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THE INDO-EUROPEAN MYTH OF CREATION

Myths of origins have always held a certain fascination for the historian of religions, and for many scholars the creation myth has become the chief mode of entry into a foreign culture. The method is a tried and proven one, and any number of rich studies have come as a result of careful investigation of creation accounts.[1] Certainly there is ample reason why this should be so, for the cosmogonic myth is the myth which establishes the order of the world and thus has important social, material, and economic ramifications as well as deep religious significance. It is not only the favorite myth of myth studiers, but of myth tellers as well, and is accorded special prestige and respect by those who live the myth.[2]

Given this, and given the recent rise of interest in the study of

[1] The most important theoretical works on the cosmogonic myth are Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959); and, "Cosmogonic Myth and Sacred History," in *The Quest* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), pp. 72–87; Raffaele Pettazzoni, "Myths of Beginnings and Creation Myths," in *Essays on the History of Religions*, trans. H. J. Rose (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967), pp. 24–36; and Charles H. Long, *Alpha: The Myths of Creation* (New York: George Brazillier Inc., 1963). For excellent examples of the use of the cosmogonic myth, see Alfonso Ortiz, *The Tewa World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), and Hans Schärer, *Ngaju Religion* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963).

[2] See Eliade, "The Myth of the Noble Savage or, the Prestige of the Beginning," in *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), pp. 39–58; and Pettazzoni, "The Truth of Myth," in *Essays . . .*, pp. 11–23.

Indo-European Creation Myth

Indo-European (I-E) religion, it is surprising to note that the problem of the Indo-European myth of origin has not received more attention in recent years. Two articles have appeared of late, but neither contains any new insights, and for the most part run along well-worn lines of argument.[3] In truth, study has not advanced much since 1923, when two contrasting positions were first articulated. The first is that of Albrecht Götze, who investigated Indian, Iranian, and Greek texts containing the idea of the correspondences between the world and the human body.[4] As a result of the similarities he observed and the transformations which seemed to have occurred in the Greek versions, Götze argued that the idea was of Indo-Iranian origin and had been transmitted to Greece by Greek physicians present at the Persian court.[5] Essentially, he interpreted the myth as a sophisticated piece of speculation on the topic of Microcosm and Macrocosm, whereby man was understood as the microcosmic image of the world and the world as the macrocosmic projection of man.[6]

Hermann Güntert, however, stressing Germanic and Indo-Iranian texts rather than the Greek texts studied by Götze, came to quite different conclusions.[7] Based on philological correspondences, he argued that these texts contained a common Indo-European mythologem which told of the creation of the world from the sacrifice and dismemberment of a primordial androgyne.[8]

Both schools of thought have had their adherents. Götze has been followed by Reitzenstein and Schaeder, Conger, Sander, Olerud, and Bonfante,[9] while Güntert's position has been accepted by Christensen, Frenkian, Botzler, Schröder, Locchi, and de

[3] Hoang-son Hoang-šy-Ǔuy, "Le mythe indien de l'homme cosmique dans son contexte culturel et dans son évolution," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 175 (1969): 133–54; Giorgio Locchi, "Le mythe cosmogonique indo-européen: reconstruction et réalité," *Nouvelle école* 19 (July–August 1972): 87–95.

[4] Albrecht Götze, "Persische Weisheit in griechischem Gewande: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Mikrokosmos-Idee," *Zeitschrift für Indologie und Iranistik* 2 (1963): 60–98, 167–74.

[5] Ibid., esp. pp. 79–85.

[6] Ibid., p. 79.

[7] Hermann Güntert, *Der Arische Weltkönig und Heiland* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1923), pp. 315–70.

[8] Ibid., see esp. p. 335.

[9] Richard Reitzenstein and H. H. Schaeder, *Studien zum Antiken Synkretismus aus Iran und Griechenland* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1926), esp. pp. 3–37, 205–40; G. P. Conger, "Cosmic Persons and Human Universes in Indian Philosophy," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, n.s. 29 (1933): 255–70; Ludwig Sander, *Der erste Mensch als göttliches Wesen* (Bonn: Triepel-Schulze, 1933); Anders Olerud, *L'idée de macrocosmos et de microcosmos dans le Timée de Platon* (Uppsala: Almquist & Wiksells, 1951); G. Bonfante, "Microcosmo e macrocosmo nel mito indo-europeo," *Die Sprache* 5 (1959): 1–8.

Vries.[10] Two other lines of interpretation have occasionally been attempted—one that the myth is merely a common "primitive" type,[11] and another that it is of Old Asiatic, pre-Indo-European origin.[12]

As can be seen from this brief summary, there are three general areas in which disagreement has arisen: the history, the content, and the meaning of the myth. It is our hope that in this paper we can make some attempt at resolving these conflicts, and point a way toward a better understanding of the myth itself.

THE HISTORY OF THE MYTH

The basic mythologem of the creation of the world from the body of a primordial being can be found in a good many texts within the Indo-European grouping. The most famous, of course, is the Puruṣa-hymn of the *Ṛg Veda* (*ṚV* 10.90), and other versions are found in Iran, Greece, Russia, Germania-Scandinavia, and Rome.[13] Related versions also occur in Chinese and perhaps in Jewish texts,[14] while similar but unrelated accounts are legion, the best known being from Babylon and Ceram.[15]

Given the number of non-I-E myths that are so striking in

[10] Arthur Christensen, *Le premier homme et le premier roi dans l'histoire légendaire des iraniens*, 2 vols (Uppsala: Archives d'Etudes Orientales, 1918) (see esp. 1:35); Aram M. Frenkian, "Puruṣa-Gayōmard-Anthropos," *Revue des études indo-Européenes* 3 (1943): 118–31; Fr. Botzler, "Ymir: Ein Beitrag zu den Eddischen Weltschopfungsvorstellungen," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 33 (1936): 230–45. Franz Rolf Schröder, "Germanische Schopfungsmythen," *Germanisch-Romanisch Monatsschrift* 19 (1931): 1–26, 81–99; Locchi, n. 3 above; Jan de Vries, *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1957), 2:359–69.

[11] Thus Andrew Lang, *Myth, Ritual and Religion* (London: Longmans, Green, 1887), 1:238–54.

[12] Thus Wilhelm Koppers, "Pferdeopfer und Pferdekult der Indogermanen," *Wiener Beiträge zur Kulturkunde und Linguistik* 4 (1936): 320–25; followed by Hoang-šy-Ǫuy, n. 3 above; Stanislaus Schayer, "A Note on the Old Russian Variant of the Purushasūkta," *Archiv Orientální* 7 (1935): 319–23; A. W. Macdonald, "A propos de Prajāpati," *Journal asiatique* 240 (1953): 323–38.

[13] In Iran, the Gayōmart account of the Greater Bundahišn, and the story of the flight of Yima's xᵛarənah from *Yašt* 19. In Greece the texts usually cited are the περὶ ἑβδομάδων of the Corpus Hippocrateum, the Orphic Hymn to Zeus (Kern, fr. 168), and Plato's *Timaeus*. In a different vein, Hesiod's story of Prometheus seems to contain many of the same elements as our myth, but I have been unable to integrate it satisfactorily into my analysis of the mythic framework. Perhaps it is unrelated. In Russia, "The Poem on the Dove King" (see Schayer). In Germania-Scandinavia Ymir texts are found in the Prose Edda, the Vafthrudnismál, Grímnismál, Völuspa, and Völuspa en skamma. In Rome there are numerous texts telling the Rōmulus-Remus story. Livy, bk. 1, has been used here.

[14] For Chinese, on P'an-ku see Hoang-šy-Ǫuy, pp. 136–39. For Jewish, the Adam figure of 2 Enoch may be an inversion of this myth. See also the occurrence of a Gayōmart figure on the walls of the Dura-Europus synagogue (Erwin Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, Bollingen Series, vol. 12 [Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965], p. 173).

