



GUIDO VON LIST

THE GERMAN  
MYTHOLOGICAL  
LANDSCAPE

# **BERSERKER**

## **BOOKS**



To his esteemed friend

the Lord

Friedrich Wannieck

Board of the "German House" association in Brno

the

powerful promoter

of  
the

German nature in Moravia

In friendly memory

dedicated by the

Author.

Vienna, 19 May 1891,

the day of the ceremonial inauguration of the "German House" in Brno.



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## The German Mythological Landscape



he Germanic view of the majesty of the celestials does not correspond to enclosing them between walls or making images of them with human features. Forests and groves are their temples, and under the names of their gods they invoke that unfathomable power which is revealed to them solely in worship.

Cornelius Tacitus wrote this about eighteen hundred years ago years ago, Cornelius Tacitus, the first eulogist of the Germanic tribes. And his words, rich in content, were to become the leitmotif of our book, the German mythological landscapes.

The surface of our planet, with the canopy of sky enveloping it in a starry blue cloak, is what is generally understood by the word nature. Within the narrow scope of the human field of vision, however, only a tiny part of nature can be surveyed, and it is precisely this tiny part that is understood by the term landscape.

But it is not the eye alone that conveys the enjoyment of nature to the perceiving and feeling observer of a landscape; the other senses also take part in this mediating role.

Even if the eye allows us to see the tangle of lines, the seemingly random confusion of color tones, the movements of individual creatures in the overall picture, only the ear can let us perceive the song of the birds, the roar of the storm and the roll of thunder. Similarly, the other senses convey to us the feeling of warmth or cold, the resinous scent of the forest and the taste of strawberries in the cool forest floor. All these individual impressions and individual perceptions combined to form an overall sensation constitute the actual enjoyment of nature.

But how the score of a symphony is made up of the individual orchestral parts, like a painting made up of thousands of points,

the naïve observer of a landscape overlooks the myriad of individual elements and therefore only allows the overall impression of the landscape to have an effect on him. Only the art connoisseur will be able to grasp the intertwined harmony of the individual voices in a symphonic tone painting, only he will be able to grasp the individual effect of the drawing and color shading in a painter's masterpiece. But only such a person will rise to the highest enjoyment of art through this recognition, by recognizing the connection of multiplicity to unity and allowing the overall impression of the work of art to have an effect on him.

Just as the aesthete of art revels in the true enjoyment of art, so the aesthete of nature will revel in the true enjoyment of nature, for he too is granted what so many are denied, namely to take a deeper look into the manifold forms of the wonderful unity in the life and weaving of nature.

But what mankind realized in the youthful age of the peoples, when they approached the sanctuary of nature with childlike timidity in the devout feeling of the beautiful, the sublime, even arousing a longing for God, only the nature aesthetician can comprehend. The childlike, naïve sense of the people of nature has been lost to the people of culture; they can barely stammer the language of nature, and it is only through science that modern man is able to laboriously approach the lost understanding of nature again.

Thousands and thousands of people go out to enjoy nature every year, but they call themselves tourists! This word alone testifies to how few of the thousands are really nature aesthetes.

But with the childishly naïve mind, the Cultur folk also lost the original, immediate awareness of their own divinity, that incomparably sublime tribal nature of the Germanic people. Inwardness means being with oneself, and being with oneself is actually being with God. So as long as a people, as a primitive people, possesses its entire original inwardness, it has no cause for an outward worship of God, for an outward ceremonial service, which only begins to take shape when inwardness is about to give way to outwardness.



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Every external service of worship therefore always refers to something external to the worshipper. The more inward a person is, the less outward his whole life is, and vice versa. This becomes most evident in the course of cultural history. The most and greatest monuments of religious art - among all peoples - were only created when man was least aware of his divinity. The ceremonial service in the cult developed ever more richly with the temple buildings. In such periods, therefore, the monuments of religious architecture were at their most perfect; it was they who determined the architectural style in question, for the end was achieved which was to be sought with them as a means.

