁵ is undoubtedly linked to a passage of Magian scripture, which states;

*"it is revealed that when they sever the consciousness of men (after the soul of the deceased has lingered for three days and been released through the performance of the "three-day ceremonial") it goes out to the nearest fire, then out to the stars, then out to the moon, and then out to the sun; and it is needful that the nearest fire, which is that to which it has come out, should become stronger".*⁷⁸⁶

Every pagan Rus' settlement was organized around a Mir,⁷⁸⁷ which symbolized their unity. The Russian *mir* specifically meant "the people", "the world", "peace", "agreement" or "accord". In a practical sense the Irish word *Mir* had a similar meaning ("a portion", "a part of a country", "a section") in that it was a label for separate areas, though Vasmer does not include it in his list of etymologies. According to Professor Vernadsky *Mir* comes from the Persian *Mithras* (meaning "an accord" of some kind), the guardian of sacred oaths. Even so the Persian *Mihr* could also denote a holy fire. For example, *Darimihr* was a popular Iranian colloquialism for a Magian fire temple ("*Dar -i-mihr* {Gate of Mithra})."⁷⁸⁸ So if the Russes were Magians, the Russian *mir* might also have meant "a holy fire", but this additional meaning did not survive the Christianization process.

A number of pagan Russian first names⁷⁸⁹ which the Church saw as unfit for the naming of Christian folk, and subsequently replaced with Christian names, may be evidence for this. Most pagan Russian first names are in some way translatable. Once translated one can see that they described a person's nature or role in life. For instance *Guhjaviteter* meant "walking wind". A good many others end in *-slav* (meaning either "glory", or "Slav"), *-misl* ("a thought"), *-mil* (meaning "beloved") or *-mir*. In the case of *-slav*, *-misl* and *-mil* the ending confers a meaning on the root word such as were indicated above. *Bogoslav* meant "the Glory of God", *Granislav* "the glorious verses" and *Mechislav* "the sword of glory". *Bogumil* meant "Beloved of God", and *Bratomil* "Beloved brother".¹⁰⁶ Then there was *Dobromisl* "Good Thought", or "one who thinks well of things".¹⁰⁶ Coincidentally "Good Thought" was an important white Magian angel, perhaps the guardian spirit of one so named. Many Slavic first names ended in *-mir*, so we might presume that the *-mir* ending had a specific meaning. But what was it? Since *Mir* had a meaning of "peace", "accord", "the world" and "the people" in the Slavic, we find it difficult to get satisfactory translations from the pagan first names using either interpretation. This suggests that that *-mir* had another elusive meaning.

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As in Russia the Iranian Pahlavi word *mīhr* connoted an abstract notion of "friendship", "an agreement" or "a contract", which is evidently reflected in the Slavic form and meaning of the word *mir*.⁷⁹⁰ In Albanian *mire* meant "good" and in the Bulgarian it also meant "light" (in addition to the standard Slavic meanings). The Old Indian word *mitras* meant "a friend". The Slavic word *svet* (which is conceptually and linguistically connected with *mir*) also meant "peace" or "light", but in some linguistic sub-groups of the Slavic we find that *mir* also meant "light", "day" or "people". *Svet* came from the Old Indian *svetas* ("bright", "light" or "white") or the Avestan *spaeta* ("to shine").⁷⁹¹ For this reason, there is every reason to believe that the pagan Russians used the term *mir* when referring to the holy fires that burned in their *ognishche* fire-houses and pavilions.

In Iran *Mīhr* also meant "sun", but carried the connotation of "fire" or "light". For example the Magi called one of their greatest holy fires *Burzem-Mīhr*. Such a fire would naturally embody all these qualities; it shone like the sun, and embodied peace and friendship. This is in perfect accord with the various meanings attributed to the Slavic word *mir*. Now in the following list of Russian names if we translate the Persian word *Mīhr* (pron. Mir) as "fire", lucid translations automatically become possible. Among many of these prohibited pagan names we can discern Slavic translations of Magian names, and concepts related to differing grades of holy fire, and various classes of people who had some ritual connection with these fires. For example the name *svetozar* probably meant "holy fire". *Medomir* ("honey-fire", or "fire-honey") was perhaps a reference to the "honey" placed on the *vahram* fire by the Magi (ie; ash-tree resin). Alternatively *Medomir* might have meant "mead of peace", or even a "mead-fire", that is a fire used during the mead-brewing process. The last option would conform to the Magian notion of brewing fires, which were a separate class of fire. Thus we might interpret *Gradimir* as "a city fire", *Budimir* as "a cabin fire", *Dalemir* might have originated from the Persian term *Dar-i-mīhr*. In pagan times Slavic fire-cabins might have resembled those found in the Scandinavian *Lund*, or the Finnish *Lud*, which had a sacral function, and were located at groves or near the family home. Each Finnish *Lud* cabin contained a holy fire and idols of the family ancestors.

Judging by the Kalevala the Finns felt it necessary to keep the fires burning all the time, for it contains the imprecation "Great woe to the flameless".⁷⁹²

In Russia we find the term *lesnaya budka*, which meant "a forest warden's hut". The Russian pagan first name *Budko*, was perhaps used by someone holding the position of grove keeper, and who manned the *lesnaya budka*, keeping watch for unholy trespassers. *Borimir* might have meant "a pine-grove fire", *Lyubomir* "the Fire of love", *Mezhamir* a "forest-fire" (ie; a grove fire). *Ostromir* could have been "an island fire" or "an ostrog fire". In the Ukrainian an *ostrog* was "a roofed building walled with wicker basketry".⁷⁹³ Such a building is an excellent description of a Magian inner-sanctum, which shielded the fire, and

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in which rites of adoration took place. But in Belorussian and Polish an *ostrog* was a settlement surrounded by a palisade made of pointed logs. In effect an *ostrog* fire was "a village fire", or a fire maintained within the inner sanctum of a fire temple (ie; a fire house). *Ratomir* might have meant "a warrior or military fire". As it happens the ancient custom of burning eternal fires of remembrance still continues. At a number of war monuments and cemeteries that I have visited over the years, eternal flames still burn, and coincidentally are guarded. In pagan Rus' a *stomir* might have been a guardian-fire kept by 100-man heathen Russian military units called *Sotnia*. This kind of fire would have been marginally less grand than the Varduli cohort's holy fire. *Ormir* is more difficult to translate. Perhaps an *Ormir* meant Or's fire (ie; the fire of the god Or) or even a "horse-fire" of the sort used to boil cauldrons during the *asvamedha*. *Zhiromir* was a composite of *zhir* ("food" or "fat")⁷⁹⁴ and *mir*, perhaps meaning "fire-fat". A Lithuanian word related to *zhir*, *gyras*, meant *kovas* (which in pagan times was a form of libation once poured into the holy fire or drunk). Serbo-Croat *zhira* ("acorns"), Slovenian *zhir* ("acorns" or "food"). These are connected conceptually with *zhil'*, which means "to live". The Ukrainian or Bulgar word *zhir* meant "fat", "an acorn" or "pig's lard". Therefore *Zhiromir* might have meant "fire-fat", or "fire food", and in a pagan sense perhaps indicated a person who placed fat, acorns, butter or meat on the holy fire.

Wooden billets of precious wood (sandal especially) were however the preferred foods consumed by the *Vahram* fires. These were traditionally broken down into small sacrificial chips, which could be placed in the fire in a variety of ways. The Magi believed that *berezisavanga* was the wood most powerfully invested with the spiritual fire, and its mere growth promoted long life and prosperity in the world. And it just so happens that *bereza* is the Slavic word for the white "birch tree", which the Slavs had for so long burned as votive offerings to their gods.⁷⁹⁵

Similarly, in the Old Norse we have what was presumably a pagan ritual term *Blotspann*, which translates as "a sacrificial chip (of wood)".⁷⁹⁶

Inevitably ash was the result of so much daily combustion. Magians referred to the residual ash of their *vahram* fires as *var* or "the clothing of the fire".⁷⁹⁷ At their daily fire ceremonies, the fire-priests anointed the faces of prayerful devotees with this ash. In Rus' Magian society it is simply no coincidence that the Slavic word *var* meant "resin", "heat", "hot embers". The inclusion of "boiling water"⁷⁹⁸ to the Slavic *var* quite likely related to the boiling cauldrons which sat on the holy fire.

In pagan times resins such as amber were placed in the glowing fires. Again the Slavic word *var* had a meaning of "ash" and "resin", and to the Magi it meant "ash" or "the clothing of the fire". Another Slavic word for "resin" was *smola*.⁷⁹⁹ A number of Baltic words (like *smela* and *smilkti*) also show the relationship between "resin" and "smouldering", which is exactly what happens to resins and incenses ignited in fire. In fact, the English word

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“smoulder” seems to be related to it. *Smola* might also be related to *smolest'* meaning “a cow’s udder”, and if so might the Lithuanian *smilkti* (“to smolder”) be connected with the English word “milk”?

TYPES OF FIRES

Every Magian fire, whether it be in a home, village, or city were all joined to God, and thus theoretically constituted a minute portion of a single holy blaze, despite whatever physical distance might have separated them.⁸⁰⁰ As with the ‘feudal’ society that maintained them, these fires too possessed varied pedigrees. The higher the social ranking of a fire’s patron, and the older the flame was, the more prestige it could claim, the more devotees it could attract.

GRADE ⁸⁰¹ OF FIRE	MAINTAINED BY ⁸⁰¹ FIRE-PRIESTS	RE-LIT ANNUALLY ⁸⁰¹	LOCATION ⁸⁰¹
<i>Vahram</i>	Yes	Permanently lit	Cathedral-like temple
<i>Adaran</i>	Yes	Yes	Communal fire house
<i>Dadgah</i>	No	Yes	Home hearths

The following is a hypothetical reconstruction of the hierarchy of pagan Rus’ holy fires, based on Magian analogies, including possible Russian word equivalents for that class of fire, based on the heathen names proscribed in Christian times.

PRIESTLY FIRE

The Magi’s main holy fire was known as *Farbag*. In Russia it might have been called *Radimir*.

WARRIOR FIRE

The principal warrior fire in pre-islamic Persia was *Gushnasp*. In Rus’ such a fire might have been called a *Ratimir* or *Stoimir*.

TRIBAL FIRE

The equivalent of a *Varharan* fire probably burned in a belfried temple in each tribal grad where a *Knyaz’* reigned. In Russia a tribal fire might have been called a *Gradimir*.

VILLAGE FIRE

Each Magian village had its own *Aduran* fire - a temple or grove fire, or communal bonfire. In Rus’ a village fire might have been called an *Ostromir*.

SETTLEMENT

In Magian lore, a settlement fire was made from 16 home hearth fires. Such a flame might have been termed a *Stanimir* or *Mezhamir* by the Slavs, and would probably have burnt on a

sacrificial stone altar within a "peasant" grove-enclosure.

HOME HEARTH

Magians kept a holy fire permanently alive in their home ovens, a symbol of the presence of the almighty and great protector of their people. These fires belonged to the lowest grade of holy fire, termed *dadgah*. Whenever a family shifted to another fixed abode they took the ash and embers of this home fire with them, to found the new hearth. This Magian custom is very ancient and continuously observed by later generations of Parsees.⁸⁰² Based on Russian folk tradition, it seems heathen Russes observed these same strict rules governing home-fires.

The ancient Greeks had a similar observance, meaning that in remotest times the translation of the home fire to a new abode was originally an Aryan custom practiced by the Vedic Indo-Europeans, thereafter being inherited by the Magi after them. The Russian word for a home fire might have been *Budimir*.

The common Slavic and Baltic words for "flame" (*plamya* or *plamen*) are not derived from Avestan and Old Indian sources, and it is my guess that they came from the Latin *flamma*.⁸⁰³ It might also be related to the Latin word *Flamen*, that is, the fire-priests who formed colleges dedicated to particular gods, as was the ancient Roman custom. It is of further interest that the priests of pagan Britain (just prior to the conversion) were referred to by Church historians as *Flamen* and *Arch-flamen*. If the connection between *plamya*, *plamen* and *flamen* is valid then we might suspect that some Slavic fire tenders followed Roman/Mithraic customs, and may have done so since the time of Ptolemy, who depicted Caesar's altar on one of his maps of Scythia. It was situated in the Southern Ukraine.

Another pan-Slavic word for "fire" was *ogon'* (or variants of it), which is derived from the Vedic *Agnis* (the divine holy fire). The Vedic *Agnis* also gave rise to the Latin *ignis* and the Hittite *agnis*, the Lithuanian *ugnis* and the Latvian *uguns*.⁸⁰⁴ Judging by the prevalence of *ogon'* (and variants of it) Baltic and Slavic "fire-worship" had substantial Vedic roots. That is not to say that the word was not being used by the demi-Vedic Zurvanite Magians. The Vedic word for fire does not seem to have taken root among the Germans and Scandinavians.

The Russian word *zhar* (meaning "heat" or "live coals") also appears in the Bulgarian, Serbo-Croat, Czech, and Slovenian.⁸⁰⁵ It is thought derived from the Old Indian *haras* (meaning "live coals" or "a flame"), which in turn fed into the Old Prussian as *gorme* ("live coals"), the Latvian *garme* ("warm"), the Armenian *jerm* ("warm") and the Frisian *germo* ("warm"), from which we get the English word "warm".⁸⁰⁵ The Old Russian word for "smoke" *dym* is found in the Slavic, Greek, Latin and Old High German, all of which originated in the Old Indian *dhumas* ("smoke").⁸⁰⁶

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The Norsemen and Prussians are recorded as having kept perpetual fires, burning on altars.⁸⁰⁷ In the Baltic the holy fire dwelling in the family stove was cared for by the woman of the house at night before going to bed, and revived each morning with devotion.⁸⁰⁸ Similar traditions are to be found throughout Slavia.

In Magian eschatology, *Ahriman* and the Whore sought to vex and destroy the purity of all created nature, especially fire, but in particular the *Valvram* fires. One further duty incumbent upon any white Magian was the protection of the holy fire. It had to be guarded against the black Magians, apostates and any other assailant who wanted to extinguish it. To this end the Slavs built heavily fortified towers wherein the *Valvrams* burned brilliantly, resolutely and with all confidence, bringing vitality and health to the land and the people.

In *Bahman Yast II*, we are told of a future time when the *Valvram* fires would suffer grievous annihilation from the enemies of god's light, signifying the onset of disaster for their religion, the obliteration of the Magian Aryan nations, and devastation for the world of created good existence. Whereas in ancient times there were more than enough Magus-priests to attend the fires, in that dark winter of *Ahriman's* malcontent, barely one-thousandth of their number would remain to perform the sacred duty to the *valvram* fires. Earth lay in the Demon's penumbra.

Temple towers also sheltered the fire against direct sunlight, since the Magi proclaimed that it was not proper to allow sunlight to fall on the holy fire, because it melted away the potency of the flame, dissolving it and rendering it invisible. In Ireland and England there are recorded examples of folk beliefs over the last eight hundred years which related to the radiance of the sun being able to extinguish fire, and hence they protected fires from direct sunlight.

Fire Birds

Fire birds had their origin in Persia, but are also interconnected with the legend of the Phoenix, which can be traced back to ancient Egypt, in the form of the Bennu bird. They were popularly portrayed as eagles composed of raging flame, and were bringers of fertility. By obtaining the blessing of a fire bird, all the crops in one's district would grow at an unbelievable rate, and cattle or sheep would be fruitful. In pagan Russia fire birds were termed *zhar-ptitsy*. These varied myths probably have a common basis, which resides in ritual. When a holy libation was poured onto a holy fire, a gush of fire would appear to fly up towards the sky. At that precise moment the flame, as a fiery bird, took flight, carrying the life-bringing sacrifice to the celestial gods, along with the prayers of the faithful. It literally rose from the ashes. Here is one Russian legend about the fire bird.⁸⁰⁹

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There was once a *tsar* (in reality a *Knyaz'* or *Khagan*), whose apple orchard was losing its fruit. Owing to the names of both his sons and himself, one can guess that they were Christian, but the year of this Tsar's reign is not stated. As matters stood, his fruit harvest diminished daily because the fire bird was taking them away from him for reasons unknown. Perhaps it was because he did not have a fire bird. I say this because the king guessed that it would only be by obtaining the fire bird that his orchard's losses would cease. And so Vyslav Andronovitch sent his three sons on a mission to find the elusive *zhar ptitsa*, which had skillfully evaded capture thus far. The prince who could find it was to inherit their father's entire kingdom, and so the competition between them was fierce.⁸⁰⁹

During this journey Prince Ivan (ie; John) lost his way, and his mount was killed in a wolf attack. A while later Ivan chanced upon the grey wolf who had slain his steed. The wolf told him where the fire bird could be found, at the court of Tsar Dalmat, in a relatively distant land.⁸⁰⁹ To get there the wolf allowed the prince to ride on his back.⁸⁰⁹ Having arrived secretly outside Dalmat's wall-encompassed garden, the wolf proceeded to warn Ivan to take only the fire bird, but not the cage which housed it in the garden. But the foolhardy prince took no heed, and tried to make off with both bird and cage. Unbeknownst to him the cage was attached to bells, and these alerted the guards, who promptly pounced on the knavish young man and arrested him.⁸⁰⁹ Dalmat castigated the rash prince after having ascertained Ivan's identity. He was told that his attempt to steal the fire bird was despicable, and that he would have been given it freely if only he had done the proper thing, and courteously asked for it.⁸⁰⁹ To atone for this misdeed Dalmat sent him on a quest. Only on completion of this assigned task would Dalmat hand over the bird. Ivan was captured in the stables of another king (Afron) doing what Dalmat had asked of him, and sent on yet another quest to retrieve a queen. With the assistance of the wolf's magical deceptions Ivan swindled both Afron and Dalmat, making off with both bird and cage, not to mention a golden-maned charger, and a queen who he seized by capture.⁸⁰⁹

In effect this seems to be a legend about a Russian Christian monarch relapsing into paganism, and fulfilling his desire to do so by re-establishing a perpetual holy flame, from the court of a foreign royal.

Now the name Dalmat sounds suspiciously like Dalmatia, in Croatia. So Dalmat might have been a Croatian royal. Ivan botches the entire mission by trying to steal the holy fire and the receptacle which held it. A series of bells were tied to the fire urn, and so they peeled once he tried lifting the receptacle. Ivan was made to undertake a quest as a penance for his crime. But with the help of a shape-changing *Volkhv* Magus, the prince merely appears to have atoned for his ruses, and returns home to Russia victorious. He lives happily ever after, with his own kingdom, a fire bird and a new wife.

In Finland the fire bird was born in the forge of a hero. In the midst of the incandescent coals the smith made "a fiery eagle, a wivern of flame ... the feet he shaped of iron, for wings the side of a boat".⁸¹⁰ This fire bird flew to locations determined by Ilmarinen, and performed wondrous deeds for him there. "Well, the iron-foot eagle at that flared up into flight - up into the sky" to the heavens.⁸¹⁰

Sounding a temple fire

Founding a temple fire was a very elaborate ritual demanding multiple ignitions and purifications and could only be performed by a *dastur* or greater. It required the gathering of flame from numerous other sources, particularly hearths and occurred during the final week of the year.

In Magian law, a temple flame was created by the pooling of fires from a prescribed number of sources, such as a fire made by friction against wood; a fire caused by a lightning strike; a brewing fire (a fire used in the brewing process); a corpse-fire and especially a fire from another fire temple. Accordingly every temple fire had a pedigree and unbroken genealogy traceable back to the earliest *Vahrams* of Mazdaism, as intricately preserved as the bloodlines of any given Magus or king.

It was not lost on the black Magi, Muslims and Christians alike that to destroy temple fires was the surest way to destroy the Good Religion of *Ahura Mazda*. Conversely the way to rebuild the religion was to found more and more temples and holy fires. Accordingly the ignition or re-ignition of a holy fire was an awe-filled occasion.

Another facet of the Magian holy fires is that lower grade fires were extinguished at a certain time of year, on the five intercalary days which concluded the year, and re-lit by the Magi. As with the Magi, the so-called Russian "fire-cult" made distinctions between various types of fire and annually re-lit their hearths around mid-winter. In Russian folklore, the term *nebesniy ogon'* ("heavenly fire"), applied to fires started by a lightning strike from one of Perun's thunder bolts.⁸¹¹ These fires were often kept separate from the standard hearth,

and fed eggs for sustenance.⁸¹¹ The Magi also fed eggs to their fires, eggs which symbolically hatched into fire birds. If there was a further lightning strike on the property, and a blaze erupted out of control, villagers were only to extinguish that blaze with milk.⁸¹¹ If there wasn't enough milk, they used kvas.⁸¹¹ They were not to use water under any circumstances, for it was believed to cause flare ups in earth-bound heavenly fire.⁸¹¹ Another species of flame was termed *zhivym*, literally the "living fire". From olden times village inhabitants in many parts of Russia (Novgoroders especially), annually doused their hearths as a community, to extinguish their home-fires in readiness to receive newly consecrated fire.⁸¹² The ceremonial generation of this much anticipated new fire, the *zhivoi ogon'*, was attended by elders, eminent families, as well as village representatives.⁸¹³ It could not begin until every hearth in a settlement had been quenched.⁸¹³ On this same day each year, unspecified menfolk briskly rotated a spoked wheel, or a wooden shaft, on a piece of wood using a length of rope.⁸¹³ In some parts of Europe a hangman's rope was recommended for this purpose.⁸¹⁴ The proceedings were conducted in absolute silence, the rite performed cleanly, and in the *exact* fashion.⁸¹⁵ As the ritual participants diligently went about their task, silent and solemn onlookers witnessed the emergence of flame from the wood.⁸¹⁶ In such a manner was born the *zhivoi ogon'* (literally "living fire"), which arose from the friction generated.⁸¹⁶ They then set alight a dry wooden staff using the fresh fire, and ferried it to every home so they could re-ignite their hearths.⁸¹⁶ The inhabitants were admonished to ensure that this flame stayed alive until the same festival one year hence.⁸¹⁶ According to Russian folklore, once the *zhivoi ogon'* was placed in the hearth, allowing it to die out would bring certain misfortune on the entire household.⁸¹⁶ The fire had to be guarded against defilement from impurities and rubbish.⁸¹⁷ Accordingly they placed leftover sour cream in the oven. Milk and water were also associated with the homefires, perhaps, like sour cream, as a bowl full of sustenance placed on a shelf inside the oven.⁸¹⁷ Russian peasants always recited prayers during the morning fire feeding, which took place at dawn.⁸¹⁸ So it was too for the Magian people. The Novgoroders, whose great city stood by the river *Volkhv* (ie; Magus River), greatly prized this flame; no doubt for its spiritual value, its pagan spiritual value. Without dallying villagers then lit bonfire in the street, one in the midst of the village, and yet others near the cow sheds and cow-trail.⁸¹⁸ Locals later ran their cattle between them to provide protection against disease.⁸¹⁸

Such were the happenings that took place on the 6th of December, the festival of *Nikol'shchina* (St Nicholas' feast day), *Nikola Ugodnik*, a time of great rejoicing for the people.⁸¹⁸ Families gathered together and celebrated this moment with three to four days of mead-drinking revelry.⁸¹⁸ While it may have been performed under the auspices of a Christian saint, this was essentially a Magian pagan ceremonial observance. You might expect a solemnity of this kind to be confined to Russia. It is instead found right across the continent: Germany,

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Scotland, England, France, but nowhere more so than in Slavia and the Balkans.^{818a} Mediaeval Europe witnessed a dramatic rise in the popularity of these need fires, that is despite a resounding condemnation of the practice by the Catholic Church, who decried it as a *heathen rite*.⁸¹⁹ The custom proved so resilient that villagers persisted with it even until last century.⁸¹⁹ One cannot overstate the significance of the Church's enthusiastic attacks on the practice, when viewed against the pan-European nature of the uses to which the need-fire was put, or the days upon which it was made, and the manner of the fire's birth. In short, such evidence suggests the existence of an ancient pagan religion deeply rooted in the European psyche, which found itself unsuccessfully challenged by the prevailing Church authorities.

