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

If you have books, then you must be able to write, and to write you need an implement. In the ancient world, feathers were sometimes used for this purpose. The word for "a feather pen" pero³²⁰ is the same in the Old Russian, Bulgarian, Serbo-Croat, Slovenian, Czech and Polish. These are related to the Latvian *sparns* ("wing") and Lithuanian *sparnas* ("wing"), which were in turn derived from the Old Indian word *parnam* ("wing" or "pen") and the Avestan *parena* ("pen"). If they used what is ultimately an Avestan or Old Indian word for "pen", does it then follow that the diverse Slavic tribes had been subjected to Magian and Brahminic tuition?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

are applied to the question.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Silver Bulgars' had contacts with the Finnic Chud and Ves tribes, tribes that by some coincidence were also involving themselves in the business of forming this new and powerful Rus' state. Whether it was in Bolgar (the capital of Silver Bulgaria) that Rurik and the Norsemen first met up with the Silver Bulgar Magi, or whether they already had extensive ties with them is uncertain. I tend to believe they already knew each other fairly well, and am willing to speculate that based on later events, that the enhanced contacts of the period were attributable not only to trade, but more importantly to politico-religious developments organized by the Magi of the various tribes. Prince Oleg the Sage's name appears on the wall of an underground stone temple at Bushivs'kiy, so there appears to be a concrete link with some Norsemen and Magians who used a quasi-runic, quasi-glagolithic script.²²⁶

For a start, the mere fact that there were Slav temples at all indicates they were influenced by unusual religious practices, since many European pagans predominantly used open air groves. As this temple inscription bears Oleg's name, it signifies that it must have been constructed during his period of rule, which came to an end in 910 AD. The Magus depicted on its wall is shown offering up a libation before a (sacred) tree, declaring himself to be Oleg's sacrificer, named Mirobog²²⁸ In the Slavic his name means "God of the world", "God of Peace", or perhaps even "God of the Mihr fire", a divine priest who acted as the tender of god's son, Svarozhich, the fire of peace.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Rogals who ruled Rus

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

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

Sun-Kings had probably lived in Europe for countless generations, dating back to the incursions of the Indo-European *Riks* (kings who were like the sun), or the time of Roman domination, when Mithraic legions transported their Iranian creed all over the continent. But, as with the Hungarian royals, a good many of them may have traced their origins to Khorezm, which, in the language of the *Avesta* means "The Land of the Sun" - *Khvar-zem*.³⁹

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Balkans.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Pagan saints - the fravashis

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

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

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

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

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





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

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

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

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

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

Fravashis figured heavily in the Iranian (and presumably the pagan Rus' and Norse) mind, for during the final apocalyptic battle, the black Fravashis (those who were alive in death) would join the black angels and that living death Ahriman, as they pushed forward to assail the heavenly fortress, built around the devil's escape hole. The sentinels on those battlements were angels and white fravashi saints, heroes of goodness (such as kings) who would one day charge out of heaven's gates, falling in behind their Saviour (Sraosha) in his solar chariot, heading a column of mounted angels with spears, ready to slay the Fiend and his contrary legions.⁵⁷³

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

We know that the pagan Slavs erected idols dedicated to the Magi,³⁵ so the original Rus' pagan saints might simply have been ancestors, or someone of far greater potency such as a fallen chieftain, battle-hero or Magus.

Dibile iravashis

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

"His enemies dreaded him; his friends put their trust in him, and relied on his power and on himself.

... People sacrificed to Odin and the twelve chiefs from Asaland, and called them their gods, and believed in them long after". 376

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Wack fravashis

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In Yngvar's Saga, a noisy demon is said to have materialized before Soti, one of Yngvar's men. He warned Soti that "Dragons ate the body of the king and his daughters, and it was into dragons that some people believe they were transformed". 366 Perhaps apostasy is insinuated in this passage.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Wagus, the Rosetta stone of European paganism

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Volkhog-She Kussian Wagi

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

From Volkhv, the words volshebstvo ("magic"), volshebnik ("a wizard" or "a sorcerer"), volshebnitsa ("a sorceress"), and volos ("hair") are derived. 426

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

And then we have a broad selection of common pan-Slavic words meaning "a werewolf" (volkolaka (Russian), vovkulak (Ukrainian), v′rkolak (Bulgarian), vukodlak (Serbo-Croat), volkodla (Slovenian), and vvilkolak (Polish)). 433

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The black Magianism of the devil-worshipers might have penetrated rather deeply into Europe. The white Magi spoke of the "vexation owing to various degrees of promise-breaking". 41 By breaking solemn oaths, one could perform unhallowed witchcraft; evil, maelific magic. And it is here that we discover the nature and psychology of the European warlock. The English word "warlock" originated from the Old High German words werloga or werlogan during the Middle Ages. These words meant "to lie", "to betray", or "one given to performing black magic". In England this became werloga (Old English), and warloghe or warlach (Middle English), meaning "one that breaks faith", "a scoundrel", or "a devil". 412 Thus we might suspect that quite apart from their use of harm magic, that warlocks were

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

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

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

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

"I saw a sunless hall, North-facing on a dead man's strand,

A poison-dripping roof above, a wall of worming snakes all round;

There waded through its marshy wastes wolf-like and murdering men;

There Nithogg suckled on damned flesh, the wolf gnawed human flesh: need you know more?" 445

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

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

Iranian Magus priests executed non-royal criminals in a roughly similar way, draping the flayed remains of executed criminals from a tree top. During a dispute between the Persian king Pacurius and the Armenian leader Arasces, the Magi intervened to determine whether or not the vassal had violated his solemn treaty oath with the Persians. 497 It was a concealed matter, and the Armenian was unlikely to compromise himself willingly, so until he confessed the Magi could not punish him. To effect a complete admission of his guilt "the Magi, after putting the whole tent under a spell by means of some magic rites, bade the king" to try and elicit the truth from Arasces. 447 The spells worked, and the hidden lies which were made under damning oaths leapt forth. 447 "Then at length the Magi passed judgment against him as having violated the treaty and the oaths". Arasces was incarcerated for his part in the conspiracy in the Prison of Oblivion (an eternal dungeon from whence there was no return), whereas Bassicius, not being of the royal blood, was flayed and had his straw-packed skin hung in a tree. 447

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The white Wagi

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The black Magi

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"for of those seven evil-doers (the arch-demons), one was Az-i Dahak by whom (evil) witchcraft was first glorified; he exercized the sovereignty of misgovernment, and desires a life of the unintellectual for the world. One was Azi Sruvar, by whom infesting the highway in terrible modes, frightful watchfulness of the road, and devoring of horse and man were perpetrated. One was Vadak the mother of Dahak, by whom adultery was first committed, and by it all lineage is disturbed, control is put an end to, and without the authority of the husband an intermingling of son with son occurs. One was the Viptak (the originator of sodomy) ... carrying on a practice which effaces and conceals the race of the living". 460

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Wolkhug's role in society

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

The Ciruc Sistory of Wizards and Wilehos

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Officer of the prince 80 grivna⁴⁷⁷
Prince's steward 80 grivna⁴⁷⁷
Prince's farm manager 12 grivna⁴⁷⁷
Prince's farm overseer 12 grivna⁴⁷⁷
Stable master 80 grivna⁴⁷⁷
Tutor/nurse 12 grivna⁴⁷⁷
Laborer 5 grivna⁴⁷⁷

Ognishchanin 80 grivna, but if the Ognishchanin had been killed near a barn or cow-shed the offender was to be slaughtered without mercy, pursuant to Article 21; no payment in lieu was acceptable. A sub-clause invoked the death penalty for killing the Ognishchanin's lowly assistant steward under the same circumstances.⁴⁷⁷

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

HAVANAN

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

RATHWISKAR

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

ATAREVAKHSH

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

ZOTA

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

MORTAR



ALTAR

SROSHAVAR'Z

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

FRABARDAR

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

ASNATAR

HE WHO CLEANSES ALL EQUIPMENT USED DURING THE CEREMONY

ABERAD

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

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

Difices of the subordinate Magi

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

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

TENDER OF THE FIRE, WOOD COLLECTOR AND PURIFIER

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

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

EQUIPMENT BEARER AND USHER

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

SACRIFICIAL-GIFT BEARERS

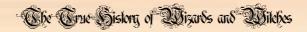
In Slavia this ceremonial position equated with that of *Aberad* Magus. The *Aberad* brought pitchers of milk and holy spring water to the altar during the *Haoma* ceremony. At other times of the day the *Aberad* relieved devotees of the gifts they wished to bestow upon the gods, and brought them into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

CLEANSERS

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

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

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



ASSISTANT PRIEST AND READER

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

PLANT GATHERER

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

FIRE GUARDIAN

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

CHOIR

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

The hierarchy of The Magi

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

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

EHRPAT

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

ZOTA

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

DASTUR / RATU - HIGH PRIEST

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

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

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

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

MAGUPAT

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

MAGUPATAN MAGUPAT

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

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

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

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

During the Middle Ages one of Rome and Byzantium's gravest political and religious concerns was the existence of a Bogomil Anti-Pope¹⁹⁴ in the Balkans, a key figure whose name cropped up time and again in matters relating to heresy. Perhaps the "Supreme Magus" who formerly resided among the Rus' later re-emerged in Mediaeval history as the untonsured Anti-Pope mentioned by Stoyanov, he who had shifted into the Balkans following the conversion of Rus' to Christianity. There he welded the heretics and magicians into a single coherent Bogomil movement, by an agreed oath of brotherhood. His success in achieving this can perhaps be attributed to the fact that he as the only truly common link between all the various cults, and an extremely unifying force amongst the pagan elements. But, did so many organized cults join forces under the *Rotu* following a formal council, during which a planned collaboration or amalgamation of Magi and heretics was discussed, and formally figured out between all parties? Or would it be a haphazard amalgamation that would take centuries? Could such a hypothetical council have been in any way linked with the military pact being organized between the Bulgar Prince Vladimir-Rasate and the Frankish Magus-King Arnulf? Many questions still remain.

As early as 1075 AD, Adam of Bremen spoke of an organized pagan priesthood, complete with monastic-style raiment and their own pagan "Pope", then operating among the Prussians and Balts. This priesthood included god-priests⁴⁰⁵ who were comparable in internal status to a Christian bishop. I believe that Adam's observations are nothing less than a description of a Zoroastrian or Zurvanite *Magupatan Magupat* and his *Dasturs*, very likely saturated with exiled *Volkhvy*, plus substantial elements of the indigenous Baltic Magus priesthood.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Priestly accoustrements

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

THE ROBES OF THE MAGI

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

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

The Come History of Wisards and Wilehes



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

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

Fig 6. Assorted Medean headgear.

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

Fig 8. Metal plaque from pagan Scandinavia. I believe it represents a caftaned $\,$

Magus priest or priestess bearing a conical hawan libation cup.

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

Fig 10. Medean bonnet.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Building further on this argument, Mediaeval Russian males also wore a knee-length overgarment known as a *svyato*⁵¹² (which is cognate with the Slavic words *sventa* or *sveta* 4"holy" or "saintly"}). The word *svyato* evidently originated from the Avestan Persian *spenta* (a word also meaning "saintly" or "holy", and which referred to the Magus saints), rather than the Latin *sanctus* or the Greek *hagios* (which applied to Christian saints). For this reason I suspect Russian men wore a Magian holy outer garment over the top of their *kurta*. Since they trussed themselves about the waist with the obligatory sash belt, it is plausible that the linen shirt went ungirdled, and the belt was worn around the *svyato* instead. Nevertheless they might have worn two sash belts, one securing their shirt, the other their *svyato*. It is my contention that these varied holy shirts were worn by Magian Turkic tribesmen (probably Bulgars), Russians and many other Slavs, plus an undetermined number of Norsemen too.

Zoroastrians (and presumably Zurvanites) considered it sinful to take off the shirt and sacred girdle (*kustik*) because of their efficacy in providing protection against the *drugs* (demons). It was a crime punishable by whipping to walk more than a few paces without the belt on. So when Magians changed their clothing, and re-girdled, they did so in a stationary position. Accordingly the Magian sacred shirts often became very dirty, owing to the fact that they were removed only with great trepidation. Is it a coincidence that another Russian word for "a shirt", *rubashka*, comes from the root word *rub*, which implies they were

grubby in appearance? Well they were heavily soiled in Leo the Deacon's account of the Russes he encountered. Only Prince Svyatoslav's white smock was free from the ingrained sweat and dirt that so tarnished the clean appearance of his many Rus' troops. In the colder months it was evidently worn under clothing, with its hem left hanging out, giving the impression of a dress, apron, or even a kilt, which had been attached.

Magian scripture tells us that the *kustik* belt's protective power lay in a magical thread sewn into it. Pagan Russes also wore this type of "uniform" (a white smock and belt) and considered it obscene to remove their sash belt, which was of the same dimensions as the Magian *kustik*. What is even more overwhelming is that the Russian word for "a sash" or "a belt" is *kushak*, and therefore similar to *kustik*. *Kushak* is also the Turkic word for "a belt", so it is possible that the concept of a *kushak* sash belt was imported into Russia with the Turkic Bulgars, but I am more inclined to think that it was a term mutually inherited by both Slavs and Turks. Consider also that the Russians have the word *poyasnit*, which means "to put on a belt". The root word in this case is *yas* or *po-yas*, which suggest that a person became enlightened or illuminated through the act of putting on a belt. Due to the apparently Magian nature of the Russian attire, the source of this light and wisdom was most likely the sun, the divine *Ahum* Mazda. Thus *poyasnit* was "to become enlightened", or be a true Mazda-yasner (ie; white Magian) by wearing the belt.

The Russian word *beliy* ("white") and the Lithuanian *baltas* ("white"), could be related to the Old Icelandic *belti*, as well as the Swedish, Danish and Norwegian word *balte* (all of which mean "a belt"). Here there appears to be a connection between "white" and "belt". I perceive this Nordo-Balto-Slavic phonetic connection as arising from the interrelationship between white Magians and the all-important *kustik* belt.

Russian and Finnish pagan priests probably wore a *kebenyak* also, a hooded overgarment or cape. The term is derived from the Turkic and Kirghiz words *kebanak*. These I link with the verb *kebovat'* (Russian: "to perform sorcery", "to tell the future"), a variant of which is found in the Finnish/Saami languages. In Saami a *kobbat* was "a summer garment", and related to the word *kobenyak* ("a hood", "a hat", "a bag", or "a sack"). Thus there appears to be a link between magic and a hooded garment, in the Russian language particularly. Based on the Turkic affiliations with these words, such a magical garment was probably imported into Russia from Eurasia, together with other oriental religious traditions.

Russians wore caftans just as the Magians once did. *Sarafan* (Russian: "a caftan") comes from the Turkic *sarapa*, or the Persian *serapa*, which meant "a garment of honour", or "a ceremonial garment". Doubtless to say these were not Christian ceremonial caftans, but Magian (Turkic shamans and Buddhist monks wore safron robes, rather than the more impressive Magian caftans, during their rites). As in Magian times the Russian caftan was traditionally worn with a girdle.

Russian women commonly wore a pointy tiara-like headdress known as the *kokoshnik* (so called because it resembles a cock's crest), which secured a veil in place. Strabo tells us that "*Persians wear turbans not unlike those of the priestly Magi*". From other accounts we know that the full attire consisted of a colourful caftan worn over a linen shirt (*kurta*), plus a turban of sorts (worn by *Ehrpats* especially). Turbans not dissimilar to those of the Magi were worn by Finns all along the Upper Volga, presumably as far north as the lands of the Volga Bulgars. As for Russian usage they seem absent from written sources, but are seemingly depicted in manuscript illuminations.⁵¹⁷

As in Scythia, Mediaeval Russians continued to wear pointed hats, often lined with fur along the rim.⁵¹⁸ Similar hats were worn by Magians. In Russia the lavishness of a hat was related to the wearer's social status.

The name *shober*⁵¹⁹ (which applied to Russian coats of Persian design) was linguistically derived from the Arabic.

Foot cloths were commonly worn in Russia, providing adequate extra insulation against the biting coldness of their frigid environs. Since Magians were required to wear two shoes at the same time on each foot, foot cloths might also have represented the second shoe. There is also a striking similarity in the boot style preferred by Mediaeval Russians and the Magians.⁵¹⁸

MASK

The Rus' Volkhvy had to wear masks to perform their ceremonies correctly. Because they were Magi, then the type of mask that Lozko refers to would probably be the Magian mouth veil. A mask, handkerchief or veil of cloth was traditionally worn tied around the mouth of any Magus who stood in the presence of the holy fire, ensuring the priest did not desecrate the sacred flame by breathing on it.