Thus the art of sculpture reached its highest flowering very early among the Greeks, because this art is less material, because in it the spirit still dwells undivided in matter. Later, with the Romans, it emerges, it asserts itself externally, but it does not yet overcome them, it does not even reach the level of art. This was only reserved for the Middle Ages and especially for the Germans. With the completion of the Gothic style, it only remained for the spirit, after having become master of matter, to reconcile itself with nature in order to return to it. He became the creator of painting, the third sister art of sculpture and architecture. Finally, after the spirit had used up all the means of art for the glorification of the highest beyond itself for the purpose of representation, contemplation, knowledge of itself, it became free again in matter and in nature with consciousness, as it had once been at the beginning of time.

As long as man is directly aware of the divinity of his own spirit, so long is his love for his fellow human beings his prayer, the joy of the beauty of nature around him his hymn; but the vast great earth with the huge blue vault of the sky is just big enough for him to be the temple of his belief in God, so that he feels at one with this divinity. As long as man is conscious of his own divinity, so long does he know this divinity of his and nothing higher in himself, in other men, in the whole universe around him; he recognizes nothing above himself but this spiritually invisible formless divinity in himself, which nevertheless has form in the whole of nature surrounding him, and therefore does not imitate any human being in the form of a god. And if he does not model his God on any human being, to whom should he

otherwise imitate him? Are there not traces of idolatrous people among all peoples who practiced idolatry?

That there really was such a time of inwardness is borne out by the traditions of all peoples; it is the same time of which all poets know how to sing and speak as the golden age. And this time was really and truly the golden age, for it was the happiest in comparison with the following times, the most uncloudedly happy, for in it human life was most united with the divine. The golden age in the life of nations is like the golden age in the life of man, the unclouded, sunlit days of earliest childhood.

All nations had at the beginning of their emergence such gods live, and were then more similar - like children among themselves than in the later course of development, where themselves only their special characteristics - not unlike those of the developing human being - were able to develop. In such course of development lost then the peoples their inwardness, which alone and everywhere different outer world appeared as the image of the peoples, and thus caused the rare and formation of nationalities. That is why the mythologies of all peoples can be traced back to quite the same beginnings, but that is also why it is possible to gauge how long the golden age lasted for one people or another, which ended at the moment when the myth system of the people concerned branched off from the common stock, allowed its special shoots to grow and flourish. That is why the diversity of peoples and religions, with all that belongs to them, as well as the very different duration of the golden age of the individual peoples, must always be explained by the diversity of external circumstances and conditions. The more paradisiacal the outside world was, the sooner man seems to have lost his paradise of the inner world; he allowed himself to be seduced into exchanging it for another. The harsher the climate, the more inhospitable the land, the more he cherished the paradise of his inner world.

The Germanic people in this, as in so many others. The Persians were the most fortunate in this respect, and only the Persians, who were related to the Germanic tribes, are approximately equal to them. What Herodotus\*) reported of the Persians, Tacitus said of them,

\*) "They (the Persians) do not have the custom of erecting images of gods, temples and altars, but rather accuse those who do so of foolishness, as it seems to me, because they do not agree with the Hellenes that the gods are human-like." (Herodotus I. 131.)

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but this was said by both at a time when all the other peoples around them already had a developed idolatry and temple service.

But even among the Germanic tribes, the worship of God did not remain completely free of externalities, and could not and could not remain so, just as little as the people could have remained with their direct awareness of their divinity. This had to take place because the external is precisely the means, the material is the mirror in which the deity has to look at itself. This transformation, however, remained reserved for the Germanic peoples only for the time of Christianity, for which, however, the signs of the beginning can still be found in paganism. Furthermore, inwardness can be recognized as a basic trait of the Germanic folk-character, of the German belief in gods, because it lasted longest among the Germanic peoples.

Consequently, the worship of God had to develop from the simplest forms without the priesthood. The oldest form was undoubtedly the sacrifice, combined with prayer. At first, each family sacrificed for itself on the altar of the house, the hearth. The father of the house as the head of the family, as the unrestricted lord and master, was recognized from the outset as the model of the supreme being, as the representative of the deity, so to speak. The housewife sacrificed to him, as the model of the priestess of future times, at the "sacred flame of the hearth".

