

Undersökningar i Germanisk Mytologi, första delen.
Investigations into Germanic Mythology, Volume 1
by **Viktor Rydberg**

I. The Myth of the Primeval Age and Migrations

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. THE PROTO- INDO-EUROPEANS.

1. THE USE OF THE WORDS GERMAN AND GERMANIC.

The nation divided into many tribes whose main bulk inhabited the extensive territory east of the Rhine river and north of the wooded Hercynian Mountains were already called Germans by the Romans and Gauls at the beginning of our era. That these tribes constituted a single nation was obvious to the Romans by the conspicuous similarity they all had in physical type, as well as, upon closer acquaintance, by their similar dialects, which evidently were variations of one and the same peculiar language and finally, by their similar customs, traditions, and religion. The characteristics of the Germanic physical type by Roman standards were a tall stature, blonde hair, blue eyes, and a light complexion.

Even the authorities from whom the Roman historian Tacitus collected his information when he wrote his *Germania* — an invaluable work in regard to the history of culture— knew that in the so-called **Suebian Sea**, north of the Germanic continent, lay another important part of Germania, inhabited by **Sviones**, a people divided into several communities, which their kinsmen on the continent described as rich in weapons and fleets, and in warriors on land and sea (Tacitus, *Germania* 44). This northern sea-enclosed portion of Germania is called Scandinavia, Scandia, by other authors of the Roman Empire; and there can be no doubt that thereby was intended the peninsula which, as far back as historical memory extends, has been inhabited by the ancestors of the Swedes and the Norwegians. I therefore include in the term *german* the ancestors of the Scandinavian as well as the Gothic and German (*tyske*) peoples. Science requires a sharply-defined collective name for all these related tribes sprung from one and the same root, and one would surely long since have been agreed upon that for that purpose, using the name by which they made their first appearance in history had not some of the German writers used the terms *german* and *tysk* as synonyms. Presumably this is the reason why Danish authors have adopted the name *Goths* for our family of people. **But one can object that the name *Goths* historically only belongs to a particular branch of the family, the branch to which the East and West Goths belonged, and in order to avoid ambiguity ought to be applied exclusively to them.** It is therefore necessary to re-adopt the old collective name, even if it is not of Germanic origin, even moreso since **there is a prospect** that a more correct use of the words *German* and *Germanic* is about

to prevail in Germany itself, under weight of the demand that science has for a precise and well-founded terminology.¹

2. THE INDO-EUROPEAN FAMILY OF LANGUAGES.

It is universally known that the Germanic dialects are related to the Latin, the Greek, the Slavic, and Celtic languages, and that the kinship extends even beyond Europe to the tongues of Armenia, Iran, and India. The holy books ascribed to Zoroaster, which to the priests of Cyrus and Darius were what the Bible is to us; Rigveda's hymns, which to the people dwelling on the banks of the Ganges are God's revealed word, are written in a language which points to a common origin with our own. However different, all these kindred tongues may have grown with the lapse of thousands of years, still they remain as a sharply-defined group of older and younger sisters as compared with all other language groups of the world. From which, even the Semitic languages are separated by a chasm so broad and deep that it is hardly possible to bridge it.

This language-group of ours has been named in various ways. It has been called the Indo-Germanic, the Indo-European, and the Indo-European family of tongues. I have adopted the last designation.² The Armenians, Iranians, and Indians I call the Asiatic Indo-Europeans; all the rest, I call the European Indo-Europeans.

It is certain that these sister-languages have had a common mother, the ancient Indo-European speech³, and that this has had a geographical center from which it has radiated. (By such an ancient Indo-European language cannot, of course, be meant a tongue stereotyped in all its inflections, like the literary languages of later times, but simply the unity of those dialects which were spoken by the clans dwelling around this center of radiation.) By comparing the grammatical structure of all the daughters of this ancient mother, and by the aid of the laws previously discovered in regard to the transition of sounds from one language to another, attempts have been made to restore

¹ Editor's Note: Viktor Rydberg titled his work *Undersökningar i Germanisk Mythologi*, Researches in Germanic Mythology. Since the Scandinavians use the words *Tyskland*, *tysk*, and the Germans use the words *Deutschland*, *deutsch*, when they wish to refer to the present Germany and the Germans, Rydberg and other continental authors adopted the words *German* and *Germanisk* to describe the Germanic peoples collectively. The English translator, Rasmus Anderson, working in the latter half of the 19th century, decided to use the term Teutonic instead of Germanic both in the title and in the body of the work, to avoid ambiguity in English. However, today, at the beginning of the 21st century, the term Germanic is universally applied to the branch of Indo-European languages indicated by Rydberg in his text. (Those being Old Norse, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic, German, and English) Thus, in this edition, the word *Germanic* (*germaniska*) will be used to describe that branch collectively; the word *Germania* (*Germanien*) will indicate the lands they historically occupied, while *Teuton* (*german*) will be retained from Anderson's translation, and refer to an individual from that region, as opposed to the natives of Germany proper.