In the *Primary Chronicle* we discover that some Rus' pagan priests performed their ceremonies or pantomimes wearing comedy masks. The Magi simply did not wear comedy masks during a traditional *Haoma* ceremony, so this might mean that there were other pagan priests in Rus' who were not Magi, and who performed rituals that were essentially Buddhist or pagan gnostic in nature, perhaps Dionysian, Mithraic or Neo-Pythagorean. Nonetheless the Magi did perform divine comedies, a form of spiritual theatre during which important religious and mythological events were portrayed. By emulating the actions of the gods they believed they could bring about the same series of miraculous events in day to day existence.⁵²¹

CUPS AND HORNS

The drink of immortality was always held in an ornate vessel of some kind. It could be a cup, a rhyton (a drinking horn), a gold or silver "chalice", or a ritual bucket (for mead). In connection with this, a great number of conical glass cups have been unearthed in mediaeval pagan settlements throughout Rus' and Scandinavia. This style of drinking vessel resembles the glass *Haoma* cups of the Magi (called *hawan*). Similar libation cups can often be seen in the hands of people depicted in Pecheneg funeral statues, and on the wall reliefs of the Iranian *daklmas* (death houses) and Darius' royal monuments, or even on Assyrian reliefs.

Glass goods were a luxury item during the pagan era, in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe, appearing mainly as bowls, small beads, bangles, and of course these conical cups. Linguistics sheds some light on the ethnicity of the glass-blowers who crafted them. The Old Russian word for "glass" st"klo is cognate with st"klo or tsklo (Bulgarian), steklo (Slovenian), stklo (Old Czech), szklo (Polish), staklo, sklo or tsklo (Serbo-Croatian). Therefore Slavs applied similar terminology when referring to the produce of this specialized trade. The Balts evidently shared the same technology considering their use of the words stiklas (Lithuanian: "glass" or "a phial") and stikls (Latvian: "glass"). These many words originated in the Gothic stikls ("a goblet", "a cup", or even "a chalice"), and the Old High German stechal ("a wine cup"). Signature cup" (signature cup"). Signature cup"). Signature cup"). Signature cup" (signature cup"). Signature

Goths were the only Europeans to fashion glassware outside of the Roman empire during the 4th Century AD. Archaeologically this "Chernyakov glass" tradition was distributed across a broad expanse of land, spanning between the Ukraine, through the Carpathians (where the main Gothic glass production center was situated), Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Czechoslovakia, and Scandinavia (where the heaviest imaginable concentrations of these artifacts are found). ⁵²³ In short, we find Gothic glass goods in geographical regions that share a common linguistic inheritance regarding glass and glassware. These were also areas where ethnic Goths dwelt. In the Gothic and Old High German it more specifically denoted a drinking cup, or more particularly a libation cup or chalice.

Owing to its similarity with the previous words, the Old Icelandic *stikill* ("the pointed end of a horn")⁵²⁴ enables us to guess that the Goths crafted pointy glass drinking horns (perhaps for ritual usage, but at the very least for drinking bouts); again something already known to archaeologists. This might account for the presence of these same vessels in Slavia, Germany and Scandinavia over a broad time expanse, even into the Mediaeval pagan era. They could also be found in Anglo-Saxon England as well. Since the Goths had their own pagan priesthood, of either a Magian or pagan gnostic persuasion this explains why these Gothic glass conical horns (fig 12.1) so closely resemble Magian *hawan* libation cups.

Aryan-pagans used horns, or wooden and ceramic cups to hold the ritual drink Soma,

the foremost sacramental libation of the Hindus. For them, *Soma* was the "cup of clarified butter", a cup which was usually placed at the head of a devotee after they died.

The drinking horn mount shown here (fig 12.2) is of triangular shape, and can be identified as Medo-Scythian. That is, it originated in the milieu of the Magi and Scythians. It played a similar function to the triangular mounts on a horn found at the 6th-7th Century AD royal Anglo-Saxon site of Sutton Hoo, in East Anglia. Other artwork, seemingly Medo-Scythian in nature was also discovered at Sutton Hoo. 525

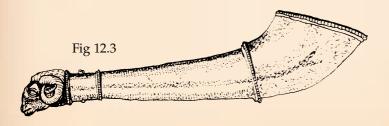




In Achaemenid times there were four distinct types of drinking vessel, three of which were incapable of being placed down without spilling the contents. These were rhytons (drinking horns), short metal cups ending in an animal head, and conical beakers. Libation buckets were the last type of drink receptacle, and were made from metal or ceramics.

Sassanian Zoroastrian rhytons were large in comparison to their earlier Parthian and Achaemenid variants, characteristically terminating in an equine sculpture. 527

For their part the Medes decorated their drinking apparatus with the typical ram's head motif. The depicted rhyton (fig 12.3) comes from the Koban region of the Caucuses, not far from Russia. The Koban exemplar was of Medean manufacture, and therefore used by Magians in that region, or brought there as pilfered booty. Owing to the close connections between Persia and this area, it is more likely to have been used for its original purpose, rather than simply transported there by accident.



BARSOM TWIGS

During a *Haoma* ceremony, the officiating Magus priest held a bundle of magical twigs in his left hand, and a single twig in his right as a prayer was recited. *Barsom* twigs opened a connection between the physical and metaphysical world, and were traditionally made from tamarisk twigs, though at some point during the past 1,000 years the Parsees have variously used pomegranate twigs, or metal wands. The magnificence of a given *Yasna* (*Haoma*) ceremony was determined by the number of *barsom* twigs used; the larger the bundle, the more powerful and glorious the rite. For the duration of the ceremony the *barsom* twigs rested upon a *malh-rui*, a metallic wand stand with crescent-shaped ends. *Barsom* twigs were originally cut from the tree with a knife as the *Ashem Vohu* prayer was uttered, and subsequently blessed with holy water during a ritual known as the *khub*. These twigs were gathered together and bound up a prescribed number of times with a *kustik* belt or date palm leaf (fig 13).

Fig 13



In all these ritual faggots resembled brooms, making it highly noteworthy that the word for "a broom" throughout various parts of Europe was *besom*. So there is clearly a linguistic association between Magian *barsoms* and European *besoms* (brooms, and indeed European witches' brooms). Many wands were burned in the sacred flame, but following a typical *Haoma* ceremony leftover *barsom* twigs were issued to the faithful to take back to their homes, for use during the blessing of meals, during the Magian grace. Consecrated green *barsom* twigs were kept on a high shelf in Zoroastrian / Zurvanite homes to impart protection to residents. These had to be sufficiently far from the ground to prevent women from accidentally defiling them by coming too close to the *barsom*, while menstruating. Eastern Finns were known to have kept similar "twigs" in their Lud cabins, and in just the same manner, but we cannot connect them with *barsoms* linguistically. The Norsemen used lot-twigs, naming them *blaut-tein*. 528

STRAINING CLOTH

The Magi needed to strain the pulverized *Haoma* plant within the mortar to extract its life-saving essence. The *Haoma* straining was often the longest part of the preparation, and was carried out by a Magus performing the role of *Havanan*. To sieve the pulp they used linen, lace or woollen cloth spun, and woven on the looms of virgins and spinsters. Similar kinds of cloth were known in Rus', either manufactured on their own looms, or imported. The looming of wool and the making of lace were highly specialized tasks, requiring adequate looming facilities and skills. In Western Europe, the best of these workshops existed in Spain, England and Flanders. The importation of woollen cloth to Rus', from the Flanders area, is

known from the archeological context, so there was definite maritime contact between Rus' and the Lowlands during the pagan and early Mediaeval era. We have no historical evidence that cloth was used in a ritual context in pagan Russia however, but being Magian they no doubt did so.

Although unspecified by Lozko in her details of *Volkhvy* ritual equipment, the *Haoma* strainings performed by the Rus' Magi may have required the use of a large, often unclosed, ring made of precious metal, to which between three and seven lengthy strands of hair from the tail of a white bull were affixed. Such a ring (which the Magi called *varesa*, or *waras fuliyan*) could only be used as long as the bull lived, and had to be reconsecrated for use before each ceremony. The heavy *Varesa* rings, designed of precious metal, were supposed to be discarded once the bull had died.

Varesa rings were depicted in ritual scenes engraved on Mithraic gems, providing proof that Roman Mithraism and certain Egyptian rites contained common features of Magian ritualism. They also resemble a ring shown in the hand of a horned dancer embossed on the well-known libation horn unearthed in Denmark. Throughout the Celtic and Germanic world large numbers of what seem to be torques have been found in votive deposits. Were these torques just exquisite pieces of jewellry, or could they have been discarded *Haoma* straining rings? If some of them were straining rings, then the eyelets at each end of these many torques may have been used to attach and anchor the lengths of tail hair.

BLESSED RODS

The Magi also had a type of rod with a piece of iron running down the center, and a cut gem at one end. It may have closely resembled the "wand" remains unearthed at the Sutton Hoo burial.⁵²⁹

The Magus' rod was supposed to have been surmounted by a cut diamond, (which were probably used for astronomical purposes, possibly for the drilling of shafts through rock, crafting talismanic gemstones, or shaping other substances considered too hard for metal tools. Some astronomical devices in the *Almagest* required precision cutting and drilling to achieve the proper results.

The Magi were supposed to have maintained the lapidary skills of ancient Babylon. One account of Simon the Magus' miraculous abilities (from St Clement of Rome) states that he could bore through solid rock as if it were mere clay (no doubt the action of a diamond tipped drilling rod). Engraved gems were sometimes found in the keeping of witches during the Inquisitions, so these magical rods were quite possibly used to execute these mystical etchings.

Norsemen probably used magical rods, for the term *tein-vondr* "a wand" or "a rod" exists in Old Icelandic, ⁵³¹ as does *spa-gandr* ("a divination rod"). ⁵³²

Special rods were also used by the heathen priests during the tending of the sacred fires, to heap the ash in a special way, and shift sacred woods into position for combustion.

CAULDRON AND TRIPOD

The cauldron was a quintessential item of Magian equipment, needed to boil the milk, holy spring water and *Haoma*. Cauldrons were also used by the Aryans to boil the horse sacrificed during the *Asvamedha* ritual. Mediaeval Europe experienced the return of cauldrons (once widely used during pagan times). If one lends credibility to the sort of details that emerged during the witch trials, cauldrons were being employed by the white and black "witches" during their assemblies. The ceremonial use of these cauldrons by both groups of witches is not so much evidence of "Hubble, bubble, toil and trouble", but much rather the ongoing performance of Magian (or even Aryan pagan) sacrificial rites during the Middle Ages.



As discussed, *chara* was the main Slavic word for "a cauldron", and linguistically it preserves the connection between magic and the cauldron, not to mention the oriental origins of these concepts. We find another Russian term for "a cauldron", *kotyol* (and variants of it), mutually shared by the diverse Slavic and Germanic-speaking nations. Some have guessed that it came from the Latin word for "a basin", *catilus*. This is where the English word *kettle* comes from.

Other utensils were needed to contain the holy butter (to fuel the fire), spades, cauldrons and diverse plates and bowls. The Old Russian word *chasha* meant "a cup" or "a bowl". The same word was found in the Bulgarian and Serbo-Croatian. It also appears as *czasza* (Polish), *chishe* (Czech), and *kosi* (Old Prussian), at to mention a few other independently evolved forms found in the Baltic region. There is a similarity between these words and the Old Indian *casaka* ("a cup" or "a goblet") and the Armenian *chashak* ("an eating utensil"). To

this I will also add *tashta*, Avestan for "a bowl" or "a saucer", vessels used during the *Haoma* ritual. Thus, bearing in mind the Magian presence in Rus', it may well be that the word *chasha* (and its variants) entered into the Baltic, Russian, Bulgarian and diverse Slavic lexicons with terms like *dron tashta* ("a dron platter used in Magian services") and *surakhdar tastija* (a straining plate with nine holes punched in it, again used in the *Haoma* ceremony).

A number of artifacts found in Scandinavia and northern Russia display not only Russian manufacture, but substantial Sassanian Persian stylistic features. For this reason they may have been ritually used, but it is impossible to prove they had anything beyond secular use.

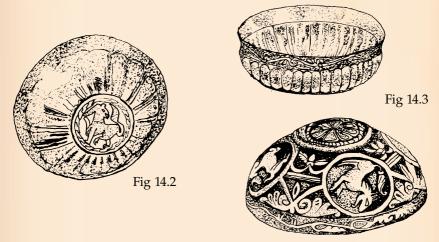


Fig 14.1. A panel from the Iron Age Gundestrup cauldron, Jutland, Denmark. Note the elephants, griffons and menacing wolf or dog, as well as the head band and torque worn by the figure shown. Considering the smallness of their ears, the elephants depicted were most likely of the Indian variety. Fig 14.2. Sassanian or Romanesque-style bowl, Uppsala Sweden, 11th C. AD. Fig 14.3. Sassanian-style bowls from the Russo-Scandinavian region, 10th C.

WANDS

Wands were sturdy wooden sticks, or precisely carved bone objects, both of which tapered upwards into a slender point, and were used by the Magi and various pagan gnostic sects to direct magical forces and cosmic energies. This they believed could alter events in this world, or bring about certain outcomes. Wands were made from a variety of woods most likely cut from a tree within the sacred grove, not just any tree. According to descriptions of the Rus' wands published by Lozko, their shapes varied. On the basis of their general shape, some could be loosely compared with the 6th Century (Swedish)

Lindholm wand,⁵³⁷ but Lozko mentions that they were often ornately incised with intertwined zoomorphic creatures, or creatures with hands, nor do they appear to have been etched with runes or similar characters.

Magical babges of office

Much of the mage's "miraculous" magical apparatus was contained in his or her own pagan reliquary. For many pagan Europeans these heathen reliquaries were small cupreous receptacles in which they respectfully held swastika and runic amulets, varied animal teeth, amber, and precious gemstones (with talismanic virtues).⁵⁸⁸

Other styles of reliquary could be found, in various shapes and sizes, from cloth bags and animal skin pouches, to chests. For instance at least one wolf-shaped pagan reliquary has been found in Europe. The shape of this particular pagan reliquary might be purely coincidental, yet it could also indicate that some of the pagan magicians operating in early Mediaeval Europe were related to the pagan priests of the Slavs, the *Volkhvy* "wolves", or indeed *Volkhvy* who had migrated onto the continent following the conversion of Kievan Rus'. *Volkhvy* of either sex (especially women) probably used the same sort of magical paraphernalia as the Magi.

MORTARS

Sacred metal and stone mortars were operated by the *Havanan* during the course of the *Haoma* ceremony, to crush the sacred *Haoma*. *Toloch'*, the Modern Russian word meaning "to crush" comes from the Old Russian *tlku* and *tolchi*, meaning "to push something around", or "to strike", "to smash", "to sound something", or "to spurt out". ⁵⁴⁰ Variants of it can be found in the Slovenian, Ukrainian, Belorussian and Serbo-Croat. ⁵⁴⁰ Now I suggest that the correlation between "to strike", "to smash", and "to sound" is derived from one element of the Magian *Haoma* rite. In it the *Havanan* pushes the *Haoma* around inside the mortar, smashes the sacred plant with the pestle, thus causing the life-giving *Haoma* essence to spurt out. Upon completion of the *Haoma* crushing, the Magus repeatedly struck the mortar with the pestle causing a metallic ringing to sound.

The Old Russian, Bulgarian, Czech and Serbo-Croat word for "a mortar" was *stupa*, or minute variations of the same word. In the Slovenian it was *stopa*, and in the Polish *stepa*. These are supposedly related to the Middle-low-German *stampe* and the Anglo-Saxon *stampe* and the Old High German *stampf*.⁵⁴¹ *Pest* or *pestik*, the Russian words for "a pestle", can also be found in a variety of other Slavic languages.⁵⁴² The ancestry of the word is uncertain, but it might be the Old Indian *pinasti* ("to grind something into a powder") or *pistas* ("ground" or "crushed").⁵⁴²

TONGS AND LADLE

The Russian word for "a ladle" is *cherpak*, and the verb *cherpat*'. It is remotely possible that *cherpak* is connected with the Avestan *chamach*, the ladle used to pour butter onto the sacred flame. The Russian for tongs, *shchiptsy* might be related to *chipyo*, the Avestan word for the set of tongs used to feed the holy fires, and turn the combusting fuel.

CRYSTAL

Since *Volkhvy* are believed to have known the arts of lapidary, and kept books on the subject of crystal-gazing we can assume they used crystalline prisms or balls to see spectres or portends of the future. The crystal ball shown here (fig 15.1) was found in Gotland, and worn around the neck like jewellry.

