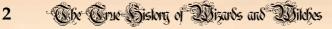
# The True History of Wizards and Witches (The Early Years)



## "John Smith"



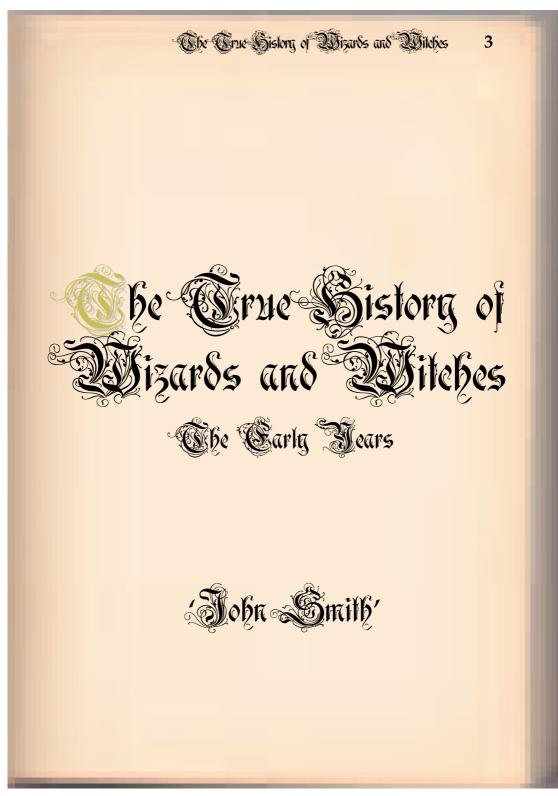


#### The True History of Wizards and Witches (The Early Years) ISBN 0-9752300-0-X

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The Grue History of Wizards and Wilches



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 sisteren, 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 knowledgable in such matters will find this an interesting, mind-expanding read.

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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

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 *dhimmis* 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

#### 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

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',<sup>1</sup> which was derived from Latin, differed from other terms for "a pagan" like yazychnik<sup>2</sup> or busorman.<sup>2</sup> 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 reverenced 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 Yuehzhi tribes recorded in ancient Chinese historical sources. The Yuezhi 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 Yuehzhi 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.<sup>4</sup>

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.*<sup>5</sup> It may equally have come from the now-extinct asiatic Tokharian language (which was closely related to the Celtic subfamily),<sup>6</sup> and in its original form denoted a wandering Buddhist monk.<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup> By implication they had interbred with the Dravidians, India's most ancient inhabitants, bequeathing their genetic legacy to the modern Indian population.<sup>7</sup> 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.

### Spe 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

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*".<sup>8</sup> 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*".<sup>9</sup>

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".<sup>10</sup> 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 *Tivar* ("the gods"). These many terms are cognate with the Old Indian *Devas* ("God").<sup>10</sup> An apparently different Russo-Baltic tradition, which intimates that the *Daevas* 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

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 educed 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.<sup>12</sup> 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

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 Dumezil, 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 *Daevas* (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")<sup>13</sup>, *nix* (German),<sup>44</sup> Other words for "snake" were *nathir* (Old Irish), *naeddre* (Old English) and *natrix* (Latin).<sup>15</sup> 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 jewellry 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



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

*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.*<sup>16</sup>

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.



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.<sup>17</sup> 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.<sup>18</sup>

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 <u>he was overjoyed to be associated with the Magi</u>, 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".<sup>19</sup>

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



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"*, <sup>20</sup>but, having witnessed Chaldean witchcraft first hand, Pythagorus *"was shocked at all the blood-shedding and killing"*.<sup>21</sup>

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".<sup>22</sup> 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.<sup>23</sup> 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?).<sup>24</sup>

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.<sup>25</sup> 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

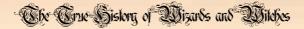
novel gear to fossick offshore, where Spanish shipping had gone down.<sup>26</sup>

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"." 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 sisteren.

The Medean Magi (whose tribal homeland centerd 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.<sup>28</sup> 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"*.<sup>20</sup> 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.<sup>30</sup> Indian texts known as the Puranas state that Brahmans should be worshiped by all people, even kings.<sup>30</sup> 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



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.<sup>31</sup> 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.<sup>32</sup> 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.

# Sow many types of "Whagi" 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 *daeva* 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 *Athnawan* (literally. "Fire-men").<sup>33</sup> 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 Aluras? 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 *Magus* (similar to



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.<sup>34</sup> 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 rekindled 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.<sup>35</sup> They were mostly

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*<sup>®</sup> {the high Goth}, Mithraism saw further high level sponsorship under his successors, notably between 284-313 AD.<sup>®</sup>

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 Ahrimanios* (the devil). *Mithras* (god of the light) stood between the sun and devil.

