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## THE ARYAN INVASION OF INDIA AND THE IDEA OF FEMALES IN AFTER-LIFE

### *The Transfer*

It seems possible that certain visions of Afterlife were transplanted from northern Europe to Asia, and from there back to the Mediterranean.

Those visions concerned Females in Afterlife.

The scenario was in the Above, in contrast to all other ideas which placed the realm of the dead in the Below, in a sphere which was populated only by male inhabitants and surrounded by an atmosphere of dark and eery hopelessness.

The sphere, which seems so unique in the world, postulated instead the re-birth of the soul to an Above in which maidens of extraordinary beauty fulfilled all the amorous desires of the departed, who appeared there in a rejuvenated condition.

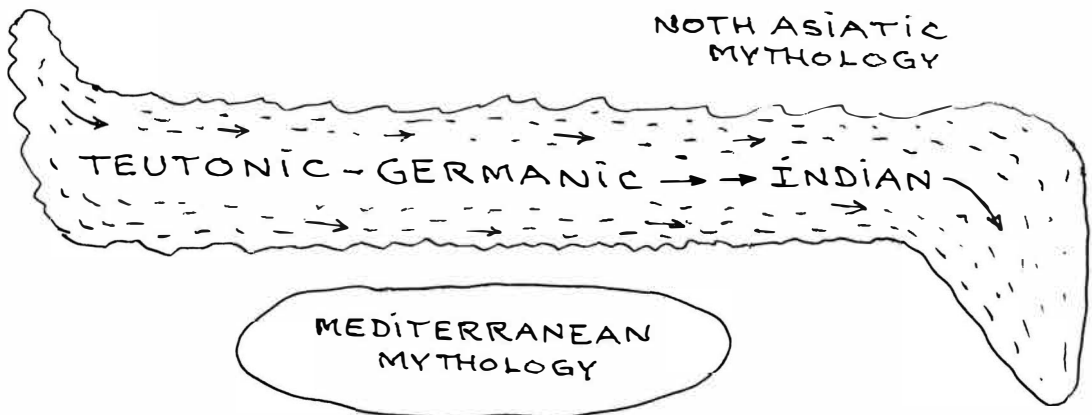
It seems therefore possible that all that is known to us as Indian mythology is actually Aryan mythology, a mental structure which tribes of Northern origin brought into India around 1000 B. C., when they overran the Indus valley.

### *The Source Material*

Based on some linguistic similarities, a certain group of peoples were called "Indo-Europeans". Their sphere of origin was assumed to have been around the Danube or the Black Sea.

One theory holds that a part of those people moved directly from that region to India, but it is also thought that a branch of this group migrated towards the North and fused there with the North-European Megalithic inhabitants, to become what we want to call in the following, for simplicity's sake, the Teutonic-Germanic branch.

Their mythological visions absorbed much of the Nordic traditions and became quite different from the Southern or Mediterranean mythologies . . . but different



also from North-Asiatic sagas, so that we see a sphere of distinct mythological similarities, a band or corridor, connecting those Teutonic-Germanic ideologies with those of India.

Our source-material of the Celtic-Teutonic mythology is of such late date that we could assume that it manifested itself in writing only when it came to India, where the main aspects of those mental images were written down by the Aryans in the Vedas. The earliest texts, found in Europe, of the Celtic-Teutonic cycle of ideas, belong to the 8th century, A.D., while our main documents – (the Books of Leinster, the Book of Rhydderch and the Book of Hergest) – date from the 14th century A.D.

Those primary sources were written by monks of the Christian era, so that we must not only expect an influx of Christian ideas, but also that important matters have been suppressed to conform to Christian ethic.

We have thereby a situation in which the very early Teutonic ideas remained invisible in the lands of their origin and manifested themselves only in India, where the Aryans seem to have learned the skill of writing, possibly inspired by the higher civilisation of the pre-Aryan native population.

As the suppressed or expurgated material of the original Teutonic mythology is forever lost, it now becomes an idle speculation that it may have contained more concerning the Females in Afterlife, who are presently regarded as typical Indian phantasies; but it is obvious that love-affairs of celestial females are especially prone to later expurgation.

Some fragmentary similarities still appear, like the gnomes as possessors of subterranean wealth, in the sagas of the Teutons, as well as those of India – and connected to it the story that Freyja had to make love to them to obtain a certain piece of jewelry; that, in turn, would hint at a love-involvement of celestial females which seems to us, maybe mistakenly, more typical for Indian superhuman figures and their multiple partners, like the Gandharvas in relation to the Apsarases, which also suggests a whole species of male lovers for a female celestial being . . .

### *The Invasion*

About 1000 B.C. India was invaded from its North-Western side by a people who called themselves “Aryans” and were subsequently called “Indo-Europeans”. The word “Aryan” is derived from the Sanskrit “Arya” which means “nobly hospitable”.

Our information about the conquest of India by the Aryans comes from the Rig Veda (“Ric” = Hymn, and “Veda” = holy knowledge), the oldest poem written in Sanskrit, by the conquerors themselves.