But once the development had reached the point of sacrifice, other ideas were soon added in order to lead to the outward worship of God.

In those days man knew of the forces of nature only their sensually perceptible manifestations, and had finally to be forced to the assumption that these manifestations must be the living conditions of an invisible being of an immeasurably higher nature than himself, a being to whom he must bow in fear and anxiety in order to moderate its power, but to increase and heighten its mildness.

Once a person had reached this level of knowledge, he soon widened his circle of vision of higher knowledge. The divine interiority began to fade, he sought the divinity outside himself. Like the mists that drift around the mountain peaks, the first gigantic, uncouth primordial being of future generations of gods formed and shaped itself in his sensory world. This split into an evil

and a good being, and thus formed itself into the shape of darkness or evil, and light or good. These two hostile brothers were naturally conceived in a continuing battle, with victory always undecided. It is only at a much later stage of perfected knowledge that this dichotomy can be attributed to the consolation that at the end of all days the divinized light will gain victory over the evil nature of darkness and, after the complete destruction of all evil, a new spiritualized world order will come.

Since our ancestors were in much more direct contact with nature in the childhood dream of the nascent people than we, their descendants crammed into cities, it is not difficult to understand that today we have lost a good part of that keen sense of observation for the processes of natural life, on which not only all myths, folk customs and peasant rules are based, but even the old healing methods, the so-called "sympathetic cures" and the belief in magic and miracles. Only the new sciences, namely the corresponding subjects of natural history, partially replace this lost sense of nature and often surprisingly confirm old mythical and mystical rules of folk tradition.

But also the "aesthetics of nature", which has been cultivated as a science in recent times, leads us back along the paths of feeling, to the recognition of nature in its beauty, sublimity and awakening of longing, which qualities have also been lost to us cultural people as nature.

But the man of primeval times, who was educated by the greatest teacher, nature herself, soon learned certain processes from the natural development of natural phenomena - without knowing their rules and laws - and also learned to accelerate them through encouraging intervention. Indeed, in the course of time man himself learned to force such results which nature would never have produced without his supportive intervention. Man has become the master of creation without even knowing it, indeed without having suspected it.

An example should make this clear.

Everyone knows our lovely wild stone carnation, whose glowing stars nod so gracefully out of the lush green of the mountain meadows; but also our double garden carnation, whose

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The glowing red contrasts so harmoniously with the blue-green of its foliage. But no one is unaware that the latter arose from the former through refinement. Over the course of thousands of years, similar supportive assistance in all developmental processes in animal husbandry and plant cultivation has resulted in our tame domesticated animals, our crops and other agricultural and forestry products, whereby the wild original forms of the animal and plant world, which have not yet been lost, clearly show us the vast distances between these and the "refined" forms of today.

But these incredibly large differences also bear witness to several thousand years of man's activity as "master of creation", because he only improved the animals and plants that were useful to him by intervening in their natural course of development, while he inhibited the further development of other species that were useless or even harmful to him, or even completely eliminated them, thus destroying entire species.

The primordial origins of these "promotions" or "inhibitions", which we know today in short as "refinement" or "eradication", were already known to man at a very early stage, but only in terms of the effects, and by no means in the essence of the cause, which remained a mystery for a long time.

As already mentioned, the oldest form of worship was prayer accompanied by sacrifice, which was initially offered by the head of the family or his wife in the self-priesthood, and later by the head of the tribe or state with the assistance of the holy councilors or priestesses for himself and his relatives. What could be more natural than that such natural "sponsorship" or in the case of "hindrances", the assistance of the deity was invoked with prayer and sacrifice, namely that of the light deity in the case of "promotions" and that of the demon of darkness in the case of "hindrances".

In the development of this system of increasingly externalized worship, the choice of time, place and type of sacrifice became decisive. Morning hours, the waxing moon and springtime were considered favorable for "promotions", while night hours, the waning moon, autumn and winter were considered favorable for "inhibitions". Consequently, the color of the sacrificial animal had to be white or black, and later the animal species itself was taken into account the further the myth developed. The sacrificial animals were called "jaws", while the non-sacrificial

capable "vermin", which latter word is still in use today in a modified meaning.