Worshipers gave their homage to *Mithras* and *Sol Invictus* at outdoor locations, whereas *Deus Ahrimanios* 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.<sup>37</sup> 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 *Mithmaeum* 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.<sup>37</sup> 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 *Mithmaeum* was overlooked by two altar stones and an on-site building.<sup>38</sup> 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.<sup>39</sup>

There the German priests and Roman fire pontiffs collaborated, concelebrating certain ritual mysteries,<sup>39</sup> 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 Arimanios* (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.<sup>40</sup>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.<sup>41</sup> For example Anaxilus, a deportee from Rome, was described as both a Pythagorean and Magus.<sup>42</sup> 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 *sacendotes* (priests), *antistes* (high priests), pontifs, 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)".<sup>43</sup>

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.<sup>44</sup> 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".<sup>45</sup>

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.*<sup>46</sup> 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 devized 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*.<sup>47</sup> 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

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.<sup>47</sup> 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,<sup>48</sup> each of them ruled by a Zarathustra (in other words an extremely high ranking Magus). Four of these religious regions centerd 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",<sup>49</sup> 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.<sup>50</sup>

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 favor 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, Parthia, 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".<sup>51</sup>

The Grue History of Wizards and Wilebes

# War amongst the Argan goos

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

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!".<sup>52</sup>

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).<sup>53</sup>

Strabo wrote, "Persian customs are the same as those of ... the Medes ...".<sup>54</sup> 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".<sup>54</sup>

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". <sup>54</sup>

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" <sup>55</sup>

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.<sup>55</sup>

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."<sup>55</sup>

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.<sup>56</sup> He went on to describe their sacrificial technique in the temples, namely bludgeoning the victim with a large wooden cudgel.<sup>56</sup> 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".<sup>56</sup>

### She 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". $\mathbb{F}$ 

"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".<sup>58</sup>

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 immortal and undecaying, hungerless and thirstless".<sup>59</sup>

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".<sup>60</sup>

Here *Ahum* Mazda threatens the devil's power by promising the arrival of *Snosha*, 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. Snaosha's power to raise God's creatures from death, meant that created existence would eventually return to *Ahum* 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".<sup>61</sup> 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 <i>Ahura* Mazda and the Archangels had never seen.

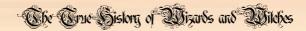
The Magi's Book of *Bundahishm* recounted exactly how this conflict came about. You see, *Ahriman* absconded from his imprisonment, not long after the Great Whore incited him into making reprisals against creation. In *Bundahishm III: 3-10* Geh, the Great Whore, deliberately comes to rouse *Ahriman* 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 Auhumamazd, I will make the whole creation of Auharmazd vexed".<sup>22</sup>

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).<sup>63</sup> 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".<sup>64</sup>

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



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 nampart 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".<sup>65</sup>

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." 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."

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



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.

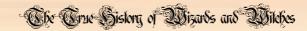
And woe for the misery of the impoverished world of creation in that one hundredth winter, for the earth would be torn open with great gaping holes to expose her inner wealth and riches. There would be spots on the sun, strange winds, earthquakes, droughts, little food in the lands, seasons would be 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?



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.<sup>68</sup> These wheels were fitted to the very chariots that made them lords of the world.<sup>69</sup> 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.<sup>70</sup> Numerous theories about the precise location and parameters of these ancestral Indo-European homelands have been postulated.<sup>71</sup> 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



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.<sup>73</sup> 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.<sup>74</sup>

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.<sup>75</sup> At the farthest limit of their influence, Indo-European Celts are seen as responsible for bringing both horses and chariots into Ireland.<sup>76</sup>

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.<sup>77</sup>

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.<sup>70</sup>

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.<sup>79</sup>

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.<sup>80</sup>

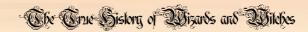
About 2,000 years before Christ, the oasis city-state of Margiana (near Iran) climbed to regional prominence. It took the form of a *qala*, a castle with crenellated battlements, outer defensive walls, palatial quarters, and densely packed intra-mural suburbs. The *qala* at Margiana, which bore some 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.<sup>81</sup>

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.<sup>82</sup>

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.<sup>83</sup>

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.<sup>84</sup> 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.<sup>85</sup>

The presumably Aryan Central Asian Andronovo culture featured dwellings similar to those described in the Vedas.<sup>86</sup> 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.<sup>87</sup> 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,<sup>88</sup> 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.<sup>99</sup>

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.<sup>90</sup> 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.<sup>91</sup>

During the 7th-4th Centuries BC, the Scythian nations played a major role in the construction of the Khorezmian and Samarkandian city-states.<sup>92</sup> 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.<sup>39</sup>

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 Caucuses 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.<sup>56</sup> 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.<sup>56</sup>

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 Caucuses 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.

