APPENDIX III: THE PROTO-INDO-EUROPEANS

III.1. PEOPLE

The **Proto-Indo-Europeans** are the speakers of the reconstructed Proto-Indo-European language, a prehistoric people of the Chalcolithic and early Bronze Age. They are a group of people whose existence from around 4000 BCE is inferred from their language, Proto-Indo-European.

Some things about their culture can be determined with confidence, based on the words reconstructed for their language:

- They used a kinship system based on relationships between men.
- The chief of their pantheon was **djḗus patḗr** (lit. "*sky father*") and an earth god.
- They composed and recited heroic poetry or song lyrics, that used stock phrases like *undying fame*.
- The climate they lived in had snow.
- They were both pastoral and nomadic, domesticating cattle and horses.
- They had carts, with solid wheels, but not yet chariots, with spoked wheels.
- What is known about the Proto-Indo-Europeans with any certainty is the result of comparative linguistics, partly seconded by archaeology. The following traits are widely agreed-upon, but it should be understood that they are hypothetical by their reconstructed nature.
- The Proto-Indo-Europeans were a patrilineal society, probably semi-nomadic, relying on animal husbandry (notably cattle and sheep). They had domesticated the horse (**ékwos**). The cow (**cóus**) played a central role, in religion and mythology as well as in daily life. A man's wealth would have been measured by the number of his animals (**péku**, the word for small livestock, acquired a meaning of "*value*" in both English *fee* and in Latin *pecunia*).
- They practiced a polytheistic religion centered on sacrificial rites, probably administered by a priestly caste. The Kurgan hypothesis suggests burials in barrows or tomb chambers. Important leaders would have been buried with their belongings, and possibly also with members of their household or wives.
- There is evidence for sacral kingship, suggesting the tribal king at the same time assumed the role of high priest. Many Indo-European societies know a threefold division of a clerical class, a warrior class and a class of peasants or husbandmen. Such a division was suggested for the Proto-Indo-European society by Georges Dumézil.
- If there had been a separate class of warriors, then it would probably have consisted of single young men. They would have followed a separate warrior code unacceptable in the society outside their peer-

group. Traces of initiation rites in several Indo-European societies suggest that this group identified itself with wolves or dogs (cf. Berserker, werewolf).

- Technologically, reconstruction suggests a culture of the early Bronze Age: Bronze was used to make tools and weapons. Silver and gold were known. Sheep were kept for wool, and weaving was practiced for textile production. The wheel was known, certainly for ox-drawn carts, and late Proto-Indo European warfare may also have made use of horse-drawn chariots.

- The native name of this people cannot be reconstructed with certainty. *Aryo-*, sometimes upheld as a self-identification of the Indo-Europeans, is attested as an ethnic designation only in the Indo-Iranian subfamily, while **téuta**, "*people*", seems to have been lost in some dialects.

- The scholars of the 19th century that originally tackled the question of the original homeland of the Indo-Europeans (also called *Urheimat* after the German term), were essentially confined to linguistic evidence. A rough localization was attempted by reconstructing the names of plants and animals (importantly the beech and the salmon) as well as the culture and technology (a Bronze Age culture centered on animal husbandry and having domesticated the horse). The scholarly opinions became basically divided between a European hypothesis, positing migration from Europe to Asia, and an Asian hypothesis, holding that the migration took place in the opposite direction.

NOTE. However, from its early days, the controversy was tainted by romantic, nationalistic notions of heroic invaders at best and by imperialist and racist agendas at worst. It was often naturally assumed that the spread of the language was due to the invasions by some superior Aryan race. Such hypotheses suffered a particularly severe distortion for purposes of political propaganda by the Nazis. The question is still the source of much contention. Typically, nationalistic schools of thought either claim their respective territories for the original homeland, or maintain that their own culture and language have always been present in their area, dismissing the concept of Proto-Indo-Europeans altogether.

III.1.1. ARCHAEOLOGY

There have been many attempts to claim that particular prehistorical cultures can be identified with the PIE-speaking peoples, but all have been speculative. All attempts to identify an actual people with an unattested language depend on a sound reconstruction of that language that allows identification of cultural concepts and environmental factors which may be associated with particular cultures (such as the use of metals, agriculture vs. pastoralism, geographically distinctive plants and animals, etc).