The Rig Veda describes the defense of the native Indian population as formidable and heroic. Before the discovery of Harappa, the historians thought that the Aryans had deliberately exaggerated the strength of the subdued people to enhance the importance of their own deed, to make it appear like an honest fight instead of a simple expedition of plunder, but the excavations proved the Aryans right: it must

have been a tremendous battle, though fought with unequal means, as the Aryans had the swift chariots and the battle-tested equipment of the Teutonic warriors.

“With all-outstripping chariot-wheel,  
O Indra, thou far-famed,  
hast overthrown twice ten Kings  
with sixty thousand nine and ninety men.  
Thou goest from battle to battle  
destroying castle after castle  
with thy superior power . . .” (Rig Veda)

### *The Discovery*

In the year 1856 two Englishmen, the brothers John and William Brunton, were laying out the tracks of the East-Indian Railway between Karachi and Lahore. They discovered thousands of bricks which they found in a heap and used them for under-pinnings or “ballast”. The bricks were “of burnt clay and fine workmanship”. Nobody knew or cared that those bricks were over 4000 years old, until little antiquities were found between them. They were seals, very skillfully engraved with animals, trees and figures. Some of these seals were shown to a British general named Cunningham, who recognized them as some sort of relics of an ancient civilization, but nobody was interested in them.

Almost seventy years later, in 1921, an Indian archaeologist named Rai Bahadur Daya Ram Sahni, a member of Sir John Marshall’s staff, began to dig in earnest at that site, which turned out to be the ancient city of Harappa of the so-called “Indus Civilization” reaching back to the second or third millennium B.C.

From 1922 to 1931 Sir John Marshall directed excavations at Mohenjo-Daro, about 400 miles from Harappa, from 1935 to 1936 the British archaeologist Ernest Mackay continued, and the final exploration of Harappa took place under Sir Mortimer Wheeler in 1946.

These cities of the very ancient Harappa culture had an astonishingly high degree of civilization. They had a greatly developed watersupply system for bathing and in some houses seat-latrines. At Mohenjo-Daro each house had a drain which ran into a central drainage system underneath the streets. The streets were straight and laid out at right angles.

Among all the buildings excavated at Mohenjo-Daro none had the proportions large enough to suggest the site of a temple or public sanctuary – (while there were bath houses of imposing dimensions). It therefore seems that the native population had no well-established religious doctrines, so that it easily absorbed the Teutonic pantheon of the invading Aryans. We had a similar situation with the Italics, who quickly absorbed the foreign ideas of the Etruscans, because they too had no well defined religious structure at that time. But just as the foreign Etruscan visions absorbed more and more from the surrounding Italic people enclosing and inter-

mixing with the relatively small groups of Etruscans, so did the Aryan pantheon in Indian lands, absorb more and more from the local mentality and imagery of the immense continent engulfing the relatively small group of Aryans.

One of the pre-Aryan symbols was the Sivatic phallus as an object of reverence – which is completely missing in the Teutonic-Aryan world of thoughts – but which seems to be such a powerful fixation in the psyche of India, that it has survived the invasion and suppression and has re-emerged as the dominant Indian symbol through all the millenia to our present day.

### *The Physical Evidence*

The excavations at the defensive fortifications of the cities showed a multitude of smaller skeletons in armour, with bashed-in skulls, while the remains of taller warriors were found mostly outside. Within the cities heaps of skeletons of the smaller race were found huddled together possibly in fear and for mutual protection. Some were women, some children, some still wore rings and bracelets. All through the cities archaeologists came across grim and grisly groups of which Ernest Mackey gives us a more detailed description.

### *Some Linguistic Remarks*

The native Indians were called “Dasas” by the invaders and the fact that the word “dasa” meant “slave” later indicates that the Aryans were victorious and also hints at the fate of the native population. Concerning the mode of that invasion, we also have a linguistic hint in the word “gavishti” which literally means “to search for cows” and came to denote “fight”. The Dasas were of darker skin than the Indo-European invaders and it is interesting that the Sanskrit word “varna” means “color” but came to mean “caste”. This was, to begin with, a system to separate the victorious from the vanquished, safe-guarding the superior position for the Aryans, and was only later extended to additional sub-divisions within the population.

### *Indus Art, the Petrographs*

The most intriguing manifestations of early times are the rock-paintings discovered in India. Some could belong to the pre-Aryan times and others may have as their subject the invasion by the Aryans.

Our best evidence of pre-Aryan transcendental thoughts comes from pictographs and petroglyphs. They seem to exhibit some contents which later re-appears in Vedic mythology, but there is no trace of pre-Aryan Females after Death nor a paradisaical lovestory in the Above in prehistoric rock art. This very special vision apparently is based on the later model of Aryan or Indo-European ideas.

The rock-paintings which possibly make reference to the invasion by the Aryans depict chariots, men with weapons, battle-scenes and fallen victims. One of the more explicit presentation of Chatur-Bhuj-Nath<sup>1</sup>, shows next to horse-drawn chariots, the equipment of the Aryans according to the Rig Veda, aggressors with big axes in hand opposing a figure with bow at the ready. This figure is, however, penetrated by many arrows. Another picture at the same location shows horse-drawn battle chariots with figures swinging axes, while several obviously dead men are lying on the ground. Most impressively above that scene arise two disproportionately large figures in triumphant gestures, having instead of any facial features only a highly accentuated radiation appearing around their heads. Considering that the Aryans revered Indra as ruler over the battles and the Rig Veda actually tells of his person or image conquering kings and lands, it is possible that those figures show the divine emanation of Indra and the Aryans over the carnage taking place on the earthly level.