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 Medean 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 Caucuses region.<sup>57</sup>

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 Medean yoke, then subjugated not only their former masters, but the Babylonians as well.<sup>86</sup> 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.<sup>99</sup> 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.<sup>90</sup> 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

whose lands they occupied for more than 20 years.<sup>10</sup> 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, Medeans and Massagetae became loyal to the dynastic visions of the Achaemenid state, and were an indispensable part of the Persian power base.<sup>101</sup> 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 Persepopolis, 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.<sup>102</sup> 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.<sup>103</sup> During the construction of the Achaemenid palace at Susa, Egyptian and Medean craft-masters were charged with all goldsmithing projects, owing to their special provess 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.<sup>104</sup> Though fortified, many of these lesser settlements were merely seasonal places of residence, in which the nomadic Scythians pitched their tents.<sup>105</sup> At other times of the year, Scythians followed their herds about in four or six-wheeled tent-covered wagons.<sup>106</sup>

To the north of the Scythians lived the Neurian wolf-men. In close proximity to them were the Melanchlæni, a Gothic race who lived near the Pripyet swamplands, and who garbed themselves in black robes. To the east were the peaceful Argippæans, 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.<sup>W7</sup> 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

Crimea, establishing not only colonies but commercially viable agricultural districts.<sup>108</sup> 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.<sup>108</sup> 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).<sup>109</sup>

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.<sup>110</sup> Embalming corpses in wax was another Magian funeral rite, one which was also incidentally practiced throughout Bronze Age Scythia.<sup>111</sup> The name of one of the Scythian leaders, Octomasadas, seems derived from the Zoroastrian word for God - *Ahuna* Mazda. Their highest god was most likely the same as that of the Persians (ie; *Ahuna* 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 Agathyrsian 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

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".<sup>112</sup>

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.<sup>113</sup> 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".<sup>114</sup>

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

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.<sup>115</sup>

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,<sup>116</sup> 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.<sup>117</sup> 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,<sup>118</sup> 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 been found of them. It is my guess they were burned down.

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 Charax<sup>119</sup> (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 devilworshipers that lived by ethics too terrifying to contemplate.....

# Weanwhile, east of Segthia

We now look eastward to the monumental developments taking place in Iran and Central Asia from the 3rd Century BC onwards.<sup>120</sup> 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.<sup>121</sup> 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.<sup>122</sup>

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.<sup>123</sup> Greeks of every description came to live there, bringing customs, lifestyles, and Hellenic religious sensibilities and traditions that would linger for century after century.<sup>123</sup> As time went by the Greeks became more Persian in their outlook.<sup>123</sup> 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.<sup>123</sup>

Greeks formed the nucleus of their administrative engine, to the exclusion of Persian scribes and academics.<sup>124</sup> 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.<sup>124</sup>

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.<sup>125</sup> Local religious heads, sacred prostitutes and their many holdings and temples were now required to submit to Greek rule.<sup>126</sup>

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.<sup>127</sup> 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.<sup>127</sup> 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.<sup>128</sup> 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.<sup>129</sup> 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.<sup>130</sup> 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.<sup>130</sup> 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.<sup>130</sup> Thus Parthian monumental masonry was stuck in a time-warp, displaying ancient Mesopotamian beasts, griffons, and Greek iconography such as centaurs.<sup>131</sup>

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,<sup>132</sup> 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.<sup>133</sup> Though the Dionysian mysteries had by that stage incorporated the extremely ancient worship of Anahita, a goddess also found in Zoroastrian scripture.<sup>133</sup>

Meanwhile Babylonian temples nestled safely into their venerable niches, and were still substantially operative in Parthian times.<sup>134</sup> 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.<sup>135</sup>