In the twentieth century Marija Gimbutas created a modern variation on the traditional invasion theory, the Kurgan hypothesis, after the Kurgans (burial mounds) of the Eurasian steppes, in which the Indo-Europeans were a nomadic tribe in Eastern Ukraine and southern Russia and expanded on horseback in several waves during the 3rd millennium BC. Their expansion coincided with the taming of the horse. Leaving archaeological signs of their presence, they subjugated the peaceful European

Neolithic farmers of Gimbutas's Old Europe. As Gimbutas's beliefs evolved, she put increasing emphasis on the patriarchal, patrilinear nature of the invading culture, sharply contrasting it with the supposedly egalitarian, if not matrilinear culture of the invaded, to a point of formulating essentially feminist archaeology.

Her theory has found genetic support in remains from the Neolithic culture of Scandinavia, where bone remains in Neolithic graves indicated that the megalith culture was either matrilocal or matrilineal as the people buried in the same grave were related through the women. Likewise there is evidence of remaining matrilineal traditions among the Picts. A modified form of this theory by JP Mallory, dating the migrations earlier to around 4000 BC and putting less insistence on their violent or quasi-military nature, is still widely held.

Colin Renfrew is the leading propagator the "Anatolian hypothesis", according to which the Indo-European languages spread peacefully into Europe from Asia Minor from around 7000 BC with the advance of farming (*wave of advance*). That theory is contradicted by the fact that ancient Anatolia is known to be inhabited by non-Indo-European people, namely the Hattians, Khalib/Karub, and Khaldi/Kardi. However, that does not preclude the possibility that those people in some way contributed to the proto-Indo-Europeans, especially since they were in close proximity to the early Kurgan cultures.

Yet another theory is connected with the Black Sea deluge theory, suggesting that PIE originated as the language of trade between early Neolithic Black Sea tribes. Under this hypothesis University of Pennsylvania archaeologist Fredrik T. Hiebert hypothesizes that the transition from PIE to IE dispersion occurred during an inundation of the Black Sea in the mid 6th millennium BC.

III.1.2. GENETICS

The rise of Archaeogenetic evidence which uses genetic analysis to trace migration patterns also added new elements to the puzzle. Luigi Luca Cavalli-Sforza, one of the first in this field, in the 1990s used genetic evidence to combine, in some ways, Gimbutas's and Colin Renfrew's theories together. Here Renfrew's agricultural settlers, moving north and west, partially split off eventually to become Gimbutas's Kurgan culture which moves into Europe.

In any case, developments in genetics take away much of the edge of the sometimes heated controversies about invasions. They indicate a strong genetic continuity in Europe; specifically, studies by Bryan Sykes show that about 80% of the genetic stock of Europeans goes back to the Paleolithic, suggesting that languages tend to spread geographically by cultural contact rather than by invasion and extermination, i.e. much more peacefully than was described in some invasion scenarios, and thus the genetic record does not rule out the historically much more common type of invasions where a new

group assimilates the earlier inhabitants. This very common scenario of successive small scale invasions where a ruling nation imposed its language and culture on a larger indigenous population was what Gimbutas had in mind:

The Process of Indo-Europeanization was a cultural, not a physical transformation. It must be understood as a military victory in terms of imposing a new administrative system, language and religion upon the indigenous groups.

On the other hand, such results also gave rise to a new incarnation of the "European hypothesis" suggesting the Indo-European languages to have existed in Europe since the Paleolithic (the so-called Paleolithic Continuity Theory).

A component of about 28% may be attributed to the Neolithic revolution, deriving from Anatolia about 10,000 BCE. A third component of about 11% derives from Pontic steppe. While these findings confirm that there were population movements both related to the beginning Neolithic and the beginning Bronze Age, corresponding to Renfrew's and Gimbutas's Indo-Europeans, respectively, the genetic record obviously cannot yield any information as to the language spoken by these groups.

The spread of Y-chromosome DNA haplogroup R1a1 is associated with the spread of the Indo-European languages. Its defining mutation (M17) occurred about 10,000 years ago, before the PIE stage, so that its presence cannot be taken as a certain sign of Indo-European admixture.