Once the deity in question had been made favorable to the intended "promoting" or "hindering" work with the "Ziefer", as it was believed, one proceeded with prayer to the promoting or hindering action itself, which was called a "spell".

Prayer and magic had thus become inseparable concepts. But as the successes of such magic became more and more certain and lasting in the further course of development, it was believed that magic and spells were able to exert a compelling impression on the gods. Man had already completely forfeited his inwardness, indeed even the outward worship of God was already beginning to fade, for he was beginning to become aware of his dominion over creation. In his arrogance, man now believed that he could force the gods by magic (Faust's compulsion to hell) to do what he had previously asked them to do in prayer.

Having reached this stage of development, the natural religion of each people began to divide into two doctrines, namely the esoteric and the exoteric, or to put it more clearly: the secret priestly doctrine and the religion preached to the people and bound to external formulae. At this stage of development, the self-priesthood naturally had to give way to the priesthood, the hierarchy.

As long as self-priesthood prevailed, which was the case with Caesar's As long as the associations of the individual families (tribes) remained without closer state ties among the freedom-loving Germanic tribes, the cult remained a simple one, regulated only by tradition and custom. This was probably also the case in the following period, when powerful individuals from the tribal families gradually rose up to become tribal kings and attempted to form states. In the communal sacrifices of these small states, not only the number of participants grew, but also the size of the sacrifices or the jaws. But only at first was the eldest of the clan regarded as the "sacrificer"; soon the king, as a descendant of the noblest family, claimed the office of priest for himself and that of healer for female members of his house, which soon gave rise to the "tribal legends" that tell of the divine descent of the ancient royal families.

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Only a few such dynasties flourished on the soil of Germania, of which the following landscape paintings are to provide a description...) It was only later, when kingship had already become more festive, when the increasingly ceremonial worship became more and more pompous, if only to increase the splendor of the royal court, that the self-priesthood began to die out. The king was still the high priest, but the female priests lived almost in monastic custody, and the male priests, the "Gottesfrohnnden", began to form a class of their own. This priesthood, which demanded celibacy and monastic devotion from women, was in no way comparable to the modern priesthood for men. Each of the deities had its own particular priesthood, which was linked to a specific trade, as folk memories and guild legends clearly show. This very peculiar hierarchy was also responsible for the education of the youth, especially the aristocratic youth, who were instructed in all courtly arts at the "sanatoriums".

As long as the old belief in Wuotan, which had already developed from the old natural religion, could continue to develop undisturbed, the magic practiced in practice also developed like a structured science, which it actually was as a "priestly secret doctrine". To the people, however, magic was regarded as a sacral-mystical act connected with the priestly dignity, as an act of consecration granted only to them by the gods. But when Christianity finally triumphed over the Wuotan cult in Germany, the Church was unable to suppress the belief in magic and miracles. It was therefore initially forced to tolerate the old pagan belief in miracles as a secondary belief, although it fought it with all its might. In the end, the Church remained victorious by destroying the places where the belief in magic and miracles was cultivated, the old schools of priests, and thus eradicating the teachers. Only the exoteric part of the Wuotan cult remained in the folk memory, and was secretly cultivated by the people without the priesthood, and passed on misunderstood from generation to generation. But this was shapeless ceremonial stuff, a misunderstood jumble of formulas, because the customs, no longer guided by science, lost their way on the paths of mysticism. Through banishment and persecution,

\*) See: "Wurmbauer, Wurmgarten, Wurmbrand".

the ground was removed from the belief, it froze in the empty, meaningless magic ritual, which now formed the shell around a grain of old mythical truth, but which had long since slumbered misunderstood in the wrapping, like the germ in the seed.

However, what we call superstition today arose from secondary belief via superstition.