The fact seems most important to us that experts see a parallel and kinship on the ethnological level between the North-European and the Indian petroglyphs, as they deal iconographically with the same type of imagery.

### *Indus Art, the Seals*

The greater number of seals make reference to bulls and ithy-phallic apparitions, often horned and in a setting of lush vegetation.

To early people the bull was the symbol of power, but unlike the lion, also of fertility and the lust of creation in a super-human dimension and therefore venerated as the paradigma of human aspiration.

The seals, – representing the person, like his signature today, – wanted to project onto the owner the chain-reaction leading from Fertility (of the herds and fields) to Wealth and from there to Power, which were all united in the image of the bull, branching off at times from there to the phallic fertility symbols and the images of heavy vegetation which decorate those seals.

This seems confirmed by the fact that we never see a cow replacing the clearly defined bulls and occasionally rams in copulatory position as the images of fertility.

Some horned personages may show the transfer of those animal powers to human beings, possibly to the owner of the seal. The same power-transfer is suggested by the horns on the helmets of the Teutonic warriors.

### *Indus Art, the Figures*

The objects found from the pre-Aryan civilization are very few.

They are, besides some seals, small and crudely-formed animals made of clay and primitive images representing females of doubtful meaning.

The most remarkable might be a statuette, only about 10 cm. high, now in the National Museum of New Delhi. It was found at Mohenjo-Daro and dates from pre-

Aryan times. It shows a naked girl of very definitely Negroid characteristics, which accords well with the aboriginal population of that early period.

But of a later period we have the busts of some bearded men, made of Limestone, and of a very different type, which could belong to a Nordic-European race. They are not at all of Negroid character. They have relatively long and slender noses, their eyes are not slanted, their lips are not protruding. The fact that they often have pierced ears to wear jewelry, that they have inlaid eyes and are dressed in ornamented robes, suggests that they could represent Aryan chieftains, maybe priest-kings of the new regime.

### *The Differences*

Adjacent to the Teutonic-Indian sphere of mythologies is the Finno-Ugric group of sagas, dispersed over the Asiatic regions, extending from Western Siberia to the Magyars. According to the great epic “Kalevala” the world of the dead is depicted as “land darker than other lands”. Tuonetar, the queen of that abode, offers beer to the departed in a pot which is swarming with frogs and worms. Her daughters – in contrast to the Indo-Germanic visions – are divinities not of joy but of suffering. One of them, in her union with the Wind, gave birth to all the plagues, enumerated in gruesome detail. There are celestial virgins, like Kuutar, daughter of the moon, or Paivatar, daughter of the sun, but no amiable females are mentioned, to comfort the souls of the departed.

The Buddhist mythology in Central Asia describes a paradise in which the souls of the beati appear as small children arising out of lotus blossoms that adorn the ponds of the celestial spheres, – but again no beautiful females are mentioned and no loving embraces are promised to the souls.

And we have, of course, the scenario of hopeless gloom in Hades of the Mediterranean lands and the Elysian fields where no females are mentioned and no love.

The idea of the Elysian Fields appears as a purely literary fiction of uncertain origin, first known to us from the *Odyssey* (IV, 561–568) and then repeated in hints by Hesiod and Pindar.

We would expect that the Elysian vision should prominently figure as the most important promise to the souls of the departed and are being clearly depicted as such repeatedly on sepulchral monuments.

Surprisingly, we find no reference to it in classical Graeco-Roman funeral art, where the travel of the souls to the next world is most frequently shown to take place on horse-drawn carts, on horseback or floating on clouds, but nowhere is shown their arrival in the Elysian spheres.

It might be that, despite the poetic visions of the Elysian Fields, the conception of the *Thereafter* remained pessimistic in the mind of the native Mediterranean population.

We have, however, references to Sea-Monsters involved with souls, in funeral art, but they are exclusively of Etruscan origin.

The reason for it seems to be that the Indo-Etruscan theory of afterlife was dealing with the idea that all life ultimately sinks into the Ocean and is re-born out of those Eternal Waters.

“As the flowing rivers, bound for the ocean, disappear into the ocean after having reached it, their names and forms being dissolved, and are simply called ocean – even so, he whose goal is the Purusha, disappears into the Purusha and so his name and form is dissolved and he becomes free and renewed in parts and immortal.”

(Prasna Upanishad VI.5)

This idea of a “Pool of Nature” as the sphere of Death and Rebirth, was fused with the Indian vision of the Celestial Ocean in the great Above and became the subject of the vast number of representations on the sepulchral images of the Etruscans. The scenes of blissful encounters of the soul with other-worldly apparitions is shown on tomb-paintings and mirror-engravings to definitely take place above those waters . . . and fail to make any clear reference to some travel to the Elysian Fields, – while we have a great number of purely Etruscan representations showing the re-birth out of the Eternal Waters.