[15] From Babylon the most recent discoveries relating to the fifth tablet of the Enuma Eliš now establish Tiamat as a cow whose sacrifice establishes the heavens

their resemblances to the I-E pattern, there is a great temptation to argue that this is a common, garden-variety creation myth to which no special I-E significance need be attached.[16] Alternately, one could see a universal structure of the human mind behind it,[17] or one could maintain that it is a myth found throughout the world whenever societies reach a certain stage of cultural development (specifically the tuber-cultivating stage of the so-called palaeo-planters).[18] Yet, none of these possibilities need detain us here. The fact is that certain linguistic correspondence make it certain that our myth has an Indo-European origin.[19] The fact that there are parallels from the Ancient Near East or Polynesia or South America is most interesting, but irrelevant to our present study. Our sources contain traces of one I-E myth which happens to resemble myths from other parts of the world, but it is very definitely an I-E myth nonetheless.

The linguistic correspondences between Germanic and Indo-Iranian versions of the myth can also be used to demonstrate that the myth is Proto-Indo-European (P-I-E) in origin and not merely an Indo-Iranian myth that reached Europe by secondary diffusion. For, while Götze and his followers were successful in demonstrating that the Greek and perhaps the Russian variants of the myth were dependent on Iranian sources[20] (as was the Jewish version; the Chinese derives from Indian influence),[21] they have never been able to deal successfully with the Germanic versions.

The main problem, of course, is that of establishing contact between Iran and Scandinavia. Several attempts have been made to do so: Reitzenstein suggested that the Manichaeans carried mythic material to the Northmen, and others have suggested the Ostrogoths and the Christians as likely intermediaries,[22] but none of their arguments is particularly convincing. Moreover, if they

(see Landsberger and Wilson, "The Fifth Tablet of Enuma Eliš," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 20 [1961]: 161, 175). From Ceram, Adolph E. Jensen, *Hainuwele. Volkserzählungen von der Molukkeninsel Ceram* (Frankfurt: V. Klostermann, 1939).

[16] See Lang, p. 239.

[17] Erich Neumann, *The Origins and History of Consciousness* (New York: Harper & Row, 1954), 1:9–11.

[18] Adolf E. Jensen, *Myth and Cult among Primitive Peoples* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), pp. 83–115.

[19] These are found in the names *Yemo- and *Manu- (see below).

[20] See Götze, pp. 79–85 and Olerud, pp. 219–21 for the former; Schayer, pp. 322–23 for the latter.

[21] David Winston, "The Iranian Component in the Bible, Apocrypha and Qumran," *History of Religions* 5 (Winter 1966): 183–216; and Hoang-šy-Ǫuy, pp. 136–39, respectively.

[22] Respectively, R. Reitzenstein, "Weltuntergangsvorstellungen," *Kyrkohistorisk Årsskrift* 24 (1924): 190–204; Axel Olrik, *Ragnarok: Die Sagen vom Weltuntergang*, trans. W. Ramisch (Leipzig: W. de Gruyter, 1922), pp 464–77; and E. H. Meyer, *Mythologie der Germanen* (Strassburg: Karl Trubner, 1903), pp. 441 ff.

are to be believed, the influence would have come at a relatively late date (no earlier than the third to fourth century A.D.), and as we shall see, this is an impossibility. For, if we are correct, the Old Norse account preserves certain details from the P-I-E Ur-myth that have been almost completely lost in even the earliest Indian and Iranian texts.[23] If this is the case, the Norse version must date back to a P-I-E original. The existence of the Roman version, heretofore unrecognized, makes this even more certain.[24]

Our conclusions can be summarized genealogically (fig. 1) or in Venn diagram fashion (fig. 2). (1) One class of creation myths can be called myths of creation by sacrifice. (2) The P-I-E myth is such a myth. (3) The chief surviving independent variants are the Germanic, Roman, and Indo-Iranian versions. (4) The Greek, Old Russian, and Jewish versions depend on the Iranian; the Chinese depends on the Indian. With regard to history, both Götze and Güntert may be freely accepted. The former merely traces the myth forward into historical times, while the latter takes it back into prehistory. With regard to content and meaning, however, we will have serious disagreements with both these scholars.

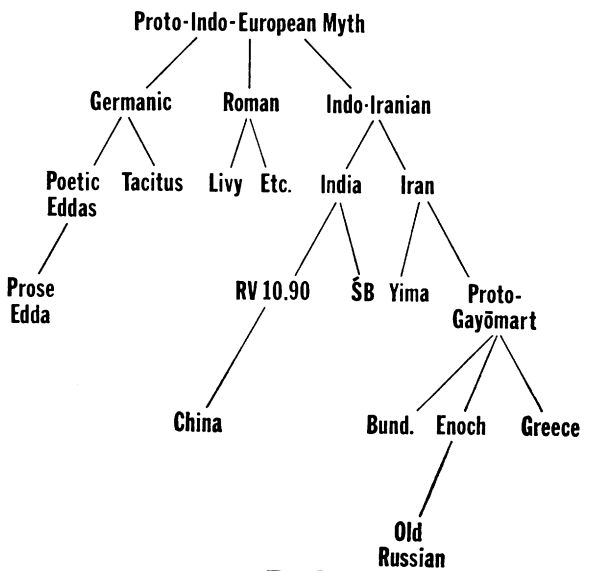

FIG. 1

[23] As we shall see, Norse accounts retain the fact that Ymir (< *Yemo) was the victim in the first sacrifice, a fact already lost at the time of composition of *RV* 10.90 (1200 B.C.?) and *Yasna* 32 (1000 B.C. [?], rejecting the traditional date).

[24] The credit for recognition of this parallel should go to Jaan Puhvel, who was kind enough to read and comment on an earlier draft of my manuscript. His views on the Roman version of this myth are found in his article, "Remus et Frater," also to be found in this issue of *History of Religions*.

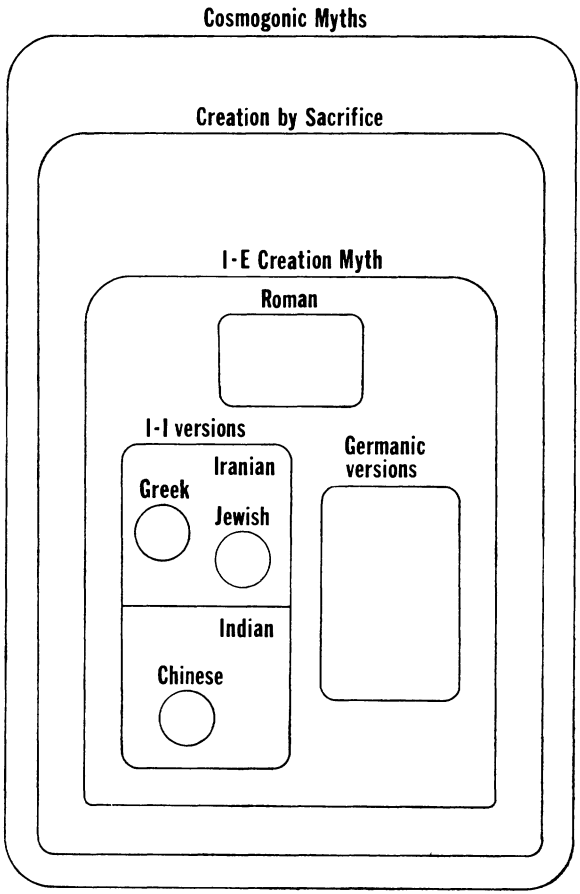

FIG. 2

THE CONTENT OF THE MYTH

Given our conclusion that the Germanic, Roman, and Indo-Iranian accounts are independent versions of a P-I-E myth, reconstruction of that myth should be possible. Three classic texts furnish a starting point for our investigation.

ṚG VEDA [ṚV] 10.90. 6–16

6. When Gods prepared the sacrifice with Puruṣa as their offering,
Its oil was spring, the holy gift was autumn; summer was the wood.
7. They balmed as victim on the grass Puruṣa born in earliest time.
With him the Deities and all Sādhyas and Ṛṣis sacrificed.