But it was not only magic alone that was taught by the healers at the priestly schools of the Germanic sanctuaries, but also the art of poetry (Nordic Scalden art) with all the related secondary subjects, which were also kept secret from the people. These included runic lore and the art of hiding deep meaning in ambiguous language, which was understandable only to those in the know, while what was told or sung appeared to the layman as a fairy tale. It is doubtless that this art of poetry, which was concerned with putting a second hidden meaning into any narrative, which could only be understood by the initiated, gave the next occasion for the rhyme of staves, and that it was precisely the staves, namely the words emphasized by the initial sound, which as so-called characteristic words must have been the bearers of the "Zwiesage", the second hidden meaning of the narrative.

This gave rise to myths that personified natural processes, depicting them as deeds of the gods and later even as heroic deeds. Later, political messages may even have been clothed in this ambiguous artistic language, which were passed on orally by laymen without them knowing their meaning. The extent to which this way of keeping secrets still lives on among the German people today may be demonstrated by the ritual with which the various craft guilds introduce those who have been "taken in and taken up" according to old custom and introduce them with ambiguous words, handles and signs. This is the case, for example, with the Freemasons.

A more recent researcher, H. H. G. F. Schliep, calls this peculiar type of poetry "Zwiesage", and promises to solve many a riddle in the future by deciphering it.

It may be emphasized, however, that even in the earliest primitive days the Teutons had already risen from the dichotomy of nature to the trinity; a mediator arose between light and darkness. Thus in German faith, as in German life, there are innumerable trinities, all of which refer to birth or origin, to



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life or work and finally point to death or passing away with the thought of rebirth.

This ancient tripartite division permeates the whole of Germanic culture and is the key to its mythology, and therefore also the key to deciphering the sacred runes which the Germanic people have indelibly engraved on their heritage.

A mountain peak from which one first saw the rising sun, a rocky pinnacle which was first illuminated by the sun's fire, a friendly valley with a refreshing spring, or a wildly rugged rocky outcrop in which the snow still clings to the gullies long after the arrival of spring - these were the incidental characteristics that made such places places of worship. In the deep forest, surrounded by intergrown ash, oak, beech and other trees that had not been desecrated by an axe, a clearing was created, the place of sacrifice. In its center stood the sacrificial stone, with an artificially raised mound with a round tower leading to the subterranean dwellings of the "Healing Councilors" offered the hidden entrance. A particularly large tree stood in the clearing as a representative of the great world tree, the world ash tree Schreckroß (Iggdrasil). A lake, stream or river, or at least an underground well, was a must.

There were many such sanctuaries in the vast Germanic lands, and they can still be recognized today, despite the fact that more than a thousand years have passed since the last sacrificial flame burned on them.

Here, the people belonging to the district of the sanctuary gathered at certain times, at the new and full moon, on the feast of the birth of the sun and the year (Christmas) on Perchtentag, at the spring festivals, at the summer solstice and at the harvest festival. From these festivals, however, three main festivals emerged, which are still known today as the three holy days: the spring festival, the midsummer festival and the harvest festival or Mihilading.

Everyone brought their sacrifice and their livelihood. The sacrificial animals were male and, depending on the sacrificial ceremonial, of a pure white or pure black color. However, the sacrificial animals were not burnt whole, but only certain parts, such as the heart, intestines, mesentery and the like, which parts are still separated today by the "butcher" (Selcher) and the butcher out of old custom. In dialect and depending on the animal species, these types of meat are called "Gebütt" (from "bieten", to offer), also "Bruckfleisch" or "Jung".

These pieces of flesh were burnt after the future had been proclaimed in obscure words from the convulsions of the heart and the devouring of the entrails. The sacred tree was watered with the blood, but the sacrificial head was either put on a pole (envy pole), placed on a sacrificial bowl or otherwise kept in the sanctuary. The rest was boiled, not roasted, and eaten together by the participants in the sacrifice. The threefold division is also evident here.

Watering the sacrificial tree with sacrificial blood was intended to create new life by moistening it; the communal meal, combined with the sacrificial part consumed by fire as the food of the deity, was regarded as the continuation of life as a living being, and the sacrificial head, which fell victim to decay, was consecrated to the ephemeral.