The use of a fire-wheel as a source of friction is a feature peculiar to Russia, Scotland, and indeed the Beltaine fires of the thought-to-be-extinct pagan Celtic druids. The Celtic bonfire ceremonies of Beltaine were lit in response to the increased activity of the black witches, who were at that time especially powerful, and much given to milk-stealing and vexing cattle.⁸²⁰ Since the druids are the oldest recorded group of Europeans known to have observed the wheel friction custom, one is tempted to associate the diffusion of need-fires with a druidic diaspora of some kind, that leapt onto the mainland, and migrated as far away as the Urals.⁸²⁰ Perhaps this took place after the Roman slaughter on Mona, with large segments of the druidic class escaping Britain, only to seek sanctuary in far away places. But on the contrary, it is far more likely to have been a ritual transported into pre-Roman Britain with druidic Magi, as they left their eastern roots and Galatian holy oak far behind.

DAILY PRAYERS AT THE FIRE TEMPLE

By drawing on the many points of similarity between Magianism and the rites of the *Volkhov* Magi, we can deduce the following. After the ringing of the bells, Svarog's fire was fed five times per day by the *Volkhov* with sacred woods and other timber cut from the forests, amidst universal rejoicing, hymns and prayers of the *Gathas*. People stood about as the procession of woods was taken into the inner sanctuary by specially invested individuals. Prayer times (which the Magi called the Gah's) began at cockcrow, when the more pious pagans attended, and continued at prescribed times throughout the day until sunset. At nightfall began *Ahriman's* domain, when the dead and deadly roamed about until dawn.

The prayer times were as follows.

<i>Gah Havan</i>	6am-10am	<i>Gah Rapithvin</i>	10am-3pm
<i>Gah Uziren</i>	3pm-6pm	<i>Gah Atwisihruthrima</i>	6pm-12pm
<i>Gah Ushahin</i>	12pm-6am		

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Evidence for Magian *gah* fire-vigils in heathen Russia is found in the Old Russian word *grano* ("verses"), which is linked to the Avestan *gar* ("praise" or "a hymn of praise"), and the Alanic *gaer* ("a cry" or "a sound").⁸²¹ *Grano* is also related to the Old Indian *grnīte* ("he is singing"), which no doubt pertains to the recital of hymns.⁸²¹ In addition to this the Old Russian *zhertva* ("sacrifice") is related to the Old Indian *gir* "praise, "reward" and the Avestan *gar*.⁸²¹ This simply illustrates the common Indian and Iranian origins for the concept of hymns as a religious offering, and a continuous understanding of the notion that the word described a tradition of religious song, present even into pagan times. The Lithuanian *girti* and *girui* ("to praise") is much closer to the Old Indian, which may or may not indicate that they cleaved more greatly to vedic psalmody, in what was arguably the most staunchly pagan of all the European countries. If Vasmer's etymological reconstructions are complete, then such a series of correlations appears to be absent in the German, Scandinavian, English, or any of the Romance languages.

A different class of religious song is perceptible in the Russian *pet'* ("to sing") and *pesnya* ("a song").⁸²² These may have been connected with Greek pagan gnostic hymns, especially to Apollo, or alternatively with Byzantine Christian hymns.

Pagan Idols

In the ancient world, mankind carved holy images of spirits, divine beings and their ancestors. The practice first began during the stone-age when hunters whittled (from bone, wood and antler) magical effigies of deer, bears, pregnant women and the like, which are thought to have been able to cause a change in the fortunes of those who gave reverence to the image. The powers attributable to these first generations of idols lay in sympathetic magic.

Later idol crafting became a highly evolved science, surrounded by intricate ritualism. As mentioned the pagan priesthoods of antiquity held common views on pagan religiosity and ceremonial in quite a number of respects. The priests of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Greeks, Romans and Medean Magi all used mutually similar, sacred and well guarded magical processes to craft idols. These were known as the telestic arts. By Greek reckoning the method appears to have originated in Babylonia-Chaldea.⁸²³ As you will soon read Christians and Jews had only a very rudimentary knowledge of the principles behind idol-worship. Based on their crude observations, the idolatry which they so vehemently rejected and condemned, entailed giving homage to stones, timber and demons. This is only partly correct. A Babylonian *Kudurru*-stone dating to the 13th Millennium BC clearly depicts Mesopotamian idols in the form of columns, or wooden posts with bulbous serpentine or anthropomorphic faces carved at the top. These were either engraved with the image of a god, or left unembellished but for inscribed spells.⁸²⁴ Images frequently included those of the

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divine sages, often dressed as animals. Carved posts were not always idols though. The erection of engraved pillars or stellae, was also practiced by the Egyptians and Mesopotamians, to delimit territorial boundaries, and to record resounding military victories for posterity.⁸²⁵

The Telestic Arts

In Alexandrian Egypt, the pagan priests taught that idols were linked with the soul of the god through the telestic arts, occult processes used during an idol's carving and consecration. From *Asclepius III:37* we know that the telestic arts entailed the use of certain plants, gemstones, incenses and sacred utterances. To the classical mind, the soul of a god could not enter "the lower bodies"; things like gems, pieces of dead wood, or living things such as trees or people. This was because the celestial divinities were too lofty and etheric to defile themselves by residing in such a base condition. To this end, the telestic arts (devised by Egyptians or Chaldeans) prescribed that a *daemone* (a lower angel) or hero *obedient to the deity* was conjured into the idol, and from that day forth this being would act as the god's agent and earthly representative. The telestic arts served to bind this *daemone* or hero to the receptacle be it a stone or wooden image, and ensured its obedience to the god it was to serve. As Celsus Africanus explained; "*Let anyone inquire of the Egyptians, and he will find that everything, even to the most insignificant, is committed to the care of a certain demon*".⁸²⁶

Tenth Century AD Muslim writers said much the same thing about them;

"Now these things are called sacred, which are made holy by the gods themselves, or their demons, being (as I may say) dedicated to us by the gods themselves. By this account we call demons holy, because in them God dwells, whose name they are often said to hear." ... and ...

"there are also sacred rites and holy observations, which are made for the reverencing of the gods, and religion, viz. devout gestures, genuflexions, uncoverings of the head, washings, sprinklings of holy water, perfumes, exterior expiations, humble processions, and exterior ornaments for divine praises, as musical harmony, burning of wax candles and lights, ringing of bells, the adorning of temples, altars and images, in all which there is required a supreme and special reverence and comeliness; wherefore they are used for these things, the most excellent, most beautiful and precious things, as gold, silver, precious stones, and such like: which reverences and exterior rites are as it were lessons and invitations to spiritual sacred things, for the obtaining the bounty of the gods".⁸²⁷

An idol was therefore only a representation of the deity, mystically linked to the god, a sort of front door step permitting divine worship and the divinity's direct presence, but through the mediation of a *daemone*, the lowest form of spiritual essence, which alone was capable of entering into inanimate lower bodies. At no stage did they see an idol was the god

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itself, something the *Old Testament* misrepresents. As a part of the telestic rite each idol (ie; resident *daemone*) received its own name, by which the God recognized it, and to which the *daemone* responded upon hearing its mere utterance, *but only if the devotee was holy*. Thus, the same god could be known by many names, depending on how many idols were consecrated to it. Idols were said to have little trouble bestowing favors on behalf of the god who they represented, but only when prayed to, given offerings or serenaded by music and incense.

The task of unravelling the connections between similar and dissimilar names for gods in pagan Eastern Europe becomes even more convoluted once you realize that (according to traditional teachings about idols) any given god might have a number of effigies on earth dedicated to it, with each idol of the God known by its own separate name. Divine worship was therefore offered to a specific god via the adoration of variously-named idols. Can we be so sure, that differing names for pagan gods which have survived down to the present day do not represent different gods (which many no doubt are), but merely names for an idol venerated in a specific locality. For example among the Slavs and Balts the God of Thunder was known by various names such as Perkunas, Perkuons, Pargnus, Perun and Proven. Were these merely dialectal variations, or are we looking at evidence that there were five main idols dedicated to one and the same god, with each idol possessing its own personal *daemone*, with its own personal name?

In antiquity, the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Indians, Medeans, Assyrians, Chaldeans and Babylonians had highly developed idolatry, and were eminently skilled in the fashioning of idols. Although the Rus' were said to had been consummate artisans when using a wood medium, it is unfortunate that the only major surviving examples of their idols are often very crude. The crafting of fairly simple images was also evident among the Celts, whose idols resemble those of the Russes in many respects. Nonetheless the more elaborate Slav idols were most likely torn down and destroyed during the conversion, leaving only petty idols remaining. Since the Slavs had inherited Chaldean magical rites,⁸²⁸ there might have been a factual link between the *telestic arts* of the classic civilizations and the origins of the idol-craft employed by *Volkhovy*.

In Rus', idols were normally crafted from the trunks of grove trees by *Volkhovy* suitably skilled in idol-craft.⁸²⁹ In areas where slash and burn agriculture was practiced, Slavic idols were normally hewn from stone to prevent the "scandalous" destruction of their deity's image during burn-offs. More often than not Balto-Slavic idols were representations of divine beings, Magi or heroes, something which leads one to believe that they knew the telestic arts. We have even greater cause to think this because according to the Arabs, their idols were inlaid with finely cut gems, especially in the eye cavities, since their gleaming facets were believed to be a window into the world, emitting glammers from the lands of the

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gods. From depressions left in the pupils of some Celtic idols, and things like the Gundestrup cauldron (which turned out to be Scythian and not Celtic), it is fairly clear that the Celts and Scythians also employed glass or gem-eyes for some images.⁸³¹ Even so, Slavic stone *kumiry* (a specific type of idol) were of mixed quality, and in no way reached the pinnacle of Egyptian, Babylonian or Indian craftsmanship, whose artisans gave their idols such life-like appearances.

Indian idols

One can infer from Mediaeval Church sources and archeological specimens, that Celtic and Slavic idols resembled those of the Hindus (see p. 12). *Agni Purana*⁸³¹ provides fairly precise descriptions of how to make, handle and consecrate idols. Indian rituals were fundamentally different from the teletic arts, for they resulted in the direct presence of the god, rather than a *daemone*-underling who merely acted as a god's representative (as was the case in Chaldeanism and pagan gnosticism). Since we don't have eyewitness accounts of European pagan priests in the act of making idols, we cannot confirm that the following rites were used in the manufacture of Slavic poly-cephalic and many-armed *Daeva* gods.

With silk fastened around his arm, a craftsman set to work making an idol, in a shed specially constructed for the purpose.⁸³¹ Other sculptors might aid him in this task, as the idol's future guardians watched on, playing music all the while. A string of mustard seeds was tied to the idol's arm as a special incantation was recited. With a blessed chisel in hand the artist delicately, and with all reverence, carved the idol's features to the best of his ability.⁸³¹

Once this work was completed the artisan and the assembled group of worshipers payed their utmost respects to the image, housing it in a special pavilion, bathing it, and dressing it.⁸³¹ Bowing low in obeisance, they bestowed upon their new lord the gift of a cow.⁸³¹

Next they prayed that there are no defects in the effigy's construction and prepared to bring it to life.⁸³¹ Sequentially the priest opened the idol's eyes with a sacred utterance and an anointing, as butter, flowers and mustard were surrendered at its feet.⁸³¹ The idol was crowned with grass.

The priest liberally bathed the image in butter, to the tune of hymns, then sealed the image by caking flour onto its surface. A short while thereafter the gluey paste was scrubbed away with the aid of hot water.⁸³¹ It underwent purificatory ablutions, washed in a river, a holy precinct, in a water source wherein gems had been placed, and with streams of water from consecrated pitchers. Steaming hot water completed the ablutions.⁸³¹ The surface of the damp image was then dried with a powder comprised of five different species of soil. Once dusted off, the washings continued.⁸³¹ Firstly herbs were boiled up, and the watery tincture poured on the idol, followed by an anointing with various dairy products, and water laced with fruit juices.⁸³¹ Even more incantations were uttered, and precious perfumes smeared on the steadily more divine image.⁸³¹ Garlands were draped around its neck, as were herbs and

a holy string.⁸³¹ With the utterance of the requisite mantras, its head was bathed in incense.⁸³¹

Next the Brahmin entered into a meditative state, drawing the god's consciousness down from the ether. Using the power of his will, the Brahmin imprinted parts of the celestial being's form and mind onto the idol.⁸³¹ Sequentially he brought to life the god's arms, mind, heart, olfactory senses, legs and genitalia by writing the required hymns on the god's body parts, both physically and mentally.⁸³¹

All this having been done, the idol became a physical embodiment of the god, the divinity itself at one with the effigy.⁸³¹ Appropriate household goods were then supplied to the god, for its earthly needs.⁸³¹ These goods were of necessity used by its custodians, who performed every menial task for the idol, and gave homage at all times.⁸³¹

Indian idols had their own daily routine; eating, drinking and sleeping. When an idol's guardians wished to put it to bed, they sang the *ato deva* hymn.⁸³¹ *Agni Purana* also relates that images were taken to the river for a ritual bath, mounted upon a vehicle, and there worshiped atop a river-side platform against a background of music and hymns. At the end of the day's proceedings, the idol returned home once again, to its place of rest in the temple, to its bed.

When an idol began to look jaded, worn out with the lapsing of ages those of wood were incinerated. Old stone idols were treated somewhat differently. Their cloth-draped form was driven to a coastal area on a wheeled vehicle, and plunged into the depths of a water body, preferably the sea, to the sound of music. On that day the old effigy was laid to rest, and a new one consecrated and raised.⁸³²

These features call to mind Tacitus' references to the Germanic Goddess Nerthus; "*They believe that she (the Earth Mother Nerthus) takes part in human affairs, riding in a chariot among her people. On an island of the sea stands an inviolate grove, in which, veiled with a cloth, is a chariot that none but the priest may touch*".⁸³³ She (perhaps meaning the idol of Nerthus) is paraded about the countryside on the chariot to share in the festivities that took place throughout many parts of heathen Germany. Upon cessation of the gaiety "*the chariot, the vestments, and (believe it if you will) the goddess herself, are cleansed in a secluded lake*". Following this the goddess and the chariot are returned to the grove in which her presence (and most likely idol) dwell.

As you will recall from the beginning of this chapter, Slavic idols were also put to bed in elaborately constructed and decorated towers and purple-bedecked temples, they were dressed, and indeed covered with inscriptions (perhaps written mantras or power words).

Herbertus' account of a Prussian grove mentions the presence of an idol coated with a thick layer of bitumen (a substance derived from crude oil).⁸³⁴ The closest parallel to this can be found in Ancient Egypt, where the idols of demons were habitually dressed in tar.⁸³⁵ Bearing in mind that an unknown number of pagan Prussians also worshiped the Graeco-Egyptian pagan gnostic god of healing Asclepius⁸³⁶ (under the name Asceutus), the link

need not be that tenuous.

The Eastern Finns kept a chest containing carved effigies of their ancestors in their holy *Lud* or *Kuala* cabins. This might have an Egyptian parallel, though whether there is a connection is uncertain, or even unlikely. You see it was the custom in Egypt that each generation an idol should be made, and kept by the priests. In this way they knew how many generations had lived there.⁸³⁷

The idol sanctuary which the Russes of the Upper Volga worshiped at consisted of a mound upon which was raised a post that had the face of a god chiselled into it. This god was surrounded by a series of smaller idols who were allegedly the issue of that same god. Whether or not these were really ancestor idols is difficult to say. Another translation makes the smaller idols the daughters and wives of the main idol.⁸³⁸

To reward these idols for their gifts and support, a Russlander gave them the meat of slaughtered cattle and sheep, which he deliberately hung around the necks of the idols. The worshipers watched on as dogs entered into the sanctuary, and converged on the offerings. The meat offerings were then eagerly devoured by dogs. So it would seem that a hopeful querist or thankful worshiper was assured that a god was well pleased if dogs ate their gifts to the idols. We know this because the visibly happy Rus merchant went on to exclaim "*he (the god) has consumed my gifts*". Therefore it would be proper to say that the god of these Rus' merchants was either personified as a dog, or that dogs merely acted as agents or familiars of the god, and their mouths were as the mouth of the god itself, who truly ate the sacrifices offered to it.⁸³⁹

For what its worth, Norse carved wooden posts provide exceptional parallels with idols made in ancient Babylon or Medea, and might well have been fashioned by Magians using the telestic arts. One Russian word for an idol was *stod* (masculine) or *stoda* (feminine), which had the additional meaning of "a god" or "a goddess".⁸⁴⁰ Linguists believe it came from the Old Scandinavian *stod* ("a post", or "a column"),⁸⁴¹ though there the *stod* has lost its original religious meaning. By implication Scandinavian pagan idolatry was found in Russia too, and what is more, their idols were in the form of carved posts. Archeological and historical sources confirm that this was frequently the case.

Consider the Norse carved posts (figs 16.1 and 16. 4) which were found at the Oseburg grave site. Commentators normally interpret them as prow ornamentation for longships, perhaps even cult objects, since a number of them were interred at the aforementioned site. However I believe they were idols, and in particular Magian effigies depicting lions. Firstly they bear a stark resemblance to Babylonian (fig 16.3), Persian (fig 16.5) and Scythian lions (fig 16.2).

Stylistically speaking Medean renditions of the lion were tamed somewhat around the 4th Century BC.⁸⁴² With their ferocious, menacing aspect stripped away they looked more



Fig 16. 1

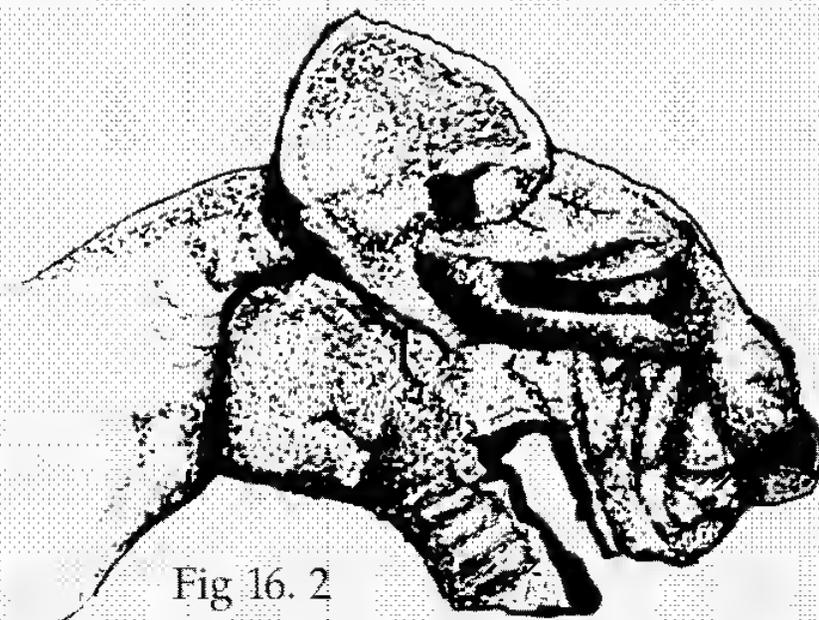


Fig 16. 2



Fig 16. 3



Fig 16. 4



Fig 16.5

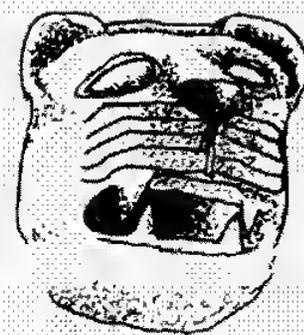


Fig 16. 6

Fig 16. 1 An intricately sculptured post from Oseburg. If it was an idol, then it was at least feline, but more likely leonine. If it was a lion, is it not strange that people living in Scandinavia chose to carve lions in preference to other known beasts?

Fig 16. 2 Scythian lions sculpted from wood and covered with gold leafing.

Fig 16. 3 Babylonian demon idol, 6th-7th C. BC.

Fig 16. 4 Feline viking burial post from Oseburg. Note the similarity between it and the Babylonian lion-headed demon (Fig 16. 4).

Fig 16. 5 The face of a lion from an Achaemenid Persian sword pommel.

Fig 16. 6 A Hittite lion-guardian carved in stone, 1,000 BC.

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like a common house cat, though they still retained their leonine features.⁸⁴² Medean craftsmen often portrayed canine and avian predators resting on the backs of the ibex and feline beasts which featured on their socketed metal standards.⁸⁴³ These varied images were often intertwined with great skill, creating an aesthetic hybrid anthropomorphic image.⁸⁴⁴ One of the Oseburg "lion-posts" (see fig 16. 1) also had a bird on its back, pleasingly integrated with the interlaced reliefs adorning the neck and head region.

Norse idols might normally be kept in a barn temple. In *St Olav's Saga* pagans related the following details about their idol of Thor, which they kept on a certain farm, and which received hundreds of willing visitors.

*"we have a god who can be seen every day, although he (Thor's idol) is not out today, because the weather is wet, and he will appear to thee terrible and very grand, and I expect that fear will mix with your very blood when he comes into the Thing". "he bore the likeness of Thor; had a hammer in his hand; was of great size, but hollow within; and had a high stand, upon which he stood when he was out. Neither gold nor silver are wanting about him, and every day he receives four cakes of bread, besides meat".*⁸⁴⁴

In the eastern world idols were often carried about on wagon-like vehicles. According to Al-Nadim's sources Indian sun-worshipers gave worship to an idol of the sun (in human form) that drove along in a horse-drawn vehicle. It had its own personal servants, money, land holdings, and was constantly serenaded by music, and cared for as one might a living being of high status.⁸⁴⁵

Indian moon-worshipers had their blacksmiths fabricate idol-vehicles too, albeit duck-drawn.⁸⁴⁵ This is almost an exact description of a metal contraption found in the Balkans, dating to the Bronze Age, long before Alexander's invasion of India.