² With these words, Rydberg clearly defines his use of the word Indo-European (Swedish *ariena* and *ariska*). By it, he means the Indo-European languages and the peoples who spoke them. Thus when the text reads "Indo-European," Indo-European should be understood. It is important to note that Rydberg wrote in the 1880s, well before this word took on the racial connotations it has today. For an overview of the history of this word see *In Search of the Indo-Europeans* by J.P. Mallory, Thames and Hudson Ltd, London, 1989. Specifically Chapter 9, The Indo-European Myth.

³ Today, this theoretical language is referred to as proto-Indo-European (PIE). For an excellent reference see *The American Heritage Dictionary of Indo-European Roots* revised and edited by Calvert Watkins, Houghton Mifflin Co, Boston, 1985.

this original tongue which many thousand years ago ceased to vibrate. These attempts cannot, of course, in any sense claim to reproduce an image corresponding to the lost original as regards syntax and inflections. Such a task would be as impossible as to reconstruct, on the basis of all the now spoken languages derived from the Latin, the dialect used in Latium. The purpose is simply to present as faithful an idea of the ancient tongue as the existing means permit.

In the most ancient historical times, Indo-European-speaking people were found only in Asia and Europe. In seeking for the center and the earliest conquests of the ancient Indo-European language, the scholar may therefore keep within the limits of these two continents, and in Asia he may leave all the eastern and the most of the southern portion out of consideration, since these extensive regions have from prehistoric times been inhabited by Mongolian and allied tribes, and may for the present be regarded as the cradle of these races. It may not be necessary to remind the reader that the question of the original home of the ancient Indo-European tongue is not the same as the question in regard to the cradle of the Caucasian race. The white race may have existed, and may have been spread over a considerable portion of the old world, before a language possessing the peculiarities belonging to the Indo-European had appeared; and it is a known fact that southern portions of Europe, such as the Greek and Italian peninsulas, were inhabited by white people before they were conquered by Indo-Europeans.

3.

THE HYPOTHESIS CONCERNING THE ASIATIC ORIGIN OF THE INDO-EUROPEANS.

When the question of the original home of the Indo-European language and race was first presented, there were no conflicting opinions on the main subject.⁴ All who took any interest in the problem referred to Asia as the cradle of the Indo-Europeans. Asia had always been regarded as the cradle of the human race. In primeval time, the yellow Mongolian, the black African, the American redskin, and the fair European had there tented side by side. From some common center in Asia, they had spread over the whole surface of the inhabited earth. Traditions found in the literatures of various European peoples in regard to an immigration from the East supported this view. The progenitors of the Romans were said to have come from Troy. The fathers of the Teutons were reported to have immigrated from Asia, led by Odin. There was also the original home of the domestic animals and of the cultivated plants. And when the startling discovery was made that the sacred books of the Iranians and Indians were written in languages related to the culture languages of Europe, when these linguistic monuments betrayed a wealth of inflections in comparison with which those of the classical languages turned pale, and when they seemed to have the stamp of an antiquity by the side of which the European dialects seemed like children, then what could be more natural than the following conclusion: The original form has been preserved in the original home; the farther the streams of emigration got away from this home, the more they lost on the way of their language and of their inherited view of the world that is, of their mythology, which

⁴ Compare O. Schrader, *Sprachvergleichung und Urgeschichte* (1883).

among the Indians seemed so original and simple as if it had been watered by the dews of life's dawn.

To begin with, there was no doubt that the original tongue itself, the mother of all the other Indo-European languages, had already been found when Zend or Sanskrit was discovered. Friedrich von Schlegel, in his work published in 1808, *Concerning the Language and Wisdom of India*⁵, regarded Sanskrit as the mother of the Indo-European family of languages, and India as the original home of the Indo-European family of peoples. Thence, it was claimed, colonies were sent out in prehistoric ages to other parts of Asia and to Europe; nay, even missionaries went forth to spread the language and religion of the mother-country among other peoples. Schlegel's countryman Link looked upon Zend as the oldest language and mother of Sanskrit, and the latter he regarded as the mother of the rest; and as the Zend, in his opinion, was spoken in Media and surrounding countries, it followed that the highlands of Media, Armenia, and Georgia were the original home of the Indo-Europeans, a view which prevailed among the leading scholars of the age, such as Anquetil-Duperron, Herder, and Heeren, and found a place in the historical text-books used in the schools from 1820 to 1840.

Since Franz Bopp published his epoch-making *Comparative Grammar*⁶ the illusion that the Indo-European mother-tongue had been discovered had, of course, gradually to give place to the conviction that all the Indo-European languages, Zend and Sanskrit included, were relations of equal birth. This also affected the theory that the Persians or Indians⁷ were the original people, and that the cradle of our race was to be sought in their homes.