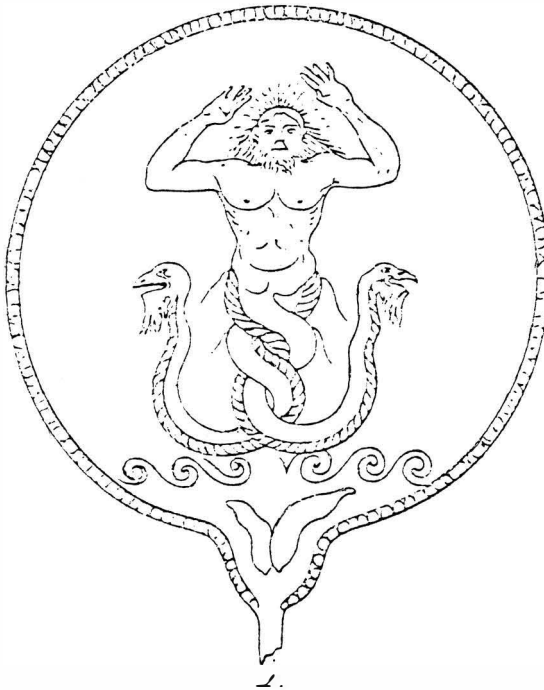


Fig. 1: Etruscan death-mirror, found in a grave-showing the re-birth out of the Celestial Waters, developing from trans-special creatures.

In conclusion it could be said that the monuments with Sea-Monsters make no reference to the Elysium, but belong to the completely different Indo-Etruscan concept of the ocean of Death and Rebirth, and that none of those scenarios feature the loving females of the upper spheres.

We therefore return to the archetype of those shadowy figures strangely related to War and Love and Death.

The myth of “devi-mahatmya” the “Wonderful Goddess” is the subject of the Markandeya Purana, 81 to 93. She is described as the almighty “Warrior-Maiden” who came into being as the manifestation of the will and energy of the concilium of the male gods (possibly meaning Indra and his satrapies). The goddess defeated the water-buffalo Mahisha, representing the combined enemies of the pantheon (possibly meaning the native resistance).

It is most remarkable that the execution of the divine battle-energy should be transferred to a Warrior-Maiden. She may, however, represent the sum-total of the many Valkyries of the Teutons, who also had to execute the decision of the main god, as the extension of his will, hovering over the battlefield.

By condensing the will of all divine into one personality, and the condensation of all Valkyries into one “Warrior-Maiden”, we may see in this Indian saga a re-play of the Teutonic chain of command, but executed by Indian actors.

As a comparison we may look at the Sumerian Inanna, who is also a goddess of Battle and Love, but the difference to the Indo-Teutonic establishment consists in the fact that Inanna is not executing orders but is a divinity who acts on her own impulses; she cheats her father, has her husband, Dumuzi, killed and is shown sword in hand, while the atmosphere is filled with the chopped-off hands of her enemies. Surprisingly, she is also a goddess of Love, but she is not promised to the souls of men in the Thereafter; she has, however, her own divine lover “Baal the Puissant” who is, following North-African convention, her brother.

While those differences are grave and fundamental and exclude Inanna from the Indo-Teutonic cycle, we are amazed at the very archtypical relation of females to Battle, Death and Love . . . hero-oriented in the Northern countries, sensually pleasing in India and cruelly savage in the North African East.

Inanna is the image of the ambitious aggressor who meets her downfall by over-expanding her sphere. When she wants to extend her domain over the realm of the dead, she is killed in the attempt by her sister Ereshkigal, queen over the departed souls in the Below. We have here the celestial female of War and Love involved in a power-struggle in which she perishes, reflecting, as it seems, the turbulent pattern of that region.

### *The Similarities*

Julius Caesar in “de bello Gallico” VI: 15; reports that the Germans had the notion of a rebirth and transmigration of souls into a next and joyous world, while the same idea is the basic assumption in the Rig Veda.



The Celtic next world was called TIR-NA-N'OG or the "Land of eternal Youth" and MAG-MELL, the "Sphere of Happiness". There was lovemaking in eternity. The heroes were compensated for their earthly sacrifice of life by the love of a celestial female, – also called "divine woman" – and were promised "supernatural delights" in the celestial spheres.

The similarity with the scenario of India is obvious, and is still extended by a great number of details. This becomes especially interesting as the belief in loving females in the Beyond cannot be understood as a generally Eastern assumption, because the Chinese or Japanese next world seems not to contain those visions of amorous females, so that the Germanic-India transfer becomes even more stunning.

### *Wotan and Indra*

The Teutonic Wotan – (or Wodin, called Odin in the North) – seems to have merely changed to the name of Indra in the East.

Instead of Wotan's horse Sleipnir, the same figure is now riding on the elephant Airavata and is called Indra.

Mediterranean divinities are never shown as riding, which appears to be a Teutonic vision, derived from the warrior-like character which is now, with the personality of Wotan, imported from Germanic lands into India.

Indra, patterned after Wotan, is now depicted as a warrior in armour, the larger projection of a powerful chieftain, boisterous, often intoxicated, disregarding moral considerations and rather cunning.

Like so many invaders, he claims to have brought great benefits to the people he subjugated. In the 250 hymns addressed to him, he is not only the god of war, but is also said to have split the mountains and clouds – (in similarity to Wotan) – to release the beneficial streams and the fertilizing rain.