Military coordination and cooperation proved difficult to achieve in Parthia.<sup>136</sup> 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.<sup>136</sup> Such untamed arrangements left social unity vulnerable to the lobbying of kingmakers, or nobles intent on feathering their own nest.<sup>136</sup> Some Parthian rulers were better able to muster support from lesser kings, with the result that they, and Parthia, fared better at those times.<sup>137</sup> But a house divided is one that is destined to fall, and for this reason Parthia fell victim to its own internal bickering.<sup>138</sup> 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 Kuhsan empire (50-250 AD), which was led by the Great Kings, the Sons of Heaven.<sup>139</sup> 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.<sup>139</sup> An unprecedented spectrum of religions intermingled in Kushan lands.<sup>140</sup> One could just as easily find Zoroastrian fire priests, preachers of ancient Greek philosophies, Chaldeans, Brahmans, Manichees, Buddhists, Taoists and Christian priests.<sup>140</sup> In this climate of coexistence, doctrinal purity was difficult to maintain. Antiochus' funerary rites were jointly

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

Kushan's extensive trade contacts are highlighted by their material culture, which showed evidence of Chinese, Indian, Greek, and even Egyptian craftsmanship.<sup>144</sup> Its preeminence in Central Asia diminished after 250 AD, leaving the region open for later Kidarite and Hephthalite control.<sup>145</sup> Much of the countryside was governed by wealthy regional lords known as the *Dihqans*.<sup>146</sup> 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.<sup>146</sup>

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.<sup>47</sup> Extensive irrigation projects, astronomical observatories, educational, and profitable craft centers were built.<sup>48</sup>

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.<sup>149</sup> The Turkic ethno-cultural complex was diverse, for they inhabited lands ranging from Mongolia through to Scythia.<sup>150</sup> 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.<sup>151</sup> 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.<sup>152</sup> Grandiose

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.<sup>152</sup> 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.



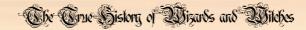
Traditional Magian civilization came to a close as a result of a three-fold foe; the Turanian devil-worshipers, Christians and Arabs.<sup>153</sup>

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,<sup>153a</sup> 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.<sup>154</sup> From there the Muslims grabbed much of Iran and the Caucuses 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.<sup>154</sup> Yazdegird was assassinated some 14 years after the debacle at Hamadan, thus prompting his hereditary successor Peroz to take flight



into China.<sup>112</sup> 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.<sup>156</sup> To realize the resettlement program of his masters required the depopulation of Merv and Khorezm, either by genocide or selling the Magians into slavery.<sup>156</sup> Muslim documentation tells us that Magian archives, educational institutions and books were destroyed, and the intelligentsia liquidated, at Khorezm.<sup>156</sup> 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.<sup>156</sup>

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.<sup>156a</sup>

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 Arascid kings of olden Iran.<sup>137</sup>

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 resistence 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"*.<sup>157a</sup>

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,<sup>158</sup> 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.<sup>159</sup> Yet others served as court astrologers to the Caliphs. In the end, Muslim authorities became so tolerant, that the Yezidis, the surmized devil-worshipers of Iraq's Basra marshes continued to live there unmolested, and still do, to this very day.

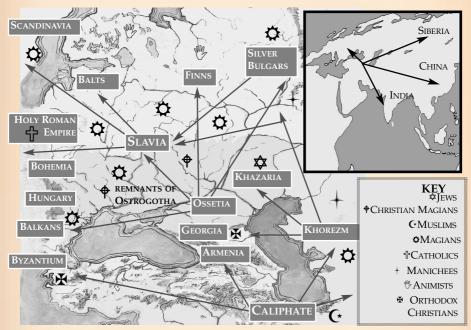
But as a rule, the fate of the blood-Magi was vastly different to that of their followers, the Magians. The Magi, together with their books of ancient lore and fire temples, were destined to be systematically exterminated by Muslim devastators, particularly during the harsh rule of Umar II.<sup>159a</sup> 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.<sup>160</sup> 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.<sup>160a</sup> The *Muslimiyah* was a Magian-Muslim sect of uncertain size, begun by one Abu Muslim, a self-styled prophet of Zoroaster.<sup>161</sup> According to his followers Abu Muslim would make a dramatic return in the distant future to reinstall the faith of the Magi.

The Grue History of Wizards and Wilebes



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 Siberian 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.<sup>162</sup> 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.<sup>162</sup> 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

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.