In distant Britain, crystal balls were found in the graves of well-todo Anglo-Saxon women, together with silver spoons that had been pierced in the bowl numerous times.⁵⁴³ I believe these spoons were

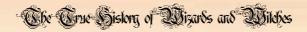


either used for ritual straining, or similar to the fire spoons used by magicians, when placing offerings of incensed wood into the holy fires. As in Persia wooden sacrificial chips were probably placed into holes that pierced the bowl of these spoons. Such devices enabled fire-tenders to hold offerings over the holy fire without burning their hands. A similar device was chiselled into a Mithraic statue of Kronos, though the head was not spoon shaped in that particular example. As with the Gothic crystal ball illustrated, Anglo-Saxon crystal balls were mounted inside strips of metal, which wrapped around them, and permitted them to be slung from the belt.

Crystal balls were used by the Celts too. The druids habitually carried crystal spheres known as "Serpent eggs"⁵⁴ which were believed to impart various powers. Being caught with one inside the Roman capital was enough to get you executed. A great many centuries later we find a man crystal-gazing in a 1499 AD woodcut, with a dog lashed to his arm.⁵⁵ Dogs were of course esteemed by the Magi for their ability to keep evil at bay!

MIRROR

Polished metal or glass mirrors had long been used by pagans as a reflective surface in which to look for demons and the souls of the dead during necromantic communal seances, or to summon friends, relatives, and heroes from beyond the grave. We know that heathen Russes had written works on this form of divination. Mirrors were used for magical purposes in the ancient world, and at least one fancy bronze mirror was found in Ireland. While the mirror was used for reasons of vanity, it is also possible that it served as a necromantic device.



LENSES

It has been hypothesized that lenses were used by the pagan Rus' astronomers during star-gazing sessions, ⁵⁵⁶ or to scrutinize the face of the moon or sun for important signs. They probably had further application in specialized handcrafts, particularly the fashioning of exquisite jewellry. Those who have seen the minute detail achieved by the heathen goldsmiths and enamellers (eg; beads of gold only 10 microns wide), in Scandinavia especially, will have few doubts they had some means of magnifying objects.

TALISMANS

In the ancient world talismans were produced by diverse means, especially low and high magic. In Iran, when a young person came of age, the Magi gave them a small bag of amulets which they wore around their neck, just in front of the throat. This they believed would provide protection against harm. Pagan Russian mystical wards and amulets often bore esoteric images of animals.⁵⁵⁷

One particularly interesting talisman was a disk recovered during the Novgorod excavations. This circular plate of bone was etched with a 9-rayed solar disk being smothered by a dragon (an image also common to the Baltic area), and lacking any written inscription. The real meaning of the motif found on the disk, I believe, can be found in the Magian text *Dadistan-i-Dinik LXIX*. The causer of eclipses was Gokihar, a large 'beast of the apocalypse' with a long head and tail,⁵⁵⁸ a creature destined to be flung down upon the earth preceding the Resurrection. Every so often it would devor the sun. This may have been a magical device to cause or prevent eclipses, or designed to free the sun from Gokihar's jaws. Lead scrolls were often used in Greece and Rome to lift fevers, or for the etching of permanent curses, following which they were buried. At least one lead scroll was excavated at Novgorod.

SWORD

From pagan Rus' we have no mention of the *Volldwy* wielding a sword during their rituals. But the most famous of the Rus' magicians were all warrior princes, and thus did carry them. Originally the Magus sorcerers used their magical iron swords (with boxwood handles) to gain control over spiritual entities which they had summoned.

Clues as to whether the *Volkhvy* Magi once wielded swords of dazzling iron can be found in the words *mech* (Old Slavonic), *mich* (Ukrainian), *mech* (Bulgarian), *mach* (Serbo-Croat), *miecz* (Polish), *mekeis* (Gothic), *mækir* (Old Icelandic), *mece* (Old English), *maki* (Old Saxon), *miekka* (Finnish). These are believed to have come from the Latin word *masto* ("to kill" or "to cut someone's throat"), though they might also be related to the Middle Persian word *magen*, which specifically means "a sword". The Middle Persian *magen* connection seems particularly strong in the case of the Teutonic languages. If the European Magi were sword-

bearers we are able to identify them not as Brahman or Zoroastrian Magi, but as the Zurvanite dualist Magus-wizards who had been run out of Central Asia many hundreds of years prior.

STYLI

Lozko mentions that the Russes had sharpened bone or metallic implements decorated by various images. ⁵⁶⁰ These enigmatic pointed instruments are actually of uncertain usage, but may have been wands, lancets or writing implements.

Since writing was deemed an almost magical pursuit, it may be that these wand-like objects were used as styli to etch birch scrolls and wax or clay tablets. From the Novgorod excavations we know that mediaeval Russians wrote on birch bark scrolls by etching characters onto their surface. Many of the styli^{so} found there had a spade-like end, used to smooth the surface of frequently-encountered waxen tablets (known as *tsery*).

Lozko also tells us that these implements possessed images at one end, in various poses. Since Slavs were recorded as having body scarring and tattoos it is equally possible that these objects acted as blood-letters, or were used to tattoo marks onto a devotee's body. Certainly Balkan pagans spilled their blood to satisfy cloud demons, for the release of one's blood seems to have had a quasi-necromantic function, serving as an offering to the demons. Maybe the crowning images depict a demon who derived its feeding-rights from a particular instrument?

MEDALS AND MEDALLIONS

The pagan Russes were medals or medallions of precious metal, hung from the neck or pinned to clothing. These were used during the performance of sorceries, or served to protect the wearer. Some medallions took the form of eastern coinage, even Sassanian dirhems. Others were belt plaques of the sort used to decorate status belts and riding equipment throughout the Russian steppe and Central Asia. Medals were also commonly worn by Gypsies, ⁵⁶² people perhaps of Magian bloodlineage.

GEM AND JEWELLRY TALISMANS

The pagan Russes apparently possessed magical talismans made in the form of fibulas, brooches, gems, buckles and other items of an aesthetic nature. These were normally etched with solar or lunar symbols, or cosmological montages composed of "totemic" animals.

It is difficult to assess what these Russian objects actually signified, but in classical magic, gem talismans were sometimes engraved with animal images. These were precious stones or crystals allied to each of the seven planets through "astral magnetisms" drawn down from the celestial sphere using closely-guarded rituals. Stones were usually tumbled, rubbed, cut, ground and incised with writing and commanding magical symbols, usually

in the form of strange animals like lions, dogs, gods, asses, eagles, bears, bulls and serpents (just to name a few things). These engravings enabled the bearer to control the energies flowing from a planet which the gem was allied to, by virtue of the type of gem used, and the variety of magical signs drawn on it. Such energies could be re-directed to effect the aims of ritual magic. Talismanic jewels were just some of the badges of office handed over to a pagan gnostic, Mithraic initiate or Chaldean sorcerer after their initiation.

THE WHIP AND SCOURGE

In *Chips from a German Workshop*, Max Mueller examined Aryan words relating to punishment. He amply demonstrated that they preserved fossilized religious notions about punishment; it was a form of spiritual purification. According to the Magi, suffering bodily chastisement for the sins of the flesh was to take place in this world and the next. Iranian holy books⁵⁶³ prescribed how many lashes were to be meted out for each offense or sin. These floggings were to be incurred for even minor transgressions like impure thoughts.

Two different types of whip are mentioned by the Magi; the *Aspahe-astra* and the *Sraosho-karana* (Zoroastrian terms). The first was a horse whip, the second a fearful scourge.

The Old Russian *chertu* and *cheresti* ("to cut") came from the proto-Slavic *ch'rto and *ch'rsti. 564 These are traceable to the Lithuanian *kirtis* ("a blow"), the Old Indian *kartanam* ("a cut"), and the Avestan *karantaiti* which relates to cutting. Moreover *chertu* and *cheresti* are related to *cherta*, the Old Russian word for "a line". 564 One might guess that this correlation related to the cutting of lines with blows, even more so because the root of the aforementioned Avestan progenitor word *karantaiti* formed part of the word *Sraosho-karana*, the title for the Magian scourge. We also find the word *cherchega* (meaning "a whip" or "to flog or lash"), also known in the Old Russian as *ch'rchega*. 565 *Cherchega* had evil connotations, perhaps indicating that such whips had fallen from grace in Christian times, though such an instrument would naturally be scary in its own right.

The Magian scourge was originally invented to slaughter snakes thereby earning the name "furious serpent-scourge", and its appearance varied by "the length, glitter and weight of the weapon". ⁵⁶⁶ The penalty for assault and other offenses against someone's person was measured in terms of wounding, the severity of which had to befit the crime. ⁵⁶⁷ Penalties were normally expressed as a 1/4, 1/2, 3/4 or a full wound, which would be inflicted on the criminal. The wealthy could avoid retributive wounding by paying silver dirhems; blood money no less. Small wonder then that scourges saw service in Ancient Rome, where Persian Mithraism previously flourished.

Good deeds merited boons, or graces that alleviated the pains inflicted on souls in the afterlife, and reduced one's own period of suffering during the 3 day ordeal of purgatorial molten metal, which was to occur at the end of time. More serious affronts to goodness, that merited death, were not to be carried out without the permission of a *dastur*. Only the Magi

conducted scourgings or executions, but in the next passage we discover that other royals probably played a similar role in remedial punishments, for their scriptures mention a nask;

"about where there is a household, village, communal or provincial petitioning for the royal chastisement of sins offecting the soul". 568

Penal scourging was commonplace in Rus' during pagan and Christian times. Beatings were not only a penance, but a cleansing, and at the same time a form of exorcism, that unseated and chased demons from the host within whom they dwelt. In many places rods or staffs were sometimes used for this purpose.

Until last century the Eastern Finnish tribes of the Votyaks and Mari performed expulsion rituals aimed at purging their settlements of demons, often around New Year. Farticipants rigorously beat dwellings with staffs. The sturdy rods, now infected by the presence of evil, were thrown into a flowing river to be carried away from the settlement. Dispensing with evil in a river is also found in the Russian *Primary Chronicle*, where the Christians thrashed the pagan idols with staffs of iron, and threw their effigies into the swift currents of nearby river. The Finnish custom is likely to be fairly old, unless of course they sought to emulate the behaviour shown in the aforementioned Chronicle, which is doubtful

PRAYER BEADS

The Magi, Buddhists and Hindus used prayer beads during acts of personal worship. Very often they were a magical string threaded with seeds. With the beads passing nimbly through their fingers the Magian faithful offered prayers of worship to the angels, archangels and *fravashis* by the *Srosh Yast*, *Farvardin Yast* and penitential prayers. These prayers were extremely repetitive, offering worship to ancestors, saints, *Yazatas*, *Snaosha* and so on, with each intended recipient of the prayer being addressed individually.

In an archeological context it is not an easy task to distinguish between a necklace and a chaplet of pagan prayer beads. Pagan Slavs had strings of coloured glass beads which are interpreted nowadays as necklaces. The beads were of three kinds, plain round beads (the most common), followed by beads encircled by ribbing, and the third trend was beads with diverse impressions and creative coloration. Such beads were found at Novgorod throughout every cultural layer, from the earliest to the latest.

Another type were the *limonky*, little yellow lemon-shaped beads which abruptly disappeared during the 11th Century in Novgorod.⁵⁷⁰ This was either due to their loss of popularity, the loss of the technique used to manufacture them, or even that they had some pagan significance, which saw them forced from public usage. This last option would still not account for their sudden end (even though they were associated with pagan burial mounds), mainly because the level of paganism was so great that the people would have

been inclined to disregard, for the most part, any moves to ban them by the Church, if they were an integral part of the old faith. There would need to be an analysis of these Slavic beads whenever they are found associated with skeletal material, but I am unaware of whether any such specific studies have been done. If they were associated with both male and female remains, and in locations which would lead one to conclude that they were not worn about the neck, then I believe it might indicate that they were in fact chaplets rather than simply necklaces.

If Saxon paganism hypothetically had Magian or Indo-European roots, as it seems, then we should expect to find chaplets there also. Many objects were imported by the Anglo-Saxons of Britain from overseas, ⁵⁷¹ things such as (rock) crystal balls (which were even used by the druids), and beads of amber, crystal, amethyst and garnet. Many such items originated in the Baltic area, but entered Britain via the Merovingians in France. ⁵⁷² Archaeologists have confirmed that the number of beads to a string varied greatly, and that they were worn as necklaces. Anglo-Saxon bead strings were probably necklaces, unless chaplets were worn.

With the rise of Christianity, Christian missionaries might have combated the pagan chaplets by introducing the Catholic Holy rosary, or Orthodox prayer strings, which directed the newly converted towards acceptable forms of Christian prayer.

A century after the conversion of the Russes to Christianity, the pagan priesthood could still draw an immense following. In a *Primary Chronicle* account pertaining to the late 11th Century we hear of a miracle working pagan magician (who was regarded as a god) making his way into the thriving heart of medieval Novgorod, hoping to win the people over. Only a short while after arriving he immediately drew much of the populace to his side. It was a bold venture, walking into such a great city, but he did so. Clearly the people still placed much hope in him and the other *Volkhvy* still at large. The enormous civil disturbances which stemmed from his mustering of the closet pagan Novgoroders was only halted once he was put to death in front of his followers. Now for some information on Celtic and Asiatic Magi.

The Cellie and Baulish Wagi

The Celts who once lived in the Balkans and Central Europe, and whose linguistic cousins, the Tokharians, lived in Asia, as far east as the Tien Shan mountains, had an organized pagan religion. Their druidic religious customs seem very much like those of the Magi. This is hardly surprising when you consider that the Celtic word *draoi* (ie; "a druid") translates as "a Magus". Druids studied in special pagan colleges, they had similar gods, and most importantly a formal dualistic religious calendar (which is nowadays termed the Coligny Calendar, after the place where the bronze plates were found). Pliny virtually

admits a druidic connection with Persia. 572a

The druids had special altars called *cromleac* or *fanleac*, and many were no doubt dedicated to good forces. Yet some of them were capable of procuring curses. This was achieved by walking anti-clockwise around the altar stone (ie; in the opposite direction to the sun) uttering the desired malediction, while holding a fragment of the stone. This probably no coincidence that in Gaul, where the druids once brandished enormous power, that the most important pre-Christian temple was the Grand Shrine of *Argentomagus* (which means "Silver Magus"). The site was used for the ritual slaughter of herd beasts over a very long period, and ultimately destroyed by the Christians. And then there was *Rouen* (formerly called Rotomagus ie; "a wheeled Magus"), *Durnomagus* and *Nijmegen* (*Noviomagus* ie; new Magus), all of which were situated in lands populated by the Franks.

Here again many have fallen for a "red herring". Through 20th Century eyes they applied our currently poor understanding of the term Magus, and perceived that Magus really only ever meant "a sorcerer", when it actually meant just that, a Magus, a priest or priestess of a religion once centerd about Iran, but by no means confined to that area.

Then again, druids had a very great deal in common with the Greek pagan gnostic Pythagorean philosophers, and many similarities to the Hindu Brahmans; that much is known. So perhaps Magian druids were only one segment of the overall druidic population, even more so if the term druid related to the "religious caste" of Celtic society. In typically Eastern style, the Celts had four main castes, headed by the druids, and the royal warriors named *Riogh*, which stems from the Sanskrit *Rig* ("sun"). In India, where very little changes, Muslim and Christian clergy are loosely considered as part of the Brahman caste. Although they are not Hindus, such a classification simply serves to signify that they are holy men.

Nevertheless the druidic philosophical outlook may have been formed in the bowels of Parthia, with the result that they espoused an accumulation of Magian, Hindu, Buddhist and pagan gnostic thought. It should be recalled that in the late 3rd Century AD, the Celts (and presumably their druids) invaded the Balkans, especially Greece, where they sacked the Temple of Apollo and the Delphic Oracles (where the power of the Pythonian genius dwelled strongly).⁵⁷⁶ Pagan gnostics are unlikely to have demolished holy sites of this significance, and so we have cause to equate Celtic paganism with a conglomeration of oriental faiths, probably Magianism. Their race migrated westward into Europe, eventually ending up in Gaul and Ireland - new lands for an old people. It is perhaps on account of this that the Celts knew philosophies similar to those of the ancient Greeks. Perhaps the Celts first learned of the existence of Ireland from the Greeks (whose astronomer scientists were allegedly visiting there perhaps as early as 400 BC) and decided to settle there. Other Celts peopled the east, serving as mercenaries in Syria, Asia Minor and Alexandrian Egypt.

The druidic religion was connected with the Far-East from earliest times. There was a

holy oak situated in Galatia (Turkey) where Celtic leaders met every year, a pivotal gathering attended by a council of 12 leaders and several hundred figures delegated to participate. Yes, they came to Turkey from as far away as Ireland. Two locations in Olden Rus' carry the title Galicia, perhaps indicating that they were locales linked with Galatia, and hence with druids. Druids wielded ultimate power over the masses in Ireland, and at the same time their unquestionable authority was recognized as far away as Carthage and Asia Minor. Druids voyaged across many warring Irish counties free of molestation, healed disputation between foreign kings, and could journey to regions as remote as the Ukraine with little trouble. To

The druids tonsured the front half of their head, and left the rest long, a custom which the Augustinian missionaries sent from Rome to the Celtic Church described as "the tonsure of Simon Magus". The Celtic name for this tonsure was the bernad mog, 580 perhaps stemming from the Iranian priestly title Aberad, that is the Magus, or indeed Mog who brought the sacred water and milk to the altar when Haoma (the white Magian drink of eternal life) was mixed.