III.1.3. GLOTTOCHRONOLOGY

Even more recently, a study of the presence/absence of different words across Indo-European using stochastic models of word evolution (Gray and Atkinson, 2003) suggests that the origin of Indo-European goes back about 8500 years, the first split being that of Hittite from the rest (the so-called *Indo-Hittite* hypothesis). Gray and Atkinson go to great lengths to avoid the problems associated with traditional approaches to glottochronology. However, it must be noted that the calculations of Gray and Atkinson rely entirely on Swadesh lists, and while the results are quite robust for well attested branches, their calculation of the age of Hittite, which is crucial for the Anatolian claim, rests on a 200 word Swadesh list of one single language and are regarded as contentious. Interestingly, a more recent paper (Atkinson et al, 2005) of 24 mostly ancient languages, including three Anatolian languages, produced the same time estimates and early Anatolian split.

A scenario that could reconcile Renfrew's beliefs with the Kurgan hypothesis suggests that Indo-European migrations are somehow related to the submersion of the northeastern part of the Black Sea around 5600 BC: while a splinter group who became the proto-Hittite speakers moved into northeastern Anatolia around 7000 BC, the remaining population would have gone northward, evolving

into the Kurgan culture, while others may have escaped far to the northeast (Tocharians) and the southeast (Indo-Iranians). While the time-frame of this scenario is consistent with Renfrew, it is incompatible with his core assumption that Indo-European spread with the advance of agriculture.

III.1.4. GEOGRAPHY

The Proto-Indo-European homeland north-east of the Black Sea has a distinctive climate, which largely results from the area being inland. The region has low precipitation, but not low enough to be a desert. It gets about 38 cms (15 inches) of rain per year. The region has a high temperature difference between summer and winter of about 33°C (60°F).

III.2. SOCIETY

The society of the Proto-Indo-Europeans has been reconstructed through analyses of modern Indo-European societies as well as archaeological evidence. PIE society was most likely patrilineal, and probably semi-nomadic, relying on animal husbandry.

The native name with which these people referred to themselves as a linguistic community, or as an ethnic unity of related tribes cannot be reconstructed with certainty.

There is evidence for sacral kingship, suggesting the tribal chief at the same time assumed the role of high priest. Many Indo-European societies still show signs of an earlier threefold division of a clerical class, a warrior class and a class of farmers or husbandmen. Such a division was suggested for the Proto-Indo-European society by Georges Dumézil.

If there was a separate class of warriors, it probably consisted of single young men. They would have followed a separate warrior code unacceptable in the society outside their peer-group. Traces of initiation rites in several Indo-European societies suggest that this group identified itself with wolves or dogs.

The people were organized in settlements (IE **wéiks**, English -*wick* "*village*"), probably each with its chief (IE **rēgs**). These settlements or villages were further divided in households (IE **dṓmos**), each headed by a patriarch, IE ***dems-póts***, "*house-master*", cf. Gk. *despotes*, Skr. *dampati*, also found as IE ***weiks-póts***, "*clan-master*", *landlord*, both compounds similar to IE ***ghos-póts***, "*guest-master*", *host*, in turn similar to the term "*aryan*", IE **alienós**, originally "*stranger*", hence "*guest*", later used (with a semantic evolution) for "*host, master*", by Indo-Iranians to refer to themselves.

III.2.1. TECHNOLOGY

Technologically, reconstruction suggests a culture of the Bronze Age: Words for Bronze can be reconstructed (**ájos**) from Germanic, Italic and Indo-Iranian, while no word for Iron can be dated to the proto-language. Gold and Silver were known.

An **ņsis** was a bladed weapon, originally a dagger of Bronze or in earliest times of bone. An **íkmos** was a spear or similar pointed weapon. Words for axe are **ácsī** (Germanic, Greek, Italic) and **pélekus** (Greek, Indo-Iranian); these could have been either of ston or of bronze.

The wheel, **qéqlos** or **rótā**, was known, certainly for ox-drawn carts. Horse-drawn chariots developed after the breakup of the proto-language, originating with the Proto-Indo-Iranians around 2000 BC.