In 11th Century Norway the pagans had a similar observance, for Thor's idol was mounted on wheels. Dragging his carriage along signified a pious act of service towards Thor.

The Rus' Idols

Our best information on the Rus' idols comes from the *Primary Chronicle*, a strange little episode that on face value leaves one with the distinct impression that the Rus' idols were the brainchild of Khagan Vladimir. While it is fairly strange that no other mention of indigenous idols was made for the pre-980AD period, what information the *Primary Chronicle* does tell us is very revealing; a solitary entry which unveils the true identities of the heathen gods worshipped by the Kievan Rus' State c.980 AD. We took a look at the "multi-national" pantheon of *Kapishche* idols raised by Vladimir (the Rus' Slav Khagan with the *Bulgar* name) in the year 980 AD on p. 73. They were predominantly Iranian gods plus a

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Daeva. Some had simply been assigned another name, and retained their other attributes and patronages, whilst others kept their original Iranian titles. Demon idols are entirely absent from the royal line-up, but the names of certain Iranian archdemons found in Magian scripture have been amply preserved in Russian folklore.

If the names of these Slavic gods are traceable linguistically to Iran and Central Asia, it would not be improper to suggest that Iranian religious thought was important during the formative stages of pagan Slav religion, and considering a plethora of anecdotal evidence, that many Slav pagans were practicing Magians. To illustrate this point, if Russian idols had names of Zulu provenance you could deduce with some conviction that there were Zulu influences, particularly if there were also apparent continuities of Zulu culture in Slavia, which accompanied the linguistic survivals. Obviously such an eventuality is improbable. But just one look at a map shows how close Russia is to Persia and the Caucasus. The pagan Slavs and Russes are, predictably, known to have travelled to these parts during the Middle Ages, for business, war, and other matters. *These Kievan idols without question belonged to people who were Magian*. Unless they were already being worshiped by Magi in Rus' for some time prior to Vladimir', they most likely belonged to newly-arriving pagan Silver Bulgar Magi migrating to the Balkans, a people who we definitively know were Magian on account of Arab testimonies and through the analysis of elements of their surviving religious architecture.

Moreover, since Orthodox Zoroastrians did not fashion idols, these particular Rus' Magians evidently belonged to an earlier wave of Zurvanites, since Vladimir's pantheon incorporated the veneration of *Ahuras* and the *Daeva* Indra.

I have focussed upon the Bulgar origin of these effigies mainly because certain Bulgars were deemed to be Magian, they did migrate from the Caucasus and Islamicized Silver Bulgaria moving west and south-west, and their temple designs were so to speak Sassanian in nature.

The *Old Testament* provides numerous Jewish accounts of the way Babylonians behaved towards their idols. The descriptions are for the most part only crude and fairly straightforward observations of idol crafting and idolatry, that do not seek to explain the philosophical basis that lay behind them. For instance *Isaiah 46: 1-2* mentions that the Chaldean idols of *Bel* and *Nebo* (in Russian the word *Nebo* means "the sky"), among others, were loaded onto donkeys to be taken away following the fall of Babylon. What this shows is all perfectly understandable, the actions of the Babylonians in attempting to save their idols from harm and destruction.

In the 10th Century AD Al-Nadim described the Chaldeans of his day (the same sort of priests that served the idols of ancient Babylon) moving their idols about on barges when they needed to transport them.⁸⁴⁶

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Al-Masudi described the arrival of a four-armed golden Aryan *Daeva* idol at Baghdad, brought all the way from India. As a result of the Muslim holy wars in India this idol called *Shugl* (together with a number of other smaller effigies) was taken back to the heart of the Caliphate as booty, and immediately diverted to a police station upon arrival, and one might suspect, impounded.⁸⁴⁷ What this shows is that idol-worshippers are likely to have taken their idols with them when forced to leave their homeland, whether by ship or by wheeled vehicle.

While the Bulgar scenario is, to my mind, the most likely reason for the late raising of the idols in Kiev, we should ask the question; if they were imported from elsewhere, where else could they had come from? Here are some options;

1. The idols were withdrawn back to Kiev from Black Bulgaria as it became more and more Christianized.
2. The idols were brought into Rus' by fugitive Western Slavs (Poles), whose country had only recently converted to Christianity (966 AD).
3. The idols were brought to Rus' by Vladimir sometime following his overseas stay in Scandinavia while trying to muster a Norse army to deploy in the civil war against his brothers. Under this option some or all of these idols would have originated in Scandinavia, or even Ireland. But if this were the case where was Odin? Freyr? Thor? While it is possible that some of these gods could conceivably be discretely tucked away within the Russian Pantheon, disguised by Slavicized titles, it should be noted that they traditionally kept their own names when worshiped by Scandinavian colonists in Western Europe and the British Isles. In these locations there are many place names which have names traceable to Norse gods. Even so there is a mounting case that an undetermined number of Norsemen were Magians, especially among those living in Dublin.
4. The Rus' idols belonged to Paulician heretics who had fled into Rus' from Asia Minor, or to some of the 200,000 Paulicians who might have migrated North into Russia and the Ukraine after their forced resettlement in the Balkans under John Zimesces. In his *Fields of Gold* Al-Masudi recorded that the faith of the Paulicians was an open blend of Christianity and Magianism, something which corroborates the account supplied by John IV, a former leader of the Armenian Church. The nature of the pagan Rus' "pantheon" fits neatly into this category.
5. The idols were brought there by Zoroastrians fleeing the failed 930 AD uprising in the Middle East.

Earlier in the book I posed the question as to where the primary idols (*kapishche*) may have been situated prior to Vladimir bringing them to Kiev and Novgorod. It is also plausible that

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Vladimir's pantheon was artificially created as a goodwill gesture toward the various tribes which now offered him their allegiance. Did he, for example, recommend a pooling of the tribal *Kapishche* (patron gods) at Kiev, as a sign of the federated nature of the early Rus' state? Such a manoeuvre would conform to Aryan practice, for the *Agni Purana* recommends that victorious kings incorporate rather than suppress local gods in captured areas. At the very least, Vladimir's choice of divinities was a political statement. Under his rule, the Kievans were to pay homage to Iranian gods, the gods of state.

Unfortunately we have no historical accounts of wheeled-idols in Russia, so once again linguistics must come to the rescue. Earlier you read of Rouen's olden name (*Rotomagus* ie; "a wheeled-Magus"), and the body of a Celtic prince laying in state on a wheeled couch, wearing a white pointed hat. From this we might guess that idols of the Magi, or even their inert bodies, were transported about on wheeled vehicles, if only for ceremonial purposes. Hence the concept of "a wheeled-Magus". In the Old Russian the words *kolimog* and *kolimag* meant "a tent". Other related words such as the Belorussian *kalamazhka*, the Old Czech *kolimah* or the Old Polish *kolimaga* all meant "a horse-drawn wagon". In the Ukrainian we discover that *kolimaga* meant "a freight wagon" whereas *kolimag* meant "a tent".⁸⁴⁸ Since there is a sound connection between tents and wagons, the tents described were probably of the mobile variety, normally mounted on the back of the vehicle.

Perhaps a wheeled-Magus was simply a wandering Magus (or group of them) deputized to visit remote settlements in their wheeled wagons. Since *kolimags* were apparently affiliated with the word *khram* "a temple",⁸⁴⁹ it is exceedingly likely that the wagons in question were sometimes mobile holy fires, or idol houses that the widely-dispersed country folk visited, whenever Magus wizards visited their area for certain festivals. They also served as transport for fire during resettlement.

One linguist has even suggested that these words are collectively related to the Old Turkic *kulungu* ("a small boat").⁸⁴⁸ If it is then it might describe a wheeled boat, sometimes used for the amphibious transportation of religious objects and dignitaries. Earlier in this book you witnessed Russian wind cars. In the early 1100's, the *Gesta Abbatum Trudonensium* reported the manufacture of a wheeled-ship near Aachen (Belgium). It was subsequently moved to Maesdricht to be fitted with sail and mast, hauled overland by weavers. Beyond there the procession visited a number of settlements along the way to Trond, where the Chronicle's author got his first glimpse of them.^{848a} The abbot there must have sensed there was something untoward about the whole affair, and his reception for them was most unflattering. Other citizens of Trond thought differently, especially the ladies that rushed to the two-week-long night-time ceremonies conducted around it.⁸⁴⁷ On account of the partial nudity, rejoicing and revelry taking place there, a great many (supporters of the abbot) wanted the land-ship burned, but other activists turned out to protest against such designs.

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Escaping the controversy, the vessel set forth yet again, but was refused entry to Louvain.^{848a} After that the Chronicler made no further mention of its ultimate fate.

In another isolated incident a 12th Century German Catholic priest saw a crowd of pagans (in festive spirits) near Cologne, clustering around a wheel-mounted, boat-like vehicle which he believed was carrying a devil (idol).^{848b} Nobody knows where the landship finally ended up. Nor do we know who built it.

The Magyars supposedly lent their name to the term *mazhara*, which was used by the Crimean Tatars when referring to their mobile homes, which were covered, four-wheeled wagons.⁸⁴⁹ I am unaware if this is the original meaning of Magyar in the Hungarian.

Based on the aforementioned meanings I believe *kolimag* originated from an agglutination of the words *kolo* ("wheel")- *mag* ("a sorcerer" or "a Magus"). As with Rotomagus, *kolimag* probably originally meant "a Magus on wheels". It should be noted linguists do not believe that *kolo*- formed the root of *kolimag*.

WERE THERE IDOLS IN RUSSIA BEFORE VLADIMIR RAISED THEM?

The Chronicle mentions nothing of pagan idols in Rus' prior to those raised by Vladimir. But the pagan Kievans certainly had them, and there are several good reasons for this. Firstly, Bulgar and western Slavic temples have been excavated, built in the pre-980AD period, which were modelled on Iranian temples, with a large central tower to house the sacred fire and largish idols.

Secondly philology supports the existence of Magian cult sites in Slavia, including those for the adoration of royals, such as were known in in the pre-Sassanian era, but converted into fire shrines by Karter's command. As the Orthodox Zoroastrian Sassanians expanded their boundaries into regions formerly part of the Parthian and Achaemenid Empires, they frequently encountered idol and fire shrines that had been continuously maintained throughout that period.^{849a}

Thirdly, the pagan Slavs really loved their idols, and thought nothing of offering animal and human victims to them in worshipful homage. The Russes are unlikely to have fostered these measures if the effigies were alien to their belief system, or thrust upon them against their will. Obviously these idols were of considerable religious significance to the throngs of believers. Thirdly, from *The Primary Chronicle*, *The Life of Avraamij of Smolensk*, and the *Lesson on the Life of Boris and Gleb*, we know that the Slavs were far from eager to relinquish their idols, or see them torn down. The Arkona idol (toppled by Christian Danes), for example, was guarded by 300 horsemen, a sign of the value attached to its protection. Moreover the Kievans wept bitterly as they chased after the idols which Vladimir had cast down into the river. Not the kind of devotion you would expect a mere nine years later if their prince had forced his alien idols upon them. Without question, Khagan Vladimir's idols were not the first Magian idols the Kievans had ever seen. Moreover it is highly unlikely that they would

had sacrificed their children to them if they were held in little regard! We are thus left with the Chroniclers view that the Slavs were a people drunk and deluded with a love of idols. So my guess is the Kievans were not unfamiliar with Vladimir's smorgasbord of Iranian and Aryan gods.

The hierarchy of Idols

There were three basic classes of idols in Slavia.⁸⁵⁰

- 1 *Kapishche* A *Kapischche* or *Kap'* was the primary idol of a god.
- 2 *Kumir* *Kumiry* were second or subsequent idols, of reasonable importance. Sometimes these include effigies of *Volkhov* and heroic cultural figures of antiquity.
- 3 *Bolvan* *Bolvan* or *Boovan* were interchangeable terms for a *Kumir*, but I use it to designate small effigies or statuettes.

Linguistics provides supplementary information about these idols;

Bolvan

Bolvan, or variants of it can be found in Old Russian, Ukrainian, Belorussian, Middle Bulgarian, Serbo-Croat, Slovenian, Czech, Polish, Latvian and Lithuanian. These were *blvan* (Old Russian: Idol), *balvan* (Serbo-Croat: "an idol" or "beam"), *balvan* or *bolvan* (Slovenian: "an idol", or "a sizeable chunk or block", or "a log"), *balvan* (Czech: "a large chunk or block" or "lump").⁸⁵¹ In Belorussian *balvan* (a word cognate with other Slavic words meaning "an idol") means "a wooden post near the corner of the stove".⁸⁵² The *pechnoy stolb* (literally "an oven post")⁸⁵³ is arguably a similar physical Russian construct. By some strange coincidence in England there was a practice whereby peasants kept "witch-posts" at one corner of the hearth specifically to protect the flame and cooking pots from the vexation of maelific black witches. One such "witch-post" (from Yorkshire, a former viking enclave) is depicted in fig 171. A closer examination of the post reveals that the top of it bears the image of a crudely carved face; an unmistakable clue that these peasants had a wooden idol standing watch over the hearth to stop witches destroying the home hearth fire, which as explained was a task eagerly pursued by warlocks and their ilk. Therefore English and Belorussians probably had similar customs when it came to the positioning of idols in the home.

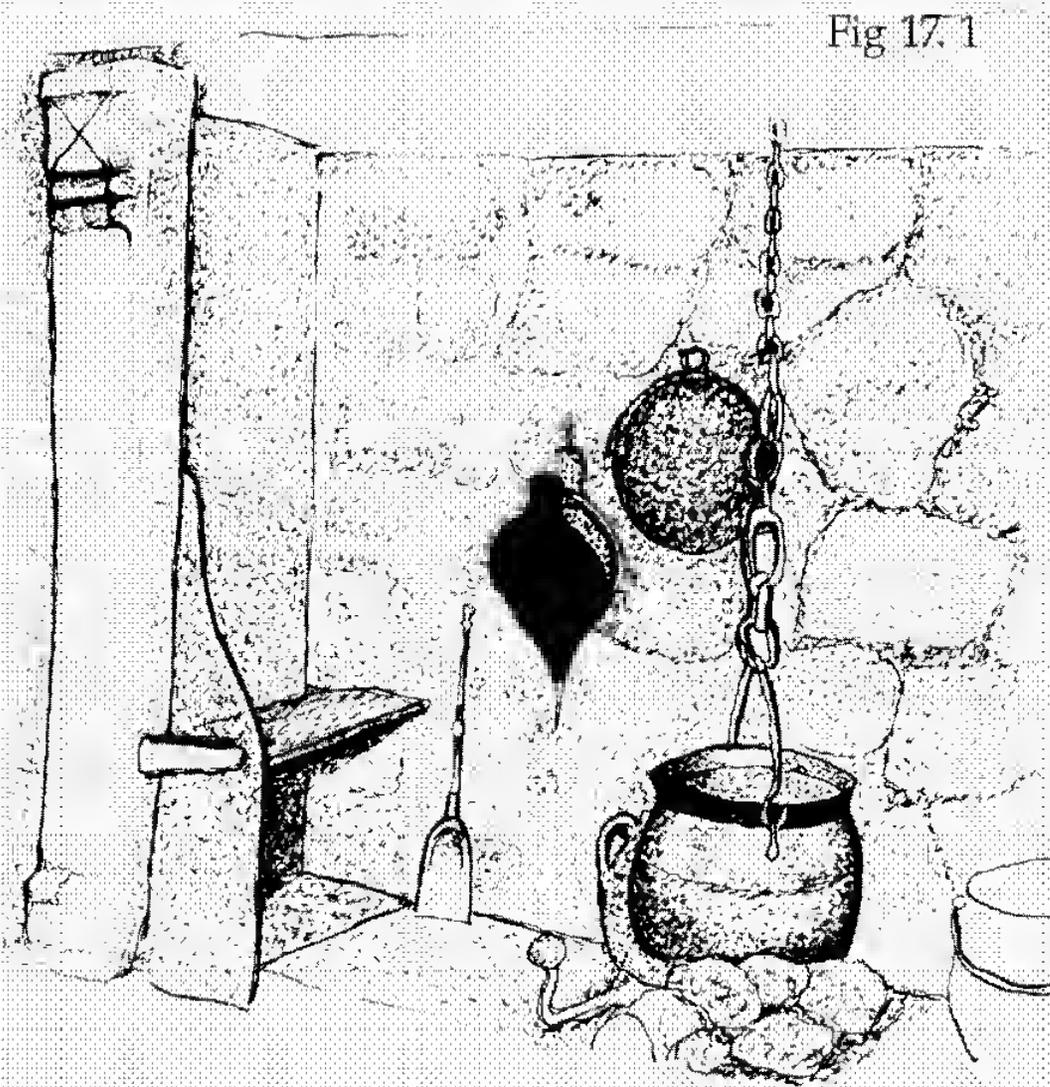


Fig 17.1

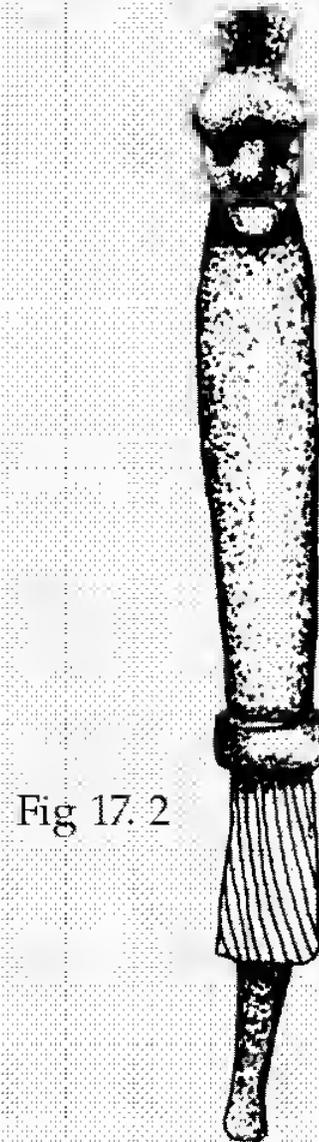


Fig 17.2

Fig 17.1.
A witch post, Yorkshire,
England.

Fig 17.2.
Slavic idol found at Starya
Ladoga, Northern Russia, 10th
Century (almost 30 cm high).

Fig 17.3. A corn goat from
Scandinavia.

Fig 17.4 and 17.5. Carved
effigies, 12th C. Scandinavian (20
cm and 17 cm).

Fig 17.6. Slavic idol, early 12th C.
Denmark (13.5 cm).

Fig 17.7. The head of a Wendish
pagan idol.

Fig 17.8 A carved post thought to
represent Odin. From a
Scandinavian stave church,
Hegge, Norway.