On the other hand there are only two recorded instances in which druids were mentioned as living gods. This does not necessarily mean that druids weren't seen as living gods by their underlings. Only a few surviving historical references made it through from that period.

Magianism and shamanism (esp. Buddhism) share a number of common features, and these allow one to make inferences of vital significance, not the least of which is an admission that the two were somehow factually related to each other.

Clear evidence of this synthesis is found in *Qormusta* (ie, *Ahura Mazda*), the lord of the Tengri celestial divinities known to the Mongols. It is said that he threw his eternal foe, Erlik Khan, from heaven, and imprisoned him in the underworld. During the end times, Erlik Khan would bring the onset of chaos and calamity, by emerging from this prison in company with iron hell-riders to lay waste to the world. Neither *Qormusta* nor the Buddhists will be able to defeat him.

It is difficult to date, with any certainty, the time frame for shamanism's assimilation of dualistic Iranian beliefs and practices, or indeed whether they had always been present since prehistoric times. What we do know is where it happened: Eurasia and Central Asia, and to this I will add European Russia. For this reason Magi came to be known by less-Persian terminologies in Central Asia and the European fringes;

Russian Volkhv "a Magus"582 "a wizard" or "a sorcerer"582 Russian Volshebnik Finnish Velho "a Magus"582 "a protector", "a (pagan) saint" Turkic Veli Bulgarian Vl"khva "a magician"582 Estonian Volu "a witch"582 Slovenian Volhva "a fortune-teller" 582 "a Sibyl, witch, prophetess" Old Norse Volva

Old Norse Volva "a Sibyl, witch, prophetess"
Old Irish Draoi "a Magus", "a druid"

Turkic Buyu "spell, magic"

Turkic Buyucu "magician, sorcerer"

Rasdi Rasdis were asiatic shamanic white Priests. If Rasdi was derived from Raspi (a white Zoroastrian priest.) then this kind of shaman was an ancestor of Magi who had fled Iran into shamanic territories to escape persecution at the hands of Muslims.

The intermarriage of dualism and shamanism might have originated in that blurred epoch when prehistoric animism evolved into formal pagan religion. *Magu* (the Magian spiritual power) might thus have been a form of shamanic ecstasy. However, dualistic animism is not universal to shamanism, and mainly confined to the Urals and Siberia. Because of the close geographical proximity of this area to Iran, the Iranians are the obvious source of their dualism, especially when one considers the substantial level of Iranian linguistic material found among not only the Finno-Ugrians, but the Mongols (which of itself intimates Indo-Iranian cultural ties with the Mongol Shamans).

The most archaic Buddhist temples paradoxically prove to be the most exquisitely executed of all, hewn from immortal substances like granite. Outwardly they replicated the forms of local Indian temples (of wooden construction), but strangely show the influence of Iranian stonecraftsmen. These particular masons probably built the temples for the Buddhists in the first place, or, at the very least, were responsible for introducing their construction techniques into the Buddhist religious community.

In spite of this it is still possible to assert that Indo-Iranian religion originally had shamanic roots. Perhaps *Magu*, the magical ecstasy of the Magi, was derived from the shamanic ecstasies of antiquity, but differed from primordial shamanism in that it had accumulated around it a formally codified religion complete with its own holy texts and mystical regime.

Darker aspects of the craft radiated out from Mesopotamia. Based on a whole host of Neo-Assyrian wall inscriptions, and the discovery of goat skulls, and the wings of noble birds and buzzards at Zawi Chemi Shanidar (which are datable to 10-9,000 BC),

archaeologists have inferred that certain Babylonians and Assyrians were dressing in ritual costumes which allowed the wearer to appear as an anthropomorphic winged-goat entity. Such imagery might have represented a demi-human deity or spirit, or may even have been a very early Assyrian-style portrayal of *Ahriman*, and a range of other very powerful demons. This might lead one to suspect that mankind's earliest organized religion (that of the Babylonians) was a direct outgrowth of prehistoric shamanism, a form of (radical dualistic) animism which they would later implant into their progenitor over millennia, as cultural ties between adherents to shamanism and Iranian religiosity were upheld.

But then again, *Magu* may have been a separate form of ecstasy, closely related to that of the shamans, and which came to have an influence on shamanism, owing to a vigorous insemination of Magian beliefs. This seems all the more certain considering that it can been shown that Shamanism was modified by a range of southern customs and beliefs, especially from Iran. The birth of dualistic animism might be traceable to the centuries following the Islamic conquests of Central Asia, which obliterated Magian culture and presumably smashed into oblivion the Central Patriarchate of Khvaniras, the Northern Patriarchate of Vorobarst, the Eastern Patriarchate of Savah, and the southern one of Fradadafsh. Large bands of roving Magian inhabitants inevitably cascaded into the surrounding countries, where Muslims had not ventured at that point in time.

Indo-Iranians and the people of Mesopotamia are regarded as having played an immense role in the formulation of the more formalized Shamanic beliefs, not only in Siberia, but in Central Asia. For instance, Pre-Buddhist Tunguskans believed in *Buga* as their supreme god, a deity whose very name is certainly derived from the Iranian *Baga* (god), and thus similar to the Slavic word *Bog* (god). These tribes had their own shamanistic sacrificial priests who performed rites for the appeasement of *Buga*, but interestingly their prehistoric shamanistic counterparts did not pay homage to *Buga*. Therefore, two strains of shamanism existed side by side in the Tunguska region. The shamans of the heavily dualistic Iranianized variant were probably hereditary, as was the tradition among the Magi. **

As with the Magus-Kings, the great khans were sons of heaven; gods no less. In the pastoralist communities of Central Asia, Magian holy sites took the form of tents. In the case of the asiatic shamanic traditions, the domed yurt tents represented cosmological features. The roof was the vault of heaven, the central support post, the pillar-axis that supports heaven. In the middle of the tent stood a nine-step birch ladder that reached up through the smoke-hole, the heavenly aperture. By ascending the ladder the shaman exited the aperture, his soul flying skyward into the celestial region. Shamans made their spiritual journeys to the underworld in like manner.

These customs inevitably seeped over the Urals into Russia, with the Finno-Ugrians. One

curious facet of Finnish shamanism is that it was, by and large, hereditary, which is a substantial deviation from the normal means by which shamanic power was acquired. ⁵⁹¹ Lapps, Votyak Finns and the Ostyaks held that shamanism could only be inherited by birthright, however the shamanic vocation only became active at the behest of the Greatest Supreme God. ⁵⁹¹ In other words if you did not come from specific bloodlines, you could never enter states of shamanic ecstasy. However full blown mystical shamanism would not develop in every member of that family line, but only in those whose calling had been signalled and actuated by omens from the omnipotent god. ⁵⁹¹

Considering that the druids allegedly originated in the east, and met frequently in Galatia, Turkey, it is no small coincidence that Eurasian shamans and the druids possessed a dualistic cosmological view. Both believed in the existence of an inverted tree of life, which in both cases grew upside down, with its roots in the heavens and whose trunk and foliage pierced down into the underworld. This is, to my mind, fairly conclusive evidence for a "Tree of Death" which belonged to the counterworld, and which was the topsy-turvy opposite of the "Tree of Life". This mystical teaching is also reminiscent of the Kabbalistic Jewish tree of death, so it must have been of some antiquity. Bear in mind also that the Celts marked the progress of time, not by the passing of days, but the passing of nights. Thus to them, sunset was the beginning of each new day, not sunrise.

The Buryat tribes of the Urals, like the dualistic Magi, also professed that the cosmos was a war zone between two groups of opposing factions of gods, one white and the other black, one good the other evil. ⁵⁹³ These deities resided in three respective cosmic zones; the celestial realm, the underworld, and this world (the place where a mixing of the two forces occurs). ⁵⁹³

Magian similarities exist even further eastward, among the Mongols. The supreme god of the Mongols was not given direct worship by the masses; instead, idols subordinate to him received homage.⁵⁹⁴ These were not made of wood, but from felt, silk or stuffed hides.⁵⁹⁴Mongols bowed to the south in adoration of these idols, and offered them the hearts of beasts sacrificed to them, which were later eaten.⁵⁹⁴Any form of disrespect to the idols was punishable by death. A captured Russian Christian prince was threatened with martyrdom for refusing to prostrate himself in front of the Mongol idols. For this transgression the outraged Mongols wished to execute him by kicking him in the heart, but thought it better to slit open his throat from ear to ear.⁵⁹⁴

The *Tatar Relation* states that the Mongols believed that their armies and their religion would be destroyed by the Christians, and that whosoever remained after that battle, would convert to the faith of the area in which they settled. A variety of other superstitions were recollected by the friars, including the importance of killing those who had touched the wagon in which their idols rested, or spat food on the ground, or spilled milk deliberately, or defiled their hut. The pollution of one's living quarters could only be alleviated through

employing a magician who understood the way to cleanse the location. Such a magician might have been a Magian cleanser, or similar.

Mongols advocated that a man should take the wife of his brother, if he had been killed. 595 This custom was of course similar to that of the Magi, and forbidden by the Church. Mongols were not however endogamous. Crime, adultery and rebellion were punishable by execution. 596 Such beliefs closely resemble facets of Magian scripture.

Despite this the Magi might also have been a powerful Iranian off-shoot of the Aryan/Indo-European brahmanic priestly caste, that resulted from a past religious schism concerning the *daevas*. Like the Brahmin priestly caste the Magi were supposed to have considered themselves Aryans⁵⁵⁷ as is stated in the Pahlavi texts and the notes of Herodotus.

The Magian priesthood, which claimed direct descendancy from King Mingochir and the Kayan kings, sattained full religious hegemony in Persia (Iran) through successful power-plays under Cyrus the Great, and brought about the transformation of traditional Zoroastrianism, by incorporating the lofty philosophical beliefs and ritual customs of the Medean Magi. It should be stated at this point that the Medean Magi were not linked to the bloodline of Zoroaster's Zoroastrian priesthood. As I have mentioned so far, these Magus priests penetrated Zoroaster's white priesthood and in time turned infant Zoroastrianism into a religion based on the Zurvanite trinity, which held as its main deity the etherically unknowable time god of the Medean astronomers (who ruled over a white son, a black son, and all creation), plus an aggregate of Aryan gods, including the *daeva* Indra.

Finns living near the Volga and the Urals seem to have had some knowledge of the Rus' and Bulgar Magi also. These Finns of the Mordva tribe (who were known to have partaken of raw flesh feasts) were noticeably different from some other revered inhabitants of the area, who roasted their meat. These folk the Finns called *Mos-chum*; the men who were as gods, ⁶⁰⁰ a race of wizards who lived under ground. References to the *Mos-chum* might be allusions to Magian interaction in an intrinsically shamanistic environment, leaving behind the seeds of their venerable culture, in the form of dualistic animism.

Perhaps these wizards were the same as those encountered by Mongols somewhere near northern Russia, who went beneath the earth to escape the light and sound of the sun. There they supposedly played music and made merry until after sunset. 601 Strange behaviour for people living in an Arctic wasteland where nothing grows, wouldn't you say? You'd think they'd be only too happy to feel the warm glow of the sun, but they weren't; they hid from it. Drawing on Magian scripture, these northern wizards may have been apostles of evil.

Kolbung - The Soreerers

In the Russian language we have another series of related words concerning sorcery - Koldun⁶⁰² (masculine), Koldunitsa (feminine) and Kolduny (plural). Koldovat' is the verb stemming from this, meaning - "to perform a spell or act of sorcery." Other words in nearby regions seem allied with the Russian word Koldun - kaldune (Middle High German): "entrails"; calduna (Latin): "the warm entrails of a slaughtered animal"; kaldoun (Czech): "goose entrails"; koldun (Polish): "a type of pie made from a mixture of meat and cheese"; koldibai (Russian): "to be limp or lame". Koldyga (Belorussian), koldygats', kal (Armenian), halts (Gothic) all carry the same meaning of "limp" or "lame". Accordingly one might suspect that the rites of the Kolduny included the ritual slaughter and disembowelment of an animal (or human) victim, from whose entrails the sorcerer or sorceress proceeded to make predictions about the future, or unleash magic.

A solution for the problematic question of the Russian *Koldumy* sorcerers may well exist in the voluminous works of the Muslim encyclopedist Al-Nadim. In the impressive *Filvristi* of *Al-Nadim*, he wrote of the *Al-Kaldani*,⁶⁰³ a 10th Century Arabic word relating to the dualistic Chaldean astrologers living in Iraq at that time, and throughout preceding centuries. In that part of the world, two different terms were applicable to them. The Chaldean sorcerers of Harran were specifically known as *Al-Kaldaniyin*, whereas the Chaldean "Sabeans" of Southern Iraq were called *Al-Kaldani* (Arabic: *Al* - "the", *Kaldani* -"Chaldeans"). Another Arabic form of the same word *Al-Kaldaniyum* was much more general in nature, and referred to the many dualistic cults operating throughout the Eastern Islamic world (such as Magi, Manichees, Marcionites and so on).⁶⁰⁴ As you will recall, one would have expected 9th Century Cordoban sources to employ this last term relating to the Norse *Al-Madjus* attacks on Moorish Spain, but instead they veered from this fuzzier label and repeatedly wrote the aforementioned *Al-Madjus* in connection with both the attacks and al-Ghazali's subsequent diplomatic mission to the king of the Magi in European waters.

The similarity between the words *kaldani* and *kolduny* is certainly compelling. Moreover, the mid-19th Century Russian folklorist Maksimov used one further word, *koldun'ya* (nominative plural), which varied from *kolduny* (nominative plural). ⁶⁰⁵ We do not know whether the difference between the two words concealed divergent meanings known only in their day. If for instance *al-kaldani* was to *kolduny*, as *al-kaldaniyin* may be to *koldun'ya*, they may have denoted Chaldean Sabeans and Harranian Chaldeans respectively. Coincidentally Aramaic-speaking Chaldeans still exist in Iraq and Iran nowadays, but they are Apostolic Christians, and in no way practitioners of the ancient heathen Chaldeanism described over the next few pages.

Anyhow, during a campaign against the Byzantines, Caliph Al Ma'mun encountered a very large group of *Al-Kaldani* as his invasion force made its way westward. 606 Upon interrogating them to determine the nature of their religion, the Caliph was greeted with a certain degree of indecisiveness, and no straight answers. He asked them whether they were Christians, Jews, Muslims, or Magi, to which the answer was no in each case. Al-Ma'mun arrived at the realization that they were members of a race of Chaldean idol-worshipers, who a generation previously, in the time of his father, were known as the *Ashab al-Ra's*. 606 At that the Caliph threatened to liquidate every last one of them unless they became *dhimmis* by conversion to either Judaism, Islam or Christianity by the time he had returned from his war on the Greeks. 606

The Al-Kaldani's lack of response to the questions posed by the Caliph is telling. Either they felt threatened by the prospect of having to reveal to the Caliph exactly who they were, or their priests prohibited them from revealing the core teachings of the Chaldeans to the non-initiated, or it was philosophically difficult to explain the nature of their faith to the Caliph in a few words or less with an army standing all around them.

Sensing the imminent peril they were in, a large number of these idol-worshiping Chaldeans converted to Christianity, a somewhat lesser number became Muslim. They were required to dispense with their smocks and long hair (including a lock of hair from each side of the head, similar to the peots worn by Jews), though paradoxically they still continued to wear their holy belts. This type of hairstyle was not unknown in Rus'.

Al-Nadim went on to say that a Sheikh (who was somehow linked in with the many Magians serving in the Caliphate's governmental apparatus) formulated a solution for the *Al-Kaldani*'s predicament by suggesting that they tell Al-Ma'mun that they were Sabeans, just to save their necks. That is because Sabeans were one of the few religions deemed acceptable in the Koran, on account of their ancestry to Abraham (Ibrahim) and "people of the book".

"Believers, Jews, Christians, and Sabeans - whoever believes in God and the Last Day and does what is right - shall be rewarded by their Lord; they have nothing to fear or to regret". 608

But fate intervened. With the strange death of Al Ma'mun on his way home from the Byzantine campaigns, the newly Christianized pagan Chaldeans automatically reverted to their old faith in droves, while those who adopted the Islamic faith were unable to abandon it for fear of the drastic reprisals that would certainly have ensued.