Judging by the vocabulary, techniques of weaving, plaiting, tying knots etc. were important and well-developed and used for textile production as well as for baskets, fences, walls etc. Weaving and binding also had a strong magical connotation, and magic is often expressed by such metaphors. The bodies of the deceased seem to have been literally tied to their graves to prevent their return.

III.2.2. SUBSISTENCE

Proto-Indo-European society depended on animal husbandry. Cattle (**cṓus**, **stáuros**) were the most important animals to them, and a man's wealth would be measured by the number of cows he owned. Sheep (**ówis**) and goats (**gháidos**) were also kept, presumably by the less wealthy. Agriculture and catching fish (**pískos**) were also practiced.

The domestication of the horse may have been an innovation of this people and is sometimes invoked as a factor contributing to their rapid expansion.

III.2.3. RITUAL AND SACRIFICE

They practiced a polytheistic religion centered on sacrificial rites, probably administered by a class of priests or shamans.

Animals were slaughtered (**chņtós**) and dedicated to the gods (**djḗus**) in the hope of winning their favour. The king as the high priest would have been the central figure in establishing favourable relations with the other world.

The Kurgan hypothesis suggests burials in barrows or tomb chambers. Important leaders would have been buried with their belongings, and possibly also with members of their household or wives (human sacrifice, *sati*).

III.2.4. NAMES

The use of two-word compound words for personal names, typically but not always ascribing some noble or heroic feat to their bearer, is so common in Indo-European languages that it seems certainly inherited. These names are often of the class of compound words that in Sanskrit are called *bahuvrihis*, already explained.

They are found in in Ger. *Alf-red*, "*elf-counsel*", O.H.G. *Hlude-rīch*, "*rich in glory*", O.Eng. *God-gifu*, "*gift of God*" (Eng. *Godiva*), Gaul. *Orgeto-rix*, "*king who harms*", Gaul. *Dumno-rix*, "*king of the world*", Gaul. *Epo-pennus*, "*horse's head*", O.Ir. *Cin-néide* (Eng. *Kennedy*) "*ugly head*", O.Ind. *Asva-ghosa*, "*tamer of horses*", O.Ind. *Asvá-medhas*, "*who has done the horse sacrifice*", O.Pers. *Xša-yāršā* (*Gk. Xérxēs*) "*ruler of heroes*", O.Pers. *Arta-xšacā*, "*whose reign is through truth/law*", Gk. *Sō-krátēs*, "*good ruler*", Gk. *Mene-ptólemos*, "*who faces war*", Gk. *Hipp-archus*, "*horse master*", Gk. *Cleo-patra*, "*from famous lineage*", Gk. *Arkhé-laos*, "*who governs the people*", O.Sla. *Bogu-milŭ*, "*loved by god*", Sla. *Vladi-mir*, "*peaceful ruler*", from *volodi-mirom*, "*possess the world*".

Patronymics such as Germanic *Gustafson*, "*son of Gustav*", Romance *Gonzales*, "*(son) of Gonzalo*", Gaelic *McCool*, Slavic *Mazurkiewicz*, etc. are also frequently encountered in Indo-European languages.

III.2.5. POETRY

Only small fragments of Proto-Indo-European poetry may be recovered. What survives of their poetry are stock phrases of two or three words, like *undying fame* and *immortal gods*, that are found in diverse ancient sources. These seem to have been standard building blocks for song lyrics.

Inferring chiefly from the Vedas, there would have been sacrificial hymns, creation myths, such as the common myths of a world tree, and hero tales, like the slaying of a serpent or a dragon (**qr̥mis**) by a heroic man or god.

Probably of the greatest importance to the Indo-Europeans themselves were songs extolling great deeds by heroic warriors. In addition to perpetuating their glory (**kléwos**), such songs would also temper the warriors' behavior, since each needed to consider whether his *undying fame* would be honorable or shameful.

III.2.6. PHILOSOPHY

Some words connected with PIE world-view:

- ***ghosti-***, concerned mutual obligations between people and between worshipers and gods, and from which *guest* and *host* are derived. Cf. also ***alieno-***, *foreigner* and *host*, in Ind.-Ira. '*arya-*'.