Fig 17.9. This "corn doll" was

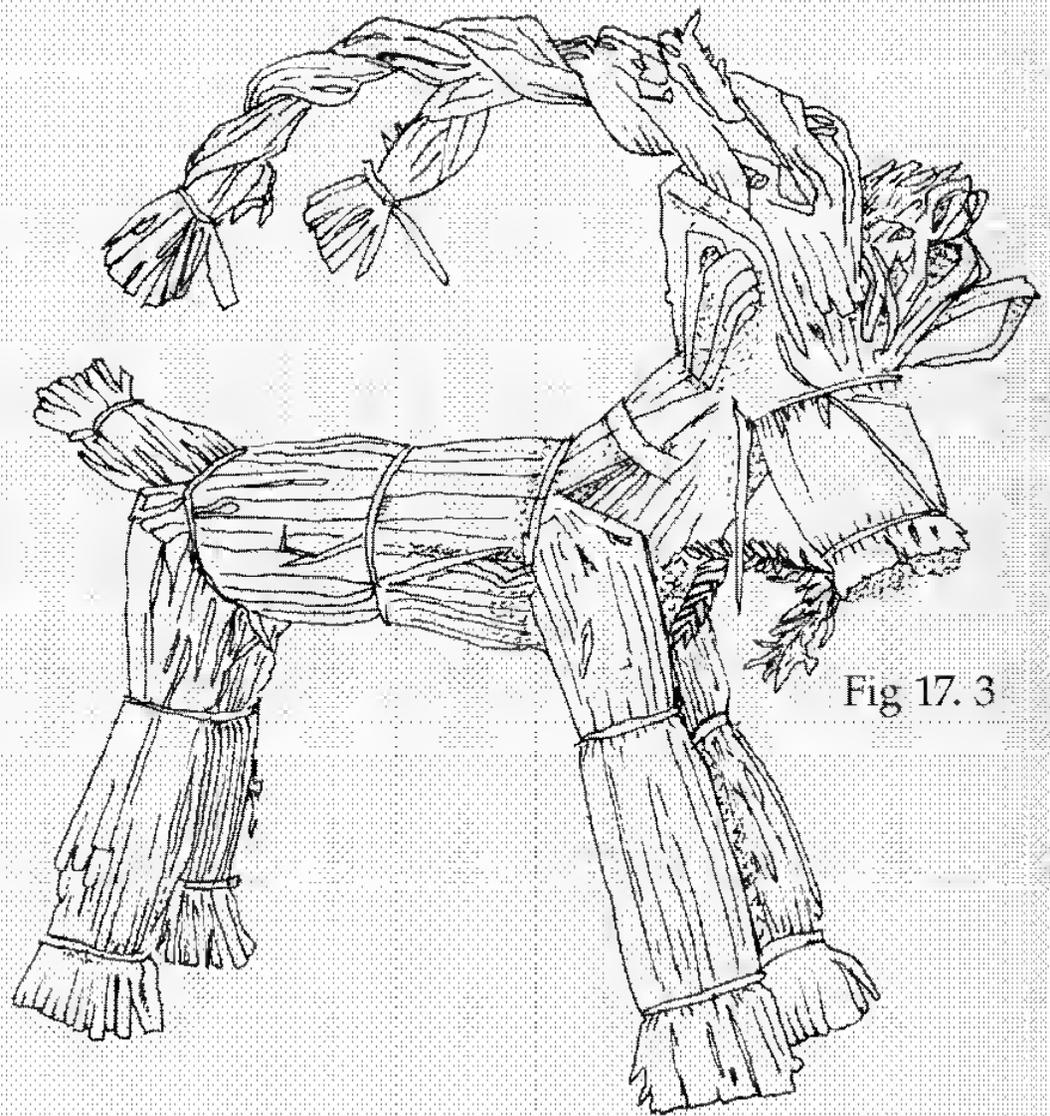


Fig 17.3

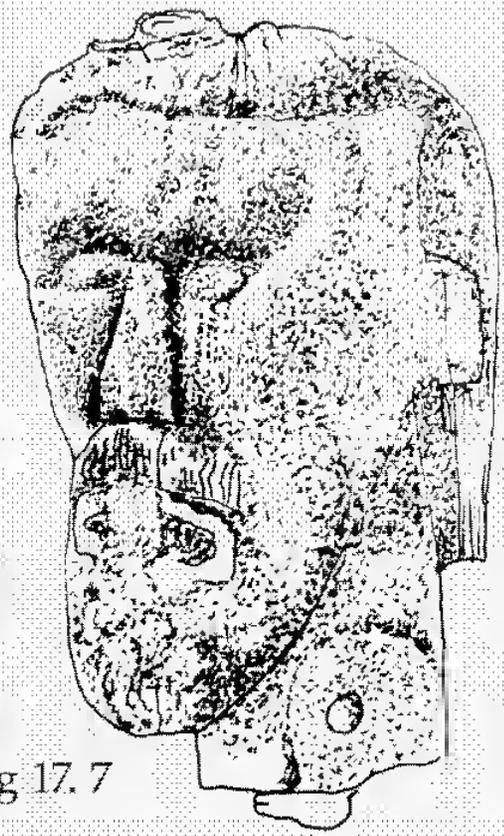


Fig 17.7



Fig 17.8

Fig 17.4

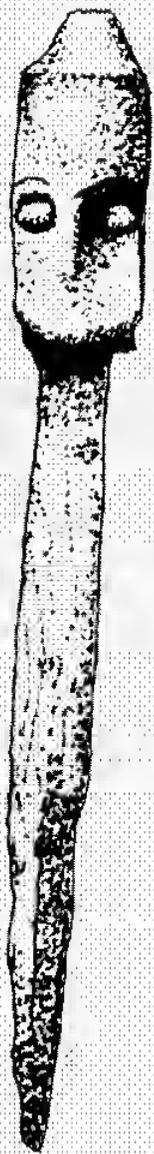


Fig 17.5

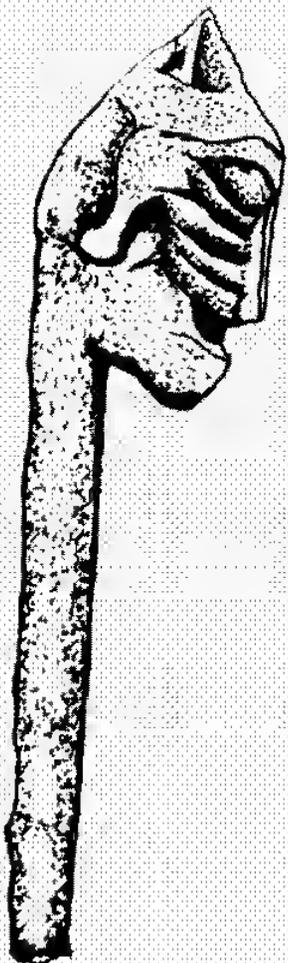


Fig 17.6

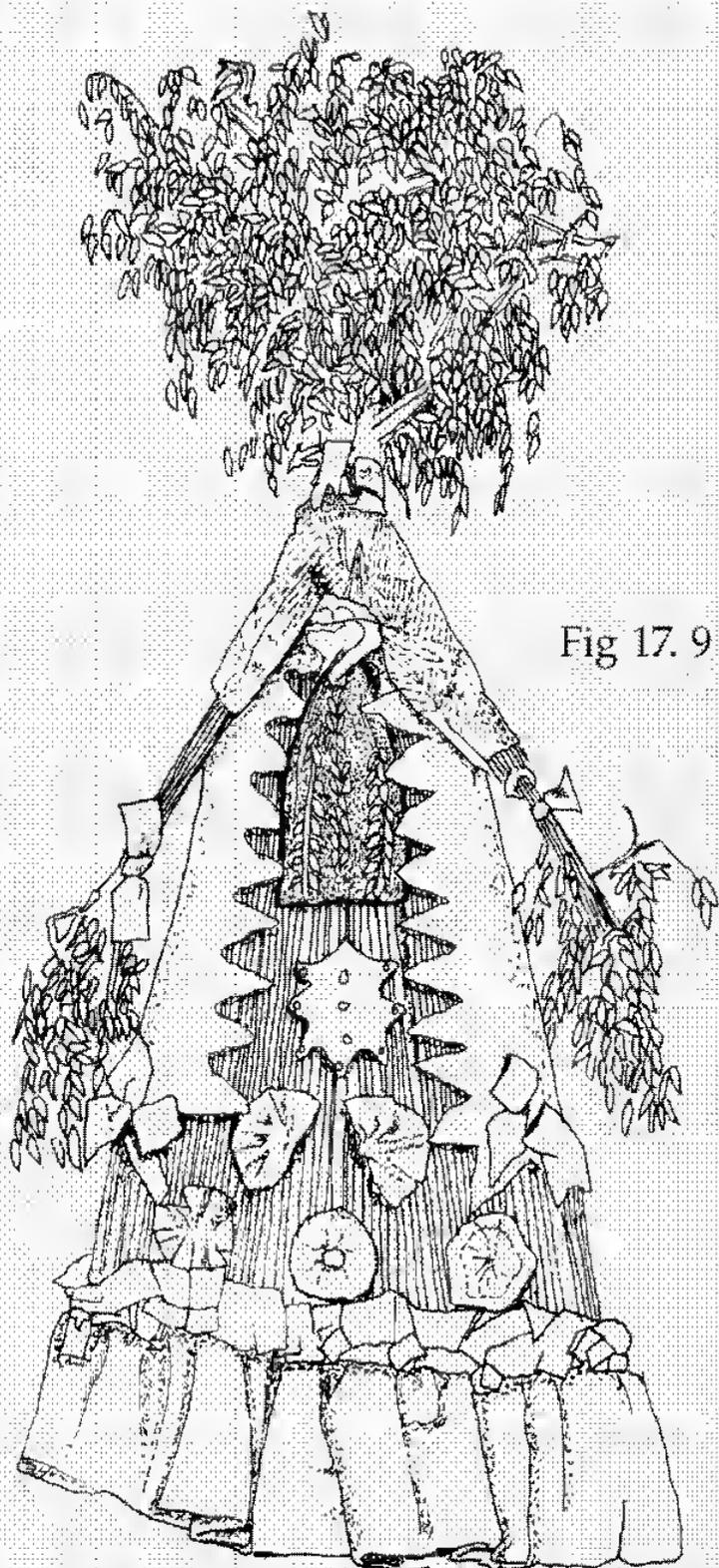
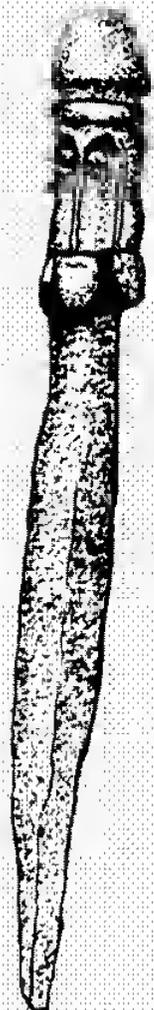


Fig 17.9

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Equally close in form and meaning is the Irish word *balban* which denoted "a straw effigy".¹⁶⁶ The Irish word is connected with the fashioning of straw idols, which as we know were relatively common in pagan Rus', Scandinavia and many parts of Europe where paganism still existed. These many terms seem connected with the Polish word *balwan*, which means "a large stone", "a huge block" or "a piece of rock", the Lithuanian *bukonas* ("an idol") and the Latvian *buluvans* ("a bird effigy").⁸⁵¹ The meaning which *buluvans* acquired might be related to the bird gods which were supposed to have been worshiped with acts of human sacrifice in certain parts of the Baltic, mostly of purchased slaves.⁸⁵⁴

It has been suggested that these many words are related to the English *bole* and the Old Icelandic *bulr* or *bolr*, which meant "a tree trunk".⁸⁵¹ Moreover the Norse kenning (ancient saying) for "a warrior" or "hero" was a "tree of battle". This kenning may dimly recollect a time when fallen heroes were immortalized by having their image carved onto a tree trunk or post. A specific link between gods and wooden beams is found in the Old Icelandic *ass*, which meant a heathen Norse god, but also denoted "a pole" or "a beam of large diameter".⁸⁵⁵

When all is said and done though these many words are probably derived from the Persian word *pahlvan* which meant "a hero" or "a warrior".⁸⁵¹ This being the case it is plausible that these linguistic ties reveal that a *bolwan*, and many variants of the word denoted idols dedicated to *fravashis*, the departed souls of white Magian heroes who could give aid to the living if invoked and given due worship. A Persian genesis for the word *bolwan* is given added credence by the presence of the word *bulwan* in the Old Turkic (meaning "a memorial" or "a memorial gravestone"), and the Kazakh word *palvan* (which also occurs in the Eastern Turkic, Tatar and Uzbek tongues) as well as *balvan*, all of which mean "a warrior" or "a hero".⁸⁵¹

Numerous stone memorial grave markers¹⁷¹ can still be found across the Russian Steppes dating to the time of the arrival of the Pechenegs, Kipchaqs and earlier horsemen (and their "walking cities" of wagons) from Central Asia. Whether they were worshiped by the nomads is unclear, but based on the more archaic variants, which would appear further westward in Europe, such individuals were no doubt once worshiped.

Here we find evidence of uniform religious terminology spread from Western Siberia and Central Asia right through as far as Ireland, something which helps reinforce the assumption that the Magian diaspora from Central Asia had fanned out in every conceivable direction from the old homelands, even into forested realms not far from the Roman Empire's more distant borders. Based on this linguistic evidence, we can surmise that idols were normally made from large slabs or chunks of rock, straw effigies, tree trunks, carved posts, logs or beams. In Russia, the words *baloban* or *boloban* (which meant "a fool")⁸⁵⁷ were probably forms of Christian invective directed against idol-worshippers in the post-

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conversion era. These words are also connected with *balaban* (meaning "to chatter or waffle on"), no doubt a cheap shot at the many prayers the pagans recited.

Kumir

Other secondary, grove or village idols were crafted near the main *kapishche* idol that they were supposed to represent, so as to achieve a rendition as close as possible to the original; providing uniform portrayals of the god in question. *Kumir* meant "an idol" or "small god". The origins of the word are rather vague. Some believe it came from the Semitic word *kumra*, which meant "a sacrificer". In the Alanic Ossetian tongue we find that a *kumir* was "a giant", and in the Finnish *kumartaa* meant "to bow down in adoration".⁸⁵⁸

Whenever a *Volkhv* Magus, sage, hero, or warrior legend died, the Slavs made a statue of them and erected it in the groves.⁸⁵⁹ The faithful prayed to it and anticipated the magical intervention of that Magian *fravashi*-saint from beyond the grave, just as Christians expected the miraculous intercession of the Christian saints. Accomplished ancestors and clan heroes of renown were also carved into wood and planted in a grove for veneration by the faithful, but usually only as a *bolvan*.

But even before they had died the great Magus-wizards and pagan gnostic priests were already gods, living gods, as was debated between Asclepius and Hermes Trismegistus in *Asclepius* :35;

"those who have soul and breadth, that they are idols - these who bring about these great events. You are saying about these who give prophecies that they are idols - these who give (men sickness and) healing that (...) them".⁸⁶⁰

The Norsemen had a word *kumba*, which meant "a sepulchral monument",⁸⁶¹ ie; a carved object dedicated to a deceased person. Considering other points discernible in the linguistic etymologies these could be construed as having a religious function, a testimony to the honour and memory of a hero or Magus-sacrificer.

Kapishche or kyp'

Linguistic evidence indicates that *kaps* and *kapishche* were religious images. They might be carved statues, or even holy pictures. The Russo-Slavic word *kyp'* which meant "an image" is thought related to these words.

Every significant god possessed a single main idol of great aesthetic value, size, and esteem. So venerated was its image that countless smaller idols would themselves be modelled on it.⁸⁶² It was through this image that the god's greatest presence could be felt on earth. Known as a *kapishche*, these elaborate effigies were located in the seat of state power, but were preferably erected on the highest possible vantage point above the surrounding

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terrain, ideally atop mountain peaks; the higher the better. Infernal gods were frequently buried underground to live beneath a mound or barrow, and were worshiped from atop the mound, thus accentuating the subterranean nature of the deity from the counter-world. In the Old Russian *kapishche* meant "a pagan temple", no doubt indicating that idols of this magnitude were housed in temples.⁸⁶³ From historical accounts of the Western Slavs, we know this to be the case. I note a similar correspondence in the Bulgarian *kapishtse* ("a temple"). Once again the Russians and Bulgars appear to share terminologies relating to places of worship. The Russian term *kaplitsa* ("a chapel" or "a shrine") could be related to both the above terms. *Kaplitsa* is in turn related to the Russian *chasovn'ya* which suggests that they took the form of sentry towers, and may have been places where time was kept.

In the Finnish Mari tongue a *kap* was "a body" or "a human figure", very likely an idol depicting a human being.⁸⁶³ The Old Norse term *kappi* is almost certainly related to these words; it meant "a hero" or "champion".⁸⁶⁴

But in the Magyar language a *kep* was "a picture"⁸⁶³ of some kind, perhaps meaning that some of their most important idols were portrayed in two-dimensions only.

Certainly the Asiatic Mongols had such idols, which were felt tapestries, and it was forbidden for ordinary people to touch them, under pain of death. These idols were transported in tented wagons.⁸⁶⁵ Idols of this nature were perhaps manifestations of dualistic animism, or forms of Magianism that preceded or superseded the Zurvanite phase of Magianism, during which three-dimensional religious images figured so heavily. This might be confirmed by the Old and Chuvash word *kap*, the Old Turkic *gib*, and the Uighur word *kep*, all of which meant "a picture".⁸⁶⁶ However the inclusion of a Uighur linguistic correlation might indicate that some of these were Manichaeism religious tapestries. That is because the second Uighur Empire had Manichaeism as its state religion.

Kapishche statues evidently existed in the Orient too; the Altai word *kep* meant "a model", "a block".

Places of pagan idolatry

The number and types of idols available in any given area, was relative to the affluence of the settlement. Merchants in particular would have been very fond of commissioning the carving of new idols to commemorate the success of business ventures. Other factors which I believe logically shaped the "pantheon" of idols peculiar to a given settlement included local environmental problems, the time of year, infestation by dark influences, rapacious demons, warfare and plagues. Very often though, Slavic idols were those dedicated to their ancestors.

In militant white communes the making of demon-idols dedicated to infernal deities, black Magi, anti-heroes (black fravashis in the form of serpents and demons) and entities

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from the counterworld was probably punishable by death. Militant black communes would usually had demon-idols of some kind, and being Zurvanites maybe a *kunir* in adoration of Perun, Volos or an assortment of *Daevas*.

Since dualism was practiced by the pagan Slavs, the idols would have been sited in an appropriate location.

IDOL SANCTUARY LOCATIONS

WHITE GODS

- A fenced mound
- A local grove
- A private residence
- A communal / banquet hall
- The market square
- At the side of the road, or in the fields
- A specially-erected shrine

BLACK GODS

- Earthen cellar
- Stone crypt or vault
- Bog
- Burial mound
- Log covered pit
- Cave or grotto

The Death of the Rus' idols

Triglav's fane was choked with war booty, evidently the proceeds from pre-battle oaths made by warriors worshiping there before setting off on campaigns.⁸⁷ Amid the piles of treasure, dazzled worshipers could only have seen physical proof of the god's past munificence. Why else would their ancestors have lavished Triglav with such booty if his powers were not to be trusted? But temples like that of Triglav soon met a swift death once the Christian religious hierarchy found favor with the Holy Roman Emperor. That their idols were just about to be annihilated was totally unexpected by many pagans. They were there one day, but with the sudden appearance of mounted Christian troops, the gods of their ancestors were gone for ever. Only rarely do we have apt descriptions of organized paganism's last moments, but it no doubt went something like this.

Planning for a raid on a heathen enclave began weeks before hand, very often prompted by officials keen to lay their hands on the treasures rumoured to be inside a pagan temple not so far away. Soldiers too became allured by the prospect of booty promised them for participating in the foray. Still others, with pious intent, dreamed of uprooting the heathen sanctuaries, and consummate god's work, the conversion of their nation.

So came the fateful day. Around daybreak a bishop's armed retinue mingled with men-at-arms supplied by whatever nobles were devout Christians, plus soldiers seconded from the German Emperor or a converted Slavic prince, and perhaps even a mercenary or two. Lackeys prepared their horses, women gave them provisions to tide them over on their journey into the heathen parts. Knowing that the pagans were in dire straits, and renowned for putting up a good fight, many probably felt a little nervous, requiring steady slugs of beer

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or wine to fortify them. Before setting off they converged on a chapel to have their confession heard. There deacons fumigated the battle ready, who kneeled in church as the bishop said mass, to bless their endeavor. This being completed they left the church, mounted up, and headed out, carrying the bishop's standard and a saintly relic or three.

Meanwhile, not a few kilometres away, the pagans were going about their daily business unaware of developments further afield. It was a precarious world for them, the old ways were collapsing, and their dwindling settlements supported the best part of those strong in faith. Amid the defensive works they had slaved so hard over, children played their games, chickens squabbled, and old women sat on doorsteps sewing clothes. Outside the palisade men and women toiled in the fields, along with their straining plough oxen.

The first signs of the impending calamity would have come from a sentry, who spotted a formation of armed riders making their way towards the holy groves nearby. With the sounding of a horn, the alarmed inhabitants ran every which way, adrenaline coursing about their bodies unchecked. The men sprinted into their homes to retrieve their weapons, and speedily returned to the parapets or the grove, as others mustered the cows into their pens, or waited for the last of those in the fields to make it back in through the gates, so they could be closed. But the element of surprise got the better of them and many wouldn't even get that far.

The wary and exhilarated Christian horsemen hurriedly dismounted, entering into the grove after killing the irate sentry. Some extinguished the centuries-old holy fire in a split second, yet others set to work kicking down or angrily chopping apart the idols. Some attacked the holy trees, laying them low with woodsmen's axes, others smashing asunder the grove's delicately carved and painted perimeter fence.

Sometimes luck was not on their side, and the pagans made it to their desecrated sanctuary while the Christians were committing the act; they were red with hate. At such a moment the Christian militia-men could expect a pitched battle, the melee fierce and unforgiving. Perhaps the pagan women were there too, along with their men, firing hunting bows at the grove ravagers. Elsewhere stalwart pagans flocked around their *flamen*, desperately trying to shepherd the priests and priestesses to safety. For their part they would have been most fearful of losing the holy books (in whatever places books were maintained), for if the Christians got ahold of them too, they would lose not only their sacrificial intercessors, but the knowledge to preserve their religion.

The following account was provided by Helmold, and it adequately describes such happenings:

"When we (Bishop Gerold and his followers) came to that wood and place of profanation, the bishop exhorted us to proceed energetically to the destruction of the grove, Leaping from his horse, he himself with his staff broke in pieces the decorated fronts of the

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gates and, entering the courtyard, we heaped up all the hedging of the enclosure about those sacred trees and made a pyre of the heap of wood by setting fire to it, not, however, without fear that perchance we might be overwhelmed in a tumult of the inhabitants".⁸⁶⁸

Temples were far bigger prey.⁸⁶⁹ Once a Wendish pagan temple was gutted, the overburdened temple coffers, and every other furnishing of value, were ripped out and snatched away as booty for the triumphant Christian temple-raiders.⁸⁶⁹ This is precisely what happened in Frisia and throughout Slavia.

Colourful additions were sometimes added to the more earthly recollections of the Arkona temple's demise. There, Christian onlookers swore they had flushed out "*a demon ... in the form of a dark animal*" from the fane's inner sanctuary.⁸⁷⁰ Prodigious quantities of bullion stocks, temple donations and taxes were ferried off into Christian coffers.⁸⁷¹ What greater incentive could there have been for undertaking the risky business of destroying the holy sites of people ready to die and kill for their faith in the old gods?

But as a general rule, the death of publicly practiced paganism was rarely recorded, preserved only in highly sanitized bravado. Russia's abandonment of idolatry was recorded by Hilarion (the first Russian Metropolitan);

"Then the murk of our idolatry began to clear, and the first rays of true piety glimmered. The darkness of demonolatry dimmed, and the sunlight of the gospel illumined our land: pagan shrines were torn down, and churches set up; the idols were smashed, and icons of saints were installed; the demons retreated, and cities were graced by the cross; and bishops - shepherds of Christ's spiritual flock - brought the bloodless sacrifice before the holy altar."⁸⁷²

At the time of the conversion in 989 AD, Christian converts and soldiers began tearing down "demonic" idols at Khagan Vladimir's command, Vladimir, the very person who erected them in the first place! According to the *Primary Chronicle* these were then soundly whipped with lengthy rods of iron, to punish the "demonic vitae" lurking behind the image. Thereafter they were hacked up with axes, smashed asunder by hammers and tossed into the nearby lakes and rivers. Many of them were decapitated. Symbolically, through the power of sympathetic ritual, this beheading passed on to the person or deity whose image was defaced in that manner. By beheading the idol, one decapitated the god.

Volkhvy from the frontier regions no doubt caught wind of the destruction of the *kapishche* and *kumirs* in the major cities, and organized teams of people to uproot the idols and holy fires, and make off with them to more discrete locations. These were re-erected in thick forests, swamps, caves or wherever the authorities would be unable to find them. Some boyars who sponsored safe-havens for the *Volkhvy* on their estates might also have had *kumirs* on their property, tucked away in a barn, which also doubled as a cult site for the local

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pagan peasantry.

As of the 15th-16th Centuries AD, the Russian Orthodox Church was still coming across groves and idols as important as *Kapishche* (and more predictably *kumirs*) in use by local peasants!¹⁸⁷³ This helps explain the longevity of Rus' and Finnish paganism, for undiscovered (and therefore undefiled) groves and major idols were still being employed towards the end of the 19th Century. For the most part though, Vladimir's policy of extirpating the idol temples sounded the death knell for Europe's last intact civilization of idol-worshiping pagans. From that time the priests and priestesses could barely rest, keeping their heads out of the noose, hoping against hope that they, their holy books and teachings would make it into the future ... that they would not be the last of their kind.

In my next book *Christianity's Greatest Controversy - Prelude to Genocide* you will see what grim fate awaited them, as Europe's much older history went up in flames. It can only be described as an ancient 'Kristallnacht' as intellectual stooges flung untold numbers of books into the fires of the new age, and a good many people 'disappeared' in like fashion. With the problem permanently 'fixed' history could now be eagerly rejigged, emerging as the much-vaunted Judaeo-Christian version of events, as taught in school.

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1 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka*, Vol III, p. 204

2 - Vasmer, M., Vol IV, p. 551 and Vol I, p. 251

3 - Talbot, C. H. *The Hodoeporicon of St Willibald*

4 - Wayland Barber, *The Mummies of Urumchi*

5 - Vasmer, M. Vol IV, p. 401

6 - Wayland Barber, p.133

7 - Spencer Wells - *The Journey of Man - A Genetic Odyssey*

8 - See Roland G. Kent, *Old Persian*, 1953, DARIUS, NAQSH-I-RUSTAM A. (DNa) 2. (8-15.), as displayed by Joseph H. Peterson on The Avesta Zoroastrian Archives.