8. From that great general sacrifice the dripping fat was gathered up
He formed the creatures of the air, and animals both wild and tame.
9. From that great general sacrifice Ṛchas and Sāma-hymns were born;
Therefrom were spells and charms produced; the Yajus had its birth from it.
10. From it were horses born, from it all cattle with two rows of teeth:
From it were generated kine, from it the goats and sheep were born.
11. When they divided Puruṣa, how many portions did they make?
What do they call his mouth, his arms? What do they call his thighs and feet?
12. The Brāhman was his mouth, of both his arms was the Rājanya made.
His thighs became the Vaiśya, from his feet the Śudra was produced.
13. The Moon was gendered from his mind, and from his eye the sun had birth;
Indra and Agni from his mouth were born, and Vāyu from his breath.
14. Forth from his navel came mid-air; the sky was fashioned from his head;
Earth from his feet, and from his ear the regions. Thus they formed the worlds.
15. Seven fencing-sticks had he, thrice seven layers of fuel were prepared,
When the Gods, offering sacrifice, bound, as their victim, Puruṣa.
16. Gods, sacrificing, sacrificed the victim; these were the earliest holy ordinances.
The Mighty Ones attained the height of heaven, there where the Sādhyas, Gods of old, are dwelling.[25]

GREATER BUNDAHIŠN (SELECTIONS)

4.10 . . . He [Ahriman, the Evil Spirit] entered in the month of Fravartin and the day of Ohrmazd, at noon; the Sky was as afraid of him as a sheep of a wolf; he then came to the Water, arranged underneath this Earth; he then pierced and entered the middle of this Earth; then he came to the Tree; then to the Ox and Gayōmart; then he came to the Fire; so that, like a fly, he went to all the creations.

4A.1 This, too, is said [in the Avesta]: When the sole-created Ox passed away, it fell to the right hand, and when Gayōmart passed away thereafter, he fell to the left hand.

13.1 As regards the whereabouts of the five kinds of animals, it says in the Scripture: "When the sole-created Ox passed away, fifty-five species of corn and twelve species of medicinal herbs grew up from there where its pith [semen?] dropped."

13.4 Having carried the semen of the Ox up to the Moon station, they purified it there and created out of it the beneficient animals of many species; first two cattle, male and female, and then a pair of every species appeared in the heart of Iran within the Earth. . . .

13.5 As it says: "On account of the value of the Ox, I produced it twice, once as the Ox, and again as the beneficient animals of many species."

14.2 When illness came to Gayōmart, he fell on his left hand side. 3. There came into manifestation lead out of his head, tin out of his blood, silver out of his marrow, iron out of his feet, copper out of his bones, glass out of his fat, steel out of his arms, and gold out of life's departure, which owing to its value, men now give along with life.

14.5 When Gayōmart emitted his semen while passing away, they filtered the seed by means of the light of the Sun; [The Fire] Neryosang guarded two parts of it, and Spendarmat [the earth] accepted one part; and it remained within the earth for forty years.

[25] Ralph T. H. Griffith, trans., *Hymns of the Rigveda* (Benares: E. J. Lazarus, 1897) 2:517 ff.

[The text continues, telling how the ten species of man were ultimately produced from the semen of Gayōmart][26]

THE BEGUILING OF GYLFI

Then Gangleri said: "Where was Ymir's home, and what did he live on?

[High One replied:] "As soon as the frost thawed, it became a cow called Auðhumla, and four rivers of milk ran from her teats, and she fed Ymir."

Then Gangleri asked: "What did the cow live on?"

High One answered: "She licked the ice-blocks which were salty, and by the evening of the first day of the block-licking appeared a man's hair, on the second day a man's head, and on the third day the whole man was there. He was called Buri. He was handsome and tall and strong. He had a son called Bor, who married a woman called Bestla, daughter of the giant Bolthorn. They had three sons: the first, Oðinn; the second, Vili; the third, Ve; and it is my belief that Oðinn, in association with his brothers, is the the ruler of heaven and earth. We think that that is his title; it is the name given to the man we know to be the greatest and most famous, and you can take it that that is his title."

Then Gangleri asked: "How did they get on together? Was one group more powerful than the other?"

Then High One answered: "Bor's sons killed the giant Ymir, and when he fell, so much blood poured from his wounds that they drowned the whole tribe of frost ogres with it—except for one who escaped with his household; this one is known as Bergelmir. . . .

Then Gangleri said: "What did the sons of Bor do next, since you believe they are gods?"

High One said: "There is a great deal to be told about this. They took Ymir and carried him into the middle of Ginnungagap, and made the world from him: from his blood the sea and lakes, from his flesh the earth, from his bones the mountains; rocks and pebbles they made from his teeth and jaws and those bones that were broken."

Just-as-High said: "From the blood which welled freely from his wounds they fashioned the ocean, when they put together the earth and girdled it, laying the ocean round about it. To cross it would strike most men as impossible."

Third added: "They also took his skull and made the sky from it and set it over the earth with its four sides, and under each corner they put a dwarf. . . ."[27]

The general resemblance among these texts is certainly quite clear. In all of them a primordial being is killed and dismembered, and from his body the cosmos is fashioned.[28] Yet, there are differ-

[26] B. T. Anklesaria, trans., *Zand-Ākāsīh: Iranian or Greater Bundahišn* (Bombay: Rahnumae Mazdayasnan Sabha, 1956), pp. 49, 53, 117, 119, 127, slightly modified.

[27] Jean I. Young, trans., *Snorri Sturluson: The Prose Edda* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954), pp. 34–35.

[28] This is not quite so clear in the Gayōmart text as in the other two, but is true there nonetheless. The basic dismemberment has here been transformed under the influence of Babylonian or Ṣabian astronomical speculation. Thus, the seven metals are homologized to the seven celestial spheres, and the disintegration of Gayōmart goes to produce the cosmos (see Reitzenstein and Schaeder, pp. 226 n., 228 n., 229; also, Geo Widengren, "The Death of Gayōmart," in *Myths and Symbols: Studies in Honor of Mircea Eliade*, ed. J. M. Kitagawa and C. H. Long [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969], p. 190).

ences in each account (beyond the petty difference that the body-world homologies do not always match up), and it is evident that certain transformations have taken place within each culture and within each text. The dismemberment is performed by gods in two of the accounts and by a demon in the third. The victim is accompanied by an ox in one text, a cow in another, and has no companion in the third. The act is treated as a sacrifice once, but as murder twice. Most perplexingly, the names of the victims bear no resemblance to one another. The primordial victim is Ymir in Scandinavia, Gayōmart in Iran, and Puruṣa in India. The question must arise: Are these figures who are structurally so similar really related in any historical way?

The answer is certainly yes, and it is here that the Old Norse version best preserves the P-I-E heritage. Old Norse Ymir, as Güntert first demonstrated, is derived from Proto-Germanic **yumǐyaz*, which in turn is derived from P-I-E **yə$_2$m(i)yós* (**Yṃ[mi]yós*, as it might be written in a more modern orthography), a term intimately related to P-I-E **yemo-* "twin."[29] This word corresponds to Lettish *jumis*, "double fruit"; Middle Irish *emuin*, "twin"; Latin *geminus*, "twin"; Avestan *yəma*, "twin"; and, most significantly, to the proper names Avestan Yima = Sanskrit Yama, which literally signify "twin" as well.[30] Based on this phonological and semantic correspondence, we hypothesize that there was originally a mythic correspondence and that all are derived from a figure in the P-I-E myth.

Iranian evidence supports this hypothesis, for behind the figure of Gayōmart we may discern the older figure of Yima.[31] The way in which this transformation took place is somewhat complex. First, it must be recognized that in pre-Zoroastrian Iran, Yima

[29] Güntert, p. 337. This argument has now been accepted by most Indo-Europeanists and most Germanicists (see Julius Pokorny, *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* [Bern: Francke, 1959], p. 505; Jan de Vries, *Altnordisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1961], p. 678; and *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte*, 2:364; Botzler, n. 10 above, p. 231; Schröder, n. 10 above, p. 7; E. O. G. Turville-Petre, *Myth and Religion of the North* [New York: Holt, Winston & Rinehart, 1964], p. 278; Otto Höfler, "Abstammungstraditionen," in *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde*, ed. H. Jarkurl [Berlin: W. de Gruyter 1973], p. 19; Rudolf Much, *Die Germania des Tacitus* [Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1967], p. 51; Koppers, pp. 320–21; Jaan Puhvel, "Aspects of Equine Functionality," in *Myth and Law among the Indo-Europeans* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970], p. 170).

[30] Pokorny, p. 505.