"Moreover those among their number who had become Muslims were unable to recant, as they feared they might be killed. They continued, therefore, to be masked by Islam". 607

Al-Nadim further stated that these particular Muslims (and we might guess Christians) resolved to continue observing the ancient rites of Chaldean magic and ritual enshrouded in secrecy, despite the risk that this entailed. To facilitate this they formulated their own peculiar marital codes, designed to conceal and protect Chaldeans living in Muslim countries. The *Al-Kaldani* wed womenfolk who were still adherents of the old faith, but in the east anyway, the menfolk of the *Al-Kaldani* were to outwardly adopt the faith of the area in which they lived (these Chaldean converts they called *Banu Ablut* or *Banu Qaytanan*). Thus it was predominantly the women who worshiped the gods of the old faith in the manner of the Chaldeans. If a significant proportion of the mediaeval and renaissance witches practiced the Chaldean rites, this last point might explain the disproportionate number of European female witches indicted compared with male wizards and warlocks in varied geographical regions.

The situation was remarkably similar in Russia. According to popular folk tradition there, the arts of the *Kolduny* were passed on in a matrilineal fashion, mother to daughter and so on. ⁶¹⁰ Where the mother gave birth to a son and a daughter, the son was raised as a sorcerer, whereas the girl became a witch. If for some reason these witch-wives could not hand down their knowledge they suffered immense torment. ⁶¹⁰ The early mediaeval Russian *Primary Chronicle* states; "even down to the present day women perform magic by black arts, poison, and other devilish deceits". ⁶¹¹

Despite the fact that witch-wives or spae-wives feature in certain Norse Sagas relating to pagan times, it is difficult to establish any firm connection between the *Al-Kaldani*, the Russian *kolduny*, and the following Old Icelandic *spa-maeli* ("a prophecy"), *spa-dis* "prophetess" or "a spae sister", *spa-mathr* ("a prophet"), *spaleiks-andi* ("a prophetic spirit").⁶¹²

In Rus' those with *Koldumy* ancestry who were unwilling participants in the craft, and wished to avoid their family duty to continue with the arts, frequently turned themselves in at the monasteries. ⁶¹⁰ There they lived on as remorseful penitents together with anyone found performing miracles throughout the wider community. ⁶¹⁰ This probably explains the means by which Chaldean arts entered the 'Orthodox' Christian monastaries, something known to have occurred in Christian times. Where a penitent relapsed, there was every opportunity to teach what they knew of these rites to fellow brethren, since Chaldeanism was a form of pagan gnosticism. It was no doubt on account of this that Orthodox Christian commentators reported an upsurge of shunned Chaldean magic and devil-worship within the Byzantine monastic system. ⁶¹³

Anyhow Abu Zurarah and another sheikh stamped out the practice of marrying Chaldean women in Islamic countries. These were prohibited liaisons, forbidden wives. Despite their intense opposition to these sorts of mixed marriages, the Hurranian Islamic jurists continued to witness sizeable groups of these Chaldean Sabeans locally.⁶¹⁴ According

to Al-Nadim, those Chaldean Sabeans who had converted to Christianity or Islam, still continued with the old rites (including dualistic magic) right down to the 10th Century AD at least, when his Fihrist was written. But were the *Al-Kaldani* really Chaldeans or Sabeans? Although Al-Nadim's account of the naming of the *Al-Kaldani* as Sabeans is about as straightforward as you can get, I remain intrigued that Ptolemy situated an Are Sabee (Latin: The Sabean Altar) in Mesopotamia in his 2nd Century AD atlas, *Geographia*. Nor is it easy to understand why the "Alphabet of the Kings" (which resembles Sabean characters) is the script most frequently used by mediaeval alchemists and magicians.

One Nestorian Christian eschatological text records the presence of Chaldeans alongside the Buddhists, Christians and Zoroastrians of Central Asia. 615 Thus they confirm what Al-Nadim adequately explains; that Chaldeans were alive and well during Islamic times, and what is more they were expecting the arrival of a saviour named Bel. 615

It is equally plausible that the religion/philosophy of the *Al-Kaldani* was not a survival of the old Chaldean rites, but a cross-pollination of Magianism and the philosophies and sciences of ancient Greece which had taken place as early as 400 BC, but centerd on the period 300 BC-200 AD. Linkages of this kind probably became a whole lot more formalized following the arrival of the exiled Greek Philosophers at Harran in the 6th Century AD after the closure of their Athenian school of philosophy. By that time there would already have been centuries of interaction between the Magi and the philosophers inside Mesopotamia.

What may well have developed in Iraq is a dualistic philosophical religion which carried features of Greek pagan gnosticism and Magianism. Unlike Magianism, the creed of the Chaldeans was a proselytizing faith, meaning that the cult possessed apostle priests who were tasked with spreading the sect's doctrines throughout mankind.

Their principle temple complex, once located at Harran, was destroyed during the 13th Century Mongol conquests, though the Chaldeans had already been thrown out of their temples centuries before that. 616 Their main holy site was converted into a shrine dedicated to Ibrahim, and the remainder of the Chaldean shrines swapped over to Islamic usage. 616 It is plausible that the *Al-Kaldani* (ie; the *Ashab al-Ra's*) migrated elsewhere between 7th and 10th Centuries AD, and rebuilt some, if not all of these temples, at other locations. Since *Al-Kaldani* and *Kolduny* are so similar in both name and nature, I theorize that the Rus' *Kolduny* sorcerers were the descendants of heathen *Al-Kaldani* banished from the Abassid Caliphate, or who eluded the Mongol decimation. Just a quick look at any map confirms that a journey from Harran or Chaldea (in provincial Byzantium) to the vast expanses of Russia is relatively short.

In the Sumerian Wonder Professor Francisco Jos Badiny provides intriguing research on the Magyars (Hungarians), providing evidence that their language contains important Sumerian and Akkadian elements. Yet a century before him, Lenormant was busy

highlighting the apparent similarity between these ancient tongues, and a variety of words found in a broad spectrum of Finnish languages, to which the Hungarian is linguistically relegated. These words are likely to have been preserved from very ancient times, but might have been bolstered by additional arrivals of magicians from the Near East during the Islamic age. Considering this, it is possible that Mesopotamian/Chaldean magical traditions were used by segments of the Slavic, Magyar and Finnish community. Indeed Orthodox Christian clergy were livid about the Chaldean rites they frequently encountered in their part of the mediaeval world, practiced by wayward parishioners and by monks in particular.

As discussed in *Christianity's Greatest Controversy*, Prester John, the eastern Magian Christian superhero, waged war against a federation of princes, whose ethnicity was Persian, Medean and Assyrian. The latter alliance was traceable across centuries, at least from the time of Cyrus the Great. Under this gracious Medean patron Assyrian culture was not only tolerated, but resurrected from the dead with his blessing, following its demise at the hand of the Babylonians. Old allegiances survived. Assyrian royals still had a certain degree of autonomy in the 7th Century AD, and were still on friendly terms with their former liberators, the Magi and Persian nobility. If a large portion of the Bulgars and Magyars were Magians, it necessarily follows that some of their monarchs might have had a very ancient Assyrian pedigree.

There is some anecdotal evidence for this. At the turn of the 8th Century AD, Byzantium was twice crippled by the weight of Muslim besiegers, with the second stranglehold broken only with the aid of Tervel, the Bulgar Khan. If the Byzantine Emperor thought he had found a new friend in the Bulgars, he was sadly mistaken. Barely one hundred years later, around 811 AD, Constantinople recoiled in horror as the unstoppable Bulgar army of Khan Krum went on the rampage throughout Byzantium's Balkan provinces, 617 defeated successive Emperors, and inflicted upon them the ultimate indignity; they slew Emperor Nicephoros, and made a golden cup from his skull, from which Krum guzzled his libations. 617

The name Krum (a name also used by Franks and Celts) is, I believe, cognate with the Slavic root word *grom-*, which I think aptly describes the personal qualities of any man named Krum. Consider the following Russian words - *grom* ("thunder"), *grom-it* ("to annihilate", "to smash asunder", "to ransack", "to rout or defeat an enemy", "to flay"), *grom-ko* ("loud"), *grom-ada* ("something massive or enormous"), *grom-ykhat* ("to rumble"), *grom-ila* ("a robber", "a house-breaker", or "a stand-over man"), and *grom-ozdit* ("to tower above"). Little wonder the Eastern Church saw Krum the Bulgar as an embodiment or revisitation of the terrifying Assyrian conquistador Sennacherib (of the House of Sargon), whose name originally meant "the God Sin (the Moon God) has compensated the brothers." ⁶¹⁸

Sennacherib's self-congratulatory commemorative stone columns have survived. They

show him slaying prostrate war prisoners. These were just some of a number of Assyrian royal stellae (engraved memorial stones) which still bear victory inscriptions boasting of; stone victory columns draped in bloodied human skins, of cairns of decapitated enemy heads, of prisoners being burnt alive, of the sacking and razing of cities with fire, of the flaying or impaling of victims. Such comments are in no way a mischievous diabolization of their war activities; these were victories written in stone by their own royal decree, and we might guess indicative of the terror which the Assyrian rulers wanted to live in the hearts of their enemies.⁶⁹

So serious were the setbacks experienced by the Byzantine military in their encounters with this new menace, that Byzantine citizens felt inclined to call on supernatural aid. During a ceremonial mass held by the Patriarch with the aim of lifting the Bulgar siege on Mesembria, soldiers disrupted the service by encircling the tomb of the deceased Emperor Constantine V with the hope of conjuring him forth from his sleep in the sepulcher, to once again lead their forces into battle.⁶²⁰

At the Battle of Adrianople the Emperor's forces greatly outnumbered those of the Bulgars, since he had mustered troops from even the most far flung eastern provinces, in the hope he could crush Krum once and for all. Spearheaded by Macedonian troops the initial engagement went well for Byzantium, in fact beyond all expectations. However at the very moment Emperor Michael was poised for the kill, he had to watch in shock as the sizeable Anatolian contingents, commanded by an Armenian relative, ran off the battlefield, for no reason whatsoever, leaving the Macedonians to be slaughtered. It has been theorized that these troops, the Emperor's most battle hardened, merely pretended to panic, when in reality they were part of an elaborate plot which at its height saw the abdication of Emperor Michael I Ragabe in favor of Leo V, the very commander of the forces who quit on him!

Krum was no ordinary ruler, but a priest-king of vigour and martial achievement. The well-encamped pagan forces of Krum, this "New Sennacherib" as they called him, ⁶²¹ choked Christian Constantinople for many long months. As the heathen war bands stood waiting beyond the battlements of the Holy city, Krum performed very elaborate human and animal sacrifices outside the gates of the city (giving benedictions to his troops in Assyrian style by sprinkling them with river water using bound foliage). This must have greatly demoralized the incarcerated Byzantine populace. If news that Krum was laying waste to all Constantinople's surrounding extra-mural suburbs, setting them ablaze and slaughtering almost every living thing was causing concerns inside the city, then reports that he was preparing siege weapons and gantries to breach the city's comprehensive defenses were even more worrying.

You may ask where they obtained their siege technology; the know-how to build engines capable of breaching Constantinople's walls? A proto-Bulgarian inscription found at Preslav

confirms that they had siege towers, and canopies⁶²² suitable for protecting sappers and ramming crews. Proto-Bulgarian terms for fortified defenses, especially ditchwork allow one to conclude an Iranian origin⁶²² for their military engineering. Bulgar camps built during the 7th Century AD were admirably protected with palisading mounted on raised mounds some 40 meters thick. The most notable of them can be found at Nikulicel, Dobrudzhan, the Danube and Bessarabia. Since these words are flavored by Central Asian Turkic language,⁶²² we know that they developed these engineering skills in and around the Caucuses, and Tajikistan. Even more amazingly their word for "a helmet" has a Sumero-Accadian etymology.⁶²² So what you may say; but the Bulgar helmets were stylistically similar to those worn in Mesopotamia some 3,150 years prior to Krum's time, during the reign of Sargon himself.

Although the siege lifted with Krum's mysterious death, the Bulgar threat persisted, and repeatedly came back to haunt successive Byzantine Emperors until this people was eventually baptized into the Christian fold by a mixture of swordsmanship, diplomacy and missionary zeal. As with much of eastern and western Europe, the Church's attempts to convert the pagans began with the conversion of the king to Christianity, at least nominally, and following this it was hoped that paganism would die as subjects followed suit. Bloodletting was sure to follow where a Bulgar royal drifted into the arms of Christian preachers. Malamir, son of Khan Omurtag murdered his brother Enravotas for daring to convert to the alien Christian faith. Around 893 AD, Khan Boris tried to introduce Christianity to his subjects. His attempts to eradicate idolatry, temples and pagan sacrifices met with only limited success, and he endured increasingly militant opposition for his troubles. 624 It would seem that despite his adoption of Christianity, paganism was particularly well enshrined within the upper strata of Bulgar society, and well supported by the community. Eventually he ended up having to exterminate most of his boyars (nobles), who rose up against him to the last, but not until after they had worked the entire countryside into a lather of civil disobedience. Khan Boris even had to put out the eye of his own son, Vladimir-Rasate, after he was discovered trying to re-kindle and trigger a full-scale pagan resurgence, by forming a formal military-pact with the Carolingian King, Arnulf.625 We know that Arnulf and Vladimir had plans for booting the Greeks out of Bulgaria, but whether he was party to the young Khan's plans to resurrect "the rites of paganism" 626 is hard to pin-point. If European royals were in any way Magianized, we might easily understand the recurring phenomenon of royals relapsing into the pagan faith, something which occurred in England, Bulgaria, Russia and similar places. Vladimir-Rasate of the Bulgars, Vladimir I of Kiev and Eric the Victorious were just some of the factual and rumoured backsliders. And in Essex, King Sigehere "began to restore the derelict temples and to worship images".627

Chaldean eustoms and traditions

The key teachings of these Chaldeans, equally descendants of Abraham, were conveyed to Al-Nadim and a number of other Muslim authors, and committed to paper. By the *Al-Kaldani's* reckoning the created cosmos was the product of a single deity who was boundless, omnipotent, unfathomable and practically unknowable. This high god, who they referred to as the "Great Power", had sent forth a range of apostles (namely the Chaldean philosophers). These apostles were charged with taking his message to the rest of the world, and acted as custodians for a whole range of pagan gnostic magical, philosophical, scientific and religious doctrines.

Besides the Great Power, the other principle deities of the cult were Agathodaemon, Hermes Trismegistus, and Arani (Heron). Hermes Trismegistus was a tutelary god possessing unparalleled wisdom, philosophy, intelligence and knowledge of the sciences. Hermes' discourses were taught to those seeking philosophical enlightenment and can be found in a variety of Hermesian texts, such as were found among the Nag Hammadi treatises unearthed in Egypt in the mid to late 1940's.

Like the priests of old Babylon the *Al-Kaldani* pursued wisdom, revered goodness and abhorred any form of wrongdoing. They were prohibited from engaging in sexual immorality or crime.⁶³⁰

The *Al-Kaldani's* eschatological views were similar to those of the Magi. Like the Zurvanite Magi, they believed that the suffering of the departed souls of wrongdoers was only to be temporary; some 9,000 years in duration. Unlike the Magi (who believed *Aluma* Mazda didn't want to kill his children, simply chastize those enarmoured by evil-doing, by the power of kings, their soldiers and officers) Chaldeans believed the "Great Power" was prone to fits of anger and mercy at the same time, but would transform into a god of mercy alone, at the end of the 9,000 year period. The latter point was a fundamental belief of the Zurvanite Magi.⁶²⁸

Maintaining personal purity was of some importance to the *Al-Kaldani*. They practiced purificatory ablutions, and were required to undergo a gruelling 30-day regime of fasting, in addition to further fasts. Like the Magi, they believed that contact with menstruating women brought defilement. So there were periods when they couldn't enjoy conjugal relations.

The Al-Kaldani had their own peculiar range of food taboos, which appear to have drawn upon Jewish, Muslim, Magian and Neo-Pythagorean teachings. For instance pigeons, swine, asses, taloned birds and dogs were not to be eaten, nor were beans, lentils and several other plants. Beans, lentils and pigs were widely cultivated in Russia as early as Scythian times, and were probably eaten by most Russians. However this is not to say that there were

others in pagan Rus' who did not eat these things, folk such as the kolduny.

Unlike the Magi, the *Al-Kaldani* did not believe it necessary to marry one's kin, ⁶³² and were required to observe strict morality within marriage, for example confining their sexual activity to procreation alone. Therefore the cult was not Magian in nature, though in truth it carried many outward similarities. Even those Arabs who had some understanding of Magian lore may have found it difficult to distinguish between Magi and Chaldean Sabeans. Though they were not specifically incestuous or given to marrying their own kind, it was often the case that they did so. The Chaldean mode of dress at first glance seemed Magian. They wore lengthy hair, with a lock on each side of the head, and a specific kind of robe or tunic (perhaps one could even call it a type smock).⁶³³ Their characteristic hairstyle may have led onlookers to guess that they were Jewish magicians, descended from Abraham (as the Sabeans were). Accordingly Chaldean temple sites in Europe might have earned the title of synagogues. Witch trials in which Jews were convicted of sorcery need to be looked at fairly closely, for the defendant might have been a Kabbalist, or a Judaized Chaldean.