On the other hand, the Indian writings were found to contain evidence that, during the centuries in which the most of the Rigveda songs were produced, the Indian Indo-Europeans were possessors only of Kabulistan and Pendschab, whence, either expelling or subjugating an older black population, they had advanced toward the Ganges. Their social condition was still semi-nomadic, at least in the sense that their chief property consisted in herds, and the feuds between the clans had for their object the plundering of such possessions from each other. Both these facts indicated that the Indo-Europeans were immigrants to the Indian peninsula, but not the aborigines, wherefore their original home must be sought elsewhere. The strong resemblance found between Zend and Sanskrit, and which makes these dialects a separate subdivision in the Indo-European family of languages, must now, since we have learned to regard them sister-tongues, be interpreted as a proof that the Zend people or Iranians and the Sanskrit people or Indians were in ancient times one people with a common country, and that this union must have continued to exist long after the European Indo-Europeans were parted from them and had migrated westwards. When, then, the question was asked where this Indo-Iranian cradle was situated, the answer was thought to be found in a chapter of Avesta, to

⁵ *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier*, 1808

⁶ *Vergleichende Grammatik des Sanskrit, Send, Armenischen, Griechischen, Lateinischen, Litauischen, Altslavischen, Gothischen und Deutschen*, (*Comparative Grammar of Sanskrit, Zend, Armenian, Greek, Latin, Lithuanian, Old Slavic, Gothic, and German*). The third and final edition originally published 1845-1850.

⁷ I have chosen to translate the word "*Inderna*" as Indian, meaning the people of India. Anderson chose to translate this word as *Hindoo*, presumably to avoid confusion with American Indians.

which the German scholar Rhode had called attention already in 1820.⁸ To him, it seemed to refer to a migration from a more northerly and colder country. The passage speaks of sixteen countries created by the fountain of light and goodness, Ormuzd (Ahura Mazda), and of sixteen plagues produced by the fountain of evil, Ahriman (Angra Mainyu), to destroy the work of Ormuzd. The first country was a paradise, but Ahriman ruined it with cold and frost, so that it had ten months of winter and only two of summer. The second country, in the name of which Sughda Sogdiana was recognized was rendered uninhabitable by Ahriman by a pest which destroyed the domestic animals. Ahriman made the third (which, by the way, was recognized as Merv) impossible as a dwelling on account of never-ceasing wars and plundering. In this manner, thirteen other countries with partly recognizable names are enumerated as created by Ormuzd, and thirteen other plagues produced by Ahriman. Rhode's view, that these sixteen regions were stations in the migration of the Indo-Iranian people from their original country became universally adopted, and it was thought that the track of the migration could now be followed back through Persis, Baktria, and Sogdiana, up to the first region created by Ormuzd, which, accordingly, must have been situated in the interior high-lands of Asia, around the sources of the Jaxartes and Oxus. The reason for the emigration hence was found in the statement that, although Ormuzd had made this country an agreeable abode, Ahriman had destroyed it with frost and snow. In other words, this part of Asia was supposed to have had originally a warmer temperature, which suddenly or gradually became lower, wherefore the inhabitants found it necessary to seek new homes in the West and South.

The view that the sources of Oxus and Jaxartes are the original home of the Indo-Europeans is even now the prevailing one, or at least the one most widely accepted, and since the day of Rhode, it has been supported and developed by several distinguished scholars. Then Julius von Klaproth pointed out, already in 1830, that, among the many names of various kinds of trees found in India, there is a single one which they have in common with other Indo-European peoples, and this is the name of the birch. India has many kinds of trees that do not grow in Central Asia, but the birch is found both at the sources of the Oxus and Jaxartes, and on the southern spurs of the Himalaya mountains. If the Indo-European Indians immigrated from the highlands of Central Asia to the regions through which the Indus and Ganges seek their way to the sea, then it is natural, that when they found on their way new unknown kinds of trees, then they gave to these new names, but when they discovered a tree with which they had long been acquainted, then they would apply the old familiar name to it. Mr. Lassen, the great scholar of Indian antiquities, gave new reasons for the theory that the Indo-European Indians were immigrants, who through the western pass of Hindukush and through Kabulistan came to Pendschab, and thence slowly occupied the Indian peninsula. That their original home, as well as that of their Iranian kinsmen, was that part of the highlands of Central Asia pointed out by Rhode, he found corroborated by the circumstance, that there are to be found there, even at the present time, remnants of a people, the so-called Tadchiks, who speak Iranian dialects. According to Lassen, these were to be regarded as direct descendants of the original Indo-European people, who remained in the original home, while other parts of the same people migrated to Baktria or Persia and became Iranians, or migrated down to Pendschab and became Indians, or migrated to Europe and became

⁸ *Avesta: Vendidad, Fargard 1*; Rhode, *Die heilige Sage des Zendfolks*, p. 61.