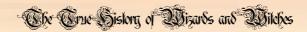
Other Magian colonists continued their religion in the vicinity of the Ural mountains, and beyond its ridges, out in the forests of Siberia. There the inhabitants were largely animists, or the inheritors of Aryan pagan religious customs, particularly in the form of Buddhism. Others made a brief expedition 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	Magus	"a Magus" <sup>163</sup>
Greek	Magos	"a Magus" <sup>163</sup>
Latin	Magus	"a Magus" <sup>163</sup>
Latin	magicus	"magical"



Arabic	Al-Madjus	"a Magus" <sup>164</sup>
German	magishch	"a Magus" <sup>163</sup>
Spanish	Magoa	"a magician"
Hungarian	Magoch Magus	"a pagan priest who keeps the bonfire"
Sassanian Pahlavi	Mog	"a Magus" <sup>164a</sup>
Lithuanian	Mag	"a magician, or wizard" 164b
Old Russian	Mag	"a magician, or wizard" 164b
Old Russian	magiya	"magic" 164b
Estonian	Maag	"a magician" 164b
Old Chinese	Myag <sup>2</sup>	"a magician" <sup>165</sup>
Babylonian	Rab-Mag	"Chief Magian" 164c

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

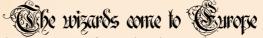
Slovak	Bieloknyazi	Bieloknyazi were heathen white priests known to the
		Slovaks. <sup>164d</sup> It translates as "The White Princes".
Magyar	Arbis	A doctor or herbalist.
Old Russia	n <i>Arbui</i>	"A priestly sacrificer versed in the old pagan rites". <sup>166</sup>
		The Old Russian verbs arbovati or arbuyu meant "to
		perform the pagan religious ordinances".166
Finnish	Arpoja	"A pagan priest who foretells the future". <sup>166</sup> Among
		the Finnish Mari tribe they were called Arbuj, which
		is derived from the words <i>ar</i> ("intellectual") and <i>-buj</i>
		("head"). <sup>166</sup> Finnish pagan priests were therefore part
		of an intellectual class.
Magyar	Baksa	A pagan priest knowledgeable in the sciences.
Kirghiz	Baksy	A sorcerer skilled at healing, and fighting off the
		demons responsible for illness.
Tibetan	Bhikshu	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	Skomorokh	A minstrel-poet
Magyar	Harsany	A minstrel-poet
	U	1
And then there were the witches dedicated to evil.		
Magyar	Garabancias	A warlock.

Serbo-Croat *Garabancias* A warlock. The *Garabancias* <sup>164d</sup> 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".<sup>167</sup>

Polish Russian Planetnik <sup>164d</sup> Ved'ma An astronomer in some way akin to the *Garabancias*. Witches who interacted with demons.<sup>168</sup>



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

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, Yaxan, Tixal, Meshekh and Tiras. The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Ripat and Togarma. The sons of Yaxan 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 ourselves 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 mces, of which there are Khazars, Pechenegs, Alans, Bulgars, Kanbina (unidentified), Turks, Buz (or Kuz, perhaps Oghuzz), Zakhuk (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 lice along the Great Danube Ricer, that is the Dunai Ricer. The sons of Yaxan, the Greeks, lice in the countries of Ionia and Macedonia. The sons of Madai, the Al'dailash, lice in Khorezm. The sons of Tixal are the Tuscans, who lice in Tuscany on the Ricer Piza. The sons of Meshekh are the Saxons and the sons of Tiras are the Russes.

The Saxons and the Angles lice on the Great Sea, the Russes lice on the Kiev River, which flows into the Gurgan Sea (the Caspian). The sons of Alisha, the Alemani, live between the Iod and Sabtimo 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 Renus (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 Indn'ya, on the Great Sea. They succe never to submit to the Romans and lay concealed 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.

And the Moravians, the Croats, the Serbs, and the Luchanians and the Lyakhs (Poles), and the Krakars, and the Boimin (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".<sup>49</sup>

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.

Russian folkloric tradition has it that many of their vegetables once came from Asia in remote antiquity: buck wheat from Turkestan, peas from China.<sup>170</sup> Their oats, barley, rye and wheat first arrived in the Dunai region from the Indian sub-continent, via the Caucuses.<sup>170</sup> 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.*<sup>171</sup> *Ovoshchi* (meaning "vegetables") came from *ovosht* which was derived from *vagsaiti* (Avestan: "to grow") or the Old Indian *vaksayati*, a connection more faithfully preserved phonetically in the Gothic/Germanic languages.<sup>172</sup>

The Russian word for "wheat" (*pshenitsa*) 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".<sup>173</sup> 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.<sup>174</sup> The Russian word for "porridge", *kasha* (which is found in a number of Eastern European countries), is only barely traceable to the Indo-European.<sup>175</sup>