[31] See Christensen, n. 10 above, 1:35–37; Reitzenstein and Schaeder, n. 9 above, pp. 212, 216 n., 217 n., 218 n.; R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons 1961), p. 136. Also note the controversial work of Sven S. Hartman, *Gayōmart* (Uppsala: Almquist & Wiksells, 1953), which for all its problems contains some valuable insights.

was not merely king of the golden age, but, as Christensen so skillfully demonstrated, was regarded as first king, first mortal, and first to die.[32] This tradition, however, was rejected by Zarathuštra, who soundly condemns Yima the only time that he mentions him (*Yasna* 32.8). There is one verse, however, in which Zarathuštra does make an oblique reference to the myth of creation by sacrifice:

YASNA 30.4

And when these two spirits first met [the good and evil spirits], they instituted
Life (*gaēm*) and non-life, and how life should be at the end.[33]

Moreover, these two spirits are said to have "appeared in the beginning as two twins (*yəmā*) in a dream."[34]

In these verses several eminent Iranists have recognized that Zarathuštra attempted to deal with an earlier myth of creation which he found objectionable but which he could not completely ignore.[35] Thus, he philosophized the myth, changing its characters into abstract entities, but retaining the essential mythologem that the first living man died at the creation of the world.

Ironically, however, a re-mythologization of Zarathuštra's version took place in later centuries. In the verse cited above, the Avestan term translated "life" is *gaya-*, which in the Younger Avesta is often combined with the term *marətan-*, "mortal"[36] to form the name given the first mortal man, who was created and died at the beginning of the world—*Gaya marətan*.[37] This name comes into the Pahlavi (Middle Persian) of our *Bundahišn* text as Gayōmart. Thus, the development is

Middle Persian Gayōmart < Younger Avestan Gaya marətan < Gathic Avestan gaya < Pre-Zoroaster Yima.

These texts, however, are all theological in nature, and contain theological transformations of the tradition. Another Iranian text which preserves heroic traditions serves to strengthen our conclusions:

[32] See Christensen. Vol. 2 is devoted entirely to Yima, but see esp. pp. 45–46.

[33] *Yasna* 30.4: aṯčā hyaṯ tā həm mainyū ǰasaētəm paourvīm dazdē / gaēmčā aǰyāitīmčā yaθāčā aŋhaṯ apəməm aŋhuš /.

[34] *Yasna* 30. 3: paouruyē yā yəmā xᵛafnā asrvātəm /.

[35] See Hartman, pp. 18–22; Herman Lommel, *Die Religion Zarathustras nach dem Awesta dargestellt* (Tubingen: J. C. Mohr, 1930), pp. 136–37; Zaehner, p. 136; Reitzenstein and Schaeder, p. 211.

[36] This term also appears in *Yasna* 30.6, just two verses after the occurrence of *gaya-*, which has led some, e.g., Reitzenstein and Schaeder, p. 213, to argue that Gayōmart was already present prior to Zarathuštra.

[37] See *Yašt* 13.87 13.145; *Yasna* 67.2. Gaya marətan appears together with Gəuš urvan, the "Soul of the Ox," in *Vispered* 21.2; *Nyayiš* 1.5, 2.5; *Yasna* 13.7, 26.4–5, and 68.22.

YAŠT [Yt] 19.30–39

30. We sacrifice to the awful kingly Glory, made by Mazdā,

31. That clave unto the bright Yima, the good shepherd, for a long time; while he ruled over the seven Karšvares of the earth, over the Daēvas and men, the Yatus and the Pairikas, the oppressors, the blind and the deaf;

32. He who took from the Daēvas both riches and welfare, both fatness and flocks, both weal and Glory;

In whose reign both aliments were never failing for feeding creatures, flocks and men were undying, waters and plants were undrying;

33. In whose reign there was neither cold wind nor hot wind, neither old age nor death, nor envy made by the Daēvas, in the times before his life, before he began to have delight in words of falsehood and untruth.

34. But when he began to find delight in words of falsehood and untruth, the Glory was seen to flee away from him in the shape of a bird. When his Glory had disappeared, then the great Yima Xšaēta, the good shepherd, trembled and was in sorrow before his foes, he was confounded, and laid him down on the ground.

35. The first time when the Glory departed from the bright Yima, the Glory went from Yima, the son of Vivanghant in the shape of a Varaghna bird.

Then Mithra seized that Glory, Mithra, the lord of wide pastures, whose ear is quick to hear, who has a thousand senses. We sacrifice unto Mithra, the lord of all countries, whom Ahura Mazdā has created the most glorious of all gods in the heavens.

36. The second time when the Glory departed from the bright Yima, the Glory went from Yima, the son of Vivanghant, in the shape of a Varaghna bird.

Then Thraētaona seized that Glory, he the heir of the valiant Athwya clan, who was the most victorious of all victorious men next to Zarathuštra;

37. Who smote Aži Dahāka, the three-mouthed, the three-headed, the six-eyed, who had a thousand senses, that most powerful, fiendish *Druǰ*, that demon baleful to the world, the strongest *Druǰ* that Angra Mainyu created against the material world, to destroy the world of the good principle.

38. The third time when the Glory departed from the bright Yima, that Glory went from Yima, the son of Vivanghant, in the shape of a Varaghna bird.

Then the manly-hearted Kərəsāspa seized that Glory; he who was the sturdiest of the men of strength, next to Zarathuštra, for his Manly Courage.

39. For Manly Courage clave unto him. We worship Manly Courage, firm of foot, unsleeping, quick to rise, and fully awake, that clave unto Kərəsāspa.[38]

The story here is ostensibly about the flight of Yima's Kingly Glory (*x^{v}arənah*). The crux of the matter, though, lies in Iranian and Indo-European notions of kingship. For the Indo-Europeans, the king is the complete man who contains within his body the essence of all three social classes: Priests, Warriors, and Commoners.[39] In Iran, these essences are seen as combined in the

[38] James Darmesteter, trans., *The Zend Avesta* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1887), 2:292 ff.

[39] See Emile Benveniste, "Traditions indo-iraniennes sur les classes sociales," *Journal asiatique* 230 (1938): 534–35; Georges Dumézil, "Le rex et les flamines maiores, "in *La regalita sacra*, ed. R. Pettazzoni (Leiden: E. J. Brill 1959), pp. 408, 412; and K. A. H. Hidding, "The High God and the King as Symbols of Totality," ibid., p. 57.

x^{v}*arənah*, the glorious nimbus which surrounds the king.[40] The myth recounted in this text, as Darmesteter first perceived and as Dumézil has since confirmed,[41] tells how Yima fell from the kingship and lost his *x*^{v}*arənah*, which then separated into three functional portions—Mithra receiving that of the priests or sovereigns, Thraētaona receiving that of the warriors, and Kərəsāspa receiving that of the commoners.[42] It is, in truth, a myth of the dismemberment of Yima and the creation of the social order from him, just as *ṚV* 10.90 (esp. verses 11–12) is a myth of the dismemberment of Puruṣa and the creation of the social order from his body.[43] The original mythologem has been transformed along royal lines, and an ethical element—the sin of Yima—has been added, but the essential concept is still the same. It is also no accident that the saga of Yima ends (*Yt.* 13.46) with the actual physical dismemberment of Yima by—a point to which we shall return—his own brother, Spityura.[44]

In India, too, it seems that the figure of Yama lies behind the Puruṣa of the Vedic hymn. Most scholars have agreed that Yama is another First Man/First King figure and have also noted that he is the first to die, thus establishing the realm of the dead.[45] Several scholars, however, have been willing to go somewhat

[40] On this side of *x*^{v}*arənah*, see John Greppin, "X^{v}arənah as a Transfunctional Figure," *Journal of Indo-European Studies* 1 (1973): 232–42.

[41] Darmesteter, *Le Zend Avesta* (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1960), 2:625; Georges Dumézil, *The Destiny of a King*, trans. Alf Hiltebeitel (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. 38–42. I am inclined to differ with Dumézil and Darmesteter on a detail of interpretation and feel that Thraētaona is properly the warrior figure in the original version of the list. Kərəsāspa, a rival warrior figure (see Stig Wikander, *Vayu* [Uppsala: A. B. Lundquist, 1941], pp. 162–77), seems to have entered for reasons of syncretism, in the establishment of the Achaemenid empire, replacing a figure who must originally have belonged to the third function.