- ***r̥-tu-***, ***r̥-to-***, "*fitting, right, ordered*", also "*right time, ritually correct*", related to the order of the world (Avestan *asha*, Vedic *rta-*, *rtu-*), cf. ***reg-tó-***, as in Germanic *right*, Lat. (*de-*)*rectus*.

- ***ap-***, ***aqa-*** and ***wodr-***, ***pawr-*** and ***egní-***, reveal a diffrentiated concept of water as an inanimated substance and as an animated being.

III.3. RELIGION

The existence of similarities among the deities and religious practices of the Indo-European peoples allows glimpses of a common Proto-Indo-European religion and mythology. This hypothetical religion would have been the ancestor of the majority of the religions of pre-Christian Europe, of the Dharmic religions in India, and of Zoroastrianism in Iran.

Indications of the existence of this ancestral religion can be detected in commonalities between languages and religious customs of Indo-European peoples. To presuppose this ancestral religion did exist, though, any details must remain conjectural. While similar religious customs among Indo-European peoples can provide evidence for a shared religious heritage, a shared custom does not necessarily indicate a common source for such a custom; some of these practices may well have evolved in a process of parallel evolution. Archaeological evidence, where any can be found, is difficult to match to a specific culture. The best evidence is therefore the existence of cognate words and names in the Indo-European languages.

Figure 54. Ancient anthropomorphic Ukrainian stone stela (Kernosovka stela), possibly depicting a Late PIE god, most likely Djeus

III.3.1. PRIESTS

The main functionaries of the hypothetical Proto-Indo-European religion would have been maintained by a class of priests or shamans. There is evidence for sacral kingship, suggesting the tribal king at the same time assumed the role of high priest. This function would have survived as late as 11th century Scandinavia, when kings could still be dethroned for refusing to serve as priests. Many Indo-European societies know a threefold division of a clerical class, a warrior class and a class of peasants or husbandmen. Such a division was suggested for the Proto-Indo-European society by Georges Dumézil.

Divination was performed by priests, e.g. from parts of slaughtered animals (for animal sacrifice, cf. Lat. *haruspex*). Birds also played a role in divination, as Lat. *augur*, language of the birds.

Examples of the descendants of this class in historical Indo-European societies would be the Celtic Druids, the Indian Brahmins, the Latin Flamines and the Persian Magi. Historical Indo-European religions also had priestesses, either hierodoules (temple prostitutes), dedicated virgins, or oracles, e.g. the Roman Vestal Virgins, the Greek Sibyls or the Germanic Völvas.

III.3.2. PANTHEON

Linguists are able to reconstruct the names of some deities in Proto-Indo-European language (PIE) from names occurring in widely spread, old mythologies. Some of the proposed deities are more readily accepted among scholars than others.

The Proto-Indo-Europeans may have distinguished between different races of gods, like the Aesir, and Vanir of Norse mythology and the Titans and Olympians of Greek mythology. Possibly, these were the **Djeus**, literally "*celestial, those of the sky/daylight*" (cf. *Deus*, *Zeus*, *Deva*, *Tiw*) and the **Ansu**-, literally "*spirits, those with vital force*" (cf. *Aesir*, *Asura*, *Ahura*).

WIDELY ACCEPTED DEITIES

- **Djéus Patér** is believed to have been the original name of God of the Daylight Sky and the chief god of the Indo-European pantheon. He survives in Greek *Zeus* (genitive case *Diòs*), Latin *Jupiter*, Sanskrit *Dyaus*/*Dyaus Pita*, Baltic *Dievas*, Germanic *Tiwaz* (ON *Tyr*, OHG *Ziu*), Armenian *Astwatz*, and the Gaulish *Dispater* (c.f. also *deus pater* in the Vulgate, e. g. Jude 1:1).

- **Pltawí Mātér** (**Dhghōm**) is believed to have been the name of an Earth Mother goddess, Skr. *Prthivi*. Another name of the Indo-European Mother-Earth would be **Dhghōm Mātér**, as in Albanian *Dhe Motë*, Avestan *Zamyat*, Slavic *Mati Zemlja*, Lithuanian *Žemyna*, Latvian *Zemes Mate*, maybe Greek *Dēmēter*.