Chaldean ceremonies

The most powerful ceremony of the Chaldeans was termed "the Mystery of the North". God one had to face toward the north, and in particular towards the pole star, while performing an elaborate daily schedule of prayers, which included stretching prostrate on the ground a prescribed number of times, at morning, noon and night. This was done in adoration of the God of the North who was both prince of demons, and father of the many genii and devils which he dispersed across the face of the earth in a prior epoch.

The Chaldean devils (*daemones*) brought a wealth of good fortune to those who worshiped them by invoking the name of the supreme god. Having recited the divine name the *dæmones* were compelled to come and render service to the summoner. The belief that devils were luck-bringers is fully in accordance with the Neo-Pythagorean and Chaldean ritualism detailed by Iamblichus in *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Assyrians,* and was a feature of Russian folk belief concerning devils. Chaldean theory required that *daemones* be conjured to live inside stone and wooden idols, in order to bring divine power to the effigy. And what should we find in the *Primary Chronicle*, but magicians stating that their demon gods were "black of visage, winged and tailed ... mount up under heaven", obedient to the supreme god of the Christians. This could be interpreted as a childish attempt by the chronicler to ridicule their religion, but it could be a reference to Chaldean *daemone* worship, explained in a very abstract or relative fashion. Nestor also tells us that the Rus' pagan idols were beaten with rods to punish the demons living inside them. Again this may provide clues for the perpetuation of the telestic art of idol crafting in pagan Rus'.

In Europe's Inner Demons Norman Cohn claims that any talk of factual, organized devil

worship is pure nonsense, because in a number of cases witches sought to control demons, not by doing evil, but by doing good. On account of their purity they were able to call upon the divine name for help when summoning up and bossing about *daemones*. It is a very good point that he raises; but unlike Norman I see Chaldean philosophy as the basis for these particular trends in witchcraft and devil-worship. This avenue is something that Cohn had never even considered. As stated, Chaldeanism was but one form of witchcraft.

Sabean Chaldeans paid some attention to the worship of the planets, to whom they offered ostentatious animal, and even human sacrifices. Normally prayers were given as offerings. For example, prayers were recited on behalf of the sun as it entered the ascendant, descendant, midheaven and *imum coeli.* Specific Chaldean beliefs about the planets were noted by Plutarch;

"The Chaldeans declare that of the planets, which they call tutelary gods, two are beneficent, two maleficent, and the other three are median and partake of both qualities". 659

Al-Nadim said one of their less savory rites included the killing of a young baby during Ab (August), though attendance and participation in the ceremony was optional. Only certain Chaldeans celebrated the northern mysteries. During the proceedings a child was reduced to powder by grinding up its body and bones, then mixing the powdery remains with a specially concocted libation. The desire to commit evil acts might not necessarily have been the motive for the sacrifice. It could just as easily have been a display of love and piety toward their god, at least equivalent to that of Abraham, who was prepared to sacrifice his own son to the Most High God. This is what Nadim preserved in relation to a Chaldean August rite;

"They slaughter the boy and then boil him until he disintegrates. Then the flesh is taken and kneaded with fine flour, saffron, spikenard, cloves, and oil and made into cakes as small as figs ... This takes place every year for those who observe the mystery of the north. No woman, slave, son of a slave girl, or lunatic eats it (the cake) or watches the slaughter of this child ... The priests burn whatever remains of the bones, the organs, the cartilages, the veins, and the jugular veins as an offering to the gods". 640

The similarities between the rites performed by these pagan Chaldean practitioners, and the ceremonies of the "People of the Little Keg" (a western Mediaeval group of Christian heretics) are quite amazing, and probably no coincidence.

At no stage were Chaldean sacrifices to be made in the name of the supreme god. Instead everything was to be delegated and apportioned to the subordinate deities which the Great Power had created to implement his will throughout the future. This is another point of similarity with the pagan Rus' rites, for they did not make offerings to Svarog directly.

Animals were ritually slaughtered in batches of 7,8 or 9 (depending on the month of the

sacrifice) for each of these lieutenant gods, most of them burned alive. ⁶⁴³Herd beasts were the main creatures sacrificed, as well as birds of various kinds, especially the cock. ⁶⁴⁴ Having cut the throat of the victim the dead or still-twitching offering was incinerated; in no case was the sacrifice eaten. The effusion of blood from the open neck wound was the crucial moment of the ritual, and accordingly the name of the god being invoked or worshiped was recited as the blood began to flow. ⁶⁴⁴ Whether blood geysered forth from severed arteries, or simply trickled gently from a puncture wound, the effect was the same, an outpouring of life-giving power. In Chaldean ritualism, bloodletting provided energy for magical rites. The Greek philosopher Pythagorus wrote of such details long before the Arabs. After studying Chaldeanism he "was shocked at all the blood-shedding and killing" required by their art. ⁶⁴⁵

It came to the attention of authorities during mediaeval witch trials, that certain rites of black witchery demanded the slaughter of chickens, dogs and cats, and blood effusions were a feature of these ritual killings. 646 However, the witches could just as easily achieve the same or similar results by pricking themself. 646 Lancashire witches pierced their bodies to get bloodflow; "witches as have sharp bones given them by the devill to pricke them ... their devill receiveth bloud from the place, pricked with the bone". 647

The Chaldean ritual for killing bulls and other such creatures was to liberally pour wine over the head of the victim. The reaction of the victim to this outpouring served as an augry as to the acceptability of the sacrifice. The severed head was scrutinized for portentous signs, which were gleaned from the way the head, tongue and eyes moved. Following this the sacrifice was incinerated, and the rapidity and completeness with which the offering was consumed by the flames served to indicate the attitude of the god towards the offering, or served as a reply to the person's request for divine aid. During the Rus' funeral on the Upper Volga, Ibn Fadhlan noticed that the pagan onlookers were extremely pleased with the manner in which the death ship, the sacrificed concubine, dog, cock, horses and cattle were consumed by the flames; the conflagration quickly devored the ship leaving only a small wispy vortex of smoke rising up into the heavens.

The other Arab name for the *Al-Kaldani* (*Ashab Al-Ra's*⁶⁵⁰ which shares a phonetic similarity with Rus' or Ros) was derived from the fact that their religion possessed a talking head, severed from a man whose countenance resembled that of the god Mercury. If such a person was found among members of the cult during their travels, they captured and slew the individual, but not before subjecting them to various planetary rites. The snatched victim was manipulated in such a way as to prompt Mercury to enter into the person's head. This was achieved by skillfully stretching the victim's neck as long as they could before the act of beheading. Following the completion of this ritual the head was able to prophecy.⁶⁵¹

The Al-Kaldani had a major temple constructed for each of the planets, each with a specific geometric design; some were circular temples, others oblong, others square, pentacle-

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shaped or triangular. At Harran these temples existed in a clustered group, situated just near a holy mountain, from which celestial phenomena was observed by the Chaldean astronomers. According to Al-Masudi every temple had its own basement area which contained a number of idols through which the priests spoke to assembled devotees by means of tubing. One site in Harran served as a center of initiation for Chaldean boys who were making their rite of passage into manhood.

Their feasts, especially those dedicated to the God of the North, followed a specific calendar of observances, which Al-Nadim went on to detail at some length. This sacrificial regime was dualistic in nature, and conceptually similar to the pagan Rus' dualistic ceremonial calendar, with white and black days. At specific times of the year demonolatry was practiced in addition to the worship of idols consecrated to celestial deities. On the 27th and 28th of August "they have mysteries, offerings, slaughters and burnt sacrifices to the north, who is the greatest god, as well as to the devils and the jinn whom he has controlled and scattered, giving them good luck". On May 1st the Al-Kaldani adored the sun, whereas on the 2nd they made offerings to a Lord of Devils, under the name Salugha. Another feast was held in honour of a time god, who is best equated with Zurvan or Kronos. Each day of the week was dedicated to one of the five planets and two luminaries, each a divinity. For example Sunday was the sacrificial day assigned to the sun god Helios. According to one Russian Chronicle, Helios was another name used by the Russes (or at least a certain proportion of them) when referring to Dazhbog, the sun God.

Monday was the day of the Moon god Sin.

Tuesday was dedicated to the planet Mars under the name Ares.

Wednesday was the day of sacrifice to Mercury under the name Nebo.

Thursday was the day of sacrifice to Jupiter, who was also called Bal.

Friday was the day of the planet Venus under the name Belit.

Saturday was the day of the planet Saturn under the name Cronus.

Fossilized remnants of the Chaldean weekly calendrical observances survived into the modern era, coming by way of the Germanic nations. Sunday (the day of the sun), Monday (the moon's day), Tuesday (the day of *Tituraz* (the Germanic war god), probably derived from the Chaldean divinity *Ta-uz*), Wednesday (Odin's day), Thursday (Thor's day, Thor being the Scandinavian thunder god), Friday (the day of Frey. However I believe it comes from his sister's name, Freya, the goddess of sex and love, who can otherwise be equated with Venus), and finally Saturday (the day of Saturnus, the Great Maelific, who can also be equated with Satan). The same assignation of days can also be found in French and Italian.

In the Chaldean list you may have noted a number of deities worshiped not only on the steppes of Russia during Scythian times, but also in ancient Britain. These gods also

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appeared in the Jewish apocryphal Book of the Secrets of Enoch. 654

The Chaldean god *Ta-uz*, was worshiped by women alone, who lamented that he had been killed and his body ground to powder beneath a mill stone. Such was their love for him that an emulation of this tragic event may have been the basis for their annual baby sacrifice, which took place less than a month later, in August. Accordingly the infant sacrifice might have been akin to that which Abraham was prepared to make for love of his god, only in their case the priest followed through, and *Ta-uz* was the recipient.

One of their most spectacular and lavish feast days was dedicated to the Goddess of Beauty and Love, Venus, who they addressed by the name Belit. An elaborate floral-clad shrine or grotto was erected during the festival to house the idol, and in front of which many different kinds of animals were slaughtered. She was not the only female god of importance. Another goddess that received adoration was a certain mistress who ruled over the herds. She was associated with goats, and possessed her own herd. On the last (30th) day of every passing month, a special gathering was held, at which the presiding priest ascended a 9-stepped raised rostrum. Members of the congregation filed past the raised priest and were repeatedly whipped with a switch of tamarisk, a plant traditionally used by Magi for their barsom twig wands. All present were implored to go forth and multiply in great numbers with a view to regaining the prestige their religion once enjoyed. The faithful were urged to go out into the world to gain sovereign authority and rule over peoples of every nation, and were tasked with destroying Churches and Mosques in their area.

"Then he preaches a sermon to them, in which he calls (prays) for all of them to live, to increase the number of their offspring, and to gain power and superiority over all nations, that their sovereignty and days of rule may return to them and that the congregational mosque of Harran may be destroyed, as well as the Greek Orthodox Church and the market street known as the Women's market. Before the Byzantine kings uprooted them when they conquered (Harran), it was in these places that their idols used to be".666

After the priest alighted from the raised dais, he collected a small quantity of silver coinage from every person present (to bolster the temple coffers) and then proceeded to share out the ritual feast. Splinters of pine wood were burned at this time.⁶⁵⁶

The rites of February particularly concerned the adoration of demons and the God of the North. 657 Priests indulged in theurgic rites evidently cajoling the planets into action.

Al-Nadim stated that some devout Muslim translators who worked on recording the Chaldean mysteries did so in a biased and lacklustre fashion, with the result that the *Al-Kaldani* were misrepresented on a number of points. He went on to say that a primary Chaldean text in common usage among the *Al-Kaldani* was a much more faithful account of their mysteries, and the basis for his Fihrist entries concerning their faith. For example Al-

Nadim stated that the *Al-Kaldani* held Aristotlean views on the nature of physical existence, and beliefs close to those contained in the book *Meteorologica*.⁶⁵⁸ One of their primary religious texts was *Discourses of Hermes on Unity*,⁶⁵⁸ which means that it was similar to certain items within the Coptic Nag-Hammadi cache of pagan gnostic texts.

The *Al-Kaldani* had a treatise which detailed the rites, incantations and operations used to create magical knots, as well as talismanic images and devices, incised gemstones, or amulets from the body parts of various animals (eg; the wing bones of certain birds worm slung around the neck). ⁶⁹⁹ Al-Nadim further claimed to have seen the specially incised signets and gemstone seals which they carried, and had explained to him some of the basic premises of such devices. ⁶⁹⁹ In *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Assyrians*, the pagan gnostic philosopher Iamblichus made mention of rites not dissimilar to those specified by Al-Nadim. Whether or not Iamblichus' work was similarly twisted by Mediaeval Islamic copyists and translators who translated it into the Arabic is open to debate, but I personally doubt it.

The Old Russian word *Edukar'* ("a doctor of teaching", or "a knowledgeable person") has hazy orgins, but is thought to have stemmed from the Iranian word *Yadu-kara* ("sorcerer"), the Middle Avestan *Yadu* ("a sorcerer" or "a magician"), which still continued to be perpetuated in the New Persian as *Jadugar*.⁶⁶⁰ In all probability the *Yadu-kar* were the sorcerers portrayed in the *Avesta* as performing the infernal mysteries of *Yatukih*, magical rites directed towards *Ahriman*. Therefore we might guess the presence of Iranian devilworshiping sorcerers in pagan Russia who practiced Chaldean idolatry, and Chaldean intellectual culture.

Since the *Edukar'* can be identified with the *Yatukih* on phonetic grounds, I incline towards the view that in a number of instances the black Magi were actually Chaldean academics, and that the Chaldean "Mysteries of the North" was simply another name for *Yatukih*. So we have a Russian "Kolduny connection" with the *Al-Kaldani*, and a Russian "*Edukar'* connection" with the *Yatukih* sorcerers condemned as evil wizards in Orthodox Zoroastrian texts. This suggests that dark wizards were chased off by the Byzantines and white Magi, and were probably living in rural Russia. Perhaps for this reason the Russian *kolduny* and the black Magi were widely reported to have worn lengthy dishevelled hair and ragged beards. One type of Russian *Koldun* was the *Baal'nik*, who made special consecrations using incantations. We might therefore make a connection between the Russian *Baal'nik Koldun* and the headman of the *Al-Kaldani'*s temple of Baal (perhaps the Chaldean Jupiter). It may well be that these Russian Chaldeans were descendants of the "Assyrian" devilworshipers who the Magi claimed were "uprooted" from Asia Minor by the Byzantine Emperors. There they lived alongside the Magians and many other types of pagan living in exile. The *Fihrist of Al-Nadim* corroborates the Magian texts with regard to the displacement

of the Chaldeans, perhaps confirming the historicity of Zoroastrian reports of anti-Chaldean Byzantine military campaigns conducted inside Anatolia.

Whereas in bygone years the Chaldean priests, priestesses and head men had practiced their magical rites free of harm, their extremely ancient faith had to slide from public influence and view after Babylon and Assyria fell to Medean and Persian troops. If it was to have any chance of maintaining its autonomy, anonymity would be their foremost asset in the struggle to preserve the religion. They were survivors. So, as white Magian, Byzantine Christian and Islamic religions sequentially inherited governorship of the Chaldean homeland, each had to contend with the pagan resilience of the locals. Amid repeated waves of failed conversions (which saw Chaldeans feign membership of these newer religions, all the while "unrepentently" and vehemently clinging to Chaldean sorcery and philosophy), waves of repression were unleashed against them to rid Anatolia of their worrisome presence. Despite Islam's ascendancy to ever newer heights of popularity, the Arabs still had them loitering about Harran in the 10th Century AD, but in diminished numbers. Obviously many had genuinely converted. Yet one cannot help feeling that the reason why late Mediaeval Islam did not suffer from the same frenzied outbursts of witch trials as the Roman Catholic Church, is because the Al-Kaldany had been forced to leave the area or abandon their religion, and those who did remain had no rights under Muslim law anyway. The later destruction of Baghdad and Harran by the Mongols may have caused further emigration of Chaldean and Muslim refugees from the war-ravaged zone.

In other words Chaldean religion was still largely intact as late as the 10th Century, clandestinely practicing their arts throughout Muslim Egypt and Arabia⁶⁶³ on some scale. Al-Nadim's testimony corroborates, if not verifies, what Iamblichus, the Greek pagan gnostic said of them. In accordance with Chaldean pagan philosophy, devils and spirits could be summoned and commanded by invoking the name of the supreme god. Exactly who this high god was, and what name he should be summoned by, depended of course on the prevailing notion of the supreme godhead in the area in which they lived. Throughout the Muslim world Chaldeanism had a distinctly Islamic flavor, while in Christendom Western European witches tailored their arts to reflect the Christianization of their society. There they drew down the power of the holy Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Al-Nadim had the following things to say about the Chaldeans found among the Muslim flock. Witness the Islamicized face of Chaldeanism!