[42] I prefer "Commoners" to any more specific term in describing the members of Dumézil's "Third Function". It seems to be something of a catch-all class, and not nearly so well defined as it sometimes appears.

[43] This motif also appears in the Old Russian version, which is thought to derive from Iran (Schayer, pp. 320–21).

[44] In later sources such as the *Shāhnāmeh*, the murder of Yima is attributed to Aži Dahāka (MPers. Zohāk), and the figure of Spityura disappears. This is due to the fact that in these texts the story has been fully assimilated to the "Kingship in Heaven" theme, as C. Scott Littleton ("The Kingship in Heaven Theme," in *Myth and Law among the Indo-Europeans*, pp. 83–121), has shown. But this Avestan text, which is much earlier in date, preserves the story of Yima's death at the hands of his own brother (here Spityura, formerly *Manuš) and represents a midway point in the process of mythic transformation, the Kingship in Heaven and Creation by Sacrifice themes being neatly fused. Later, as the Kingship in Heaven theme won out, the anomalous figure of Spityura dropped from the myth entirely.

[45] Following R. Roth, "Die Sage von Dschemschid," *Zeitschrift der deutschen Morgendlandischen Gesellschaft* 4 (1850): 417–33. See, among others, Alfred Hillebrandt, *Vedische Mythologie* (Breslau: M. & H. Marcus, 1929), 2:355 ff.; and Hermann Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda* (Berlin: Wilhelm Hertz, 1894), p. 276.

further and equate his freely chosen death and his abandonment or transcendence (< Skt. *pra-√ric-*) of his body as in *ṚV* 10.13.4 with the sacrifice in Puruṣa in *ṚV* 10.90.[46] As Dandekar, who most effectively argued the case, put it, the Puruṣasūkta is merely a more detailed setting of the Yama myth of *ṚV* 10.13.4.[47] In light of the comparison to Ymir and Yima, I am inclined to agree. The name Puruṣa literally means "Man" and seems to be a title born of philosophical and theological speculation. Such speculation changed this figure's name again in the Brāhmaṇas, as Puruṣa, "Man," became Prajāpati, "Lord of Creatures," but the underlying story is still the same.[48] The morphological and structural features convince us that this is the same figure encountered in Iran and Scandinavia—*Yemo, "Twin"—first king[49] and first sacrificial victim, from whose body the world was made.

The question now arises: Who played the role of the first sacrificer in this myth? In the texts already considered, the first sacrificer has been Oðinn and his brothers—Ahriman, and the entire assemblage of Vedic gods. Yet, there is reason to believe that all of these are late developments whereby an originally human figure was either deified or demonized depending upon the prevalent attitudes toward sacrificial ritual. In order to recover the original figure, we must consider yet another version of the myth in which the Indian Manu figures prominently—

ŚATAPATHA BRĀHMANA [ŚB] 1.1.4.14–17:

14. Manu was in possession of a bull. Into him had entered an Asura-killing, foe-killing voice; and by this snorting and roaring the Asuras and Rakṣas were continually being crushed. Thereupon the Asuras said to one another: "Evil, alas! this bull inflicts upon us! How can we possibly destroy him?" Now Kilāta and Ākuli were the two priests of the Asuras.

15. These two said, "God-fearing, they say, is Manu: let us two then ascertain!" They then went to him and said: "Manu! We will sacrifice for thee!" He said: "Wherewith?" They said: "With this bull!" He said: "So be it!" On his [the bull's] being killed, the voice went from him.

16. It entered into Manāvī, the wife of Manu; and when they heard her speak, the Asuras and Rakṣas were continually being crushed. Thereupon the Asuras said to one another: "Hereby even greater evil is inflicted on us,

[46] Güntert, n. 7 above, pp. 321, 335. More recently, see R. N. Dandekar, "Yama in the Veda," in the *B.C. Law Volume* (Calcutta, 1945), 1:194–209.

[47] Ibid., p. 202.

[48] For still further developments of this figure, see Paul Mus, "Où finit Puruṣa?" in *Mélanges d'Indianisme à la mémoire de Louis Renou* (Paris, 1968), pp. 539–63.

[49] The Germanic versions transform *Yemo into a giant (Ymir) or a god (Tuisco). This stems from the fact that the I-E notions of kingship have been strongly altered in the Germanic area, as can be seen from the disappearance of the P-I-E term **rēg'-* "king" from the Germanic stock (Werner Winter, "Some Widespread Indo-European Titles," in *Indo-European and Indo-Europeans*, ed. G. Cardona, H. Hoenigswald, et al. [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1970], pp. 50–51).

for the human voice speaks more!" Kilāta and Ākuli then said: "God fearing they say is Manu: let us then ascertain!" They went to him and said: "Manu! We will sacrifice for thee!" He said: "Wherewith?" They said: "With this thy wife!" He said: "So be it!" And on her being killed that voice went from her.

17. It entered into the sacrifice itself, into the sacrificial vessels; and thence those two [Asura priests] were unable to expel it. This same Asura-killing, foe-killing voice sounds forth [from the mill-stones when they are beaten with the wedge]. And for whomsoever that knows this, they produce this discordant noise on the present occasion, his enemies are rendered very miserable.[50]

Certainly this is a late, aetiological text. Yet preserved within the aetiology is a very ancient myth. Several points must be noted. First, the sacrificial victim is here Manāvī, Manu's wife, and, from the appearance of her name, his sister as well.[51] Behind her lies the figure of Yama, "the twin," who has been taken here as a female twin of Manu. Second, the human victim is joined by a second victim, a bovine, just as the victims in Iranian and Norse versions were joined by a bovine. This assures us of two important facts: (1) in the P-I-E version a bovine appeared, and (2) this is an independent variant of the P-I-E myth.

For the moment, however, we are concerned with the figure of Manu. Etymologically, his name is derived from P-I-E *manu-, "man," and corresponds to Proto-Germanic **manwaz*, "man" (as in German *Mann*, English *man*, etc.), Old Church Slavonic *mǫžъ*, "man," and Avestan **Manuš*, a proper name.[52] Within the Indian accounts, Manu appears as the first sacrificer (see *ṚV* 10.63.7; 10.70.8; 8.10.2, etc.). He is said to establish Agni as the sacrificial fire (*ṚV* 5.21.1; 8.23.13; 10.69.3, etc.), and when men sacrifice they are said to be acting as Manu did (*ṚV* 6.4.1; 1.76.5; 4.34.3; *ŚB* 1.5.1.7). Further, his association with sacrifice is so great that those who do not sacrifice are called *amanuṣāḥ*, "non-Manu's" (*ṚV* 8.70.11; 10.22.8), a term which carries the sense of "inhuman" as well as "unlike Manu."

There is, moreover, a consistent relation of Manu to Yama as First Sacrificer-First King,[53] and this relation is more than a mere typological pairing. Already the *ṚV* knows them as brothers, both appearing as sons of Vivasvat (*ṚV* 9.11.8; 10.58.1; 8.52.1). Later speculation at a time when the myth was much transformed

[50] Julius Eggeling, trans. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897), 1:29–30.

[51] As Yama's sister-wife is named Yamī in *ṚV* 10.10.

[52] Pokorny, n. 29 above, p. 700; Manfred Mayrhofer, *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindisches* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1963), 2:576–77.

[53] Christensen, 2:34; Oldenberg, p. 276; Roth, p. 430.

and no longer fully understood made them half-brothers, sharing only a father,[54] and as a result of this many have attempted to see them as doublets brought together with an artificial aetiology.[55] But the fact is that both Manu and Yama have correspondences in Germanic versions of the myth, which assures us that they both go back to the P-I-E version. Their relation is that of brothers as Puhvel has suggested,[56] and it is only the general Vedic avoidance of matronyms that permitted later speculation to make half-brothers of them. We would further argue that the significance of Yama's name, "Twin," is found in his relation with Manu. We thus have here a frequently encountered mythic theme—the twins at the beginning of time—which is endowed with a typical I-E content—one brother is the first priest, the other the first king.

In Iran, the figure of *Manu is well hidden, but discernible nonetheless. We have already noted that in the heroic tradition, Yima is dismembered by his brother, Spityura (see above). We would suggest that this Spityura is but a reflex of Manu, and that the heroic story is a transformed version of our myth. But there is other evidence as well.