● A Thunder God, possibly associated with the oak, and in some traditions syncretized with **Djḗus**. A name **Pérqunos** root **per-q-** or **per-g-** is suggested by Balto-Slavic **Perkúnos*, Norse *Fjörgyn*, Albanian *Perëndi* and Vedic *Parjanya*. An onomatopoeic root **tar** is continued in Gaulish *Taranis* and Hittite *Tarhunt*. A word for "*thunder*" itself was **(s)tene-**, continued in Germanic **Þunraz* (thunder personified), and became Thor.

● **Áusōs** is believed to have been the goddess of dawn, continued in Greek mythology as *Eos*, in Rome as *Auror-a*, in Vedic as *Ushas*, in Lithuanian mythology as *Aušra* or *Auštaras*, in Armenian as *Astghik* and possibly also in Germanic mythology as *Eastre*.

SPECULATIVE PROPOSALS

Additional gods may include:

● Greek Poseidon was originally a chthonic god, either a god of the earth or the underworld, from *poti daon* "*lord of Da*", cf. *Demeter* from *Da mater* "*Mother Da*". Another etymology may be proposed, **don** referring to "*the waters*", as the Vedic goddess of the rivers, *Danu*, who shares a name with the Celtic mother god. Poseidon being "*the master of the waters*", more conform to the functions of a god of the sea (and possibly also the supposed celestial ocean or watery abyss).

● **Wélņos**, maybe a god of the night sky, or of the underworld, continued in Sanskrit *Varuna*, Greek *Uranos* (which is also a word for *sky*), Slavic *Veles*, Armenian *Aray* and Lithuanian *Velnias*.

● Divine twins, brothers of the Sun Maiden or Dawn goddess, sons of the Sky god.

● There may have been a sea-god, in Persian and Vedic known as *Apam Napat*, in Celtic as *Nechtan*, in Etruscan as *Nethuns*, in Germanic as *Njord* and in Latin as *Neptune*, possibly called **Néptonos** (originally from **neq-t-**?). This god may be related to the Germanic water spirit, the *Nix*.

● The Sun, **Sḗwel**, and the Moon **Ménōts/Men-** deities, possibly twin children of the supreme sky-god **Djḗus**, continued in Hindu religion as *Surya* and *Mas*, in Iranian religion as *Hvar* and *Mah*, in Greek as *Helios* and *Selene* (these were later pushed out by imported Anatolian deities *Apollo* and *Artemis*), in Latin mythology as *Sol* and *Luna*, in German mythology as *Sol* and *Mani*, in Baltic mythology as **Saulē* and **Mēnō*. The usual scheme is that one of these celestial deities is male and the other female, though the exact gender of the Sun or Moon tend to vary among subsequent Indo-European mythologies.

FANTALOV'S REDUCTION

According to the Russian scholar Alex Fantalov, there are only five main archetypes for all gods and goddesses of all Indo-European mythologies. He also proposes that these five archetypes were possibly the original deities of the pre-PIE pantheon. These, according to Fantalov, are:

- God of the Sky
- God of Thunder
- God of the Earth/Underworld
- Cultural hero
- Great goddess

The sky and thunder gods were heavenly deities, representing the ruling class of society, and in subsequent cultures they were often merged into a single supreme god. On the other hand, the Earth god and the Cultural Hero were earthly gods, tied to nature, agriculture and crafts, and in subsequent cultures they were often split into more deities as societies grew more complex. And while it seems there existed some enmity between the Thunderer and the God of the Earth (which may be echoed in myths about battle of various thunder gods and a serpentine enemy, v.i.), the Cultural Hero seems to be a sort of demigod son of either the sky god or the thunder god, and was considered to be the ancestor of the human race, and the psychopomp. Together with the character of Great goddess, who was a wife of the ruling sky god, the cultural hero thus balanced between the heavenly god of the sky/thunder and the more chthonic god of the earth/underworld.

III.3.3. MYTHOLOGY

There seems to have been a belief in a world tree, which in Germanic mythology was an ash tree (Norse Yggdrasil; Irminsul), in Hinduism a banyan tree, in Lithuanian mythology Jievaras, and an oak tree in Slavic mythology, and a hazel tree in Celtic mythology. In classical Greek mythology, the closest analogue of this concept is Mount Olympus; however, there is also a later folk tradition about the World Tree, which is being sawed by the Kallikantzaroi (Greek goblins), perhaps borrowed from other peoples.