Celts, Greco-Italians, Teutons, and Slavs. Jacob Grimm, whose name will always be mentioned with honor as the great pathfinder in the field of Germanic antiquities, was of the same opinion; and that whole school of scientists who were influenced by romanticism and by the philosophy of Schelling⁹ made haste to add to the real support sought for the theory in ethnological and philological facts, a support from the laws of natural analogy and from poetry. A mountain range, so it was said, is the natural divider of waters. From its fountains, the streams flow in different directions and irrigate the plains. In the same manner, the highlands of Central Asia were the divider of Indo-European folk-streams, which through Bactria sought their way to the plains of Persia, through the mountain passes of Hindukush to India, through the lands north of the Caspian Sea to the extensive plains of modern Russia, and so on to the more inviting regions of Western Europe. The sun rises in the east, *ex oriente lux*; the highly gifted race, which was to found the European nations, has, under the guidance of Providence, like the sun, wended its way from east to west. In taking a grand view of the subject, a mystic harmony was found to exist between the apparent course of the sun and the real migrations of people. The minds of the people dwelling in Central and Eastern Asia seemed to be imbued with a strange instinctive yearning. The Indo-European folk-streams, which in prehistoric times deluged Europe, were in this respect the forerunners of the hordes of Huns which poured in from Asia, and which in the fourth century gave the impetus to the Germanic migrations and of the Mongolian hordes which in the thirteenth century invaded our continent. The Europeans themselves are led by this same instinct to follow the course of the sun: they flow in great numbers to America, and these folk-billows break against each other on the coasts of the Pacific Ocean. "At the breast of our Asiatic mother," thus exclaimed, in harmony with the romantic school, a scholar with no mean linguistic attainments, "at the breast of our Asiatic mother, the Indo-European people of Europe have rested; around her as their mother they have played as children. There or nowhere is the playground; there or nowhere is the gymnasium of the first physical and intellectual efforts on the part of the Indo-European race."

The theory that the cradle of the Indo-European race stood in Central Asia near the sources of the Indus and Jaxartes had hardly been contradicted in 1850, and seemed to be secured for the future by the great number of distinguished and brilliant names which had given their adhesion to it. The need was now felt of clearing up the order and details of these emigrations. All the light to be thrown on this subject had to come from philology and from the geography of plants and animals. The first author who, in this manner and with the means indicated, attempted to furnish proofs in detail that the ancient Indo-European land was situated around the Oxus river was Adolphe Pictet. There, he claimed, the Indo-European language had been formed out of older non-Indo-European dialects. There the Indo-European race, on account of its spreading over Bactria and neighboring regions, had divided itself into branches of various dialects, which there, in a limited territory, held the same geographical relations to each other as they hold to each other at the present time in another and immensely larger territory. In the East lived the nomadic branch which later settled in India in the East, too, but farther north, that branch herded their flocks, which afterwards became the Iranian and took possession of Persia. West of the ancestors of the Indo-European Indians dwelt the branch which later appears as the Greco-Italians, and north of the latter the common

⁹ Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling (1775-1854.)

progenitors of Teutons and Slavs had their home. In the extreme West dwelt the Celts, and they were also the earliest emigrants to the West. Behind them marched the ancestors of the Teutons and Slavs by a more northern route to Europe. The last in this procession to Europe were the ancestors of the Greco-Italians, and for this reason their languages have preserved more resemblance to those of the Indo-Iranians who migrated into Southern Asia than those of the other European Indo-Europeans. For this view, Pictet gives a number of reasons. According to him, the vocabulary common to more or less of the Indo-European branches preserves names of minerals, plants, and animals which are found in those latitudes, and in those parts of Asia which he calls the original Indo-European country.

The German linguist August Schleicher has to some extent discussed the same problem as Pictet in a series of works published in the 1850s and 60s. The same has been done by the famous German-English scientist Max Müller. Schleicher's theory, briefly stated, is the following: The Indo-European race originated in Central Asia. There, in the most ancient Indo-European country, the original Indo-European tongue was spoken for many generations. The people multiplied and enlarged their territory, and in various parts of the country they occupied, the language assumed various forms, so that there were developed at least two different languages before the great migrations began. As the chief cause of the emigrations, Schleicher regards the fact that the primitive agriculture practiced by the Indo-Europeans, including the burning of the forests, impoverished the soil and had a bad effect on the climate. The principles he laid down and tried to vindicate were: (1) The farther East an Indo-European people dwells, the more it has preserved of the peculiarities of the original Indo-European tongue. (2) The farther West an Indo-European-derived tongue and daughter people are found, the earlier this language was separated from the mother-tongue, and the earlier this people became separated from the original stock. Max Müller holds the common view in regard to the Asiatic origin of the Indo-Europeans. The main difference between him and Schleicher is that Müller assumes that the Indo-European tongue originally divided itself into an Asiatic and an European branch. He accordingly believes that all the Indo-European-European tongues amid all the Indo-European-European peoples have developed from the same European branch, while Schleicher assumes that in the beginning the division produced a Germanic and Letto-Slavic branch on the one hand, and an Indo-Iranian, Greco-Italic, and Celtic on the other.

This view of the origin of the Indo-Europeans had scarcely met with any opposition when we entered the second half of our century. We might add that it had almost ceased to be questioned. The theory that the Indo-Europeans were cradled in Asia seemed to be established as an historical fact, supported by a mass of ethnographical, linguistic, and historical arguments, and vindicated by a host of brilliant scientific names.

4.

THE HYPOTHESIS CONCERNING THE EUROPEAN ORIGIN OF THE INDO-EUROPEANS.