The Nordic Wode-Wodan is pictured as the thundering "Roarer" and "Wild Huntsman" with his host of howling spirits speeding through the sky as "the Wild Hunt" – die wilde Jagd.

Akin to it, Indra was described as the lord of ghosts and specters with his retinue composed of the departed souls who roaring passes in his wake through the sky.

Wotan commands a great number of celestial females, the Valkyries and Wunschmaidens, who are said to be his daughters. In a startling similarity, we now see Indra also with a great number of celestial daughters, the Apsarases. Both types of females have the mission to fulfill the amorous wishes of the souls in the Beyond, pictured in both cases as the realms of eternal joy and both celestial spheres feature the drink of everlasting youth.

The Valkyries are subject to a quasi military chain of command, by receiving strict orders from their war-lord, Wotan, which they have to obey, or else they will be demoted and stripped of their rank.

The Apsarases, by contrast, and conforming to the local pattern or femininity, are forever willing and never dispute any request from Indra, their father and lord, nor, as it seems, any wish from the souls of the departed.

We see that originally both of those otherworldly daughters arose from the same concept, but were locally modified to reflect the character of their lands.

### *Females of Love and Death*

In an attempt to understand the relation of females to death, we may start with the Teutonic visions, which might have been inspired by battles, the most obvious scenery of heroic death.

We have the reports by Tacitus and Caesar to the effect that women were considered the prize to gain or to lose, depending upon the outcome of the battle.

“Tradition says that armies already wavering and giving way have been rallied by women who, with earnest entreaties and bosoms laid bare, have vividly represented the horrors of captivity, which the Germans fear with such extreme dread on behalf of their women . . .” (Tacitus, *Germania*, paragraph 8)

Before the industrial production, females were valued as the “Production-Machinery” of the human race, and the number of children produced equated with the power of the tribe, which then could conquer territories, fields and cattle.

In earliest times it was usual that all males of the enemy were killed, while all the females of the vanquished belonged to the victorious, so that they could have that “Production-Machinery” multiply their own race or tribe.

We therefore see a definite connection between the warrior and Females, and since the battle is a gamble with death, the vision of death may in this way be associated with the females who are regarded as the prize to be gained, as well as the temptation which lured the warrior into Death.

It may easily be that the vision of such females floated in the phantasy of the warriors, over the battlefield, which would bring us to the image they had of the Valkyries.

Since the destiny on earth was believed to be decided by some invisible specters in the Above, it could be that those spectral images of women could make decisions about life and death of a combattant, as was believed to be in the power of the Valkyries.

If a warrior died in battle, and thereby lost the prize, being a woman, it seems only reasonable that he should be rewarded with a woman in the next world.

As the man was supposed to fight for a just cause, it therefore seems just that he should get his reward either here on earth, when victorious, or in the Beyond when he perishes.

This then could explain the relation of Women to Death, and the re-appearance of comforting females in the Above.

If we assume that this basic idea of a higher justice was imported into India by the Aryans, we see that the conquered Indian tribes were rather in the position of the earthly loser in the battle and therefore put their emphasis on the rewards in the

Above, consisting of the celestial brides in excelsis, to compensate for their fate on earth.

### *Wings on Females of Death*

Assuming now the vision of female specters over the battlefield to be a prize or promise, this image may easily have become so accepted, that it was transferred to the mythical imagination of men in general, and thereby advanced to the quasi-reality of a mythological figure.

If so, it may have become expedient, in the visual arts, to represent the floating condition of such spectral females with wings, to denote and justify their suspension in the atmosphere.

Once this was done, it could have inspired the poets, mythographers and story-tellers to verbally support those representations, in the mutual feed-back between the visual and the literary arts.

Another reason why the Females of Death have wings may be that Birds were often thought to be manifestations of the heavens where the destiny of mortals was decided, especially the outcome of battles. The flight of birds was taken as an omen of divine provenience and all winged creatures and wings in themselves were therefore thought to be an insignia of the upper spheres and impending destiny of which Death was the most dramatic evidence.

It is probably no coincidence that supernatural beings are shown in Teutonic art as riding, which was there the elevated manner of transportation and fighting, on a terrestrial level, while in India such unearthly beings had already assumed the value of abstractions, due to the unreality of imported ideas, so that they usually appear floating on clouds to denote their spiritual quality . . . or else riding on a symbolic vehicle which is only an attribute or "determinant" to explain their personality.

Beyond the Females of Death we have, however, the phenomenon of wings on other transcendental manifestations, hinting at a certain ethnic-demographic complex to which they belong, and thereby revealing their spiritual allegiance.

A significant kinship between the Teutonic and Indian celestial apparitions consists in the fact that both of them are shown without wings.

In contrast to it stand the prominent wings on the supernatural beings of the Near-East, whose images seem to have inspired Graeco-Roman abstractions like the winged Victory, Eros, the Harpies, etc.

The question of wings seems to exclude the Mediterranean sphere from the Teutonic-Indian complex, but on the other hand makes the Nordic to the Indic connection more remarkable.

### *Females and Birds*

Beyond the Soul-Birds, the Harpies and the Sirens, we see another amazingly widespread connection between Females and Birds, from Celtic sagas, to Melanesian

cycles of well recorded tales, to early Indian texts. All of them talking about a metamorphosis from females to birds and from birds back to females.