"The exorcists and magicians assert that the devils, Jinn, and spirits obey and serve them, being directed by their command and their prohibition. The exorcists, who pretend to observe the sacred laws (of Islam), claim that this is because of obedience to Allah ... Thus invocation is addressed to Him, and oaths by the spirits and devils are by His help, with the abandoning of lusts and by consequence of religious practices.

Moreover, (they claim) that the jinn and the devils obey them, either because of obedience to Allah ...

The (other) magicians assert that they enslave the devils by offerings and prohibitive acts. They (claim) that the devils are pleased by the committing of acts which are forbidden and which Allah ... has prohibited. Thus the perpetrating of things such as abandoning prayer and fasting, permitting blood, marrying forbidden women, and other kinds of evil actions is also pleasing. This is common practice in Egypt and the nearby regions: the books which are written there are many and extant ... A person who has seen this (state of affairs) has told me that there still remain men and women magicians and that all of the exorcists and magicians assert that they have seals, charms of paper, sandal, jazah, smoke and other things used for their arts". 663

Thanks to archaeologists we have a series of ancient pre-Zoroastrian Chaldean tablets, entitled the *Wicked Spirits*. They contained expulsions and shielding formulae designed to protect the practitioner, some of which took the form of imprecations. In this respect Al Nadim's exposition of Mediaeval Chaldean magic and demonolatry can be vindicated. Foremost among the offending spirits were three species of demon known to the Chaldeans as *Utuq*, *Gigim* and *Maskim* (from lowest to highest potency). ⁶⁶⁴ Of the *Maskim* it was said:

"On high they bring trouble, and below they bring confusion. Falling in rain from the sky, issuing from the earth, they penetrate the strong timbers, the thick timbers; they pass from house to house. Doors do not stop them, bolts do not stop them, they glide in at the doors like serpents, they enter by the windows like the wind, they hinder the wife from conceiving by her husband; they take the child from the knees of the man; they make the free woman leave the house, where she has borne a child. They, they are the voices which cry and which pursue mankind".665

Many of these beings lived beneath the earth, under water especially, and far beneath the sea in particular. Another fragmented tablet describes this underworld known to the Chaldees. It called it the "foundation of Chaos", "6650 a jail from which there is no escape, where there is no food to speak of save the dust, where no light comes, where dirt-speckled aerial demons, in their multitudes, fly thickly, even so far as licking the ceiling of the underworld's vault.

Al-Nadim went on to describe Chaldean engraved gems, plus stone and bead talesma throughout much of the Middle-East, although he adds that they had been "rendered vain". Iamblichus already told us of these things long prior, but Al-Nadim knew of their mediaeval presence first-hand. Additionally, as a result of these arts, many specialist treatises dedicated to the Jinn and demonology could be found in their keeping throughout much of Arabia, often quite detailed.

As this section draws fast to a close, I must draw your attention to comments made by some writers on the topic of European witchcraft. They say that witchery was largely a

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fictitious phenomenon scraped together by a number of mediaeval Catholic clergy, built on older stories and plenty of imagination. As further proof of this they proclaim that witchcraft did not exist in the Middle East, or in Orthodox Christian countries. This is simply untrue. Sadly, whatever Russian Orthodox Church texts concern contemporary paganism are hardly explicit, adding hardly anything to our search for what actually took place in pagan Russia. Their pens were far more busy recording the glorious ascension of Christianity, the magnificence of their rulers, the conversion of their race, and the path towards inward moral reform. Be that as it may, the Chaldeans are mentioned in the sermons of Klim Smolyatich, but only in terms of their weakness when compared with god. Klim's homily is more likely to have been a moral lesson for his parishioners rather than a direct reference to local Chaldeans.

On the other hand, Russian folklore greatly supports my contention that Chaldeans were present in Slavia. In the folk tale Prince Vladimir's Quest (which rivals the official account of the conversion polemic contained within the Primary Chronicle), Vladimir sends three observers Mladan, Oleg and Vachtan to discover a new faith for the Russian people. 666 This faith was to replace their homage of the many gods which inhabited their environs, and their excessive reliance on the stars and astrology for guidance.66 They visited many places and were unsatisfied with what they saw until they ran into a dwarf.666 He advised them to go far to the east into Mesopotamia, to the city of Babylon, the city of the seven hills. 666 Upon arrival they discovered black-clad worshipers prostrating themselves before metallic or stone idols, as females garbed in black danced around a censer emitting a plume of thick billowing smoke. 41 the while a choir uttered unnerving discordant chants as an accompaniment to the proceedings. 66 Their primary god was a female, who I associate with the black mother, Geh, the great whore, mother of dark witchcraft (as described in the Magian texts). Having felt themselves deceived by the dwarf the three Russians made off. Eventually, they had a dream of a holy maiden (the Virgin Mary) who guided them to the City of the Sun, which surprisingly turns out to be Constantinople, the city where they would find the light, truth and joy which Vladimir sent them in search of. Behind this tale we find the story of their unrequited search for a new faith in Babylonian religion. Their City of the Sun was not Khorezm (a former homeland of the Croats, and the Hungarian Arpad dynasty. Iranian: literally "The Land of the Sun") as one would suspect, but Constantinople. Whether the real version of the myth lay at Khorezm, but was later shifted to Constantinople the further they entered the Christian era is debatable. The search for the City of the Sun reveals an underlying strata of heliolatry superimposed over Christianity - such were the beliefs of the dvoeveriye, the pagan Christians.

A 13th Century Chaldean-style spell scroll unearthed by archaeologists in Novogorod confirms the existence of the dark craft in Russia beyond all doubt. The spells were written

backwards in the form of prayers to the Virgin Mary, making them "anti-prayers". These were the sort of pagan observances so frequently condemned by the Russian Church as unholy. But their relative absence in relation to the 150,000 other scrolls unearthed there show that, in the cities at least, it was not widespread. Having said that, only 10% of the old city has been excavated so far.

On top of that we have a number of *zmeiovik* medallions (designed to be worn!) featuring the cross of Jesus on one side and the head of a medusa-like fiend on the other. The latter is quite plausibly a depiction of Ahriman, since a similar relief is found in Persia, in the form of the Evil One being crushed under the hooves of Ahura Mazda's steed.

Likewise there can be no mistaking the intended symbolism of a deliberately manufactured inverted cross found in Scandinavia. The principles behind the object in question seem related to *ergi*, an art of ritual inversion theoretically connected with infernal wizardry.

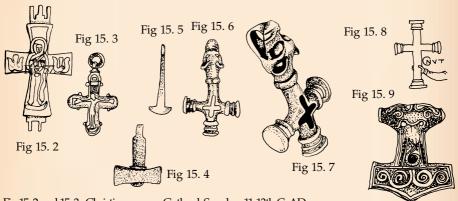


Fig 15. 2 and 15. 3. Christian crosses, Gotland, Sweden, 11-13th C. AD.

Fig 15. 4. Plain "Thor's hammer" amulet.

Fig 15. 5. Plain "Thor's hammer" amulet.

Fig 15. 6. Inverted cross found in Iceland and dating to the Norse pagan era, the 10th C. AD.

Fig 15. 7. Side projection of 15. 5.

Fig 15. 8. The Christian Danish King Canute's cross.

Fig 15. 9. Stylized Norse hammer amulet, headed by a horned creature.

The situation was far different in the countryside. For example in the Russian district of Penzen, *kolduny* supposedly used candles, aspen and wands of witch-hazel during their devotions. As with the *Al-Kaldani*, Russian *kolduny* were allegedly practitioners of ritual inversion. They were notorious for attending Church services and then disrespectfully turning their back on the priest and iconostasis where Jesus, Mary and the Saints are portrayed in religious art. Profanities were supposedly the order of the day at Easter time. They recited the Easter resurrection prayer backward then began yelling obscenities.

unholy consecrations of the Russian *koldumy* (termed *porchi*) involved necromancy, devilworship, desecration, and even performing the dance of St Vitus. For this reason I am inclined to identify Rus' black Magians as heathen Chaldean *koldumy*. The Mediaeval antiwitch treatise *Malleus Maleficarum* states "it can be said that the devils deputed to work are not in Hell, but in the lower mists". Clearly a Chaldean explanation was posited by Kramer and Sprenger for the abilities and activities of devils, as professed by the witches.

It would seem that they were blasphemously mocking not only Christian rites, but Magian pagan ceremonies still extant in Russia. On *Velikiy Chetverg* (ie; Holy Thursday) *kolduny* held their own fire ceremonies during which aspen was burned. Fellow sorcerers and sorceresses soon converged on the scene of the fire requesting to receive portions of this ash from the ringleader. The Old Russian word for *aspen* (a species of poplar tree) was *osin*, which bears a superficial resemblance to *yasen'* ("the ash tree"), and therefore *yasna* (the name of the Magian *Haoma* ritual). Even though Russian *kolduny* used the ashes of burned poplar for magical purposes, there is no reason to include it as a candidate for the mantle of *Haoma* on the strength of this linguistic correlation, ostensibly because it does not resemble the plant described in the Magian texts.

In Rus' bread, salt and water were desecrated at other times and strategically flung in certain locations, especially near cross-roads. Eggs or a knotted bundle made from a shirt, belt, cross, chain and coal, were put there too. Whosoever retrieved these things (which are especially identifiable with Magianism) would be afflicted by disease generally speaking, and through them, the *koldumy* brought diseases and plagues into the villages. The depositing of bread at cross-roads is probably indicative that Magians left consecrated loaves at cross-road shrines by their priests and priestesses. Hence the desire to pick them up, and eat of them.

Koldumy slept during the day, and come night time they set off to be about their business, carrying a staff with an iron crook at the end. They mostly dressed the same, with a sheep-skin jacket girthed by a belt-sash (kushak). Their countenance was terrible, their grin that of a wolf, their eyes vulpine. To have them look at you was all the worse owing to the powers of witchcraft that flowed from those eyes. This the peasantry called "the wolf gaze".

Russian sorcerers could astral travel, or in other words, make their soul leave their body and send it on journeys. At other times they mutated into animal form. ⁶⁷⁴ *Koldumy* used iron blades, cats, frogs and snakes as aids to performing sorcery, in addition to poplar ash. ⁶⁷⁴ These were classic features of black Magianism, if we are to believe the Zoroastrian texts. *Koldumy* displayed further black Magian features described in the Avestan and Pahlavi texts. *Koldumy* rendered cattle lame by rubbing their hand along the beast's back. ⁶⁷⁵ Moreover they destroyed the crops raised by the peasantry out of hatred for bread and cereal grains, and to make their austere lives even more troubled. ⁶⁷⁵

They performed another rite eminently feared by the peasantry. According to it bread was broken on its right and left side, then twisted into a knot. The ripped and knotted loaf was not sprinkled with salt (as would normally be the case in any white Magian or Russian household), but was instead intentionally despoiled with ashes, dirt from a grave plot, eggshell, and old grain. The ash used in the ritual was to be taken from the hearth of the intended victim, who was to be attacked by the black magic of the unholy loaf. This bread caused poverty and fires on the person's property, and made their cattle drop due to sickness. It could even lead to death. It was widely believed throughout Belorussia that such a rite would prevent a harvest across many fields. A conceptually similar ritual was known in Western Europe, and featured in an undetermined number of European witch trials.

In the Sarapyl' district, in the Vyatka region of Eastern Russia, *koldumy* apparently laced wine and beer with a specially prepared incense. The tainted draught caused mental disorientation, rendering whomsoever had imbibed the drink unable to find doors. Where *koldumy* managed to make a person drink wash-up water, the victim was supposedly drained of their strength.⁶⁷⁶

Kolduny had a good side as well; for a price. Russians who believed themselves vexed sought the services of another koldun, who performed counter-magical rituals, to relieve the burden imposed on them by the enemy sorcerer. Wedded couples often had them protect the family home using diverse rituals.

As stated earlier, evil witches were notoriously present in the far north of Russia, particularly near the exceedingly frigid White Sea. Folklore remembers them as black of visage, perhaps negroid or Indian, or perhaps simply allegorically black in heart and body. Their infernal powers came to them in a reversed version of confirmation, when the spirit of evil entered their body, in the form of demons, traditionally embodied as toads, frogs and serpents. The state of the spirit of evil entered their body, in the form of demons, traditionally embodied as toads, frogs and serpents.

Evidence for European Chaldeanism appears in Western sources too, mainly in the form of spell scrolls written in Chaldean and Hebrew. The 1376 text *Directorium Inquisitorium* provided unmistakably Chaldean details about certain witch-rites. After laying face down on the ground many times, and with songs, "they lacerate their own flesh (to draw blood). Out of reverence for the demon or by his instructions they wear white or black vestments. They worship him by signs ... burn candles or incense, they sacrifice animals and birds, catching their blood". The famous protestant theologian Calvin, did however think to brand Western witches as Chaldeans, drawing, in places, from *Old Testament* passages. St

"He (God) hands the Chaldeans over to be impelled by Satan, having chosen them as His ministers for this task. Satan with his poison darts arouses the wicked minds of the Chaldeans to execute that evil deed ... and befoul them by the crime". 681

Consider also the details recorded in 1376 (by the Inquisitor Nicholas Eymeric) concerning the arts of the witch-heretics at Aragon, France. He mentioned;

Bloodletting, animal sacrifices (by burning), collecting the blood of the sacrifices, invoking demons, paying homage to demons through their chastity.

Wearing robes either black or white in colour, as a given demon required.

Using propitiatory hymns, incenses and aromas for unholy purposes.

Kneeling before demons.

Using sigils and unidentifiable words to worship particular demons

Burning candles.

Conducting rituals similar to Baal worship.

Ragan holg sites

What we know of the former heathen holy sites of Europe, provides us with clues that they were of varied pagan faiths, which included eastern dualist paganism (Magianism), animism, pagan gnosticism (Mithraism, Chaldeanism, Neo-Pythagoreanism) and Aryan paganism. The Aryan origin of their words for fire, their holy flags, the Hindu-style form of their idols, their grove cults, and the Indo-Iranian names of their gods, suggests a need to indulge in a comparative religious study, that expands upon similarities between Vedic and Magian religion, and European paganism. In doing so one is able to make informed guesses about the nature of European pagan religious sites, to paint in details otherwise erased or omitted by Christian or Muslim sources.

This approach does have one shortcoming. Due to a relative scarcity of Pan-European historical source material for each given sub-topic, dating to between 500 and 1,000 AD, it is by no means easy to confirm that these additional conjectured details were actually present across all of Europe. Sometimes folklore is all we have to go on. In most cases we cannot definitively authenticate the Pan-European nature of a given analogous custom, where comparable details are no longer to be found in other European countries. Considering that many features of Magian religion should be readily noticeable in the archeological record, only a greater commitment to archeological exploration will bring us a better understanding of what actually took place. Even then, we will never be able to recover the full picture. As in Asia, European pagan holy sites fell into five main categories; temples (fixed or mobile), groves, holy springs, holy fires and idols. With the coming of Christianity, public modes of heathen religious expression were no longer permitted. The new order, whether Christian or Muslim, set about dismantling whatever sites still remained operative, or where possible commandeered them for Christian or Islamic usage respectively.

More importantly, this section proceeds to divulge evidence that these heathen faiths

were remarkably well organized, so much so that pagan adherents from other "christianized" countries made their way to Rus' and the Baltic on religious pilgrimages during the 10th Century AD and before.

Shrami - pagan temples

In bygone ages, the pagans could see their fenced off grove and the trees within them. On days when an oblation was to be made to the gods a high priest would cross over the boundary fence, and enshroud the tree in the holy tent. There he was alone with the heavenly gods. As temple-making became more common, people incorporated the concept of this private inner sanctum into their building design. Under Aryanism, a sacred post or pillar was raised inside the groves to tether the steed prior to its sacrifice. In Zoroastrian/Magian texts, four wooden pylons were said to delimit the boundary-line of the inner-most sanctum, and were encased by a mesh of interwoven thin wood slats, or even woven basketry which prevented entry into the pagan "holy of holies", yet allowed worshipers to see the holy fire within, and witness the ceremonies taking place. Sanctuaries were also found in any Christian church or chapel, although in Russia it was appended to one end of the nave, rather than centrally located, and skirted by a *trapeznya* porch. 685a

Large sums of money were invested in their construction. At Gutzkow, Poland, 300 marks of silver was the sum recorded as having been raised and set aside for building a temple there. Upon completion it proved so breathtaking in appearance, that the Gutzkowians refused to demolish it when their people were eventually converted. Upon completion it proved so breathtaking in appearance, that the Gutzkowians refused to demolish it when their people were eventually converted. Upon converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted. Upon converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted. Upon converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted. Upon converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted. Upon converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted. Upon converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted. Upon converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted. Upon converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted. Upon converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish it when their people were eventually converted to demolish

Abram eonstruction

According to a linguist by the name of Makhek, the Old Slavic word for "a temple" (singular *Khram*", plural: *Khrami* is supposed to have been derived from the Hittite word *Karimmi*, which also means "a temple". "So One cannot overstress the implications of this, for here we find that the pagan Slavic word for "a temple" came from the language of the Hittites, an Aryan people, and there are *no surviving Persian or Old Indian parallels*.