In the year 1854, a voice of doubt was heard for the first time. The sceptic was an English ethnologist, by name Roger Latham, who had spent many years in Russia studying the natives of that country. Latham was unwilling to admit that a single one of the many reasons given for the Asiatic origin of our family of languages was conclusive, or that the accumulative weight of all the reasons given amounted to real evidence. He urged that they, who at the outset had treated this question, had lost sight of the rules of logic, and that in explaining a fact it is a mistake to assume too many premises. The great fact which presents itself and which is to be explained is this: There are Indo-Europeans in Europe and there are Indo-Europeans in Asia. The major part of Indo-Europeans are in Europe, and here the original language has split itself into the greatest number of idioms. From the main Indo-European trunk in Europe, only two branches extend into Asia. The northern branch is a new creation, consisting of Russian colonization from Europe; the southern branch, that is, the Iranian-Indian is, on the other hand, pre-historic, but was still growing in the dawn of history, and the branch was then growing from West to East, from Indus toward Ganges. When historical facts to the contrary are wanting, then the root of a great family of languages should naturally be looked for in the ground which supports the trunk and is shaded by the crown, and not underneath the ends of the farthest-reaching branches. The mass of Mongolians dwell in Eastern Asia, and for this very reason Asia is accepted as the original home of the Mongolian race. The great mass of Indo-Europeans live in Europe, and have lived there as far back as history sheds a ray of light. Why, then, not apply to the Indo-Europeans and to Europe the same conclusions as hold good in the case of the Mongolians and Asia? And why not apply to ethnology the same principles as are admitted unchallenged in regard to the geography of plants and animals? Do we not in botany and zoology seek the original home and center of a species where it shows the greatest vitality, the greatest power of multiplying and producing varieties? These questions, asked by Latham, remained for some time unanswered, but finally they led to a more careful examination of the soundness of the reasons given for the Asiatic hypothesis.

The gist of Latham's protest is, that the question was decided in favor of Asia without an examination of the other possibility, and that in such an examination, if it were undertaken, it would appear at the very outset that the other possibility - that is, the European origin of the Indo-Europeans - is more plausible, at least from the standpoint of methodology.

This objection on the part of an English scholar did not even produce an echo for many years, and it seemed to be looked upon simply as a manifestation of that fondness for eccentricity which we are wont to ascribe to his nationality. He repeated his protest in 1862, but it still took five years before it appeared to have made any impression. In 1867, the celebrated linguist William Dwight Whitney came out, not to defend Latham's theory that Europe is the cradle of the Indo-European race, but simply to clear away the widely spread error that the science of languages had demonstrated the Asiatic origin of the Indo-Europeans. As already indicated, it was especially Adolphe Pictet who had given the first impetus to this illusion in his great work *Origines indo-européennes*. Already, before Whitney, the Germans Weber and Kuhn had, without attacking the Asiatic hypothesis, shown that the most of Pictet's arguments failed to prove that for which they were intended. Whitney now came and refuted them all without exception. At the same time, he attacked the assumption made by Rhode, universally accepted until that time,

that a record of an Indo-European emigration from the highlands of Central Asia was to be found in that chapter of Avesta which speaks of the sixteen lands created by Ormuzd for the good of man, but which Ahriman destroyed by sixteen different plagues. Avesta does not with a single word indicate that the first of these lands which Ahriman destroyed with snow and frost is to be regarded as the original home of the Iranians, or that they ever in the past emigrated from any of them. The assumption that a migration record of historical value conceals itself within this geographical mythological sketch is a mere conjecture, and yet it was made the very basis of the hypothesis so confidently built upon for years about Central Asia as the starting-point of the Indo-Europeans.

The following year, 1868, a prominent German linguist, Theodor Benfey, came forward and definitely took Latham's side. He remarked at the outset that previous geological investigations had found the oldest traces of human existence in the soil of Europe, and that, so long as this is the case, there is no scientific fact which can admit the assumption that the present European stock has immigrated from Asia after the quaternary period. The mother-tongues of many of the dialects which from time immemorial have been spoken in Europe may just as well have originated on this continent as the mother-tongues of the Mongolian dialects now spoken in Eastern Asia have originated where the descendants now dwell. That the Indo-European mother-tongue originated in Europe, not in Asia, Benfey found probable on the following grounds: In Asia, lions are found even at the present time as far to the north as ancient Assyria, and the tigers make depredations over the highlands of Western Iran, even to the coasts of the Caspian Sea. These great beasts of prey are known and named even among Asiatic people who dwell north of their habitats. If, therefore, the ancient Indo-Europeans had lived in a country visited by these animals, or if they had been their neighbors, they certainly would have had names for them; but we find that the Indo-European Indians call the lion by a word not formed from an Indo-European root, and that the Indo-European Greeks borrowed the word lion (*lis, leon*) from a Semitic language. (There is, however, division of opinion on this point.) Moreover, the Indo-European languages have borrowed the word camel, by which the chief beast of burden in Asia is called. The home of this animal is Baktria, or precisely that part of Central Asia in the vicinity of which an effort has been made to locate the cradle of the Indo-European tongue. Benfey thinks the ancient Indo-European country has been situated in Europe, north of the Black Sea, between the mouth of the Danube and the Caspian Sea.