One common myth which can be found among almost all Indo-European mythologies is a battle ending with the slaying of a serpent, usually a dragon of some sort: examples include Thor vs. Jörmungandr, Sigurd vs. Fafnir in Scandinavian mythology; Zeus vs. Typhon, Kronos vs. Ophion, Apollo vs. Python, Heracles vs. the Hydra and Ladon, Perseus vs. Ceto in Greek mythology; Indra vs. Vritra in the Vedas; Perun vs. Veles, Dobrynya Nikitich vs. Zmey in Slavic mythology; Teshub vs. Illuyanka of Hittite mythology; Θraētaona, and later Kərəsāspa, vs. Aži Dahāka in Zoroastrianism and Persian mythology.

There are also analogous stories in other neighbouring mythologies:

- o Anu or Marduk vs. Tiamat in Mesopotamian mythology;
- o Baal or El vs. Lotan or Yam-Nahar in Levantine mythology;
- o Yahweh or Gabriel vs. Leviathan or Rahab or Tannin in Jewish mythology;
- o Michael the Archangel and, Christ vs. Satan (in the form of a seven-headed dragon),
- o Virgin Mary crushing a serpent in Roman Catholic iconography,
- o Saint George vs. the dragon in Christian mythology.

The myth symbolized a clash between forces of order and chaos (represented by the serpent), and the god or hero would always win. It is therefore most probable that there existed some kind of dragon or serpent, possibly multi-headed (cf. *Śeṣa*, the *hydra* and *Typhon*) and likely linked with the god of underworld and/or waters, as serpentine aspects can be found in many chthonic and/or aquatic Indo-European deities, such as for example the many Greek aquatic deities, most notably *Poseidon*, *Oceanus*, *Triton*, *Typhon* (who carries many chthonic attributes while not specifically linked with the sea), *Ophion*, and also the Slavic *Veles*. Possibly called **qr̥mis**, or some name cognate with **Welṇos** or the root **wel**- (cf. Skr. *Varuna*, who is associated with the serpentine naga, *Vala* and *Vṛtra*, Sla. *Veles*, Bal. *velnias*), or "*serpent*" (Hittite *Illuyanka*, Skr. *Ahis*, Ira. *azhi*, Gk. *ophis* and *Ophion*, and Lat. *anguis*), or the root **dheubh**- (Greek Typhon and Python).

Related to the dragon-slaying myth is the "*Sun in the rock*" myth, of a heroic warrior deity splitting a rock where the Sun or Dawn was imprisoned. Such a myth is preserved in Rigvedic *Vala*, where *Ushas* and the cows, stolen by the *Panis* were imprisoned, connected with other myths of abductions into the netherworld such as the mysteries of *Eleusis* connected with *Persephone*, *Dionysus* and *Triptolemus*.

There may have been a sort of nature spirit or god akin to the Greek god *Pan* and the *Satyrs*, the Roman god *Faunus* and the *Fauns*, the Celtic god *Cernunnos* and the *Dusii*, Slavic *Veles* and the *Leszi*, Vedic *Pashupati*, *Prajapati* and *Pushan*, the Germanic *Woodwose*, *elves* and *dwarves*.

There may also have been a female cognate akin to the Greco-Roman *nymphs*, Slavic *vilas*, the *Huldra* of Germanic folklore, the Hindu *Apsaras*, the Persian *Peri*. A possibly similar type of spirit may be found in Jewish mythology, *Azazel* and the *Se'irim*, as well as in Arabic mythology, the *Jinn*.

There may have been a savage dog or wolf guarding the underworld, as Greek *Kerberos*, Norse *Garm*.

It is also likely that they had three fate goddesses, see the *Norns* in Norse mythology, *Moirae* in Greek mythology, *Sudjenice* of Slavic folklore and *Deivės Valdytojos* in Lithuanian mythology.

The first ancestor of men was called **Mánus**, cf. Germanic *Mannus*, Hindu *Manu*.

The Sun was represented as riding in a chariot.