Perhaps Russians might also have grown egg plants (aubergine). The Russian term *baklazhan*,<sup>176</sup> 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 crops<sup>177</sup> 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.<sup>178</sup> This suggests that apricots initially entered Russia with Turkicspeakers, 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,<sup>179</sup> with the result that famines were a regular occurrence. It took a few hundred years of sustained cultivation

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" (omezh' 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.<sup>181</sup> 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").<sup>182</sup> It is also related to the Old High German sahs ("a knife").<sup>182</sup> In this instance the Slavs and Goths probably utilized sokha scratch ploughs, which scarified the suface 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.<sup>183</sup> 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 *staora* ("huge, horned cattle").<sup>184</sup> From this we get the English word "steer", which came via the Gothic *stiur*.<sup>184</sup> 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 *svein*, 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").<sup>185</sup> *Kaban*, the Russian word for "a boar", comes via the Turkic.<sup>186</sup>

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,

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").<sup>187</sup> One Russian word for "home", *khata*, comes directly from the Avestan Persian word *kata*.<sup>188</sup> 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".<sup>189</sup> 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 folk<sup>190</sup> (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").<sup>59</sup> 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.



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

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 Asaheim, 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 ..."<sup>192</sup>

"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".<sup>193</sup>

"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".<sup>194</sup>

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".<sup>95</sup>

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

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?<sup>106</sup> 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).<sup>197</sup> 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

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.<sup>98</sup> 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 intact<sup>99</sup> 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.<sup>200</sup> Other targets awaited him. The monasteries at Terryglass and Glonenagh were utterly devastated by his swift assaults, their abbots put to the sword.<sup>200</sup> 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 prophesies 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.

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".<sup>201</sup>

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"*.<sup>202</sup> By this, the Persian king went on to say, he meant *every article of wealth in the city*.<sup>202</sup> 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.<sup>202</sup> 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 Caucuses, 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

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".<sup>203</sup>

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.<sup>204</sup>

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.<sup>205</sup> 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.<sup>206</sup> 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

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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.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> 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 slavetrading operation out of Dublin, which had been founded by viking settlers from Norway.<sup>20</sup> 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).<sup>210</sup> I think they were Moors rather than negroes (termed heliar-skinn {Old Icelandic "dark skinned", lit. 'hell-skin', or 'skin of the damned'}).<sup>20a</sup> 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

among the Slavs and Scandinavians, it is my personal belief that there was a propensity for collaboration between the Dublin vikings and Russlanders; 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.<sup>211</sup> 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.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>[213</sup> 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.<sup>214</sup>

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.),<sup>215</sup> and their prows are identical to

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

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.<sup>217</sup> 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.



TE LINECO WAEMBY FFA WAONEH NOĤ NE 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.<sup>218</sup> The passenger load of

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 Russlanders flew war-kites with disturbingly bizarre faces over the battlefield,<sup>219</sup> 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).<sup>220</sup> The Chinese also fielded manned variants as observation platforms, into which battlefield observers were strapped.<sup>220</sup> 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 Sjæland 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.<sup>221</sup> 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.<sup>22</sup> 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").<sup>223</sup> 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'.<sup>223</sup>

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. Norwich<sup>224</sup> 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,<sup>225</sup> 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.

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.<sup>227</sup> 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.<sup>228</sup> 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*,<sup>29</sup> 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 *witchingi* were white wizards. The Germans called some viking raiders *Ascomanni* (perhaps meaning "Ashmen"),<sup>230</sup> 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").<sup>231</sup> I am disinclined to equate *Ascommani* 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 whereever they may be found ruling in the material world. Therefore some of the viking warriors who raged against

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.<sup>232</sup> 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.<sup>23</sup> 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"*.<sup>234</sup> 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.<sup>236</sup> 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.<sup>236</sup> Thus many relics and items of secular and religious writing penned 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

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".<sup>237</sup>

"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;" ",<sup>237</sup> 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)".<sup>257</sup> 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?"* <sup>257</sup> 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.

"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".<sup>28</sup>

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 shun ... 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.



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".<sup>240</sup> 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*).<sup>241</sup> 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 word English word "witch".

*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.<sup>242a</sup> Old Icelandic has conceptually similar terminologies; *visdoms-kona* ("a wise-woman"),<sup>243</sup> visinda-madr ("a soothsayer"): *visinda-kona* ("a wise woman or sybil"): *visinda-tree* ("the tree of knowledge"),<sup>244</sup> and *visi* ("a poet", "a chieftain" or "a leader"). *Visi* was simply another word for a *gothar*. <sup>245</sup> 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".<sup>246</sup>

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,

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 oncenomadic 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-raumr* ("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").<sup>247</sup>

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),<sup>248</sup> lunge down upon the world, thereby melting the mountains and they sink down, making a great plain, upon which the war will be fought.