9 - Darmesteter - *The Zend-avesta Part II (Sirozahs, Yasts & Nyayis)*, p. 120

10 - Mallory, J. P. *In Search of the Indo-Europeans*, p. 9-10

11 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka*, Vol I

12 - Mallory, J. P. *In Search of the Indo-Europeans*

13 - Gimbutas, M. *The Civilization of the Goddess*, p. 243

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- 14 - *Larousse Dictionary of World Folklore*
- 15 - Mallory, J. P. , p. 154
- 16 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*, Vol III. p. 118
- 17 - *The zend-avesta part i vendidad, Intro III 2*
- 18 - Graf, Fritz. *Magic in the Ancient World*, p.36. As noted by Cicero.
- 19 - Iamblichus' *Life of Pythagorus IV*. Sylvan Guthrie, K. *The Pythagorean Sourcebook and Library*, p. 61.
- 20 - Porphry's *Life of Pythagorus VI*. Sylvan Guthrie, K. *The Pythagorean Sourcebook and Library*, p.124.
- 21 - Porphry's *Life of Pythagorus VII*. Sylvan Guthrie, K. *The Pythagorean Sourcebook and Library*, p.124.
- 22 - Cotterell, A. (Ed), Keall, E. J. *The Penguin Encyclopedia of Classical Civilizations*, p.172
- 23 - *Pahlavi Texts Part III*, p. 171
- 24 - A translation of these tales is listed in Freake - *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, C. Agrippa, p. 707
- 25 - *Ancient Inventions*, p. 101-103.
- 26 - Thomas, K. *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, p. 237.
- 27 - Jones, H. L. *Geography* , Strabo 15:20
- 28 - Moulton. *The Treasures of the Magi*
- 29 - Moulton. *The Treasures of the Magi*, p.14, as well as Boyce, M. - *Zoroastrians*, p.139
- 30 - *Agni Purana II*, p.578. *Agni Purana 222:15*
- 31 - Flint, V. *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*, p.152
- 32 - Muray, M. *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*, p. 22-23
- 33 - *The Zend Avesta Part I, Introduction*, as well as Moulton, p.15.
- 34 - *The Zend Avesta Part I, Introduction*
- 35 - Wolfram, H. - *History of the Goths*, p. 56
- 36 - Nock, *Conversion*, p. 132
- 37 - Bond, Janet and Colin, p. 12-13
- 38 - Ibid. , p. 13
- 39 - Nock, p. 128
- 40 - *Quest for the Past*, p. 174.
- 41 - Sylvan Guthrie. *The Pythagorean Sourcebook and Library*, p. 61. *The Life of Pythagorus: 4* (by Iamblichus). Sylvan Guthrie. , p. 124-125.
The Life of Pythagorus: 12 (by Porphry).
"In Babylon he associated with the other Chaldeans, especially attaching himself to Zaratus, by whom he was purified from the pollutions of his past life, and taught the things from which a virtuous man ought to be free".

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Here Zoroaster is mistakenly identified as a Chaldean. Nevertheless the quoted passage serves to illustrate that religious ordinances peculiar to certain geographical areas spread to others.

42 - Nock

43 - *The City of God* II:15, p. 65

43a - West - *Pahlavi Texts Part I*, p. 332. *Shayast La-Shayast* X:35. The ceremonial functions of priestesses mainly entailed the consecration of holy meals and sacrificial cakes in particular. Ritual cakes fashioned by women of ill-repute were shunned as offerings, which may account for their acceptableness at black sabbaths.

44 - Guhl and Kroner. *The Romans - Their Life and Customs*, p. 535-538.

45 - *Sikand Gumanik Vigar* X:67. *West Pahlavi Texts Part III*, p. 171.

46 - Lenormant, F. *Chaldean Magic*, p.221

47 - Graf, Fritz. *Magic in the Ancient World*.

48 - West, W. *The Pahlavi Texts Part I, Bundahishn, Zad Sparam and Bahman Yast*.

49 - West, W. *The Pahlavi Texts Part I*,

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50 - Graf, Fritz. *Magic in the Ancient World*.

51 - From Roland G. Kent, *Old Persian*, 1953, as displayed by Joseph H. Peterson on The Avesta Zoroastrian Archives. Inscription DARIUS, NAQSH-I-RUSTAM A. (DNa) 3. (15-30.)

52 - *Yasna XII: 1-4*

53 - Jones, H. L. *Geography*, *Strabo* 15:13

54 - *Ibid. Geography*, *Strabo* 15:13

55 - *Ibid.*, *Strabo* 15:14

56 - *Ibid.*, *Strabo* 15:15

57 - West, W. *The Pahlavi Texts Part I, Bundahishn I:3*

58 - *Ibid.*, *Bundahishn I:9-11*

59 - *Ibid.*, *Bundahishn I:13*

60 - *Ibid.*, *Bundahishn I:16*

61 - *Ibid.*, *Bundahishn I:9-11*

62 - *Ibid.*, *Bundahishn III: 6*

63 - *Ibid.*, *Bundahishn VIII*

64 - *Ibid.*, *Bundahishn VIII:1*

65 - West - *The Pahlavi Texts Part I*, p. 87. *Dadistan i Dinik XXXVII:27*.

They were truly a force to be reckoned with, those living Fravashis of the past, and the present, and those yet to be born, for all were joined together in one eternal moment. During earthly combats warriors could count on the assistance of the ghostly angelic warriors from

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above. Farvardin Yast VII-XII 'We worship the good, strong, beneficent Fravashis of the faithful, who form many battalions, girded with weapons, lifting up spears, and full of sheen; who in fearful battles come rushing along where the gallant heroes go'. They were 'the good, strong, beneficent Fravashis of the faithful, who gallantly and bravely fight, causing havoc, wounding ... most strong ... harmless to those who are true, who turn to that side where are faithful men, most devoted to holiness, and where is the greatest piety'. God's warrior champion Mithras would likely be there too and the soul-weigher 'Rashnu and the awful cursing thought of the wise and the victorious wind'.

66 - West - *The Pahlavi Texts Part I*, p. 201-215. *Bahman Yast II* and *Dadistan i Dinik XXXV:3*

67 - West, W. *The Pahlavi Texts Part I, Bahman Yast II:16-64*.

68 - There is a common perception that early wheel usage was confined to the building of rickety or cumbersome ox-drawn carts or light chariots. On the contrary, Assyrian siege frescoes (mid-8th Century BC) and Indian texts such as the *Sama Veda* may reveal they had some complexity. In books like *War in Ancient India* and the *Sama Veda* various kinds of vehicles are described which had a variety of applications in commerce and war. Obviously these writings could well be deemed the product of wild imaginations, and it is only too easy to arrive at this conclusion. Until I saw a wall mural of Sennacherib's army undertaking a siege on Lachish (as shown in *Exploring the World of the Bible lands*, p. 93-95) I had never been willing to entertain the thought that these Vedic references might be actual descriptions of advanced wheel usage. The Assyrian murals depict siege engines (of a uniform design) advancing up the slopes of a siege ramp under their own power, followed at the rear by infantry which are firing their bows at the parapets from behind the cover of the vehicle. Modern examples of this can be found during World War 2, when soldiers huddled at the rear of advancing tanks whilst walking into battle devoid of cover, in order to gain some protection against incoming small arms fire. These Assyrian "vehicles" were not drawn by cattle or horses (as were the other carts and chariots shown in the mural), and show no pictorial evidence that they were propelled by soldiers walking on ground. We will never know for sure how they were made mobile, but the answer may be something as simple as soldiers operating systems of pulleys and wheels within the confines of the siege engine.

69 - For an insight into their technological achievements read Thorpe, P. J. and N. *Ancient Inventions*.

70 - *History Begins, The Penguin Encyclopedia of Classical Civilization, The World of Ancient Times, The Rise and Fall of Civilizations, The First Civilizations, Ancient Iraq*, just to name a few books. In *The Indo-European Language and the Indo-Europeans*, I am told that a Russian scholar utilizes extremely involved linguistic arguments to postulate that the Aryans originated not in Russia, but in Anatolia specifically.

71 - Mallory, J. P. *In Search of the Indo-Europeans*

72 - Christian, D. *A History of Russia, Central Asia and Mongolia*, p.102

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- 73 - Ibid., p. 93
- 74 - Ibid., p. 82, 83
- 75 - Mallory, J. P. *In Search of the Indo-Europeans*, p.163
- 76 - Ibid., p. 154
- 77 - Christian, D. , p. 100, 101
- 78 - Ibid., p. 100, 101
- 79 - Ibid., p. 73
- 80 - Ibid., p. 108,109
- 81 - Ibid., p. 110
- 82 - Ibid., p. 111-112
- 83 - Ibid., p. 113
- 84 - Roux, G. *Ancient Iraq*, p. 266
- 85 - *The Rise and Fall of Civilizations*, p.325
- 86 - Christian, D. *A History of Russia, Central Asia and Mongolia*, p.104
- 86a - For more information see *The Journey of Man - A Genetic Odyssey*.
- 87 - Roux, G. *Ancient Iraq*, p. 242
- 88 - Ibid., p. 266
- 89 - Mallory, J. P. , p.222
- 90 - Christian, D. , p.124-127
- 91 - Ibid., p. 129
- 92 - Ibid., p. 137
- 93 - Ibid., p. 130, 133
- 94 - Roux, G., pp. 326-327, 332, 336, 373, 375-376
- 95 - Christian, D. , p.163-165
- 96 - Ibid., p.134
- 97 - Culican, W. *The Medes and Persians*, p.54
- 98 - Rawlinson, G. *The Histories I:126*, p. 60
- 99 - Culican, W. , p. 58-59
- 100 - Rawlinson, G. *The Histories*, p. 305, 309
- 101 - Christian, D. *A History of Russia, Central Asia and Mongolia*, p.167
- 102 - Culican, W. , p.136
- 103 - Ibid., p. 143
- 104 - Ibid., p. 104
- 105 - Christian, D. , p.137
- 106 - Ibid., p. 142
- 107 - Rawlinson, G. *The Histories*
- 108 - Christian, D. , p.153

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- 109 - Rawlinson, G. *The Histories*
- 110 - Ibid., p. 330
- 111 - Ibid., *The Histories* I:140, p.65
- 112 - Ibid., IV:119
- 113 - Cf *Cosmography*, Plate XXII
- 114 - Rawlinson, G. *The Histories*, IV:67
- 115 - Ibid., p. 326-327
- 116 - Maps depicting these Scythian migrations can be found in *Predistoriya Davnikh Rusio*
- 117 - Rawlinson, G. *The Histories* : 62.
- 118 - Their reverence for sword imagery has distinct Arthurian parallels (as does Caucasian mediaeval literature). While the story of King Arthur is believed to have been embellished by romanticists in the Middle Ages, one still wonders whether or not there is an actual link between this story and the Caucasus.
- 119 - Mongait, A. L. *Archaeology of the USSR*, p. 204
- 120 - Christian, D. , p.169-171
- 121 - Walbank, F. W. *The Penguin Encyclopedia of Classical Civilizations*, p. 44
- 122 - Ibid., p.45
- 123 - Christian, D. , p.169-171
- 124 - Walbank, F. W. , p. 63
- 125 - Ibid., p. 63-64
- 126 - Ibid., p. 63
- 127 - Ibid., p. 55
- 128 - Christian, D. , p.176
- 129 - Ibid.
- 130 - Cotterell, A. (Ed), Cuyler Young, T. *The Penguin Encyclopedia of Classical Civilizations*, p. 161
- 131 - Walbank, F. W. , p. 175
- 132 - Walbank, F. W. , p.172
- 133 - Christian, D. , p. 312
- 134 - Ibid.
- 135 - Nock, A. D. *Conversion*, p.42
- 136 - Christian, D. , p.176
- 137 - Walbank, F. W. , p.163
- 138 - Ibid., p.166
- 139 - Ibid., p.213
- 140 - Ibid., p. 213
- 141 - Nock, A. D. , p. 43

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- 142 - Ibid. , p. 46
- 143 - Christian, D. , p. 216
- 144 - Ibid., p. 215
- 145 - Ibid., p. 304
- 146 - Ibid., p. 306-307
- 147 - Ibid., p. 306
- 148 - Ibid., p. 307
- 149 - Ibid., p. 248-260
- 150 - Ibid., p. 248
- 151 - Ibid., p. 250, 253
- 152 - Ibid. , p. 261
- 153 - Cotterell, A. (Ed), Keall, E. J. , p.189
- 153a - Boyce, The Zoroastrians, p.142
- 154 - Christian, D., p. 307
- 155 - Ibid., p. 308
- 156 - Ibid., p. 309
- 156a - Boyce, Mary - Zoroastrians, p. 146
- 157 - Lunde and Stone. *The Meadows of Gold*, p. 425
- 157a - Boyce, Mary - Zoroastrians, p. 156
- 158 - Dodge, B. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadim*
- 159 - Lunde and Stone.
- 159a - Boyce, M. - *Zoroastrians*, p. 43
- 160 - Dodge, B. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadim*
- 160a - Boyce, M. p. 153
- 161 - Ibid. , *Chapter IX, Part II*
- 162 - Cotterell, A. (Ed), Keall, E. J. , p. 189-190
- 163 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar Russkovo Yazyka, Vol II*, p. 554
- 164 - Dodge. *The Fihrist of Al Nadim*
- 164a - Boyce, *The Zoroastrians*, p. 102
- 164b - Vasmer, Vol II, p.554
- 164c - *Strongs Concordance, Hebrew-Chaldean Dictionary*
- 164d - *A History of Pagan Europe*
- 165 - Wayland Barber, p. 201
- 166 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar Russkovo Yazyka, Vol I*, p. 84
- 167 - Jones and Pennick. *A History of Pagan Europe*, p.186
- 168 - Vlasova, M. *Novaya Abevega Russkikh Syeverii*, p. 70-71
- 169 - My Russian-English translation of an excerpt from *Book Of Jossipon, The Table of*

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- Peoples. Petrukhin *Nachalo Etnokyl'turnoi Istorii Rusii IX-XI Vekov*, p. 36-40.
- 170 - Maksimov, S. V. *Nechistaya, Nevedomaya i Krestnaya Sila*, p. 96
- 171 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka, Vol I*, p. 139
- 172 - *Ibid.*, Vol III, p. 115
- 173 - *Ibid.*, Vol IV p. 571
- 174 - *Ibid.*, Vol III, p. 493-494
- 175 - *Ibid.*, Vol II p. 214
- 176 - *Ibid.*, Vol I p. 110
- 177 - This table of plantsuffs was compiled from information contained in Vernadsky, Maksimov and *Excavations in the Medieval City*.
- 178 - Vasmer, M. Vol II, p. 47
- 179 - *Excavations in the Medieval City*
- 180 - Vasmer, M. Vol III, p. 139
- 181 - *Excavations in the Medieval City*
- 182 - Vasmer, M. Vol III, p. 729
- 183 - Vasmer, M. Vol III, p. 287
- 184 - Vasmer, M. Vol IV, p. 122
- 185 - Vasmer, M. Vol III, p. 578
- 186 - Vasmer, M. Vol II, p. 149
- 187 - Vasmer, M. Vol I, p. 305
- 188 - *Ibid.*, Vol IV, p. 226
- 189 - *Ibid.*, Vol I, p. 526
- 190 - Murray, M. *The Witch Cult of Western Europe*
- 191 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka, Vol III*, p. 780
- 192 - Laing. *The Ynglinga Saga* :2
- 193 - Laing. *The Ynglinga Saga* :5
- 194 - Laing. *The Ynglinga Saga* :4
- 195 - Laing. *The Ynglinga Saga* :7
- 196 - *The Oxford Illustrated History of Medieval Europe*, p. 109-110
- 197 - *Ibid.*, p. 105-112
- 198 - *The Oxford Illustrated History of Medieval Europe*, Bronsted, Johannes. *The Vikings, A History of the Vikings*
- 199 - *The Oxford Illustrated History of Medieval Europe*, p. 110
- 200 - *Shanahoe - A rich area - Naithi O'Raicli*
- 201 - Dewing, H. B. *Procopius II: xxvi:1*
- 202 - *Ibid. II: xxvi:1*
- 203 - *The Vikings*, pp. 34, 35, 55, 56

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204 - Ibid. , pp. 34, 35, 55, 56

205 - Ibid.

206 - Dodge, B. *The Filristi of Al-Nadim*

207 - *A History of the Vikings*, p. 214-215

208 - Oxenstierna. *The Norsemen*, p.107

209 - Jones, G. *A History of the Vikings*, p. 214

210 - Marsden. *The Fury of the Northmen*, p. 124, and Jones, G. *A History of the Vikings*, p. 214

210a - Zoega. Western readers will probably be disgusted by this reference. Still this is a history book. So a little bit of background is warranted under the circumstances, to explain it in an historical context. Firstly racism is not peculiar to Europe's Aryan immigrants. It's found on every continent throughout the world ... India, Japan, Vietnam, China, Rwanda, Iraq, Israel etc. Since the happenings of WWII white Caucasians have been touted as super-racists *par excellence*, when infact they have embraced racial diversity on a scale never attempted among any other 'racial group'. In the case of the Aryans, the following factors played a decisive part in crafting a xenophobic psychology found throughout certain points in their history.

* **Genetic preservation.** Fair hair and complexions are recessive genetic characteristics. By interbreeding this particular segment of the Aryan nations would eventually disappear. In fact the very existence of blondes is undeniable evidence for exclusive interbreeding within that same gene pool over a long period of time. Otherwise it would have died out a very long time ago. Having said that the Persian Empire was built of diverse racial and tribal building blocks. This did not necessarily result in racial inter-breeding on a massive scale, merely societal coexistence united under the king's law, a unified rule frequently undermined by disunity among racial groups.

* **Natural order** Magians were very big on natural order ... things are the way they are because that's the way they were intended to be. Acting contrary to the natural order was considered inverted demonic behaviour. For instance women were tasked with rearing children. This was never questioned simply because women were physically equipped with breasts to feed infants. Men do not have breasts, but are physically stronger, and so better suited to hunting and protecting the group. And so this is what they do. It sounds very primitive, but it has stood the test of time since the stone age. Now if we take this concept to another level and suggest that humanity consisted of varied primitive racial archetypes (eg; caucasians, semites, mongoloids), interbreeding between these groups might be deemed contrary to the natural order, since it was by the Creator's will that they fell into these categories originally.

* **Geopolitical conflict** Caucasian Europoids (blondes, red-heads, brunettes) had settled in

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distant China and Siberia some 4,000 years ago. Archaeology gives some insight into their initial east-meets-west experience. In the early phase they lived apart from Asia's traditional inhabitants, wandering the countryside as nomads. But as time went by they progressively interbred with indigenous locals, whether in China or India. Several hundred years before Christ the asiatics started pushing Caucasians out of the region, compressing them back in toward Europe. From this came a period of two-way mistrust and military conflict between Europeans and Asians, mainly due to, as has been supposed, the former's predatory raiding.

* **Aryan mythology** Now in relation to the racial undertones attached to the word *heharskinn*, certain unspecified schools of Magi, without question, identified particular human races as belonging to the devil, on the basis of philosophy and certain visual indicators (the relative lightness and darkness of skin colour, physiological traits, disorderliness, crime, laziness, intellectual sloth, a tendency to destroy rather than build civilization etc). These views were enshrined in Iranian mythology. For example; *"This, too, they say, that in the reign of Azi Dahaka (the Demoness of Greed) a young woman was admitted to a demon and a young man was admitted to a witch, and on seeing them they had intercourse: owing to that one intercourse the black-skinned negro arose from them"*. (*Bundahishn XXIII:2*). Negroes became, in effect, part human, part demon. This was of course not typical of all Magians. Many Magi mixed in with the Hindus and Semitic races of the Near East, especially during the early period when Asuras and Daevas were lauded in equal measure.

* **Philosophical/Religious conflict** The Aryan priesthood widely regarded Jews as demon spawn, not because of their race, but owing to their theology. The Magi expounded that, based upon the scripted activities of Yaweh, the god of the Jews was the *'fiend who is leader of the hell which is the den of the gloomy race, whom the devilish defiled ones and evil people glorify by the name of the Lord, and offer him homage'*. (*Sikand-Gumanik Vigar XIV:82-86*)

"In these three modes (Judaeo-Christianity, Judaism and Islam who equally teach of god's jointly merciful and punitive aspects) the sacred being gives evidence of different kinds about his own creatures. One is this, that he himself is Aharman; one is this, that he is himself the deluder of the creatures; and, in the other, he makes his own creatures confederates involved with Aharman in deluding". (*Sikand-Gumanik Vigar XI:273-275*)

Jewish Magi, being party to the old Aryan cosmology, did not fall under the same level of anathematization as their pharisaic and sadducean brothers. That is because they felt god was not the ultimate source of harm. Through their efforts notions of the devil begin to infiltrate rabbinical judaic literature in the post-exilic era. The *Book of Job* seems to indicate the existence of an independently-acting evil, destructive force, unrelated to the supreme being. It, and its fiendish ilk, wandered about the world, suggesting that its preferred dwelling space was the material world. The new-fangled teaching, alien to pre-exilic judaic ideologies,

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undeniably comes from white Magianism, inevitably imparted to certain Jewish priests and rabbis, plausibly in the royal courts of Cyrus and Darius. The following *Old Testament* scripture will give you a better idea.

'Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan. Whence cometh thou? (ie; where in the hell have you come from?) Then Satan answered the Lord, a, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it'. (Job I:7)

The statement "Whence cometh thou?" is a profoundly important portion of this scripture, a novel yet wierd introduction to Jewish monotheism. Here god appears to greet the Evil One as though they'd never met. From here it appears to diverge into a sort of Magian Zurvanism as Satan tells the Lord he can make even his most pious creations despise him as their creator. God decides to put Satan's theory to the test and accepts his dare. But first of all Satan suggests that god should invoke the calamities personally, saying 'Put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he (the pious man Job) will curse thee to thy face'. 'And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord'. (Job I:11-12) In other words god said 'Satan, you go and do it'. 'And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause'. (Job II: 3) What follows for Job is a period of relentless, excruciating destruction and chaos. Under the more ancient rabbinical model you have to take out an eraser and remove the devil entirely from this picture. This leaves only a single deity, who, if you displease him in only some small way, your punishment may be out of all proportion.

A comparable event is chiselled into the teachings of the Magi, the most likely source of the doctrines which led to the tale of Job. In Magian theology, god is the fountain of endless light, originator of all purity, wisdom and goodness. This tranquility came to an abrupt end the moment the dark spirit of evil stumbled across the light, somewhere in infinity. *'The evil spirit, on account of backward knowledge, was not aware of the existence of Auaharmazd; and, afterwards, he arose from the abyss, and came in unto the light which he saw. Desirous of destroying, and because of his malicious nature, he rushed in to destroy that light'. (Bundahishn I:9-16)* He was convincingly beaten back, though returned with reinforcements to attempt a victory through renewed violence and supreme malevolence. And the devil beheld all that god had made and he was jealous indeed at their magnificence. The wicked spirit imperiously declares that he will ensnare all god's special creations, enticing them to worship him, and his entirely different value system. He will lure mankind into worshiping the abomination himself, namely the root source of all desolation. He would usurp the place of their true creator, masquerading as the divine being, so as to win over creation from its original source. For this reason the

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white Magi identified the doctrine of a creator-destroyer (the single principle), as the cardinal sin, the very reason for mankind's fall from grace in the first place.