Since the presentation of this argument, several defenders of the European hypothesis have come forward, among them Geiger, Cuno, Friedrich Müller, Spiegel, Pösche, and more recently Schrader¹⁰ and Penka. Schrader's work, *Sprachvergleichung und Urgeschichte*, contains an excellent general review of the history of the question, original contributions to its solution, and a critical but cautious opinion in regard to its present position. In France, too, the European hypothesis has found many adherents. Geiger found, indeed, that the cradle of the Indo-European race was to be looked for much farther to the west than Benfey and others had supposed. His hypothesis, based on the evidence furnished by the geography of plants, places the ancient Indo-European land in Germany. The cautious Schrader, who dislikes dealing with conjectures, regards the question as undecided, but he weighs the arguments presented by the various sides, and reaches the conclusion that those in favor of the European origin of the Indo-Europeans

¹⁰ Eberhard Schrader, 1836-1908.

are the stronger, but that they are not conclusive. Schrader himself, through his linguistic and historical investigations, has been led to believe that the Indo-Europeans, while they still were one people, belonged to the stone age, and had not yet become acquainted with the use of metals.

5.

THE INDO-EUROPEAN LAND OF EUROPE.

On one point - and that is for our purpose the most important one - the advocates of both hypotheses have approached each other. The leaders of the defenders of the Asiatic hypothesis have ceased to regard Asia as the cradle of all the dialects into which the ancient Indo-European tongue has been divided. While they cling to the theory that the Indo-European inhabitants of Europe have immigrated from Asia, they nearly all have ceased to claim that these peoples, already before their departure from their Eastern home, were so distinctly divided linguistically that it was necessary to imagine certain branches of the race speaking Celtic, others Germanic, others again Greco-Italian, even before they came to Europe. The prevailing opinion among the advocates of the Asiatic hypothesis now doubtless is, that the Indo-Europeans who immigrated to Europe formed one homogeneous mass, which gradually on our continent divided itself definitely into Celts, Teutons, Slavs, and Greco-Italians. The adherents of both hypotheses have thus been able to agree that there has been a European-Indo-European country. And the question as to where it was located is of the most vital importance, as it is closely connected with the question of the original home of the Teutons, since the ancestors of the Teutons must have inhabited this ancient European-Indo-European country.

Philology has attempted to answer the former question by comparing all the words of all the Indo-European-European languages. The attempt has many obstacles to overcome; for, as Schrader has remarked, the ancient words which today are common to all or several of these languages are presumably a mere remnant of the ancient European-Indo-European vocabulary. Nevertheless, it is possible to arrive at important results in this manner, if we draw conclusions from the words that remain, but take care not to draw conclusions from what is wanting. The view gained in this manner is, briefly stated, as follows:

The Indo-European country of Europe has been situated in latitudes where snow and ice are common phenomena. The people who have emigrated thence to more southern climes have not forgotten either the one or the other name of those phenomena. The circumstance that the ancient European Indo-Europeans recognized only three seasons - winter, spring, and summer, also points to a comparatively northern latitude. This division of the year continued among the Teutons even in the days of Tacitus. For autumn, they had no name.

Many words for mountains, valleys, streams, and brooks common to all the languages show that the European-Indo-European land was not wanting in elevations, rocks, and flowing waters. Nor has it been a treeless plain. This is proven by many names of trees. The trees are fir, birch, willow, elm, elder, hazel, and a beech called *bhaga*, which means a tree with eatable fruit. From this word *bhaga* is derived the Greek *phagos*, the Latin *fagus*, the German *Buche*, and the Swedish *bok*. But it is a remarkable fact that

the Greeks did not call the beech, but the oak, *phegos*, while the Romans called the beech *fagus*. From this, we conclude that the European Indo-Europeans applied the word *bhaga* both to the beech and the oak, since both bear similar fruit; but in some parts of the country the name was particularly applied to the beech, in others to the oak. The beech is a species of tree which gradually approaches the north. On the European continent, it is not found east of a line drawn from Königsberg across Poland and Podolia to Crimea. This leads to the conclusion that the Indo-European country of Europe must to a great extent have been situated west of this line, and that the regions inhabited by the ancestors of the Romans, and north of them the progenitors of the Teutons, must be looked for west of this botanical line, and between the Alps and the North Sea.

Linguistic comparisons also show that the Indo-European territory of Europe was situated near an ocean or large body of water. Scandinavians, Germans, Celts, and Romans have preserved a common name for the ocean - the Old Norse *mar*, the Old High German *mari*, the Latin *mare*. The names of certain sea-animals are also common to various Indo-European languages. The Swedish *hummer* (lobster) corresponds to the Greek *kamaros*, and the Swedish *säl* (seal) to the Greek *selakhos*.

In the Indo-European country of Europe, there were domestic animals - cows, sheep, and goats. The horse was also known, but it is uncertain whether it was used for riding or driving, or simply valued on account of its flesh and milk. On the other hand, the ass was not known, its domain being particularly the plains of Central Asia.

The bear, wolf, otter, and beaver certainly belonged to the fauna of Indo-European Europe. The European Indo-Europeans must have cultivated at least one, perhaps two kinds of grain; also flax, the name of which is preserved in the Greek *linon* (linen), the Latin *linum*, and in other languages.