In Iceland there is the saga of a boy named Helgi, who was united in love with the Valkyrie Kara. She would fly above him invisibly in a swan's plumage and would sing a song of such charm and sweetness that his enemy would be entranced and would not defend himself. One day, while she was hovering over Helgi, he raised his sword towards his adversary, but instead struck Kara in flight and fatally wounded her, which turned out to be the end of his protection and thereby of his life.

The Irish dream of Oengus is most similar, picturing his beloved transformed into a swan, joined by a silver chain to her playmates, who are also maidens in the guise of swans. He promises his Swanmaiden to return with her into the lake and puts his arms around her and sleeps with her in the form of a swan, after which they fly off together as a celestial couple.

Valkyries could turn themselves into swan-maidens and could, when it pleased them, cast their plumage aside and appear in human form. But if a man succeeded in stealing their plumage-hull, they were forced to obey his will.

In Teutonic mythology, the "Nibelungen-Lied" tells of Hagen seeking a place to cross the Danube. He hears a splash in the waters, and approaching silently sees two naked maidens who had slipped out of their swan's plumage and were bathing in the waters. He seized their feathery hulls and refused to give them back, until they told him the fate the future holds for the army of the Burgundians marching towards the Huns. (Quite typically, we see here the aim of the usual love-encounter changed into a military pursuit.)

A Melanesian group of sagas also speaks of Swan-Maidens (in another version of Parakeets or love-birds) who descended on a lake, took off their feathery garments, and were frolicking in the waters as naked girls. A young man crept up behind the bushes and stole the discarded plumage-hull of one of the girls. At the end of the story, the girl whose feather-dress the man had captured, became his bride.

As early as in the Rig Veda (the Brahmanas) the story of King Pururavas appears, where he expresses his desire to become the "bridegroom" of the beautiful Apsara Urvasi "daughter of the Celestial Waters" to which she replies: "Thou shouldst embrace me thrice every night, but I should never see thee naked." The jealous Gandharvas, being the lovers of the Apsaras, contrive to send a bolt of lightning to the lovebout between the King and Urvasi, so that she sees the naked King, whereupon she vanishes through the air. Later, riding by a lake, the abandoned King sees his beloved Urvasi floating upon the waters in the guise of a swan. Recognizing him, she says to the playmates, the others swans: "Daughters of the Waters, here is King Pururavas whose couch I have shared" and she addresses the King with the words: "I passed through thy arms like a ray of dawn through a transparent wave, but I wait for you here the last night of the year". On that fateful night she capriciously united with the King, who turned into a Gandharva as her celestial paramour and ascended with her to the heavens "without ever dying of mortal death".

To see a king naked might be akin to seeing a female without plumage and the stories seem to hint at the idea that underneath the magic dazzle of even celestial

females is still the “*ewig Weibliche*” – and once stripped of their ornate decorum, they then become simply females in the flesh.

At the root of all those sagas may have been the real-life experience of seeing a plucked bird as the juxtaposition of a glamorous outer appearance with an inner naked reality, the visual paradigm of “*Entzauberung*”, able to break the mysterious spell which so often plagues love-lorn men.

Here too we notice a similarity between the Valkyries and the Apsarases of India, as both are involved in love-relations with earthly men, subject to death and enigmatic promises and binding obligations – of which the “*Nibelungenlied*” generally abounds.

### *The Harpies*

Leading over from the winged females, in general, to their manifestations in the Mediterranean sphere, we may look at the shift in the image of the Harpies.

They were in earliest times possibly inspired by the Babylonian specters of death, like Lilit, with gruesome claws on their feet, like birds of prey, and loops of string in their hands, to strangle their victims.

The Harpies too belong to the winged females of the Above, connected to Death, but under the influx from the East, where loving females were promised to the beati in excelsis, the image of the “horrible soul-snatchers” of old, changed gradually into apparitions cradling the souls in their arms, to carry them off to a Beyond which was increasingly pictured as the sphere of sweet embraces.

The Etruscans, importing those Eastern doctrines, changed them into the winged *Lasae*, who at times show a loving inclination towards the souls in their arms.

In a twilight of transition, we see the Harpies, still as birds with female heads, handing the *corona immortalis* to the departed banquetting in the Above, together with winged Eros figures, or greeting the soul of the departed reappearing as Eros<sup>1</sup>, sometimes even longingly waiting for his soul in seductive poses<sup>2</sup>, or receiving his soul-substance in love, now blending over completely into the Eastern paradisiacal visions<sup>3</sup>.

### *From India to the Mediterranean*

Whatever influence the invasion by the Aryans may have had, the heavens of India were now pictured as the Celestial Ocean and Indra as the king of gods. The infinite number of his daughters were called the Apsarases, which means “those of the waters” – (“*Apsa*” cognate with “*aqua*”) – because they were thought to populate those celestial waters. They were of eternal youth and beauty and eager to fulfill all the desires of the souls of men after their earthly departure.

Around 600 B.C. the Eastern visions of females after death started to infiltrate the Mediterranean. This was the time when the trade from the East increased over the silk caravan routes and the time of the greatest expansion of the Etruscans. At

Corinth, which was the terminal of the Asia trade, the Etruscans established in the Aphrodite temple a swarm of Hierodules, who were to be the earthly replica of the celestial females in Afterlife.