As in the tale of Job, the Magi tell us that the material world is the devil's domicile; "*Hell is in the middle of the earth; there where the evil spirit pierced the earth and rushed in upon it, as all the possessions of the world were changing into duality, and persecution, contention, and mingling of high and low became manifest*" (Bundahishn III:27)

In Magian legend a similar dare to that found in Job, from the Evil One to the supreme being, proved to be the origin of the war between light and darkness. '*And Auarmazd spoke to the evil spirit thus: "Appoint a period! so that the intermingling of the conflict may be for nine thousand years'. Then the evil spirit, unobservant and through ignorance, was content with that agreement*' (Bundahishn I: 18). It amounted to a declaration of war, of finite duration. The battleground? ... the chessboard of physical existence. So began the primordial duel.

The sublimely pure and majestic spiritual being lauded by the Magi wasn't good at destroying through fighting. It wasn't in its nature. To hold his ground in the world Ahura Mazda needed the assistance of loyal servants, ready willing and eager to tackle evil-doing head on, to cross swords with the Evil One and his earthly minions. Normally these servants took the form of kings, white magi, soldiers, doctors, teachers, judges, lawmen and imperial officers, very often incarnate angels and saints. Their job was to suppress lawlessness and chaos throughout the world.

* **Under siege** Aryan Magians were hunted down like filth for the last 2,000 years, mainly for daring to suggest that the god of the Judaeo-Christians, Jews and Muslims is practically indistinguishable from the devil when you sit down and examine their holy texts in elaborate detail. Their real crime was to suggest that the supreme being is a whole lot more loving and compassionate than he is portrayed in these other faiths. Spiritual damnation did exist, but it was not an act of god, merely a parting of the ways on Judgement day. One flock goes off to the heavenly father, the other to their father in the underworld. They were chased out of their homelands, slaughtered throughout Iran and Europe. As they were squeezed into smaller and smaller parcels of land, especially after the European conversions to Christianity, they became significantly vengeful. In this book you will see their forces attacking various locations, whether it be Jewish Khazaria, Iran, Moorish Spain, the Holy Roman Empire and Byzantium, followed by enemy counter-attacks and ceaseless warfare. As you will see in *Christianity's Greatest Controversy - Prelude to Genocide* many of them were left with no other option than to convert to one of these other faiths or be stripped of property and title, burned alive, tortured or summarily executed. It was like repeatedly thrusting a stick into a wasp's nest. At the end of it all you end up with a lot of very angry people who just want to be left alone, to live life according to the ways of their ancestors ... or else!

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- 212 - Flint, V. *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*
- 213 - Cross, Sherbowitz-wetzor, *The Primary Chronicle*, p. 64
- 214 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*
- 215 - Byzantium, *Rozvitok dawn'orus'kogo staroukrains'kogo naukovogo tekstu*, illustr 10
- 216 - *The Ship as Symbol in Prehistoric and Medieval Scandinavia*, p. 176
- 217 - Thorpe, p. 77-78.
- 218 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*, p.219
- 219 - Erdoes, R. *AD 1,000 - Living on the Brink of Apocalypse*
- 220 - Thorpe
- 221 - *The Ship as Symbol in Prehistoric and Medieval Scandinavia*, p. 186-194
- 222 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka*, Vol II, p. 289
- 223 - Ibid. , Vol III, p.168.
- 224 - *Byzantium - The Apogee*, p.150
- 225 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*, p. 175
- 226 - Ibid. , p. 256
- 227 - *The Vikings, A History of Pagan Europe*
- 228 - Tschan. *The History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*
- 229 - *The Vikings, A History of Pagan Europe*
- 230 - *The Vikings, and A History of Pagan Europe*, p. 179. Not far to the north of Kurland was a region of Estonia known as Askala, on account of the many wizards who inhabited the area. Though translated as "Land of the Wizards", I believe Askala came from a combination of Nordic words *Askr land*, or in other words Ash land, the home of Ash, which, on linguistic grounds, can be associated with the *Haoma* tree of the white wise Magi, ie; wizards, or *Ascomanni* ("Ashmen") as Adam of Bremen called them.
- Vernadsky, G. *The Origin of Russia*, p. 89. Alternatively it was derived from *Askal*, an Arab word denoting the Alans.
- 231 - Zoega, p. 20
- 232 - Orchard, A. *Dictionary of Norse Myth and Legend*, p. 129
- 233 - Daniel, G. *The Slavs*, p.214
- 234 - Dodge, B. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadim*
- 235 - *The Oxford Illustrated History of Medieval Europe*, p. 104
- 236 - *The Oxford Illustrated History of Medieval Europe*, p. 111
- 237 - *St Olav's Saga*
- 238 - *St Olav's Saga*: 118
- 239 - Dennis, A., Foote, P., Perkins, R. *Laws of Early Iceland - Gragas*. K115, p. 184-185
- 240 - *The Vikings*, p. 34, 35, 55
- 241 - Jones, P. and Pennwick, N *A History of Pagan Europe*, p. 166

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242 - Webster's Dictionary

242a - Witches and wizards always sought the council of their ilk to obtain specialized knowledge, witches both living and dead. In 1588 Alison Peirson was convicted of summoning "the spreitis of the Dewill ... "speciallic in the visione and forme of ane Mr. William Sympsoune, hir cousing and moder-brotheris-sonne, quha sche affermit wes ane grit scoller and doctor of medicin". (Murray, M. *The Witch cult in Western Europe*, p. 35)

243 - Zoega, G. T., p. 500

244 - Ibid., p. 500

245 - Ibid., p. 500

246 - Ibid., p. 500

266 - Vasmer, Vol IV, p. 156

247 - Ibid., p. 158

248 - Ibid., *Bundahishn* V:1

249 - Ibid., *Bundahishn* XXX:33

250 - Orchard, A.

251 - Turville-Petre, E. O. G. *Myth and Religion of the North*, p. 283-284

252 - Mc Ginn. *Visions of the End - Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages*, p. 81. *Muspilli* :54

253 - Wolfram, H. - *History of the Goths*, p. 113

254 - Cross Sherbowitz-wetzor. *The Primary Chronicle*

255 - Laing. *The Ynglinga Saga* :9

256 - Ibid. *The Ynglinga Saga* :15

257 - Turville-Petrie, E. O. G. *Myth and Religion of the north*

258 - Palsson, H. and Edwards, P. *Vikings in Russia*, p. 27

259 - *The Archaeology of Novgorod Russia*, p. 92-93

260 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*

261 - **Simargel** Owing to the writings of the Persian Muslim Khaqani,^a we can deduce that *Simargl* was the Slavic name for *Simurg*, a white celestial fertility god recorded by the white Magi in the *Book of Bundahishn*.^b In fact he goes so far as to call the Russians Simurghs. According to both the Magian and pagan Rus' traditions Simurg or Simargel was the semen of the gods, who controlled the growth of crops and medicinal herbs, plus family and tribal fecundity. In Zoroastrian iconography Simurg is depicted as a dog-headed beast with bat's wings, which is a little like the Persian depiction of *Ahriman*, but closer to that of the Griffon-bird (the bat) which itself brought much fertility to the land. To the Zoroastrians Simurg was the "radiant bird", the *Haoma*-bringer, and the spreader of life across barren earth. This notion was encapsulated in the Russian myth of the *Zhar Ptitsa* (the Fire Bird). When Simargel^c was strong every one would prosper; when depleted of potency, life remained barren or died. Further evidence of profound Magian influence on Rus' paganism (and the

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foundation of the pagan Kievan Rus' State) is found by the mere existence of this God among those stone *kumry* (idols) raised by Vladimir atop bald hill in Kiev, in the year 980 AD.

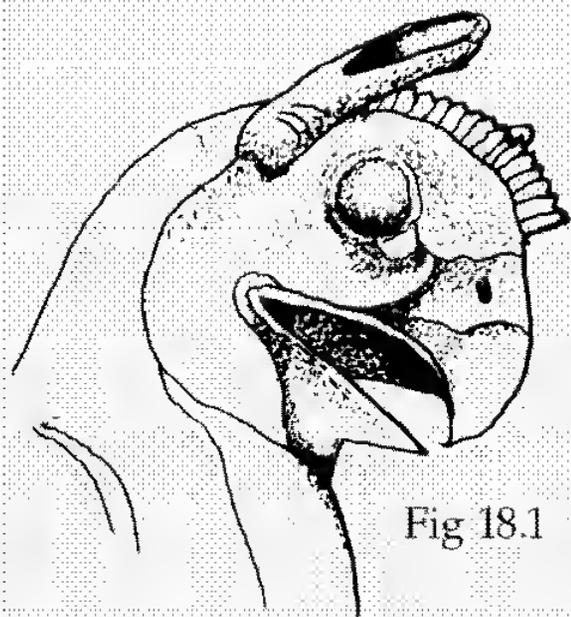


Fig 18.1

Fig 18.2



Fig 18. 1. Sculpture of Simurg from Persepolis, at the Achaemenid Persian royal palace. Vladimir's Simargl may have looked very similar.

Fig 18. 2. Magian ritual platter depicting Simurg

Simurg was often shown with leonine features, bat's wings, a spread of resplendent peacock tail feathers and the body parts of a dog. To Zoroastrians the dog was one of the holiest of animals, a sign of vitality, a ward against the dead, and an indispensable part of their everyday life. Despite this unusual appearance Simurg should not to be confused with *Ahriman* the devil, in typically Assyrian goat or dog form. Alternative spellings for Simargel were Semar'gl', or Simargl. In Rus' it acted as a guardian for the average pagan household, and gave aid to those in trouble.^d

Overseas in Ireland it appears they had a very different conception of him, for there *Simorg* was regarded as a demon. That Simurg was known in pagan Ireland is self-evident, perhaps owing to Norse influences. Calling him a demon has wider implications though. Unless this meaning arose during Christian times to diabolise the old heathen god, then the Irish saw Simargl' with Vedic eyes, equating him with what the Indo-European Aryans saw as demonic Asuras.^e

A similar situation exists in Rus'. The Medieval Russian text *Slovo o Polku Igoreve* (written in the Christian era) classifies Simargl as a *Div* (derived from a Persian word relating to *Daevas*), which in both Persian and Russian meant "a demon". In this particular instance the old word was used in Christian times to diabolize one of the holiest spiritual beings known to the good Magi.

Alternatively medieval commentators confused Simargl with Samael, a high infernal prince found in Jewish apocrypha (identified as the serpent in the *Book of Genesis*, the true

father of Cain by Eve, and a celestial power associated with fire, Mars the planet of war, and ruler of the northern wastes). The Hebrew terms *sama'l* ({pronounced sawmal} meaning "to use the left hand path", "to turn left") and *semo'l* ({pronounced semole} meaning "wrapping up", "enveloped in darkness", "the north", "the left hand") point to a connection between Samael and the high demon of the Chaldees.

Chaldean sorcerers lauded the God of the desolate North, Lord of Demons, captain of countless legions of devils and crafty djinn. He was also the master of the left-hand path that leads away from heaven, the route of crime, perversion and decadence. If this correlation is factual, the Russian Simargl/Smoagel worshipers were plausibly Magians familiar with the Chaldean "Mysteries of the North". In effect this made them somewhat similar to Zurvanites; absolute dualists. It probably seems paradoxical to modern readers, but Chaldean rituals obtained luck and blessings from the devil, for the benefit of their families. Only Russian folklore prevents us from formally attributing a demonic nature to Simurgh, since the Russian Simargl's festivals do not coincide with ceremonial dates formerly observed in Chaldean Harran. Moreover orthodox Magian tradition assures us that Ahriman and Simurgh were two totally different deities, one bad, one good. Only chaldeanized Magians are likely to have conflated the two.

Despite the clear association between the words Simargl and Simurg, a later church source, the 11th Century *Slovo nikoeevo Khristolyubitsya*^f mentions "The peasants live a double faith (ie; a form Christianity steeped in paganism) and believe in Perun, and Khors, and Mokosh', and Sima, and R'gla and Vili ... they bring them sacrifices ... and they pray to fire"^g

On account of this some have guessed that Simargl was simply a joining together of *Sima*, and *R'gla*.^h Be that as it may we still find reference to Simargl in a *fifteenth century* Bavarian magical text. In a Medieval spell designed to divine the identity of thieves, a portion of the wording is prefaced "*Jaspar, Balthasar, Melchior, Smoagel, Emanuel* (ie; Jesus)".^h Here I believe the Bavarian reciter is summoning Jesus, the Three Wise Kings, and of course Simurgh, but under his Slavic name Simargl. As with the zodiacal reliquary found at the royal nunnery of Quedlinburg, it proves the penetration of Slavic Christian witchcraft into Germany (see also note 303 of this book).

a - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*, p. 124

b - West, W. *The Pahlavi Texts Part I, Bundahishn XIV, XVIII, XIX, XXIV*

c - Metropolit Ilarion. *Dokhristiyans'ki Viruvannya Ukrain's'kovo Narodu*, p. 108-109

d - Simonov, P. *Essential Russian Mythology*, p. 15

e - Vasmer, M. , *Vol III*, p. 622

f - Krishchuk, M. *Ukrains'ka Mifologiya*, p. 28. My translation.

g - Metropolit Ilarion, *Dokhristiyans'ki Viruvannya Ukrain's'kovo Narodu* and Krishchuk.

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h - Kieckhefer, R. *Forbidden Rites - A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century*, p. 337.

262 - **Khors** 25 May - 16 June Khors, also known as Khoros, Khoroshko, Khres, Khurz, Korsun' or Kherson, was worshiped by the Slavs, Croats, Czechs and Bulgars. The name Khors, which some believe gave rise to the Russian word *khorošiiy* ("good") is drawn from the Alanic *khur* ("the sun"), and *khurz* ("good"). Ultimately it is traceable to the Avestan *hour* ("the sun"). From Russian mythology we know that Khors was the god of peace and goodness. He was offered mead, consecrated rolls, wild flowers and green twigs in sacrifice, and represented the Good Sun in the sphere of fate, where he served as the ruler of the benign 12 zodiacs (the sun-signs). Khors was the embodiment of all goodness, and, based upon the above etymologies, originally a Khorezmian, Magian deity dear to the Alans, through whom the word entered the Russian. Thus the worship of Khors can most likely be traced back to Khorezm and the Mesopotamian city of Khorsabad. Khors' idols varied regionally in pagan Rus'. Based on the wide range of divergent information that Mikhail Krishchuk and G. Lozko have managed to discover concerning the images of Khors, I believe he was perceived by people in different ways, or that Khors was several different but very similar gods, which in Russian folklore became known by the one name.

1. In the first variant, Khres or Khors' benevolent image closely resembles that of Christ, a man holding a young lamb in his arms;^a amazing when you consider that the Avestan word Keresā is believed to mean Jesus! However such an effigy need not necessarily depict Christ, Hermes might be represented in this fashion too.

Khors, the Good Sun, was seen to own the 12 portions of the (good) zodiac, whereas the black Chernobog most likely adopted *Ahriman's* function as lord of all planets. This last point is only an inference based on traditional Magian thought on the matter, and was never recorded as such in Rus'. The 12 zodiacs were originally personified as young princesses who were often rendered as idols. Interestingly, in Manichaeism, the signs of the zodiac were also depicted as young maidens. Dolya, another Rus' deity was also connected with the planetary motions.

On the strength of evidence it would appear that the reverencing of Khres did not contain itself to Russia alone. Imagery found on the 10th Century AD Quedlinberg reliquary^b shows the rapid infusion of Magianism into Germany, in fact, into Otto's royal court. This "Christian" reliquary had Christ "the sun" at its center, and the 12 apostles revolving around him. Moreover, *each apostle portrayed on the reliquary was astrally linked to a gemstone and sign of the zodiac!* The advent of such novel though condemned imagery is, I believe, linked with Otto's Russian bride and other Russians who no doubt started to mix in with the Ottonian elite.^c

If Khres or Khors was in reality the pagan conception of Christ, then this creed most likely

began among the very great masses of Persian Christians^a who were cut off from the rest of Christendom following the 3rd Century AD. During the reign of Shapur, at the time of the Zoroastrian reformation, many of them had been rounded up and shipped to the very center of the Persian empire and there underwent sustained persecution^b and ultimately liquidation. Others may have fled westward. But Christianity may have been present in Russia for some considerable time. Just as St Thomas made his way to India, Eusebius mentions that St Andrew went to evangelize the lands at the northern end of the world. And he was perhaps very successful. According to the *Life of Constantine*, a sizeable delegation of Scythian bishops attended the great council of Nicaea in the early 4th Century AD, much to the surprise of those present.^c If there were bishops in Scythia (Russia) then there were dioceses, and where there were dioceses there were parishes of practising Christians. However, this fledgling Church in Rus' died out for some reason or other, perhaps put to the sword by the many Huns and Avars who made their way across the steppes and into Europe and the Balkans. These dead would have been included among the swelled ranks of the hitherto unknown eastern martyrs that eluded the hagiographer's pen. Those that survived the so-called "barbarian" incursions may well have adopted other pagan customs while living there.

a - Krishchuk, M. *Ukrains'ka Mifologiya*, p. 8

b - Flint, V. *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*

c - Heer, F. *The Holy Roman Empire*

d - Williamson, G. A. (trans) *The History of the Church*, and Comby, Jean. *How to Read Church History*, p. 60

e - Comby, Jean. *How to Read Church History*, p. 60, 80

f - *Ibid.*, p. 91. An extract from *Life of Constantine III:7-16*

263 - Dazhbog Dazhbog, the grandfather of the Russes was also called Daibog ('the giving God'), Belobog or Byelun (Slav: the White God). The name Dazhbog is most likely derived from the Iranian words *Dag бага*, meaning "the fiery god". Dazhbog was the deity of Heavenly Fire, day, sunlight, warmth, life on earth, work, prosperity and germination. He is also recorded being called Helios (a Greek and Chaldean term) in Rus'. Dazhbog might also have personified *Ahura Mazda*, the burning love and goodness of god's spirit, who reigned over the earth from the heavens.

Dazhbog was born and grew old every day, reaching maximum potency around midday. At dawn he pushed back the night, but after sunset he made a perilous journey down into the counter world (the underworld) where he tussled with the Lord of Darkness. As the sun waxed and waned in potency throughout the year, so too did the powers of Dazhbog. During Summer he was an armoured warrior of middle age brandishing either a sword or a hammer, riding a blazing red horse across the heavens. Yet during Winter, his

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fires were less potent and his steed became black in colour. Dazhbog governed forges, and was known as lord of all fire, the sons of God. His penchant for healing and purifying his devotees served to multiply the numbers of worshipers faithful to him.

264 - **Stribog** Stribog was also called *Shtiribog* or *Strzyboga* (Polish), God of the Winds from the four corners of the earth. His name comes from the Olden Iranian *Sribaga*, "the high god", or "god of the heights", or "God of the High Places" (a reference to the mountain-top shrines and places of sacrifice).^a Based on the Old Iranian meaning we might suspect that *Stribog* was the Eastern Slav name for *Svyatovit*. In support of this, one tradition makes his idol similar to that of the four-faced *Svyatovit*.

Stribog supposedly had another form, portrayed as a round fat man with a big head and long straight nose, but only one face.^b It sounds suspiciously like an elephant, so perhaps such an effigy has been wrongly attributed to Stribog and instead should represent the Hindu deities Ganesh or Indra's wind steed, Airavata. That this idol might have been a rendition of an elephant is not as implausible as it may sound. *Yngvar's Saga* records an encounter between 11th Century Norse adventurers and a group of Slavs seated in a tower, mounted on the back of a massive creature. This was, doubtless to say, an elephant.

Stribog sired all the winds, and helped Perun (a Slavic name for Indra) go about his business. He was tasked with controlling the winds in an almost undiscernable pattern handed down to him by his father Svarog. When he exhaled via his nose, winds were born, when he inhaled, the skies were calm.

It is also possible that Stribog was a personification of *Spenta Mainyu* (the Holy Spirit), the vital spiritual emanation of the creator, which the Magi termed the "Holy Wind". This is a valid analogy since the first form of Stribog's idol mentioned was said to be one and the same as that of the four faced Polish Creator-god called *Svyatovit*. If Stribog was *Spenta Mainyu*, then it is only natural that he would have the same sort of idol as *Svyatovit*, for in essence they were the same god. If this was the case, then Stribog's idol could have come to Rus' from Poland, which had converted to Christianity c.960 AD.

a - Vasmer, M., Vol III, p. 777

b - Krishchuk, M. *Ukrains'ka Mifologiya*, p. 8

265 - **Perun** In the Baltic region and the Balkans the god Perun was variously known as *Perkuons* (Latvian: "God of the Oak"), *Perkunas* (Lithuania), *Perunja Ves* or *Perunji Vrh* (Bosnia), *Perendi* (in Albania his name meant "God") and *Percunis* (Old Prussian: "Thunder").^c

Perun's name is believed to be derived from titles that described Indra, the Aryan *Daeva* war god enshrined in the *Rig Veda*, *Purandara* ("the destroyer of cities"), *Parjanya* ("rain-bringer"), or *Purana* ("the triple lawbreaker"), or *Perunas* (a god known to the Hittites); to my

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mind this explanation is more than convincing. As for the names *Perkuons* and *Perkunas*, which have a "Perkunish" rather than "Perunish" root they may have come from the Sanskrit word *Peykkuraoi*, which translates as the "devil dance", a dance that Aryan warriors performed to the tune of pipes and drums, after annihilating their foes.

Therefore Perun is one of the oldest European gods, a divinity probably imported onto the continent along with Indo-European words and the domesticated riding horse, as the ancient Indo-European migrations and invasions pressed westward. He also entered into India with the invaders who destroyed much of the pre-Aryan civilization that existed there, and until the present day, continues to be one of the most important gods of India. The Vedic Aryans had the following to say about their esteemed war god;

"He who killed the serpent and loosed the seven rivers who drove out the cows that had been pent up by Vala, who gave birth to fire between two stones, the winner of booty in combats - he, my people, is Indra.

He who is invoked by both of two armies, enemies locked in combat, on this side and that side, he who is even invoked separately by each of two men standing on the very same chariot, he, my people, is Indra.

He who killed with his weapon all those who had committed a great sin, even when they did not know it, he who does not pardon the arrogant man for his arrogance, who is the slayer of the Dasyus, he, my people, is Indra.