The Indo-Europeans knew the art of brewing mead from honey. That they also understood the art of drinking it, even to excess, may be taken for granted. This drink was dear to the hearts of the ancient Indo-Europeans, and its name has been faithfully preserved both by the tribes that settled near the Ganges, and by those who emigrated to Great Britain. The Brahmin by the Ganges still knows this beverage as *madhu*, the Welchman has known it as *medu*, the Lithuanian as *medus*; and when the Greek Indo-Europeans came to Southern Europe and became acquainted with wine, they gave it the name of mead (*methu*).

It is not probable that the European Indo-Europeans knew bronze or iron, or, if they did know any of the metals, had any large quantity or made any daily use of them, so long as they linguistically formed one homogeneous body, and lived in that part of Europe which we here call the Indo-European domain. The only common name for metal is that which we find in the Latin *aes* (copper), in the Gothic *aiz*, and in the Sanskrit *áyas*. As is known, the Latin *aes*, like the Gothic *aiz*, means both copper and bronze. That the word originally meant copper, and afterwards came to signify bronze, which is an alloy of copper and tin, seems to be a matter of course, and that it was applied only to copper and not to bronze among the ancient Indo-Europeans seems clear not only because a common name for tin is wanting, but also for the far better and remarkable reason particularly pointed out by Schrader, that all the Indo-European European languages, even those which are nearest akin to each other and are each other's neighbors, lack a common word for the tools of a smith and the inventory of a forge, and also for the various kinds of weapons of defense and attack. Most of all does it astonish us, that in

respect to weapons the dissimilarity of names is so complete in the Greek and Roman tongues. Despite this fact, the ancient Indo-Europeans have certainly used various kinds of weapons - the club, the hammer, the axe, the knife, the spear, and the crossbow. All these weapons are of such a character that they could be made of stone, wood, and horn. Things more easily change names when the older materials of which they were made give place to new, previously unknown materials. It is, therefore, probable that the European Indo-Europeans were in the stone age, and at best were acquainted with copper before and during the period when their language was divided into several dialects.

Where, then, on our continent was the home of this Indo-European European people in the Stone Age? Southern Europe, with its peninsulas extending into the Mediterranean, must doubtless have been outside of the boundaries of the Indo-European land of Europe. The Greek Indo-Europeans have immigrated to Hellas (Greece), and the Italian If, as the linguistic monuments seem to prove, the European Indo-Europeans lived near an ocean, this cannot have been the Mediterranean Sea. There remain the Black and Caspian Sea on the one hand, the Baltic and the North Sea on the other. But if, as the linguistic monuments likewise seem to prove, the European Indo-Europeans for a great part, at least, lived west of a botanical line indicated by the beech in a country producing fir, oak, elm, and elder, then they could not have been limited to the treeless plains which extend along the Black Sea from the mouth of the Danube, through Dobrudscha, Bessarabia, and Cherson, past the Crimea. Students of early Greek history do not any longer assume that the Hellenic immigrants found their way through these countries to Greece, but that they came from the north-west and followed the Adriatic down to Epirus; in other words, they came the same way as the Visigoths under Alarik, and the Eastgoths under Theodoric in later times. Even the Latin tribes came from the north. The migrations of the Celts, so far as history sheds any light on the subject, were from the north and west toward the south and east. The movements of the Germanic races were from north to south, and they migrated both eastward and westward. Both prehistoric and historic facts thus tend to establish the theory that the Indo-European domain of Europe, within indefinable limits, comprised the central and north part of Europe; and as one or more seas were known to these Indo-Europeans, we cannot exclude from the limits of this knowledge the ocean penetrating the north of Europe from the west.

On account of their undeveloped agriculture, which compelled them to depend chiefly on cattle for their support, the European Indo-Europeans must have occupied an extensive territory. Of the mutual position and of the movements of the various tribes within this territory nothing can be stated, except that sooner or later, but already away back in prehistoric times, they must have occupied precisely the position in which we find them at the dawn of history and which they now hold. The Indo-European tribes which first entered Gaul must have lived west of those tribes which became the progenitors of the Teutons, and the latter must have lived west of those who spread an Indo-European language over Russia. South of this line, but still in Central Europe, there must have dwelt another body of Indo-Europeans, the ancestors of the Greeks and Romans, the latter west of the former. Farthest to the north of all these tribes must have dwelt those people who afterwards produced the Germanic tongue.

B. ANCIENT GERMANIA.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION OF ANCIENT GERMANIA.
THE PREHISTORIC GERMANIC STONE AGE

The northern position of the ancient Teutons necessarily had the effect that they, better than all other Indo-European people, preserved their original race-type, as they were less exposed to mixing with non-Indo-European elements. In the south, west, and east, they had kinsmen separating them from non-Indo-European races. To the north, on the other hand, lay a territory which, by its very nature, could be but sparsely populated, if it was inhabited at all, before it was occupied by the fathers of the Teutons. The Germanic type, which undoubtedly also was the Indo-European in general before much spreading and consequent mixing with other races had taken place, has, as already indicated, been described in the following manner: Tall, white skin, blue eyes, fair hair. Anthropological science has given them one more mark - they are dolicocephalous, that is, having skulls whose anterior-posterior diameter, or that from the frontal to the occipital bone, exceeds the transverse diameter. This type appears most pure in the modern Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, and to some extent the Dutch, in the inhabitants of those parts of Great Britain that are most densely settled by Saxon and Scandinavian emigrants; and in the people of certain parts of North Germany. Welcker's craniological measurements give the following figures for the breadth and length of Germanic skulls:

Swedes and Hollanders	75-71
Icelanders and Danes	76-71
Englishmen.....	76-73
Holsteinians.....	77-71
Hanoverians \	
The vicinity of Jena,	77-72
Bonn, and Cologne /	
Hessians	79-72
Swabians	79-73
Bavarians	80-74

Thus the dolicocephalous form passes in Middle and Southern Germany into the brachycephalous. The investigations made at the suggestion of Rudolf Virchow in Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, and Austria, in regard to blonde and brunette types, are of great interest. An examination of more than nine million individuals showed the following result:

Germany 31.80% blonde, 14.05% brunette, 54.15% mixed.
Austria 9.79% blonde, 23.17% brunette, 57.04% mixed.

Switzerland 11.10% blonde, 25.70% brunette, 61.40% mixed.

Thus the blonde type has by far a greater number of representatives in Germany than in the southern part of Central Europe, though the latter has German-speaking inhabitants. In Germany itself, the blonde type decreases and the brunette increases from north to south, while at the same time the dolicocephalous gives place to the brachycephalous. Southern Germany has 25% of brunettes, North Germany only 7%.

If we now, following the strict rules of methodology which Latham insists on, bear in mind that the cradle of a race- or language-type should, if there are no definite historical facts to the contrary, especially be looked for where this type is most abundant and least changed, then there is no doubt that the part of Indo-European Europe which the ancestors of the Teutons inhabited when they developed the Indo-European tongue into the Germanic must have included the coast of the Baltic and the North Sea. This theory is certainly not contradicted, but, on the other hand, supported by the facts so far as we have any knowledge of them. Roman history supplies evidence that the same parts of Europe in which the Germanic type predominates at the present time were Germanic already at the beginning of our era and that then already the Scandinavian peninsula was inhabited by a North Germanic people, which, among their kinsmen on the Continent, were celebrated for their wealth in ships and warriors. Centuries must have passed before the Germanic colonization of the peninsula could have developed into so much strength - centuries during which, judging from all indications, the transition from the bronze to the iron age in Scandinavia must have taken place. The painstaking investigations of Oscar Montelius, conducted on the principle of methodology, have led him to the conclusion that Scandinavia and North Germany formed during the bronze age one common domain of culture in regard to weapons and implements. The manner in which the other domains of culture group themselves in Europe leaves no other place for the Germanic race than Scandinavia and North Germany, and possibly Austria-Hungary, which the Germanic domain resembles most. Back of the bronze age lies the stone age. The examinations, by von Düben, Gustaf Retzius, and Virchow¹¹, of skeletons found in northern graves from the stone age prove the existence at that time of a race in the North which, so far as the characteristics of the skulls are concerned, cannot be distinguished from the race now dwelling there. Here it is necessary to take into consideration the results of probability reached by comparative philology, showing that the European Indo-Europeans were still in the stone age when they divided themselves into Celts, Teutons, etc., and occupied separate territories, and the fact that the Teutons, so far back as conclusions may be drawn from historical knowledge, have occupied a more northern domain than their kinsmen. Thus all tends to show that when the Scandinavian peninsula was first settled by Indo-Europeans - no doubt coming from the South by way of Denmark - these Indo-Europeans belonged to the same race, which, later in history, appear with a Germanic physiognomy and with Germanic speech, and that their immigration to and occupation of the southern parts of the peninsula took place in the time of the Indo-European stone age.

For the history of civilization, and particularly for mythology, these results are important. It is a problem to be solved by comparative mythology what elements in the various groups of Indo-European myths may be the original common property of the race

¹¹ Rudolf Ludwig Karl Virchow, 1821-1902.

while the race was yet undivided. The conclusions reached gain in trustworthiness the further the Indo-European tribes, whose myths are compared, are separated from each other geographically. If, for instance, the Germanic mythology on the one hand and the Asiatic Indo-European (*Avesta* and *Rigveda*) on the other are made the subject of comparative study, and if groups of myths are found which are identical not only in their general character and in many details, but also in the grouping of the details and the epic connection of the myths, then the probability that they belong to an age when the ancestors of the Teutons and those of the Asiatic Indo-Europeans dwelt together is greater, in the same proportion as the probability of an intimate and detailed exchange of ideas after the separation grows less between these tribes on account of the geographical distance. With all the certainty which it is possible for research to arrive at in this field, we may assume that these common groups of myths - at least the centers around which they revolve - originated at a time when the Indo-Europeans still formed, so to speak, a geographical and linguistic unity - in all probability at a time which lies far back in a common Indo-European stone age. The discovery of groups of myths of this sort thus sheds light on beliefs and ideas that existed in the minds of our ancestors in an age of which we have no information save that which we get from the study of the finds. The latter, when investigated by painstaking and penetrating archeological scholars, certainly give us highly instructive information in other directions. In this manner, it becomes possible to distinguish between older and younger elements of Germanic mythology, and to secure a basis for studying its development through centuries which have left us no literary monuments.