As perhaps the single most important part of his reform, Zarathuštra condemned the cultus centering around cattle sacrifice that had flourished in Iran prior to his time.[57] As a result of this, a myth that told of the creation of the world out of the primordial sacrifice of a man and an ox was clearly unacceptable. Rather than being completely lost, however, this myth managed to re-emerge in texts composed after Zarathuštra's death, somewhat transformed in accord with the dualistic theology of the times, but fully recognizable nonetheless.[58] The *Bundahišn* text which we have cited is such a text, and there the first sacrifice—the slaying

[54] See *Bṛhaddevata* 6.162–7.7.

[55] Thus Roth, p. 430; Christensen, 2:34; Dandekar, p. 207; Güntert, p. 346.

[56] Puhvel, "Aspects of Equine Functionality," p. 170.

[57] This is the classic position on the relation of Zarathuštra to the earliest cultus as formulated by Lommel, *Die Religion Zarathustras*, p. 248, and "War Zarathuštra ein Bauer?" *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Sprachforschung* 58 (1930): 248–65. Recently, some authors, such as Zaehner, pp. 38–39; Marijan Molé, *Culte, mythe et cosmologie dans l'Iran ancien* (Paris: PUF, 1963), p. 226; and Mary Boyce, "Ātaš-zōhr and Āb-zōhr," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1966), p. 110, have claimed that Zarathuštra did not condemn animal sacrifice, per se, but only certain types or aspects of bloody sacrifice. For our purposes, it is sufficient to note that Zarathuštra unambiguously condemned cattle sacrifice (see *Yasna* 32 generally, and esp. 32.12), and that cattle sacrifice did disappear from the Iranian cultus, being replaced by sheep, which are less valuable in economic terms and which have much less religious significance (see Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin, "Miettes iranniennes," in *Hommages à Georges Dumézil* [Brussels: Collection Latomus 1960], pp. 98–99).

[58] Hartmann, pp. 18–22; Lommel, *Die Religion Zarathustras*, pp. 136–37; Reitzenstein and Schaeder, p. 211.

of Gayōmart and his ox—is attributed to Ahriman (< Av. Aŋra Mainyu, the "Evil Spirit"). In a very sophisticated way, though, the act of killing is condemned, while the beneficial results of that killing are accepted. Thus, the creation is understood in almost ironic terms, as an indication that Ahriman's destructiveness will always be turned to good ends by the superior power of Ohrmazd (< Av. Ahura Mazdā, the "Knowing Lord").

Insofar as Ahriman is an original conception of Zarathuštra,[59] some other figure must have played his part in the pre-Zoroastrian version of the myth. If our evidence from India is to be trusted, we would expect an Iranian figure corresponding to Sanskrit Manu to take this role. Phonologically, such a figure would be named *Manuš. Yet, in all the Iranian texts we possess, no *Manuš appears.[60] There is, however, in both Avestan and Middle Persian, a figure who assures us that such a *Manuš did once exist. This is Mānūščihr (< Av. Manuš.čiθra-), whose name literally means "seed," or "son of Manuš."[61] Morevoer, in the genealogies, Mānūščihr is made an ancestor of Zarathuštra (GBd. 35.52–53). It is also explicitly stated:

GREATER BUNDAHIŠN [GBd] 35.55

All the Mōpats of Pars [the high priests of Persia] are traceable to this race of Mānūščihr.[62]

Further, Christensen has demonstrated that the antecedents of Mānūščihr in these genealogies are nothing more than reflexes of *Manuš himself.[63] Thus, it would appear that *Manuš was originally regarded as the First Priest, but that, as he was too closely identified with a myth rejected by the reforming Zarathuštra, he was written out of the tradition and replaced by three figures: (1) Ahriman, who took his role as first sacrificer, (2) Mānūščihr, who took his role as ancestor of the priestly line, and (3) Zarathuštra, who took his role as priest par excellence. These figures all belong to later Iranian development. For our purposes, we have established that a *Manu(s) played these roles in the Indo-Iranian version of the myth, and if we can establish a Germanic correspondence we will be satisfied that he is an Indo-European figure as well.

[59] James Darmesteter, *Ormazd et Ahriman* (Paris: F. Vieweg, 1877), p. 5.
[60] This is not strictly true. Manuš does appear in *Bundahišn* 31.28 and 33.4 in genealogical lists, but West has attributed this to scribal errors.
[61] A. Christensen, "Reste von Manu-Legenden in der Iranischen Sagenwelt," in *Festschrift Friedrich Carl Andreas* (Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz, 1916), p. 66.
[62] *Greater Bundahišn* 35.55, trans. Anklesaria.
[63] Christensen, "Reste von Manu-Legenden," pp. 64–65.

Does such a correspondence exist? In order to see this, we must consider yet another text, this time from Tacitus:

GERMANIA, CHAPTER 2

In their ancient songs, their only way of remembering or recording the past, they celebrate an earth-born god, Tuisco,[64] and his son Mannus, as the origin of their race, as their founders. To Mannus they assign three sons, from whose names, they say, the coast tribes are called Ingaevones; those of the interior, Herminones; all the rest, Istaevones[65]

Again we encounter a character whose name derives from P-I-E **manu-*, and who is described as the first man. The name is a purely Germanic form, supported by other Germanic evidence, and there is no reason to doubt Tacitus when he tells us that the name was recorded in the Germans' ancient songs.[66] What is more, this Mannus is closely related to a figure whose name means "twin"—for that is the proper etymology of Tuisco,[67]—and still further, he is responsible for the division of the world into three parts which are susceptible to interpretation along the lines of class and function.[68] They have been historicized, no doubt, but their original nature is still readily apparent beneath the "historical" overlay.

In Rome, similar historicizing of the myth took place, yet our mythic scenario of the sacrifice of one primal twin by the other is discernible nonetheless in the story of Rōmulus and Remus.

LIVY, 1.6.3–7.3

The Alban state being thus made over to Numitor, Rōmulus and Remus were seized with the desire to found a city in the region where they had been exposed and brought up. And in fact the population of Albans and Latins was too large; besides there were the shepherds. All together, their numbers might easily lead men to hope that Alba would be small, and Lavinium small, compared with the city which they should build. These considerations were interrupted by the greed of kingly power, and by a shameful quarrel which grew out of it, upon an occasion innocent enough. Since the brothers were twins, and respect for their age could not determine

[64] This form alternates with *Tuisto* in the manuscripts, but the difference is insignificant (Much, p. 51). Professor Puhvel has also pointed out to me the alternance in Old English of *twist* and *twisc* (private correspondence, July 10, 1974).

[65] *Complete Works of Tacitus*, trans. A. J. Church and W. J. Brodribb (New York: Modern Library, 1942), p. 709.

[66] Jacob Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, trans. J. Stallybrass (London: George Bell, 1883), 1:345; Höfler, n. 29 above, p. 19.

[67] Güntert, n. 7 above, p. 324; Schröder, n. 10 above, pp. 8–9; Much, p. 51; Höfler, p. 19.

[68] Dumézil, *Destiny of a King*, pp. 12–13, proposes one possible means of interpretation, while a slightly different (though no less tri-functional) one has been given by Much, pp. 53–55 and Jan De Vries, "Sur certains glissements fonctionnels de divinités dans la religion germanique," in *Hommages à Georges Dumézil*, pp. 89–95.

between them, it was agreed that the gods who had those places in their protection should choose by augury who should give the new city its name, who should govern it when built. Rōmulus took the Palatine for his augural quarter, Remus the Aventine. (7) Remus is said to have been the first to receive an augury, from the flight of six vultures. The omen had been already reported when twice that number appeared to Rōmulus. Thereupon each was saluted king by his own followers, the one party laying claim to the honour from priority, the other from the number of birds. They then engaged in a battle of words and angry taunts leading to bloodshed, Remus was struck down in the affray. The commoner story is that Remus leaped over the new walls in mockery of his brother, whereupon Rōmulus in great anger slew him, and in menacing wise added these words withal, "So perish whoever else shall leap over my walls!" Thus Rōmulus acquired sole power, and the city, thus founded, was called by its founder's name.[69]

The differences between the two versions of Remus's death really have little to do with our case as they seem to be related to the polemics of later Roman politics.[70] But in both accounts the essential mythologem is the same: one of the twins is killed that the city may be founded. And just as the founding of the city is, in a very real sense, an act of creation[71] (the institution of laws, rituals, and the class structure follows quickly), so the death of Remus may be seen as the sacrifice which establishes that creation. Rōmulus is a very complex figure in Roman myth, but here he seems to have assumed the role of *Manu, the first sacrificer. His name is a back-formation from the city of Rōma (earlier Ruma),[72] and thus bears no resemblance to *Manu, but the name Remus is directly derived from P-I-E *Yemo. The initial **y-* has changed to an *r-* under the influence of Ruma, Rōma, and Rōmulus, but the word is otherwise exactly as we would expect.[73] Given the fact that Remus is explicitly said to be a twin (*geminus*), and the meaning of *Yemo as "twin," the conclusion is inescapable.