The reconstructed hypothetical Old Eastern-Slavic word *khorm", though linguistically dissimilar to *khram* by a minor degree, apparently gave rise to other related words throughout Slavia, many of them quite specialized, others more general. 666 These include the Russian dialectal words *khoromina* or *khoroma* ("a roof"), *khoromshchik* ("a carpenter"), as well as the Ukrainian word *khorom* ("a corridor"), *khoromi* ("a porch"). 5 Then in the Serbo-Croat we have *khram* and *khrama* which meant "a house" or "a temple". 686 In the Slovenian *hram*

signified "a construction, "a dwelling", "a home", "a temple", and much later in history "an apartment ", and Czechs used the words *chram* or *chramina* ("a temple" or "a church"). **Chromina was the Polish word for "a hut" or "a cabin". Related to these last few words is the Latvian *karms* ("a construction") and the Old Indian *harmyam* ("a fortification"). **

From this we can infer several things. Firstly that *klmm* originally denoted a pagan temple in eastern and southern Slavia. Secondly that many folk in western and central Slavia had lost the pagan meaning of a *klmm* and began using it to describe any kind of building whatsoever. Alternatively these same people still worshiped in heathen *klmmi*, but due to their isolation from more major Eastern Slavic cult centers, they had to content themselves with conducting pagan religious gatherings in private homes. The situation was much the same in Scandinavia, for *St Olav's Saga* tells us that a major cult site for Thor was situated on a farm, in a barn. And lastly, in Russia and Poland the word entirely lost its pagan affiliations after the conversion, thereafter meaning "a Christian church". This probably means that local bishops chose to commandeer and renovate pre-existing heathen buildings, during the conversions, recycling them for Christian usage. The very same thing happened in England.

So how is it that Mediaeval Slavic pagans had preserved a word for "temple" once used by the Indo-European Hittites some 2,000 years prior to their day? Let's face it, the word had survived the passage of 2,000 years in the Slavic, in the same context (ie; not only the survival of the word, but its use to describe temples which Slavs in fact built). If the word Khrami had not been in Slavia for 2,000 or so years, a relic of the ancient Indo-European migrations into Europe, then it was surely imported there by people who had kept Hittite temple-building alive for that same period. Pagan Slav temples evidently had a Mesopotamian or Aryan origin.

Since the Bulgars are the only other non-Slavic race to equate *khram* with a heathen temple, it's possible that that the Bulgars taught the ultimately Hittite word to the Slavs, together with the know-how to make them. Since *khram* was not used by the Volga Finns or Bashkirs, and cannot be found in other Turkic languages, this leads me to believe that the word was indigenous to Slavia, and had been there from remotest antiquity.

So what were Aryan temples like? From the *Agni Puranas* we know that Aryans believed they could redeem up to 21 generations of their ancestors by building or financing the construction of temples and pavilion shrines. Temples were ideally of exquisite craftsmanship, for they were intended to shelter the holy *Daeva* idols. Their general appearance and structural integrity was to be well maintained by regular upkeep, if the good fortune promised by the *Puranas* was to materialize. It then followed that the destruction of a temple robbed its former builders and sponsors of the spiritual graces received through their act of devotion.

Indian pagan temples varied in both shape and size. They could be square, circular, elliptical, octagonal or oblong. Doorways were an integral structural component, and were

traditionally embellished with the effigies of angels and divine guardians, carved into the lintels and posts either side of the entrance. Further ornamentation consisted of intertwined branches and foliage. The temple's architectural form was seen as a representation of the divine being to whom the temple was dedicated, with specific structural features embodying certain part of the god's body. For instance the fairly standard towering vault and cupola represented the divinity's head and neck. Such notions seem apparent in the Old Russian p'rst", the Bulgarian pr"st, the Serbo-Croat, Czech and Slovenian prst, the Polish parst, all of which meant "a finger". These are related to the Latvian pirsts, the Lithuanian pirstas, and Old Prussian. These Slavic words are cognate with the Old High German word first ("the ridge of a roof"), or the Latin postis ("a post"), the Old Indian prstham "a backbone", "the spine of a mountain", or "a summit". Stolb (variously meaning "a post", "stairs" or "a ladder" in diverse Slavic tongues) is equated with the Latvian stilbs "the lower part of the hand or foot". That further correlations between names for architectural features and body parts are not easily discernible, indicates that such similarities are purely coincidental, or had mostly dissipated with the passage of time.

Anyhow, the Brahmins wrapped a special thread around various parts of an Aryan temple, including the exterior. Once built, all that remained was to sanctify the building by a prescribed set of hallowing rituals, and chisel sacred images into it. Such an unusual detail as a string encircling a temple seems replicated in Adam of Bremen's mention of the Swedish temple at Uppsala, which was girded by a golden chain.

To consecrate an Aryan temple doorway "(a piece of) gold should be placed beneath the door (frame)". Et is impossible to guess whether or not such a custom gave rise to a later Norse pagan tradition. At various Scandinavian sites, archaeologists have located carnelian shards and golden embossed foils (termed goldengubber) buried under post holes. Owing to their widespread distribution archaeologists guess the foils served some magical purpose, perhaps sealing a marriage, or guaranteeing fertility at the site. They variously depict heterosexual couples, same sex couples (perhaps men hugging each other, or perhaps homosexuals) or a person and an animal. Some of these golden foils carry the image of a bear embracing a woman. This last motif may be related to Gothic mythology, which traces their ancestry to progeny once generated by the union of a young lass and a bear. Considering that golden magical foils are frequently found in the foundations of houses, these bear and woman foils may have been Gothic amulets designed to bring fertility and heirs to the married couples dwelling in a given Gothic household.

The Aryans usually placed a large golden metallic disk inside their newly completed temples, but only after the due consecrations had been made.⁶⁹⁴ These temple disks represented the sun, and were thus objects of cult veneration.⁶⁹⁴ This calls to mind an account concerning the Wends, who slung a so-called "golden shield", on a wall inside Yarovit's

temple. 695 Perhaps it was really a solar disk of the type described in the *Agni Puranas*. Judging by Herbord's spartan description of the sanctuary's interior, little else was found there. Maybe Wolgast was more austere than other Wendish sites, but judging by the number of villagers thronging around the temple as the Christian troops first entered to violate the sanctuary, the pagans might have been expecting their arrival. If so pagan priests could have spirited away most of the temple's valuables just in time. Nevertheless the locals were visibly awe-struck as the sacred device passed by, victoriously held aloft by the Christian free-booters. Though in opposition to this conjecture, Yarovit was held to be a war god that Herbord equated with Mars. 695 Evidently his name was derived from the Slavic *yariy* ("violent", "fierce", "furious").

To further inaugurate an Aryan temple the Brahmins placed a stone altar there, and lit the holy fire of *Agni* upon it. Next the temple's principal idol was put in place, seated on its own stone pedestal. Following this a flagstaff was blessed and erected next to the idol of the divine being, in order to negate the effects of the evil spirits. Once hoisted, the flag "surrounds the neck of the temple (the vault's interior) and it wafts the wind around the globe (the cupola's interior), altar and image". An Aryan temple banner required purification too, and could only be used after it was bathed and consecrated. The silken flag was either of "a single or variegated colours", and traditionally bore an heraldic depiction of military arms. The *Agni Purana* adds; It should be adorned with cowries and small bells". Once all this was complete, a flag-raising ceremony took place, accompanied by great pomp and reverence, the faithful solemnly reciting hymns as the unfolding banner made its heroic ascension to the top of the mast. If worshiped with piety the temple flag could remove the stain of one's sinfulness, and bestow boons upon the assembled devotees. Kings were the primary providers of temple flags. It was a pressing duty that they avoided to their own personal detriment.

"By the offer of a banner one goes to heaven and becomes a strong monarch on the earth". 697

In the Aryan tradition idols could also be housed inside a temple, or outdoors safely sheltered by a pavilion shrine, or in the halls of those who wished to earn the spiritual merits attached to sponsoring the erection of an effigy.⁶⁹⁸

The faithful also needed to dig holy tanks, reservoirs or wells near the new temple, to pool the sacred waters. A post was driven deep into the well's bottom, and a consecrated effigy, plus gold, were committed its bottom. The spiritual graces flowing from well construction were profound. As sacred cattle lapped its waters, the sins of the one who commissioned the digging and lining of the well were taken away - "He never goes to hell", so said their scriptures.

The style and decoration of pagan Russian khrami varied depending on the precise form of worship normally conducted there. Just as there was immense variation in the

construction and decoration of the later Christian churches, pagan temples most likely acquired their own "feel". The more lavish and impressive *khrami* no doubt attracted greater volumes of heathen pilgrims on sacred festivals (and more prestige for local tribespeople).

Since most available descriptions of the pagan Wendish temple interiors come from some of the very people who sacked them, we should ask how reliable their recollections were? If Mediaeval Christian writers were in any way keen on diabolizing the pagans, they could have had an absolute field day describing the insides of the heathen temples. There was simply no better moment to revel in classic demonic cliches. Instead, we find very little of this, and predominantly lucid descriptions of what was seen inside. For example at Rethra ... "a great temple had been erected to the demons, the chief of whom is Redigast. His image is ornamented with gold, his bed bedecked with purple". To Thietmar added that the effigy was actually gilded wood, embellished by engravings, perhaps writing, though it is highly unlikely that Redigast was seen as demonic by pagan Wends. This was Thietmar's own embellishment. Purple cloth was draped over the walls, and flags placed inside, though it is difficult to guess how closely this practice resembled that of the Aryans. Carved images (set with animal horns) were erected outside, near the exterior of the Rethra temple. In all we are presented with a picture of pagan Slav holy sites every bit similar to those described in the Hindu Puranas.

Solus shaped mounds?

In Hindu (and presumably Aryan) religious art, the *Daeva* idols were very frequently found seated (in the lotus position) or standing on a lotus flower pillar. According to the *Agni Purana* the faithful worshiped weaponry and sundry deities atop flower-shaped mounds, in the center of which was an idol of Indra. In 1951 Russian archaeologists excavated a flower-shaped mound at Novgorod, which is believed to have acted as a pedestal for Perun's idol, originally brought there by Vladimir's uncle Dobrynya. Holy fires once blazed there also, burning in the center of the flower, and at the tip of each petal. All things being equal, this Novgorod religious site was probably a Zurvanite or Aryan pagan *daeva* temple dedicated to Perun, or in other words Indra.

As you will have seen Celtic pagan idols were sometimes found seated with their legs arranged in the so-called lotus position, a religious posture adopted during meditation in India.⁷⁰³

Cowered temples

As you will recall, Aryan temples frequently possessed a lofty vault.⁷⁰⁴ The situation was much the same in Slavia. By far the most impressive of the Slavic *khrami* were immense (square, octagonal or circular) wooden towers, roofed by a pyramid-like cupola made from aesthetically pleasing rows of oak shingles called *lemekh*.⁷⁰⁵ *Lemekh* is a word common to all

the Slavs, despite minor phonetic variations, and appears traceable to the Lithuanian word *lemesis*. These shingled temples probably resembled the fire temples of the Magi, and coincidentally were not unlike Western Church bell-towers to look at.

In other instances, heathen Slav towers had octagonal spires, or *shater* "tent rooves" (pronounced *shatyor*) as they called them. These cupola-towers apparently existed before the 989 AD conversion to Christianity, and their design was faithfully incorporated into early Russian churches." High towers were therefore elements of pagan Slavic architecture.

Linguistics lets us infer that *shater* tent rooves (or at the very least Magian tents) were employed over a large area; Slavia, Serbo-Croatia, Bulgaria, the Uighur Empire, Azerbaijan, and the vast Turkic lands of Central Asia, as far away as the Altai region of Siberia, in the Asiatic Far-East. The true origin of *shatyor* is the Persian word *chatr* ("a barrier" or "tent"), and the Old Indian chattram ("a barrier").708 Shatyor's impressive distribution might be evidence that Magian or Magian-Brahminic temple building skills had decentralized from the Iranian region, and had diffused northwards, eastwards and westwards over an exceptionally vast region. The Achaemenid holy city of Pasargadae (which translates as "the encampment of the Persians"), was tent-shaped in its overall layout.⁷⁰⁹ Such a design was simply a translation of their tented holy sites into more lasting materials, which were suitably decorated with the exploits of kings by teams of carvers.709 If for arguments sake Achaemenid Magians had come to settle in Russia, either immediately, or after a lengthy period of habitation in Northern and Central Asia, we might expect that they engaged themselves in similar activities. Accordingly one might find groves, anthropomorphic household utensils, griffons, highly decorated temples, seals. And we do. Though one point of difference between Achaemenid Persia and Slavia was the Russian use of wood rather than stone, perhaps on account of its plentifulness. The relatively treeless realms of the Achaemenids and Magi never provided the Persians with a suitable quantity of timber for use in temple construction. For this reason, building in wood may have been cheaper to make in time and money (no stone to import and dress), and what is more, the wood was very holy. Expatriate Persian craftsmen in Slavia probably delighted in a pleasant change from stone. Achaemenid architecture originally showed Egyptian and Mesopotamian decorative influences (ie; humans with animal heads and other animalian body parts, lions, griffons),79 far in excess of the expected Greek influence, which was nonetheless present.70 Be that as it may, the vast majority of the Magian religious sites appear to have been in the form of outdoor gardens (transected by flowing creeks of crystalline purity), free-standing pavilion-shrines, as well as raised platforms set atop hills.709

Our most enduring problem is the desolation of the old Slav temples, on account of which we are unlikely to discover the fullest range of artistic themes that once adorned them. This is a pity, for they were described as exquisite even by the Christians who came to destroy

them. Nor can we compare anything other than chance discoveries of well-preserved fragments of carved panels. Nevertheless, Russian holy groves and temples can be admirably equated with Iranian holy sites. All the more so because a number of Scandinavian and Slavic artifacts (whether excavated or mentioned in mediaeval historical sources) resemble those of the Persians. Accordingly we see a translation of Persian motifs like lions and griffons cascading out of Iran and into Northern and Eastern Europe. Such motifs are found in their wood carvings. In a Slavic context, the tent-roofed cupola design is thought to have been an outgrowth of a feature common to Slavic fortifications.⁷¹¹ A firm relationship between religious towers and fortified sites is validated by archeological excavations and historical accounts pertaining to Rugen, which depict the main temple there as securely guarded not only by men-at-arms, but defensive works.

Another Old Russian word for "a tower" commonly used in pre-Christian times was *vezha*, which is similar to the Slovenian *veza*, the Polish *wieza*, and the Czech *vez* or *veze*, which in almost all cases mean "a tower". *Vezha* perhaps originated from the Avestan Persian verb *vaza*.⁷¹¹ What is more certain is that these correlations emerged from the proto-slavic *vezha meaning "a mobile home", or "a portable tower". Historically speaking, Slav towers were more often than not portable, and for this reason only infrequently covered in external cladding. They could be readily dismantled, transported about on a wagon and reassembled at a new location.

We know from Poland that the Western Slavs preferred to build their temple towers on the top of hills or mountains, but due to the lack of high ground in Russia, it is less likely that they followed this custom. These temples contained idols, treasure and holy fires which were so valuable that in one case we know of (the Western Slav cult center of Rugen) they were guarded by 300 armed riders. Archaeologists and surviving historical accounts allow us to guess that the Rus' pagan temples resembled those of the Western Slavs in many respects. The latin 10th Century text Fields of Gold, Al-Masudi informs us that many Slavs were demi-pagans, part Christian and part sun-worshipers. They were, so to speak, heretics. He provided descriptions of their Slavic temples (or possibly even heretical churches), but did not state if he saw them personally:

"And another temple was built by one of their kings on Chornaya Gora (Black mountain)
- miraculous waters encircle it, multi-coloured and varied, with well known uses. In it they had
a great idol in the form of a person, like an old man with a stick in his hands, with which
he moves the bones of the dead from the grave (ie; he re-animates or resurrects the
dead). A picture of various ants is situated at his right foot, and at his left foot are pictures
of black, winged ravens, and other black winged images ..." 713

"And they have another temple on a hill surrounded by the sea Inside it was lined out with red coral and green chrysolite. In the midst of it was a great tower, and under it was the