They also propagated the Eastern ideas of rebirth after death to an Above – a revolutionary contradiction to the local doctrine of the subterranean Hades.

This information trickled gradually, as a vague hearsay, from the East into the Mediterranean lands and manifested itself first in Etruscan art, to infuse later the Roman funeral visions.

More and more celestial females appeared on sarcophagi in loving attitudes towards the deceased, while the Italian artists used figures of Graeco-Roman mythology to stage those encounters. We see, for instance, the great number of the “Endymion Sarcophagi” showing Endymion in eternal sleep, with the features of the deceased, being visited by the loving celestial female in the person of Selene, the moon crested queen of the night, which was equated with night eternal, or death, as the scenario of the encounter.

Also on hundreds of Etruscan mirrors which were found in graves, reference is made in pictures and writing, to the tender females of the Beyond, receiving the departed in love.

Those otherworldly celestial brides were impersonated again by locally known figures, like the Three Graces, or scenes depicting the judgement of Paris, wherein the dead appeared in the person of Paris who is shown to have his choice between those celestial images of supreme beauty awaiting his arrival.<sup>4</sup>

The Indian Apsarases were verbally translated into “Water Nymphs” and appeared on votive-plaques in the company of the deceased, who assumed the image of Apollo, following the tradition of the “Grave Apollos” memorizing and glorifying the dead in apotheosis. The Nymphs were later understood as “Brides” – (as Nympe actually means Bride) – and were joined with the Apollonic epiphany of the dead in a nuptial scenario.

The Indian idea of the Celestial Ocean was fused with the vision of the “Eternal Waters of Rebirth” and led to the deeply mysterious Sea-Sarcophagi, which, in reality, show the apotheosis, according to Eastern thoughts, but staged by Mediterranean actors, to be then totally absorbed in the art of later classical antiquity.

### *Evidences of Infusions*

As evidence of the transfer from India to the Mediterranean, via the Etruscans, we have the phallic gravestones, in the exact shape and size as they were used in India, now appearing in Italy, made of Italian stone, but with Etruscan inscriptions. In India those gravestones were the insignia of Siva as the symbol of resurrection, but Siva was not known in Italy, which clearly points to an import from India.

We also have the Betel Nut appearing on Etruscan objects of art. The Betel Nut was not known in Italy, but in India was the symbol of love, and is seen now in Italy, on Etruscan statuary in the same connotation.

On the Etruscan mirror engravings, found in graves, we see females in Indian costumes involved with male figures. They wear the typically Indian sharply-pointed drapes with Indian patterns and tassels on their ends, while tassels were never worn in Italy. Also the typically Indian loin-cloths re-appear worn by men on those mirrors which are seen generally in Etruscan funeral art.

On grave-mirrors reference is consistently made to the celestial waters, above which the otherworldly encounters take place, obviously hinting at the Indian vision of the Celestial Ocean, unknown to Italian thoughts of Afterlife.

The Etruscan funeral art, in general and throughout, makes references on mirrors, ash-urns, plaques and frescoes to amorous relations with females in the Above, which is entirely foreign to Mediterranean doctrines, but represents the postulates of the Indian next world.

### *Summary*

As a summary it could be said that the idea of females as the prize of battle may have originated in Teutonic-Germanic lands where females were closely associated with battle and therefore also with death.

The hero fallen in battle lost his earthly reward of a female and was therefore given in compensation a female in the next world.

The post-mortem female in excelsis was thereby established, and also the astonishing relation of the Female as such, to Death.

This complex was transplanted to India by the invasion of the Aryans, but lost for the vanquished tribes of India its connotation with battle and instead enlarged the aspects of the compensation by females in the Above.

Accentuated was this shift of emphasis possibly by the fact that the native Indian population was not a tribe of warriors, and women were not considered as "War-production-machinery" for creating soldiers, but had the logistically inferior mission to console the fallen. They were not considered helpmates in battle, but instead were given an increased role as figures in Afterlife, which related Females to Death, thereby giving them the most exalted role in the realm of Eternity . . . turning Death, the greatest tragedy of man, into a doorway to wonderful hopes of felicity.

### *Zusammenfassung*

Der Autor, der auch das Buch "The Celestial Brides" verfaßt hat, beschäftigt sich mit den Parallelen der Jenseitsvorstellungen im germanischen Norden und in Indien, und vor allem mit der merkwürdigen Rolle, die weibliche Wesen in den Mythologien beider Bereiche in den Sphären zwischen irdischem Tod und ewiger Liebe im Jenseits spielen. Gemeinsamkeiten dieser Art werden durch die Möglichkeit erklärt, daß in der Frühzeit indogermanische Gruppen aus ihrer Urheimat nach Nordwesten wanderten, dort Mythen und Vorstellungen der Nordvölker absorbierten und diese dann bei der Invasion des indischen Nordwestens in dieses Gebiet verpflanzten.