Even the sky and the earth bow low before him, and the mountains are terrified of his hot breath, he who is known as the Soma-drinker, with the thunderbolt in his hand, with the thunderbolt in his palm, he, my people, is Indra".

Perun, the Slavic thunder god was also lord of the heavenly verses, the winds which kissed the earth and lower heavens, and the god of war, desolation, rain, justice and liberation from both man and demons; he was the mighty liberator. Perun was breathtakingly similar to Indra in nature, lying the skies in his chariot looking for foes to defeat and grind under his feet, the *ultimate conquistador* of men, gods and demons; the whole world was his domain.

In the sphere of fate Perun probably offered council to the planet Mars (one of the "Great Judges" of fate), though he was himself linked with two signs of the zodiac, namely Taurus (Slavic: *Telets'*, *Bik*), and Sagittarius (*Strilyets'*). The insignia of these two zodiacal signs, the bull and the archer, aptly describe both Indra and Perun as heavenly archers for whom the bow was a sacred weapon, and the bull which both of these gods received in sacrifice.

Perun was the god of war declaration and overall victory; the god of sacred oaths, and sudden attacks. Since he looked upon battles as though men were merely pawns, whole cities and princes had to make offerings to him in times of war if they wished for his aid in

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vanquishing their foes, or simply survive battle. Prussian pagan priests burned 1/3 of a warrior's war booty to their gods as an offering for their victory. *Proven* would have been prominent among those gods who received sacrificed war goods from their hand. These same intercessory priests ritually slew horses for the community and were lot-casters.⁶ The notion that princes and sacrificers made offerings to Perun on behalf of the Rus' people may be somehow linked to *Yasna 46 : 11*. In that passage, Zarathustra spoke of the Sacrificers and Magus-princes who practiced blood sacrifice by cattle killing, who treated life with contempt, and who sought to destroy creation wherever possible. Bloody cattle sacrifices were practiced in Medea and related localities long before the arrival of the Zurvanite Magi, in places like Scythia.

In his role as administrator of justice, Perun seems to have adopted the functions of "Mithra of the Wide Pastures", the neutral mediator, soul-weigher, judge and executioner all rolled up in one. Though of normal human appearance, both Mithra and Indra could open 1,000 eyes to scrutinize humanity's actions; who could hide from their awesome gaze?

In the elemental sphere, Perun controlled the weather. When he was angry the entire sky became enshrouded in violent storm clouds, as lightning and thunder erupted, and his anger blotted out the sun.

Perun's statue had a silver head and a golden moustache, and in at least one case, iron legs. He was venerated in sacred groves under the branches of his favorite tree, the holy oak. It was presumably to him that the *Volkhov* hanged their sacrificial victims, dangling them from the boughs of these trees.

Although Perun served the mighty Dazhbog, as his prized champion in the ongoing cosmic battle against Chernobog who daily attempted to transform the world into a bier of chaos and disunity, he was a freelance deity. For if we more closely equate him with Indra, he was more greatly concerned with his own thirst for the shattered remnants of battle, of splintered wood, dented armour and the blood of the slain, which, besides *Soma* and mead, were his true loves.

During war, Perun, the prashchur (guardian deity) of the Rus' people, arrogantly thundered across the skies in his great sky chariot, brandishing spear, axe, war hammer or cudgel, resolutely peering over the battle, seeking those whom he wished to pluck from life. As the dispatcher of souls to the starry bridge, he nocked arrows of lightning which he fired into the thick of flailing swords and axes, ready to cut down his victory fee, to reap the bread of battle. The Indo-European god of thunder was no ordinary god, not even the gods dared anger him. Via the hands of the Brahman and Zurvanite Magus priests it remained the lot of warriors to feed him his dues; the spoils of war, the lamentation of widows, war booty and the blood of the slain, whether they fell in battle or were captured on the "field of justice" and later ritually sacrificed.

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Perun served good as the agent of law, order and imparter of rain, but served evil as the author of war, man's ultimate act of predation on himself. The Russian word for lightning, *molniya*, is phonetically similar to the word *Mjollnir*, the hammer of Thor, the Norse thunder God. This may be indicative of a link between Perun and Thor. For this reason some would equate him with both Zeus and Jupiter, who were both lightning wielders. In fact a Russian manuscript of 1202, refers to him as the classical Roman god Jupiter.^e The pagan priests of the Slavs divined the future by interpreting the lightning which arced down from the heavens, bearing tidings from their lord who raced about the heavens.

a - Ibid. , Vol III, p. 246-247

b - Donigher O'flaherty, W. *Rig Veda* 2.12:3, 8,10,13

c - Maksimov, S. V. *Nechistaya, Nevedomaya i Krestnaya Sila*, p. 411

d - *Portable Medieval Reader*, p. 428, Source: *Ordensritter und Kirchenfürsten* - Trans H. F. Schwarz, Insel-Verlag 1927

e - Metropolit Ilarion. *Dokhristiyans'ki Viruvannya Ukrain's'kogo Narodu*, p. 98

266 - Vasmer, M. , Vol IV, p. 156-157

267 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*, p. 101

268 - Culican, W. *The Medes and Persians*, p. 18

269 - Wolfram, H. *History of the Goths*, p.115

270 - Ibid., p. 106

271 - Zoega, p.169

272 - Ibid. , pp. 169,175

273 - Wolfram, H. *History of the Goths*, p.135

274 - Ibid., p.108

275 - Petrukhin *Nachalo Etnokul'turnoi Istorii Rusi IX-XI Vekov*, p. 265-267. See also *Ancient Russian Cities: A travel guide to the Historical & Architectual Monuments and Fine Art Museum*

276 - Laing. *The Ynglinga Saga* :37

277 - *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*II:18

278 - *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*II:19

279 - *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*IV:18

280 - *Timber Castles*, p. 84-87

281 - *The Ancient Slavs*, p. 49

281a - e. karloukovski@uea.ac.uk Drawn from Vassil Karloukovski's English translation of Dmitrov, D. *Prabulgarite po severnoto i zpadnoto Chernomorie*, Varna 1987

282 - Cotterell, A. (Ed), Keall, E. J. *The Penguin Encyclopedia of Classical Civilizations*, p. 190-192

283 - The involvement of Magyars in support of a fledgling Christian regime is difficult to reconcile with a host of other information indicating that a certain number of Magyars were

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Magian. Were these particular Magyars of another faith, say Christians, Animists, Muslims or Jews? Or might the garrison have been indirectly led by white Magi deeply concerned by the political activities of other Magi to their north? With a name like Amos, one might guess that the Magyar force was headed by a Christian or Jewish Magyar.

284 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*

285 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia and Ukrain's'ke Yazichnitstvo*

286 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*

287 - Cotterell, A. (Ed), Keall, E. J. *The Penguin Encyclopedia of Classical Civilizations*, p. 189

288 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia, The Primary Chronicle*

289 - Culican, W. *The Medes and Persians*, p. 29

290 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnitstvo*

291 - Stoyanov, Y. *The Hidden Tradition in Europe*

291a - See *Archaeology of the USSR*. These predate medieval western blast furnaces by several centuries.

292 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*

293 - Stoyanov, Y. *The Hidden Tradition in Europe*, p. 112

294 - Ibid.

295 - e. karloukovski@uea.ac.uk Drawn from Vassil Karloukovski's English translation of Dmitrov, D. *Prabulgarite po severnoto i zpadnoto Chernomorie*, Varna 1987 - Proto-Bulgarians 7, p. 3

296 - Ibid. , *Proto-Bulgarians 8*, p. 3-4

297 - Ibid. , *Proto-Bulgarians 9*, p. 2

298 - Ilarion, Mitropolit. *Dokhristiyans'ki Viruvannya Ukrain's'kovo Narodu*, p. 159

299 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*, p. 110

300 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnitstvo*, p.23

300a - Vernadsky, G. , p. 110.

301 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka*, Vol I, p. 409-410

302 - *Pahlavi Texts Part I*, p. 131

303 - Moulton. *The Treasure of the Magi*, p. 167. Mesopotamia is the undoubted home of astrology. And it was there that priests developed the notion that seven planets were really gods worthy of worship and sacrifice (Venus, Mercury, Mars, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars and the Moon under varied names). Magi were similarly accomplished astronomers and astrologers. Yet they compiled astrology charts at the birth of every child for an entirely different reason - to discover what harm might befall the newborn. One of their greatest philosophical arguments surrounded the cause of misfortune for extremely pious individuals. They attributed their woes and injustices, in a practical sense, to these planetary 'divinities' who, acting like brigands, redistributed the good fortune of the righteous, and

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handed it over to the unworthy as they travelled around the zodiac, as they clashed with the celestial sphere. For this reason many of the Magi differentiated between light-emitting (stars and constellations) and light-reflecting celestial bodies (planets). The white wizards made offerings to the stars and holy constellations as entry points for the light of god into the universe, but condemned cattle sacrifices to the planets, whereas the rites of the Chaldeans and Chaldeanized Magi were directed toward adoration of the planets. Magian scripture contains a number of references on this issue;

"A similitude of these planets and the benefit which they always bestow is such as the brigands and highwaymen who interrupt the path of traders in a caravan. They abstract important things from many, and do not grant and give them to the diligent and worthy, but to sinners, idlers, courtezans, parricides and the unworthy." (Sikand-Gumanik Vigar IV: 6-10 and Sikand-Gumanik Vigar IV: 24)

"And those are the five planets that rush below them in the shape of stars, and they keep them enveloped in light, which are Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus and Mercury. Since the supreme constellation, the great one of the north-opposing. Haptoring, is opposing Saturn, Haptoring, created by Mazda, is opposing Jupiter, Vanand, the smiter of noxious creatures, is opposing Mars, the star Sataves is opposing Venus, and the star Tistar is opposing the planetary Mercury."

"If Ahura Mazda and Ahriman created in conference, then that way it is manifest that Ahura Mazda is an accomplice and confederate with Ahriman, in the harm and evil which ever arise from the celestial sphere. The answer is this, that the celestial sphere is the place of the divinities, who are the distributors of happiness from which they always justly bestow their distribution of every happiness. And the forms of the seven planets are witches who rush below them, despoilers who are antagonistic distributors, to whose scriptural name is Gadug (the Brigands)." (Sikand-Gumanik Vigar IV: 30-36)

"As the evil spirit was entangled in the sky, that fiend, with evil astuteness and with lying falsehood encompassed and mingled with the light, together with the fiends of crimes of many kinds, who are those of a gloomy race, thinking thus: "I will make these creatures and creation of Ahura Mazda extinct, or I make them for my own" (Sikand-Gumanik Vigar IV: 12)

In brief the zodiacal sun signs provided protection against the sometimes vicious fallout of unfortunate planetary positionings, and the inescapable aspects of fate that flowed from them. When it came to the Christian Magi the beneficent zodiacal sphere was remodified, becoming Christ, the Good Sun (*Helios Christus*) or the Sun of Righteousness, surrounded by the constellations of light, each governed by one of the twelve apostles, who revolved in their orbit around the saviour.

303a - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnistvo*, G. Lozko,

304 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnistvo*, G. Lozko, p. 99

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305 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*

306 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 85-86

307 - Ibid. , Vol I, p. 94. Zaehner. Assyrian writers were important figures in early Magian scriptoria, perhaps imparting some of their own terminologies into educated Magian speech. This might account for *kunnuku*.

308 - Ibid. , Vol III, p. 273

309 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnistvo*, p. 11

309a - e. karloukovski@uea.ac.uk Drawn from Vassil Karloukovski's English translation of Dmitrov, D. *Prabulgarite po severnoto i zapadnoto Chernomorie*, Varna 1987

310 - Mierow, C. C. *The Origin and Deeds of the Goths* XI:67-73

311 - Ibid. , *Proto-Bulgarians 1b*, p. 3

312 - www.uib.no/smi/paj/Frolova.html.

As pointed out by Prof O. Frolova during the third Nordic conference on Middle Eastern Studies, Joensuu, Finland, 19-22 June 1995. As evidence she drew upon existing copies of al-Qazwini's mediaeval work

313 - An English translation of German and French passages contained in in Marquart. *Osteuropaische und Ostasiatische Streifzuge* (eastern European and eastern Asiatic Migrations)1903.

The quoted extract was preceded by the following "We note something peculiar about the Danube Bulgars; as I indicated above, Gaihani incorporated (Abu) Muslim's report on the still pagan Burgan (ie; Bulgars, and also called Bordjan) (in his own hand) without changing anything. Especially noteworthy here are the funeral customs followed by the Huns".

314 - The Jewish author of *The Book of Jossipon* lists Yavan as one of Japhet's sons, not Younan (as Abu Muslim states). This far-eastern Jewish text identified the sons of Yavan as Romans, Greeks, Tarshish, the Alemanni (ie; Germans), the Burgundians and Baioriya, Danes, Moravians, Croats, Serbs, Poles, Czechs, Slavs and Bohemians. Thus Abu Muslim classified the Bulgars as belonging to the same racial pool as the above nations, whereas according to *The Book of Jossipon* Bulgars belonged to the descendants of Tograma, son of Gomer, son of Japhet. Whether this represents an additional tradition, or whether Abu Muslim or the author of the *Book of Jossipon* is mistaken is not easily resolved.

315 - Vasmer. , Vol III, p. 655

316 - Dodge, B. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadim*

316a - Cross, Sherbowitz wetzor. *The Russian Primary Chronicle - The Laurentian Text*

317 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*, Vol II, p. 262-263

317a - Vasmer, Vol II, p.100-101. *Znakhar'*, a Ukrainian, Bulgarian and Prussian word for 'sorcerer', also found in far-off Astrakhan (an Alanic city in the Caspian-Azov region), is likewise derived from *znat'*, signifying they were sorcerers graced with knowledge.

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- 318 - Ibid. , Vol I, p. 304
- 318a - Ibid. , Vol I
- 318b - Zoega
- 319 - Zoega, p. 500
- 320 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*, Vol III, p. 243
- 321 - Ibid. , p. 266
- 322 - Ibid. , p. 673
- 323 - Badiny, Francisco Jos, *The Sumerian Wonder* 1974, p. 249
- 324 - Dodge, B. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadim*
- 325 - *Ynglinga Saga*:5
- 326 - Bahn, P. G. *Tombs, Graves and Mummies*, p.152-153
- 326a - Thanks to Dr Paul Cubberley, professor of Russian linguistics, for advice given on this point.
- 327 - Ibid., p.152
- 328 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnitstvo*, p. 24. Vernadsky's theorises that the Old Rus characters were a glagolitic-style script devised by St Constantine, p. 239-240.
- 329 - Vasmer, M. *Vol II*, p. 670
- 330 - Zoega, G. T. *A Concise Dictionary of Old Icelandic* , p. 500
- 331 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*
- 332 - Cross Sherbowitz-wetzor *The Primary Chronicle*, p. 93
- 333 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*
- 334 -Though it is possible to say that Thor resembled Perun in some ways, and therefore Indra.
- 335 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*
- 336 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*, p. 279
- 337 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*, p. 315 and *Slovo o polky Igoreve*.
- 338 - Zoega, p.102. For information on king Agni see Turville-Petre. *Speculum Norroenum*, p. 89
- 339 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*, p. 33
- 340 - Korinfskii, A. A. *Narodnaya Rus'*, p. 105
- 341 - Ibid. , p.105
- 342 - Ibid. , p.105
- 343 - Christian, D. , pp. 252,255
- 344 - Vasmer, M. , *Vol I*, p.141
- 345 - Ibid. , *Vol II*, p.155
- 346 - Ibid. , *Vol I*, p. 182
- 347 - Zoega, p. 39

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- 348 - Christian, D. , p. 256
- 349 - Ibid. , p.256
- 350 - Vasmer, M , *Vol I*, p.183
- 351 - Dodge, B. *Chapter IX, Part II*
- 352 - Eliade, M. *Shamanism*, p.4
- 353 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*, p. 69
- 354 - Vasmer, M , *Vol II*, p. 266
- 355 - Jones and Pennick. *A History of Pagan Europe*, p. 187
- 356 - Hollingsworth, P. *The Hagiography of Kievan Rus'* , p. 6
- 357 - Cross Sherbowitz-wetzor. , p. 86
- 358 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*, p. 255-257
- 359 - Ibid. , p. 149
- 360 - Cross Sherbowitz-wetzor. , p. 134-135
- 361 - Vasmer, M. , *Vol I*, p.183
- 362 - *Mithras - Mysteries and Initiation Rediscovered*, pp. 77, 94, 105
- 363 - *The Concise Encyclopedia of Heraldry*, p.49
- 364 - Culican, W. , p.41
- 365 - *Concise Encyclopedia of Heraldry*, p. 165-178.
- 366 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*
- 367 - Vasmer, M. , *Vol III*, p. 585
- 368 - Ibid. , *Vol III*, p. 584
- 369 - Orchard, A. , p. 186
- 370 - Cotterell, A. (Ed), Keall, E. J. *The Penguin Encyclopedia of Classical Civilizations*, p. 186
- 371 - Turville-Petre and Orchard
- 372 - Simonov, P.
- 373 - West, W. *The Pahlavi Texts Part I, Bundahishn VI*
- 374 - *Selections of Zad Sparam V:1-2.*
- 375 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnistvo*
- 376 - Laing. *The Ynglinga Saga* :7
- 377 - Ibid. *The Ynglinga Saga* :10
- 378 - *War in Ancient India*
- 379 - Laing. *The Ynglinga Saga*
- 380 - Ibid. *The Ynglinga Saga* :11
- 381 - Ibid. *The Ynglinga Saga* :13
- 382 - Flint, V. , p. 65
- 383 - Ibid. , p. 64

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- 384 - Palsson, H. and Edwards, P. - *Vikings in Russia*, p. 56
- 385 - Mc Ginn, B. - *Visions of the End*
- 386 - Palsson, H. and Edwards, P. - *Vikings in Russia*, p. 57
- 387 - (*Avesta Part I*) *Vendidad Fargard VIII: V: 31-32*
- 388 - West, W. *The Pahlavi Texts Part III, Sad Dar VIII:1-2,6*
- 389 - *Zend-Avesta Part I*, p. 102
- 390 - *Shayast La-shayast VIII:4*
- 391 - Flint, V. , p. 215
- 392 - *Larousse Dictionary of World Folklore*, p. 217.
- 393 - *Witchcraft in Europe 1100-1700*, p. 95
- 394 - Ankarloo and Henningsen. *Early Modern European Witchcraft*, p. 259
- 395 - *The Oxford Dictionary of Superstitions*, pp. 172, 189.
- 396 - *Ibid.* , p. 431. Magians also believed tempests accompanied the departure of very holy souls.
- 397 - Murray, M. *The Witch Cult in Western Europe*
- 398 - Arnold. *An archaeology of the early anglo-saxon kingdoms*, p. 193
- 399 - Cohn, N. *Europe's Inner Demons*, p. 131
- 400 - Lenormant, F. *Chaldean Magic*, p.7
- 401 - Lenormant, F. , p.5-6
- 402 - Lenormant, F. , p.5
- 403 - Moulton, J. H. *The Treasure of the Magi*, p. 137
- 404 - *The Treasure of the Magi*. Unfortunately Moulton regarded their penchant for rote-learning as symptomatic of their lack of intelligence, when in fact it really signified their desire to propagate their faith in a relatively pure and undefiled form. It's a demanding method that mindless cretins should steer well clear of. Although Moulton studied the Zoroastrians, such comments show that he held their priests in little regard. These were men of extreme piety, albeit a piety which others may not appreciate.
- 405 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka*
- 406 - Vasmer, M. , *Vol II*, p.642
- 407 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*, p. 124
- 408 - Vasmer, M. , *Vol I*, p. 346
- 409 - Metropolit Ilarion, *Dokhristiyans'ki Viruvannyya Ukrain's'kovo Narodu*, p. 174-175
- 410 - Vasmer, M. , *Vol I*, p. 346
- 411 - Vlasova, M. *Novaya Abevega Russkikh Sueverii*, p. 109 and Metropolit Ilarion, p. 174
- 412 - Vlasova, M. *Novaya Abevega Russkikh Sueverii*, p. 109
- 413 - *Ibid.* , p. 110
- 414 - Dodge, B. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadim*

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- 415 - Vlasova, M. *Novaya Abevega Russkikh Sueverii*, p. 109
- 416 - Metropolit Ilarion. *Dokhristiyans'ki Viruvannya Ukrain's'kovo Narodu*, p. 175
- 417 - Zoega, p. 292
- 418 - Zoega, p. 286
- 419 - Zoega, p. 37
- 420 - Zoega, p. 169
- 421 - *Early Modern European Witchcraft*
- 422 - Vlasova, M. *Novaya Abevega Russkikh Sueverii*, p. 109
- 423 - Wayland Barber, E. *The Mummies of Urumchi*, p. 201.
- 424 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*, p. 191
- 425 - Rawlinson, G. *The Histories, Herodotus*
- 426 - Vasmer, M. , *Vol I*
- 427 - Maksimov, S. V. *Nechistaya, Nevedomaya i Krestnaya Sila*, p. 355
- 428 - Ankarloo and Henningsen *Early Modern European Witchcraft*, p.126
- 429 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka, Vol II*, p. 554
- 430 - Flint, V. *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*
- 431 - Fletcher, R. *The Conversion of Europe*, p. 246-247
- 432 - Petrukhin. *Nachalo Etnokul'turnoi Istorii Rusi IX-XI Vekov*, p.141
- 433 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka, Vol I*, p. 338
- 434 - Vlasova, M. *Novaya Abevega Russkikh Sueverii*, p. 262
- 435 - *Ibid.* , p. 105
- 436 - *Ibid.* , p. 262
- 437 - *Ibid.* , p. 106
- 438 - Vasmer, M. *Vol I*, p. 315
- 439 - Plutarch, *Moralia V, De Iside et Ostride*
- 439a - Boyce, *The Zoroastrians*
- 440 - Tschan. *The Chronicle of the Slavs*, p. 159
- 441 - West, E. *The Pahlavi Texts Part IV, Dinkard VIII: Nikadum Nask XX.116*
- 442 - *Webster's Dictionary*
- 443 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka, Vol I*, p. 345
- 444 - *Ibid.* , *Vol I*, p. 345
- 445 - From the Norse *Voluspa*, as reproduced in Heer. *The Medieval World*, p. 364
- 445a - Vasmer, *Vol I*, p.352
- 446 - Petrukhin. *Nachalo Etnokul'turnoi Istorii Rusi IX-XI Vekov*, p. 148-149
- 447 - *Procopius I:V:16-20*
- 448 - Vlasova, M. *Novaya Abevega Russkikh Sueverii*
- 449 - Vasmer, M. , *Vol III*, p. 614

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- 450 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 63
- 451 - *Encyclopedia of Religion*, p. 356
- 452 - Stoyanov, Y. *The Hidden Tradition in Europe*
- 453 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnistvo*
- 453a - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnistvo*
- 454 - *Russko-Angliiskii Slovar'*
- 455 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka*, Vol IV, p. 316
- 456 - Ibid. , Vol IV, p. 316-317
- 457 - Jones and Pennick. *A History of Pagan Europe*, p. 187
- 458 - West, E. *The Pahlavi Texts Part IV, Dinkard IX:XXX:6*
- 459 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka*, Vol II, p. 51-52
- 460 - *Haoma* was a ritual drink made by the Magi. It was believed to grant immortality.
- 461 - West, E. *The Pahlavi Texts Part IV, Dinkard IX:XXX:6*
- 462 - Ibid. , *Dinkard IX:XLV:8-9*
- 463 - Ibid. , *Dinkard IX:LIII:2*
- 464 - Ibid. , *Dinkard IX:XVIII:1*
- 465 - Ibid. , *Dinkard VIII:IX1-3*
- 466 - *Yasna LXII: 3-4*
- 467 - West, E. *The Pahlavi Texts Part IV, Dinkard IX:XLIV:19*
- 468 - *The Rivyat of Bahman Pungyah:18-20*
- 469 - *Dadistan-i Dinik LXXII:3-5*
- 470 - *Legends relating to Keresasp, Pahlavi Texts Part II, p. 376*
- 471 - West, E. *The Pahlavi Texts Part IV, Dinkard VIII: Nikadum Nask XX:2*
- 472 - Flint, V. *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*, p.179
- 473 - *The Balts and Ukrains'ke Yazichnistvo*, G. Lozko, p.8
- 474 - Maksimov, S. V. *Nechistaya, Nevedomaya i Krestnaya Sila*, p. 406
- 475 - Maksimov, S. V. *Nechistaya, Nevedomaya i Krestnaya Sila*, p. 410
- 475a- Fell, C. *Egil's Saga*
- 475a - Maksimov, S. V. *Nechistaya, Nevedomaya i Krestnaya Sila*
- 476 - Zoega, p.110, 111
- 476a - Vernadsky. *The Origins of Russia*. Dmytryshyn. *A History of Russia*, p.69
- 476b - Vasmer, Vol III, p.177
- 477 - Vernadskiy, G. *Medieval Russian Laws* , p. 30-32
- 478 - Vernadskiy, G. *Medieval Russian Laws* , p. 41
- 479 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka*, Vol III. p. 177
- 479a - Boyce, p. 142
- 480 - See *Dinkard IX - XXXIII: 1-6, The Zend Avesta Part I footnote p. 64*, and Darmesteter's

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commentary on p. 262 of *Pahlavi Texts Part IV*

481 - *Visparad*.