If this were not enough, one other factor supports the inclusion of this variant under the rubric of myths of the first sacrifice: the role of the she-wolf. For, according to the Rōmulus-Remus legend (see *Livy* 1.4.6), the twins were nurtured as infants by a she-wolf who suckled and cared for them. This she-wolf, of course, is a direct correspondence to the cow Auðhumla of the Norse Ymir myth, who gave milk to the giant at the beginning of time. Roman national pride has replaced the passive cow with the

[69] B. O. Foster, trans. *Livy* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1961), 1:25.

[70] See the excellent treatment in Michael Grant, *Roman Myths* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), pp. 110–13.

[71] Eliade, *Cosmos and History*, p. 18.

[72] Grant, pp. 99, 245.

[73] The initial syllable **iem-* has been preserved nowhere in Latin (Puhvel, "Remus et Frater"). The suffix *-us* is, of course, the normal masculine singular nominative ending.

ferocious figure of the she-wolf as a means of emphasizing the military strength of Rome, but the Indo-Iranian parallels assure us that the bovine figure is the original one.

Actually, we are led to reconstruct two myths: one European and one Indo-Iranian, both of which are quite similar and are closely related. In both of them, the world begins with a pair of twins, *Manu, "Man," and *Yemo, "Twin," *Yemo being characterized as the first king, while *Manu is the first priest, and in the course of the myth, *Manu offers *Yemo as the first sacrificial victim. As a result of this sacrifice, the world is created, and *Manu fashions the earth and heavens, as well as the three social classes from his brother's body. In the I-I version, an ox or bull, a male bovine, is offered along with *Yemo, and from the body of this animal all the other animal and vegetable species are created. In the European version, however, a female bovine, a cow, appears, and merely functions to feed and care for the twins prior to the act of creation. Given this reconstruction, we may now properly consider the meaning of the myth. For convenience, the various elements leading to this reconstruction have been listed in table 1, while an analysis of the various transformations is given in table 2.

THE MEANING OF THE MYTH

The problem remains, of course, How are we to understand this reconstructed myth? Clearly, neither Güntert's Androgyne theory nor Götze's Microcosm-Macrocosm theory is a very satisfying treatment for the totality of the myth. This is not a piece of philosophical speculation, as Götze would have it, but rather is a myth, and a myth of a peculiarly double nature. To use Pettazzoni's terminology, it is both a cosmogonic myth and a myth of beginnings,[74] or as Eliade has more recently put it, a myth that deals with events of the first *and* second primordia.[75] The myth tells us of the origin of the world and also of the origin of the most important human institution—sacrifice. In truth, these are not two separate origins but one. The first sacrifice *is* the origin of the world, and each repeated sacrifice serves to re-create it.[76] Sacrifice is the

[74] Pettazzoni, n. 1 above.

[75] Eliade, "Cosmogonic Myth and Sacred History."

[76] See Eliade, *Cosmos and History*, for a general discussion of the repetition of the cosmogonic myth. Also, see Jensen's theory of blood sacrifice as "the festive reformulation of a primeval event" (*Myth and Cult*, pp. 162–90, esp. p. 168). This aspect of sacrifice has been noted with regard to I-E peoples by Sylvain Lévi, *La doctrine du sacrifice dans les Brahmaṇas* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1898), pp. 11–35; Molé, pp. 86 ff. et passim; James L. Sauvé, "The Divine Victim: Aspects of Human Sacrifice in Viking Scandinavia and Vedic India," in *Myth and Law among the Indo-Europeans*, pp. 175–76; and is also quite explicitly stated in Hesiod, *Theogony* 11. 556–57 with regard to Prometheus.

TABLE 1

P-I-E	*ṚV* 10.90	*ŚB* 1.1.4	*GBund.*	*Yt.* 19	*Gylf.*	*Germ.*	*Livy*
1. First priest "man"	Gods	Manu	Ahriman	Spityura	Oðinn and Bor's sons	Mannus	Rōmulus
2. First king "twin"	Puruṣa	Manāvī	Gayōmart	Yima	Ymir	Tuisco	Remus
3. First bovine	...	Manu's bull	Gōšūrvan	...	Auðhumla	...	She-wolf
4. First sacrifice	Man	Woman and bull	Man and ox	Xᵛarənah	Man	...	Man
5. Creation	World Classes Animals Plants	...	Metals Men Animals Plants	Classes	World	Tribes	City

TABLE 2

	ṚV 10.90	*ŚB* 1.1.4	*GBund.*	*Yt.* 19	*Gylf.*	*Germ.*	*Livy*
Main tendency of text.....	Speculative	Aetiological	Dualist	Heroic	Antiquarian	Euhemeristic	Historicizing
Specific transformations:							
Priest	Deified	Rejected as dupe of demons	Demonized	Historicized	Deified	Historicized	Historicized
King	Philosophized	Feminized	Philosophized	Made tragic	Deroyalized	Deified	Historicized
Bovine	Omitted	Portrayed as powerful, heroic	Portrayed as suffering, tragic	Omitted	Portrayed only as nutritive	Omitted	Made martial as wolf
Sacrifice	Embellished, Cleared of animal offering	Condemned as demonic	Condemned as demonic	Changed to royal idealogy, euhemerized	Animal offering omitted	Omitted	Portrayed as murder
Creation	Animal's role subsumed by man	Omitted	Portrayed as ironic	Only creation of classes preserved	Animal's role altered	Historicized	Historicized

central religious act for all the Indo-European peoples, and it must have been so for their Proto-Indo-European ancestors as well.[77] The reason for this is to be found in this myth, a myth that was reenacted with each sacrifice.

Güntert did recognize much of this. He was able to deal with the myth as myth and also its connection to sacrifice.[78] But, in his insistence on the androgynous character of the first victim, he lost track of some of the more important elements of the myth. Thus, he was inclined to take the presence of the cow Auðhumla as a late addition to the Norse mythic scenario and refused to deal with it as part of the P-I-E myth.[79] But, given the Roman evidence, the authenticity of Auðhumla's role is assured, and in my opinion is one of the most important elements for interpretation of the myth in its two differing versions.

In order to appreciate this, we must recall the cultural differences between the Indo-Iranian and the European branches of the Indo-European family. Of the two, the Europeans seem to have been much more agricultural, given the evidence of vocabulary, while the Indo-Iranians were more pastoral in their orientation.[80] For all the Indo-Europeans, though, cattle were of crucial importance, furnishing a tremendous amount of the food supply and serving as the basic unit of wealth in the economy.[81]

[77] See E. Mayrhofer-Passler, "Haustieropfer bei dem Indo-iraniern und den anderen indogermanischen Völkern," *Archiv Orientalni* 21 (1953), 182–205; J. Vendryes, "Les correspondances de vocabulaire entre l'indo-iranien et l'italo-celtique," *Mémoires de la Société de linguistique de Paris* 20 (1918): 265–85; Eric Hamp, "Religion and law from Iguvium," *Journal of Indo-European Studies* 1 (1973): 318–23.

[78] Güntert, p. 335.

[79] Ibid., pp. 365–70.