## References

- 1 Cf. ALMOGAREN vol. VIII/1977. p. 150–151
- 2 Cf. ALVAREZ, The Celestial Brides: pp. 138, 139
- 3 Cf. ALVAREZ, The Celestial Brides: Illus. 10
- 4 Cf. ALVAREZ, The Celestial Brides: Illus. 51
- 5 Cf. ALVAREZ, The Celestial Brides Illus. 88, 89, 90.

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# THE CELESTIAL BRIDES

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Fig. 2: SCULPTURE. The Apsarases are often shown as riding on their male counterparts as their “Vehicle” or basis of operation. (Philadelphia Museum of Art, Number 56;75.23). The sphere of action is the Celestial Ocean, the Paradise, the realm of felicity, and eternal rebirth. The Gandharvas were first pictured as Centaurs in raw masculinity, as personifications of the generative “Pool of Nature” and the Apsarases, being “those of the Waters,” as their passionate playmates, often riding upon them, as their “Vehicle” – their emotional transport. Later the Gandharvas changed to princely creatures, bewitching the females with the spell of their music – (Gandharva means Music).

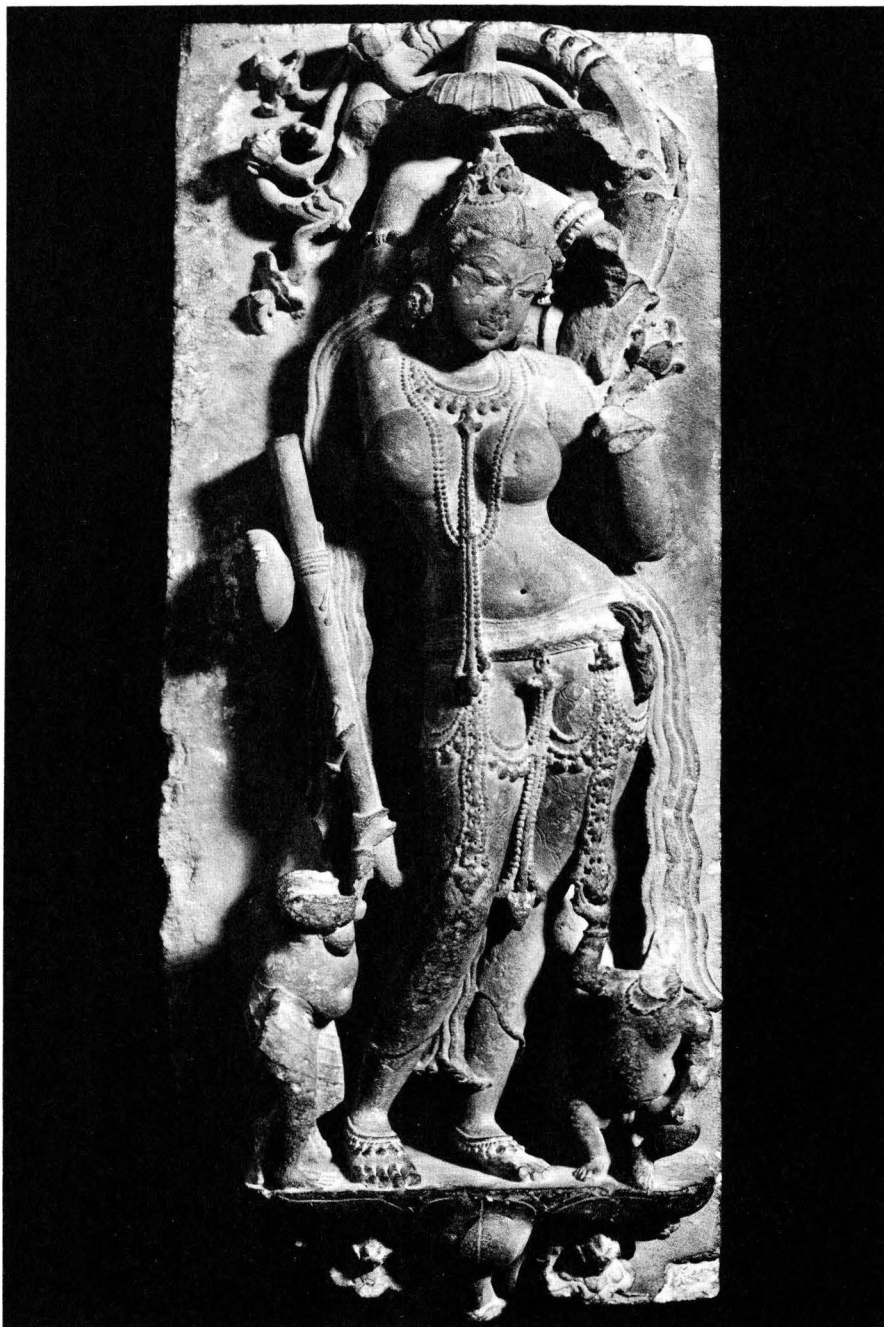


Fig. 3: SCULPTURE. The Apsarases with “Determinant” figures indicating the mood and aura of the princesses of lust. (Philadelphia Museum of Art. Number 56.75.12). The Heavens are full of them and they give their favors to the Gandharvas, at times also seducing earthly males, but mainly fulfilling all amorous desires of the souls of the Blessed in the great Above . . . as promised in the holy scriptures of the East. Their Oriental counterparts are the Houris, who also consort with the Faithful in Heaven.