482 - Information on the sorts of offices filled by the subordinate Slav priests has been gained from *Ukrains'ke Yazichnitstvo*, G. Lozko, p. 10-14 and 24-28.

483 - *Geography*, 15: 3: 15

484 - *Foote and Wilson - The Viking Achievement*, p. 401

485 - *Zoega*, p.27

486 - *Zoega*, p. 219

487 - *Lozko, G. Ukrains'ke Yazichnitstvo*, p. 64-65

488 - *West, W. The Pahlavi Texts Part III, Sad Dar VIII*

489 - *Vernadskiy, G. The Origins of Russia*

490 - *Lozko, G. Ukrains'ke Yazichnitstvo*, p.8-9

491 - *Cosmography*, plate IX, XVII and XX.

492 - *The Zend Avesta Part I, Introduction xlviii*

493 - *Elizabeth Wayland Barber. The Mummies of Urumchi*, p.201

494 - *Stoyanov, Y. The Hidden Tradition in Europe*, p.190

495 - *Gimbutas, M. The Balts*, p. 183

496 - *Ibid.*, p. 25

497 - *Jones and Pennick. A History of Pagan Europe*, p.166

498 - *Gimbutas, M. The Balts*, p. 183

499 - A great many of these items are mentioned in *Lozko, G. Ukrains'ke Yazichnitstvo*, p.10-15, *Barret, F. The Magus, Encyclopedia of the Occult*, p.262, the *Avesta* and *Pahlavi* texts.

499a - *Lozko*

500 - *Jones, H. L. Geography 15: 1: 71, Volume VII*, p. 125

501 - *Culican, W. The Medes and Persians*, p. 47-48. This mode of attire resembles that of the Egyptian Horus priesthood. In their case the leopard-skin cloak symbolized the sun's victory over Seth or Sutekh (the demonic brother of Horus, cognate with the Devil himself).

502 - *Culican, W. The Medes and Persians*, p. 27

503 - *Bahn, P. G. Tombs, Graves and Mummies*, p. 152

504 - *Ibid.*, p. 106-109

505 - For those wanting to see this for themselves compare the Hotchdorf exemplar in *Bahn, P. G. Tombs, Graves and Mummies*, p.108 with those found in *Kaul, Fleming - Ships on Bronzes - A study in Bronze Age religion and iconography (Vol I and II) - National Museum of Denmark*

506 - *Nicolle, D. Armies of Medieval Russia*, p. 24.

507 - *Strabo - Geography 15:3*

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- 508 - *Shayast La-Shayast IV: 1-14*
- 509 - *The Northern World*
- 510 - Vasmer, M *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka, Vol II, p. 429*
- 511 - Gordon, p. 379
- 512 - Tkach, Y. *History of Ukrainian Costume, p. 21*
- 513 - Tkach. *The History of Ukrainian Costume, p.19.*
- 514 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka, Vol I, p. 118*
- 515 - Ibid. , *Vol II, p. 220*
- 516 - Ibid. , *Vol III, p. 561*
- 517 - Tilke, M. *Costumes, Patterns and Designs, p. 26*
- 518 - Tkach, Y. *History of Ukrainian Costume, p. 22*
- 519 - Tilke, M. , p. 26
- 520 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichmitstvo, p.14*
- 521 - *The Zend Avesta Part I, Introduction*
- 522 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka, Vol III, p. 752-753*
- 523 - Heather, P. - *The Goths, p.77-80*
- 524 - Zoega, p.407
- 525 - Culican, W. *The Medes and Persians, p. 141-142*
- 526 - Ibid. , p. 120
- 527 - Ibid. p. 122
- 528 - Foote and Wilson. *The Viking Achievement, p. 401*
- 529 - *The Sutton Hoo Ship Burial, Angela Care Evans p. 92-93*
- 530 - I believe that the level of perfection achieved in the crafting of stone idols and earlier stone architectural forms, as noted in India (performed by Persian masons), Egypt (especially), and to a lesser extent Greece and Rome, was achieved, in a number of instances, without any great need for metal tools. Instead rock surfaces were hewn and shaved back quickly and easily with the aid of dolerite (a very hard rock which archaeologists have found shaped into hand tools), or by diamond tipped cutting instruments, and diamond dust scourers (for polishing granite, basalt, etc) which the Babylonian gem engravers are known to have used.
- To give you an example of the excellence attained by these craftsmen we find in India a casket dating to the Mauryan period (c 322-185 BC), which was made to house Buddhist relics. The object was carved from a large piece of crystal and is one of the finest examples of stonework ever seen in Asia. (*The Penguin Encyclopedia of Classical civilizations, p. 215.*)
- 531 - Zoega, p. 434
- 532 - Ibid. , p. 397
- 533 - See *The God of the Witches* and *The Witch Cult of Western Europe.*

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- 534 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*, Vol IV, p. 320
- 535 - See *Dadistan i Dinik XLII* and other references.
- 536 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnistvo*, p. 13-14
- 537 - Kieckhefer, R. *Magic in the Middle Ages*, p. 48-49
- 538 - Fletcher, R. *The Conversion of Europe*, p. 251
- 539 - Flint, V. *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*
- 540 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*, Vol IV, p. 73
- 541 - *Ibid.*, Vol III, p. 788
- 542 - *Ibid.*, p. 250
- 543 - Arnold. *An Archaeology of the Early Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*
- 544 - Berresford Ellis, P. *The Druids*
- 555 - *The Dictionary of Symbolism*, p. 273
- 556 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnistvo*, p.92
- 557 - *Ibid.*, p. 12
- 558 - Gokihar might be related to the astrological terms, the two nodes of the dragon, which were composed of a head and tail.
- 559 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*, Vol II, p. 612-613
- 560 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnistvo*, p.12
- 561 - Brisbane, Judelson and Huggins. *The Archaeology of Novgorod, Russia*, pp. 162, 165, 183
- 562 - Appendix of L. Cherenkov, *Gypsy-Russian / Russian-Gypsy Dictionary (Kalderash dialect)*, Moscow Russky Yazyk Publishers 1990
- 563 - Cf. *The Zend-Avesta Part I Vendidad*
- 564 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*, Vol IV, p. 349
- 565 - *Ibid.*, p. 349
- 566 - West, E. *The Pahlavi Texts Part IV, Dinkard VIII:XVIII:6*
- 567 - Darmesteter, J. *The Zend-Avesta Part I Vendidad*, p.102.
- 568 - West, E. *The Pahlavi Texts Part IV, Dinkard VIII:VII:15*
- 569 - Frazer, J.G. *The Golden Bough*, p.549
- 570 - *Novgorod the Great - Excavations at the Medieval City*, pp. 66, 93
- 571 - Arnold. *An Archaeology of the Early Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, p.162
- 572 - *Ibid.*, p.120
- 572a - Regarding the Iron Age Druids, Pliny (a Roman academic), in his inimically anti-Magian style, expressed;

"Magic continued to be practiced in the two Gallic provinces within living memory. The principate of Tiberius saw the removal of the Druids and the whole pack of soothsayers (ie; those who prognosticated by means of animal sacrifice) and doctors. But these remarks are of little interest when one considers that magic has crossed the ocean and reached Nature's empty wastes. Today

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even Britain, in awe, practices magic with such impressive rites that one might think that she had given the Persians the art of Magic. (Healy, J. (trans). *Natural History* XXX:13)

572b - Macalister. *The Archaeology of Ireland*, p. 367

573 - Mac Mullen, R. *Christianity and paganism in the 4th to 8th Centuries*, p. 184

574 - Fletcher, R. *The Conversion of Europe*, p. 100

575 - Berresford-Ellis. *The Druids*

576 - Berresford-Ellis. *The Druids*, p. 26-27

577 - Berresford-Ellis. *The Druids*, p. 47

578 - Ross. *Life and Death of a Druid Prince*, p. 124

579 - Berresford-Ellis. *The Druids*

580 - Berresford-Ellis. *The Druids*, p.80-83

581 - *The Diamond Path*, p. 92-93

582 - Vasmer, Vol I, p. 346-347

583 - Eliade, M. *Shamanism*

584 - Eliade, *Shamanism*, p. 501

584a - *The Penguin Encyclopedia of Classical Civilizations*, p. 229

585 - Black & Green. *Gods, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia*, p. 33

586 - Eliade, M. *Shamanism*, p. 502

587 - Ibid. , p. 501

588 - Ibid. , p. 498-499

589 - Krupp, E. *Skywatchers, Shamans and Kings*, p.53

590 - Krupp, E. *Skywatchers, Shamans and Kings*, p.53

591 - Eliade, M. *Shamanism*, p. 15

592 - Ibid. , p. 169 and *Celtic Heritage*

593 - Ibid. , p. 10

594 - Skelton, Marston and Painter, *The Vinland Map and the Tartar Relation*, p.88

595 - Ibid. , p.90

596 - Ibid. , pp.92, 94

597 - Rawlinson. *The Histories*.

598 - West, W. *The Pahlavi Texts Part I, Bundahishn* LXXIX:3

599 - *The Zend Avesta Part I, Introduction* xlvii: 15

600 - Ginzburg, C. *Ecstasies*, p. 262

601 - *The Vinland Map and Tartar Relation*

602 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka, Vol II*, p. 288

603 - All information on the *Al-Kaldani* has been taken from Dodge, B. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadim (Volumes I and II)*, especially the ninth part, section 1.

604 - Dodge, B. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadim, Vol II*, p. 745-746

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- 605 - Maksimov, S. V. *Nechistaya, Nevedomaya i Krestnaya Sila*, p. 384
- 606 - Dodge, B. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadim, Vol II*, p. 751
- 607 - Ibid. , *Vol II*, p. 752
- 608 - Dawood, N. J. *The Koran - The Cow*, p. 15
- 609 - Dodge, B. , *Vol II*, p. 752-753
- 610 - Maksimov, S. V. , p. 337
- 611 - Cross, Sherbowitz wetzor. *The Russian Primary Chronicle - The Laurentian Text*, p. 153
- 612 - Zoega, p. 397
- 613 - Stoyanov, Y. *The Hidden Tradition in Europe*
- 614 - Dodge, B. , *Vol II*, p. 752-753
- 615 - Christian, D *A History of Russia, Central Asia and Mongolia*, p. 312
- 616 - Dodge, B. , *Vol II*, p. 755-756
- 616a - *Myths of th e Middle Ages*
- 617 - Julius Norwich, John. *Byzantium. The Apogee*
- 618 - Roux, G. , p. 319
- 619 - *Quest for the Past*, p. 82-83
- 620 - Julius Norwich, John. , p. 13-19
- 621 - Stoyanov, Y. *The Hidden Tradition in Europe*, p. 115-116. As stated in *The Ancient Slavs*, p. 42, Pliska, the old capital city of Bulgaria was apparently founded under Khan Krum. There a large palace was built using what seems to have been classical Roman architectural principals. Pliska remained the Bulgar capital until the relocation of primary rule to Prejслав.
- 622 - Drawn from Vassil Karloukovski's English translation of Dmitrov, D. *Prabulgarite po severnoto i zpadnoto Chernomorie*, Varna 1987 - 1. Proto-Bulgarian Inscriptions in Greek Letters, The Preslav Inscriptions, p. 1-2. e. karloukovski@ uea.ac.uk
- 623 - Fletcher, R. *The Conversion of Europe*, p. 339
- 624 - Stoyanov , Y. *The Hidden Tradition in Europe*, p. 123.
- The conversion of the Bulgars to Christianity, and the pagan revival which followed are also depicted in the Bulgarian movie *The Last Pagan*, which is noteworthy not only for its portrayal of the events, but the turbaned Magi who helped incite Vladimir-Rasate to abandon the new faith of his father.
- 625 - Ibid. , p. 123.
- 626 - Fletcher, R. *The Conversion of Europe*, p. 362
- 627 - Ibid. , p. 289
- 628 - Dodge, B. , *Vol II*, p. 746
- 629 - Robinson, J.M. *The Nag Hammadi Library*, p. 330-338. Cf. *Asclepius* 21-29
- 630 - Dodge, B. , *Vol II*, pp. 746, 748-749
- 631 - Ibid. , *Vol II*, p. 748-749

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- 632 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 749
- 633 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 751-752
- 634 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 757. Livestock were sacrificed and burnt. There was also feasting and libations, as well as the smelling of roses.
- 635 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 759
- 636 - Taylor, T. *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Assyrians*
- 637 - Cross, Sherbowitz wetzor. *The Russian Primary Chronicle - The Laurentian Text*, p. 153
- 638 - Dodge, B. , Vol II, p. 746-747
- 639 - Babbitt, F. C. *Moralia - De Iside et Osiride*: 48
- 640 - Dodge, B. , Vol II, p. 759
- 640a - Cohn, N. *Europe's Inner Demons*
- 641 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 747
- 642 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*
- 643 - Dodge, B. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadim*, Vol II, p. 757
- 644 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 748
- 645 - Sylvan Guthrie. , p. 124-125.
- 646 - Murray, M. *The Witch Cult of Western Europe*, p. 153-154
- 647 - Ibid. , p. 153
- 648 - Dodge, B. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadim*, Vol II, p. 764-765
- 649 - For the full account cf. Erdoes, R. *AD 1,000 - Living on the Brink of Apocalypse*
- 650 - Dodge, B. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadim*, Vol II, p. 751
- 651 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 753-754
- 652 - Dodge, B. , Vol II, p. 755-756
- 652a - See *Before the Burning Times*, Chapter VIII, p. 433-437 for the reconstructed ritual calendar..
- 653 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 760
- 654 - Barnstone, W. *The Other Bible*
- 655 - Dodge, B. , Vol II, p. 761
- 656 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 762-763
- 657 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 764
- 658 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 749-750
- 659 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 754
- 660 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*, Vol II, p. 10
- 661 - Maksimov, S. V. , p. 386
- 662 - Vlasova, M. *Novaya Abevega Russkikh Sueverii*, p. 42
- 663 - Dodge, B. *The Fihrist of Al-Nadim*, Vol II, Chapter VIII
- 664 - Lenormant, F. *Chaldean Magic*, p. 13

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665 - Lenormant, F. *Chaldean Magic*, p. 30

665a - Lenormant, F. *Chaldean Magic*

666 - Simonov, P. *Essential Russian Mythology*, p. 108-114

667 - Brisbane, Judelson and Huggins. *The Archaeology of Novgorod Russia*, p. 98-99

667a - Brisbane, Judelson and Huggins. *The Archaeology of Novgorod Russia*

667b - Boyce, M. p. 107

668 - Maksimov, S. V. , p. 338

669 - Maksimov, S. V. *Nechistaya, Nevedomaya i Krestnaya Sila*, p. 338-339

670 - Summers, M. *Malleus Maleficarum, Part I, Question 4*, p. 90

671 - Maksimov, S. V.

672 - Ibid. , p. 341

673 - Ibid. , p. 342-343

674 - Ibid. , p. 348

675 - Ibid. , p. 349-350

However unrelated it may be, one chap I met in Ireland in 1998 claimed that he saw his parent's farm in County Galway fall on very lean times. Their property had faltered agriculturally despite their intense efforts, whereas all the surrounding farms were thriving. To make matters worse they found an object resembling a nest, hand woven, placed at one corner of the field. From this arose suspicions that their misfortune was not entirely natural ... witchcraft perhaps.

676 - Maksimov, S. V.

677 - Ibid. , p. 340

678 - Vlasova, M. *Novaya Abecæga Russkikh Sueverii*, p. 70-71

679 - Fanger, C. - *Magic in History - Conjuring Spirits - Texts and Traditions of Medieval Ritual Magic*

680 - Kors and Peters. *Witchcraft in Europe 1100-1700*, p. 85-86

681 - Ibid. , p. 211

682 - Ibid. , p. 86-87

683 - Ellis Davidson. *Gods and Myths of Northern Europe*, p. 87

683a - Milovsky, A. *Ancient Russian Cities: A travel guide to the Historical and Architectural Monuments and fine Art Museum.*

684 - *Towns in the Viking Age*, p. 113-115

685 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka Vol IV*, p. 273

686 - Ibid. , Vol IV, p. 265

687 - *Agni Purana I:64:2*, p. 178

688 - *Agni Purana II:104:11-12*, p. 314

689 - *Agni Purana I, 61:6-14*, p. 165

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- 690 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*, Vol III, p. 244
- 691 - Ibid., Vol III, p. 765
- 692 - *Agni Purana I: 60 : 2*
- 693 - Wolfram, H. *History of the Goths*, p. 108
- 694 - *Agni Purana I:61:14*
- 695 - Daniel, G. *The Slavs*, p. 154
- 696 - *Agni Purana I, 61:28-48*, p. 167-168
- 697 - *Agni Purana I : 61-50*, p. 169
- 698 - *Agni Purana I : 65: 1 and 14*, p. 178-179
- 699 - *Agni Purana I, 64*, p. 178-179
- 700 - Tschan, F. J. *The Chronicle of the Slavs*, p. 50
- 701 - Daniel, G. *The Slavs*, p. 153
- 702 - Novgorod the Great, *The Northern World, The Origins of Russia*
- 703 - *New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*
- 704 - *Agni Purana II*, p. 314
- 705 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*, Vol II, p. 480
- 706 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnistvo*, p. 22, *Origins of Russia*, p. 5
- 707 - *The Wooden Architecture of Russia*, p. 16
- 708 Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*, Vol IV, p. 413
- 709 - Cotterell, A. (Ed), Cuyler Young, T. *The Penguin Encyclopedia of Classical Civilizations*, p. 161
- 710 - *The Wooden Architecture of Russia*, p. 16
- 711 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*, Vol I, p. 285
- 712 - *The Encyclopedia of Religion*
- 713 - Ilarion, Metropolit. *Dokhristiyans'ki Viruvannya Ukrains'kovo Narodu*, p. 159-160.
- 714 - Flint. *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*, p. 210
- 715 - Vernadsky, G. *The Origins of Russia*, p. 293
- 716 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*, Vol IV, p. 47
- 717 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkogo Yazyka*, p. 818
- 718 - Vasmer, M. Vol IV
- 719 - *The Penguin Encyclopedia of Classical Civilizations*, p. 185.
- 720 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnistvo*, p. 22
- 721 - Cotterell, A. (Ed), Keall, E. J. - *The Penguin Encyclopedia of Classical Civilizations*, p. 190
- 722 - *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. The Aryans attached some importance to their temple flags as evidenced by *The Laws of Manu IX: 285* "He who destroys a bridge, the flag (of a temple or royal palace), a pole, or (common) images (made of clay and so forth), shall repair the whole (damage) and pay five hundred (Panas)". Regarding the pagan Western Slav temple flags we may have further evidence of Aryan religious parallels.

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722a - Darmesteter, the Avesta Part II, p.191 *Farvardin Yast* XII:45.

723 - Turville-Petrie, E. O. G. *Myth and Religion of the North*, p. 59-60

724 - Ibid. , p. 59

724a - Vernadsky. *The Origins of Russia*

725 - *The Northern Crusades*

725a - Boyce. *The Zoroastrians*. Boyce mentions historical incidents of fire rescues and relocations.

726 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnitstvo*, p. 10

727 - Like those depicted in Ancient Russian Cities.

728 - Moulton *The Treasure of the Magi*, p. 145

729 - Ibid. , p. 144

729a - Boyce, p. 147

730 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka*, Vol IV, pp. 336, 348

731 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnitstvo*, p. 22-23 and *The Origins of Russia*

732 - Vlasova, M. *Novaya Abovoga Russkikh Sueterii*, p. 188

733 - Vasmer, M. *Etimologicheskii Slovar' Russkovo Yazyka*, Vol I, p. 111-112

734 - Ibid. , Vol II, p. 294

735 - Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnitstvo*

736 - Moulton. *The Treasure of the Magi*, p. 149

736a - See Lozko and Metropolitan Ilarion.

737 - The following locations are just some of the places where Mithraea have been found;

RUMANIA

Brucla, Protaissa, Sacidava and Sarmizegetusa.

EGYPT

Memphis and Alexandria.

GERMANY (GAUL)

Durnomagus, Vetera, Friedberg, Osterburken, Magont, Pons Saravi, Bourg St Andeol and St Wendel.

ITALY

Aquileia, Scarbantia, Brigetio, Milan, Naples, Rome, and Vienne.

ENGLAND

Vindobala, Borcovicium and Londinium.

738 - *The Hagiography of Kievan Rus'*, p. 171

739- Lozko, G. *Ukrains'ke Yazichnitstvo*, p. 19

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