[80] Peter von Bradke, *Über Methode und Ergebnisse der arischen Alterthumswissenschaft* (Giessen: J. Ricker, 1890), p. 194; Wilhelm Brandenstein, *Die erste Indogermanische Wanderung* (Vienna: Gerold, 1936), pp. 26–28; V. Gordon Childe, *The Aryans* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926), p. 83; R. A. Crossland, "Indo-European Origins," *Past and Present* 12 (1957): 23–24; R. N. Dandekar, "The Antecedents and the Early Beginnings of the Vedic Period," *Proceedings of the Indian History Conference* 10 (1947): 36; A. B. Keith, "The Home of the Indo-Europeans," *Indian Historical Quarterly* 13 (1937): 16–17; James Mallory, "A Short History of the Indo-European Problem," *Journal of Indo-European Studies* 1 (1973): 56; Otto Schrader, *Prehistoric Antiquities of the Aryan Peoples*, trans. R. B. Jevons (London: Charles Griffin, 1890), pp. 284–85 and *Die Indogermanen*, ed. H. Krahe, (Leipzig: Quelle & Meuer, 1935), pp. 16, 29; Louis de la Vallée Poussin, *Indo-européens et Indo-iraniens* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1924), p. 39.

[81] Von Bradke, p. 163; Brandenstein, p. 38; Childe, p. 82; Dandekar, *Proceedings*, p. 36; Giacomo Devoto, *Origini Indoeuropee* (Florence: Sansoni, 1962), p. 262; Marija Gimbutas, "Proto-Indo-European Culture: The Kurgan Culture in the 5th, 4th and 3rd Millennia B.C.," in *Indo-European and Indo-Europeans*, p. 157; Ward H. Goodenough, "The Evolution of Pastoralism and Indo-European Origins," in *Indo-European and Indo-Europeans*, p. 255; Herman Hirt, *Indogermanica*, ed. H. Arntz (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1940), p. 186; Schrader, *Prehistoric Antiquities*, p. 259; and *Die Indogermanen*, pp. 23–24.

But, what is perhaps of prime importance is that cattle were seen as an essential element of the social order—society itself being thought of not just as the collectivity of men but of men and cattle, as is reflected in the common P-I-E locutions "men and cattle," "men and animals," and "bipeds and quadrupeds" that have been so brilliantly analyzed by Wackernagel and Benveniste.[82]

There is a difference, however, between the way in which an agriculturalist views his cattle and the way in which a pastoralist does so. An agriculturalist tends to treasure his animals for their milk, while for a pastoralist they are much more than mere sources of food. The pastoralist derives not just milk and meat from his cattle, but also leather for clothing, bags and tents, bone for tools, dung for fuel, and even urine for use as a disinfectant.[83] Cattle seem to him to be the source of all good things, incomparable in their productivity. It is this factor which produces the differing versions of the myth: in the European, agricultural version, the cow is present as a nutritive figure on whom the first man is dependent for sustenance, while in the Indo-Iranian, pastoral version, the ox is present as man's equal, and is a vital source of all creation.

Basically, two theses have been advanced to account for the difference in orientation between the European tribes and the Indo-Iranians. One holds that the Indo-Iranians were among the first groups to leave the I-E homeland, migrating before the time at which the remaining groups encountered agriculture.[84] The second, which necessitates locating the homeland in South Russia or on the Russian steppes, holds that agriculture was introduced to the Europeans upon their entry into Europe, either by peoples already dwelling there who were agricultural or as a result of the new demands of the European environment, which gave much less scope for pastoral wanderings.[85]

[82] J. Wackernagel, "Indoiranica," *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung* 43 (1910): 295–98; E. Benveniste, "Sur quelques dvandvas avestiques," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* 8 (1935–37): 405–6.

[83] For a superb account of the importance of cattle within a herding culture, see E. E. Evans-Pritchard, "The Sacrificial Role of Cattle among the Nuer," *Africa* 23 (1953): 181–98, and *The Nuer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940), chap. 1; or P. Crazzolara, "Die Bedeutung des Rindes bei den Nuer," *Africa* 7 (1934): 300–320.

[84] Brandenstein, p. 26; Keith, pp. 3–4; von Bradke, pp. 217–18. This coincides with the chronology proposed by George L. Trager and Henry Lee Smith, "A Chronology of Indo-Hittite," *Studies in Linguistics* 8 (1950): 61–70.

[85] Schrader, *Prehistoric Antiquities*, pp. 284–87; *Die Indogermanen*, pp. 32–33· Dandekar, *Proceedings*, p. 36. This is consistent with the theory of I-E migrations

It is not the purpose of this paper to adjudicate between these two views, but it should be noted that in either case the Indo-Iranian culture and economy are taken to be closer to the earliest level of P-I-E than are the European. Both P-I-E and I-I are pastoral, while the agriculture of the Europeans is a more recent innovation. In light of this, I am inclined to take the Indo-Iranian version of the creation myth as closer to the original Indo-European version.[86]

The myth is, then, a pastoralist's myth. In the first sacrifice, a man and an ox (or bull) were sacrificed. This couple, man-and-animal, or better yet, Primordial-Man-and-Primordial-Animal, forms a complete unit of society, from which the physical world and the societal world were created, the latter being composed of men in their three characteristic classes and all the species of domesticated animals. As the primordial beings were dismembered, society came into being: from the man, men; from the ox, animals. Thus, the total social world originated in the first sacrifice. In each successive sacrifice, the pattern stated in the myth is repeated, man-and-animal being offered up to produce furtherance of men-and-animals. It is not simply a gift-exchange, though that element is present,[87] but on a grander scale it is the offering of the minimal societal unit for the benefit of society at large.

It would appear that this form of sacrifice did actually take place. Archaeological evidence shows frequent human and animal offerings among the Indo-Europeans of the fifth and fourth millennia.[88] With time, however, this practice came to be altered, and human-animal sacrifice gave way to animal sacrifice, which in turn yielded again to vegetable or liquid offerings in some

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proposed by Marija Gimbutas, "The Indo-Europeans: Archaeological Problems," *American Anthropologist* 65 (1963): 815–36. Hirt, p. 208, contended that the Indo-Iranians lost their agricultural terminology when migrating from a European homeland, but this does not account for the prominence of pastoral vocabulary in the European languages, and cannot be accepted. Recently, Ward H. Goodenough, in the article cited above, has revived Hirt's theories on the nature of mixed agriculture and herding as preceding true pastoralism, but his argument is not convincing.

[86] The symmetry of the version from the *Greater Bundahišn* is also so elegant and authentic in feeling as to support this conclusion. While such an argument does not constitute scientific "proof" in any sense, it cannot be overlooked entirely.

[87] This is in keeping with the exchange-nature that characterized much of the I-E economy (see Benveniste, "Don et échange dans le vocabulaire indo-européen," in *Problèmes de linguistique générale* (Paris: Gallimard 1966), pp. 315–26.

[88] Gimbutas, in *Indo-European and Indo-Europeans*, pp. 170, 191. Of course, this evidence does not hold if her theory that the Kurgan culture of South Russia was the I-E homeland proves to be incorrect. For the moment, however, this seems to be the best supported and most widely accepted hypothesis.

locales.[89] Yet, traces of this early form can still be discerned in the Germanic areas, as in the sacrifice at Uppsala described by Adam of Bremen,[90] and in the repeated formulae of the *Ṛg Veda* and the Younger Avesta calling for "cattle and sons" as a return for sacrifice[91]—a sacrifice that repeats in ritual the events described in the creation myth.

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[89] These developments differ widely for each of the separate I-E groups, and any attempt to detail all of the various evolutions is beyond the scope of this paper. For the moment, suffice it to say that cattle sacrifice remained the most important form of animal sacrifice for the I-E tribes (see Mayrhofer-Passler, p. 182, and such texts as the *Iguvine Tables* Ia, 1–6 et passim; Hesiod *Theogony*, 545 ff; *Iliad* 2.410–31; *Heimskringla* 1.186–87; *Eyrbyggja Saga* 4; *Ṛg Veda* 2.7.5, 8.43.11, 6.16.47; *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 11.6.3.9; *Yasna* 8.1–2; 32.12; Pliny *Natural History* 16.249–51; also the Hittite archaeological remains reported in Stuart Pigott, "Heads and Hoofs," *Antiquity* 36 [1962]: 110–18).

[90] Francis T. Tschan, ed. and trans., *Adam of Bremen: History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), pp. 207–8.

[91] *ṚV* 1.113.18, 5.20.4, 3.1.23, 3.16.1; *Yasna* 4.5, 24.10, 62.10.