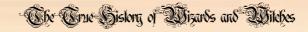
"this earth becomes an iceless, slopeless plain; even the mountain, whose summit is the support of the Kinvar bridge, they keep down, and it will not exist".<sup>249</sup>

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 archenemy 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, Yina, 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 repeople 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.

**S**CANDINAVIANS AND **G**ERMANS 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.<sup>250</sup>

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").<sup>®</sup> 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



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".<sup>251</sup>

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,<sup>252</sup> 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.<sup>253</sup>

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 Ragi 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

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 hardiness, 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",<sup>254</sup> the birth of Russia.

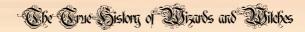
To be sure the Norsemen were beginning to look far beyond their frost-bound northern peninsula. Today's historians simply attribute their adventurous eastern forays and racial politics to trade and a trail-blazing spirit. Commerce was, no doubt, a significant reason for them colonizing Russia, and even 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 Swithiod*. 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 Swithiod they called Mannheim (literally: The home of men), but the Great Swithiod (Greater Scythia) they called Godheim; and of Godheim great wonders and novelties were related".<sup>255</sup>

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".<sup>256</sup>



Earl Hakon the Great was not the only high-born one to look eastward. In the Old Norse tale *Gylfaginning*,<sup>257</sup> 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')".<sup>28</sup> 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.<sup>29</sup> 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).<sup>29</sup> 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 Caucuses.<sup>260</sup> Vernadsky believed there may be a relationship

The Grue History of Wizards and Wilches

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. <sup>261</sup>		
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		
Khorsabad	in Mesopotamia which, in one form, is almost certainly equated with Jesus,		
	the Good Son. <sup>262</sup>		
Dazhbog	A sun God with an Iranian title. <sup>263</sup>		
Stribog	A high-ranking Iranian deity. <sup>264</sup>		
Perun	Cognate with the Vedic war god Indra. <sup>265</sup>		

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 *Volkhwy* (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 *Volkhwy* (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

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".<sup>26</sup> 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.<sup>267</sup> 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

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 semidivine 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.<sup>268</sup> Gutic priests were predominantly magician-smiths.<sup>269</sup>

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.<sup>20</sup> 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".<sup>21</sup> 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"),<sup>22</sup> and *goth-mogn*, *guth-magn*, *gothmagn* ("divine powers", "the gods").<sup>22</sup>

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.<sup>273</sup> White and black magic were acknowledged influences in Gothic society.<sup>273</sup> So too the influence of demonic possession known as *daimonareis*.<sup>274</sup> 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.<sup>275</sup> Through the agency of archaeology it is only now coming to light just how many of these settlements were established during the



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".<sup>26</sup>

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.

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".<sup>27</sup>

"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".<sup>278</sup>

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".<sup>29</sup>

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.<sup>20</sup>

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.<sup>281</sup>

- 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.<sup>62</sup>

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.<sup>282</sup> 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,

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 *Volkhoy* 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.<sup>203</sup> 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



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 *Volkhwy* 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.<sup>284</sup> 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 *Volkhwy* 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 *Volkhwy* 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".<sup>285</sup>

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.<sup>286</sup> 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.<sup>287</sup>

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,<sup>288</sup> 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.<sup>290</sup> 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.<sup>290</sup>

The Grue History of Wizards and Wilebes

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.<sup>291</sup> 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,<sup>291a</sup> hot water baths, complete with plumbing,<sup>291a</sup> 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

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 *Volkhoy*. 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.<sup>392</sup>

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.<sup>293</sup> 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<sup>294</sup> 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.

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 Caucuses.

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.<sup>295</sup> A square-set building was situated there, somewhat similar to a Magian fire temple.<sup>365</sup> Much the same could be said for a kindred construction found at Pliska, Bulgaria, near the royal palace.<sup>365</sup> Nowadays a considerable number of stone towers can still be seen in the Caucuses, 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.<sup>2%</sup> 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.<sup>2%</sup> These, I believe, were tribal standards. Similar images were found in relief on ceramic shingles at a handful of sites, situated in the Crimea.<sup>397</sup> 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. 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.<sup>297</sup> 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)".<sup>28</sup>

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,<sup>299</sup> 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.<sup>300</sup> 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.<sup>300</sup>

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.<sup>301</sup> 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*"

meant "a ball" or "a globule".<sup>301</sup> 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").<sup>30</sup> 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*<sup>302</sup> (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.<sup>310</sup>

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* <sup>303a</sup> with entries found in the extinct pagan treatise *Ostrologiya*,<sup>30a</sup> 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-



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 <sup>304</sup>	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.

For example the Slavic word for Venus, *venyera*, comes from the Latin *venerius*. Likewise *yupiter* 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*.<sup>305</sup> 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".<sup>306</sup> 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.<sup>307</sup> *Planeta*, meaning "a planet" is derived from the Latin and Greek.<sup>308</sup> 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.<sup>39</sup> The priormentioned 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 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).<sup>30%</sup> Amazingly many words had distinct Celtic parallels,<sup>30%</sup> which may have been due to Central Asian Tokharian influence, or, indeed, to words left behind by the Celts

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) lice 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 maces; 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 zocliac) 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 glove 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".<sup>30</sup>

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.<sup>311</sup> 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.<sup>311</sup> Their religious observances appeared to have been a synthesis of Persian and Turkic traditions,<sup>311</sup> with the Shamanic god Tengri considered the cognate of the Persian deity Aspandiat. Not a few shamans, physicians and diviners resided in Varachan.<sup>311</sup> 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

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 (kapishche) 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 Zakarija al-Qazwini reported that the Burdjan followed the religion of the "Magi(cians) and pagans".<sup>312</sup> The term Burdjan is believed to have applied to both Bulgars and Norsemen in his text.<sup>312</sup>

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 Caucuses. 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;<sup>313</sup>

\"The Bordjans (Danubian Bulgars and Norsemen) are the descendants of Younan, son of Japhet.<sup>34</sup> 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 Uzbekhistan (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 jewellry 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.<sup>35</sup>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*.

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 Caucuses 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 (Vlakhs ie; Wallachians of the Carpathians), the Burghaz

(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...".<sup>36</sup>

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).<sup>36</sup> He first learned of the Rus' script from an Armenian emissary who was returning home to the Caucuses 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"*.<sup>364</sup>

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 *knjiga* (Slovenian), and *kniha* (Czech). These words are connected with *kuinig* (Old Turkic), *kuiniv* (Eastern Bulgar dialects), *koniov* (Mordva meaning "paper"), *konyv* (Hungarian), *kiunugæ* (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").<sup>317</sup>

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

reversed characters Avestan Persian phonetic Equivalent Persian Avestan supplied by Al-Nadim Fig 3.4. Example of Rus' writing P P P P P S 9 8 < 4 4 4 G M M M U D K やまくっつ E オ  $\overline{\lambda}$ ~ ~ ~ UU

idea (or proposal)" emmmud k enkruuR 
Ruurkne k dummme 
Rurik ne k dume. Likely English translation: "Rurik says no to the

1. Being a communique from the Russians to the Armenians, the text originally possessed a political significance

of curiosity. 2. The courier guessed the Arab would be unable to recognise what was written, and showed him the Rus' writing for the sake

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 that he was a frained priest. last character 10 seems to have been twisted inside out. Most characters were inverted 180°. The Pahlavi insignia served to indicate 5. Of the 9 different characters used, 7 are almost identical to Avestan script, 1 more closely resembles the Pahlavi "n". Only the

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

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)*.<sup>317a</sup> 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*.<sup>318</sup> 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",<sup>318</sup> the religion of the Aryan forefathers. For this reason it might not be a coincidence that the Slavic word for "knowledge" *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	vest' ("knowledge") <sup>318a</sup>	vedat' ("to know") <sup>318a</sup>
Old Norse	visa ("a verse", "a stanza")3186	vita ("to know") <sup>318b</sup>

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

OLD ICELANDIC		LATIN
visan	"a direction", or "an instruction" <sup>319</sup>	adminstratio, doctrina
visir	"a king" or "a leader" <sup>319</sup>	rex
visinda-bok	"a learned book" <sup>319</sup>	liber, volumen, codex
visinda-kona	"a prophetess" <sup>319</sup>	vates, fastidicus
visinda-mathr	"a soothsayer" <sup>319</sup>	hariolus
visindi	"knowledge", "prophetic revelation",	scientia, vaticinari,
	"magic" <sup>319</sup>	magicus
vis-bending	"knowledge", "intellect", "wisdom",	scientia, doctrina, ingenium
	"wise talk" <sup>319</sup>	

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.