Just as Wuotan, Wili, Weh, as later Wuotan, Donar, Loki, (Kaspar, Melchior, Balthasar) or Fraya, Frouwa, Helia, correspond to this tripartite division as birth, life, death, but in themselves form an indivisible whole, so this sacrificial tripartite division corresponds to the Germanic basic idea of the unified trinity in a single sacrificial ceremony.

Of course, not only specific animals were sacrificed to the various divine personifications, but also specific professional classes (guilds, guilds) were sacrificed; only the healing councilors ruled over the sacrificial priests of their noble office instead of the nomen.

To name but a few, the blacksmiths sacrificed the white sacrificial steeds to Wuotan and Froh, while the millers sacrificed the flour. The human sacrifices, namely the executions of criminals who had offended against these two deities, were carried out jointly by the blacksmith and the miller. Thus it came about that even in the Middle Ages the custom still prevailed here and there that the miller had to hold the ladder to the gallows for the poor sinner.

The butchers and butchers sacrificed the bull or ox to Donar the Thunderer, but the "Pfister" (bakers) sacrificed the bread.

The goat and the flax were sacrificed to Frouwa, the mother of the gods, by the honorable guild of "weavers and garment tailors", from whose ancient priesthood the mocking nickname "Schneider Meck-Meck", referring to the sacrificial animal, still originates today.

That these sacrificial meals, especially those of the three great things commanded, are also accompanied by an enormous libation, the so-called "Minnetrunk" were connected, need only be mentioned, just as little

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It will be strange that festive songs and other amusements were associated with it, for the Germanic worship was a cheerful one, just as the Germanic tribes themselves were always cheerful. They only became dull fools several centuries later.

That on these days of sacrifice, however, judgment and popular deliberations were also held, in which, of course, the kings as it is understandable that the "sons of the sun" presided. If the situation was difficult or dangerous, the gods themselves were consulted in the form of oracles. They threw rune sticks, cast lots, investigated the flight of the birds, the movement of the clouds, listened to the neighing of the horses or other actions of the "wise" animals.

If, however, this peculiar division of the male sacrificers is not to be regarded as the actual priesthood, which is even more probable because of the designation of the "godsend", since it can be assumed that they merely served as "sacrificers" to the actual priesthood, then only the king remains as the supreme judge, who acted as the actual priest. Here again we see the threefold division: king, judge, priest.

So there was only one priest in each state of the Germans, and this one priest was king and judge.

But there was another class of priests in Germany, and this was the large group of priestesses.

Among no people in the world did women enjoy such veneration as among the Germanic tribes. It is a mistake to claim that Christianity first liberated women through its cult of women. If we look at women among the peoples who boast of being the oldest Christians, we find that they have been degraded to the status of beasts of burden, slaves to the mostly lazy and crude man. "Women are silent in the assembly!" is a well-known saying, and in the first centuries the church was hostile to women. Even today, this hostile attitude can still be seen in the celibacy and many other church statutes. It was not until the German Middle Ages that German women's service triumphed and drove the glorious blossoming of the Marian cult, with which the German woman regained the glory of her former divinity.

Thus there were women among the Germans who distinguished themselves by their superior wisdom; but this is easily explained.

The pure, infallible feeling for nature was lost in men in the wild bustle of battle, in the struggle for acquisition, but was preserved far longer by women, who lived more in the interior of the home, in the narrower but not smaller circle of their destiny. Of the lost inwardness of God-consciousness, all that remained for men was the recognition and appreciation of that sense of humanity which women had retained. Just as truth always wins the victory of recognition in the end, so this feeling of respect led men to that high veneration of women which only the Germans knew and which Tacitus so praisingly commemorates.

The later in time, however, the more there were only a few women in whom such originality of spirit was preserved in all its purity, who attained the fame of an Aurinia or a Veleda. The ancients were quite right when they ascribed something divine to these women; it was nothing other than the original divine that shone forth from them, which we still love above all things in our women today, when we find it. This divine quality of women is still best described today as inwardness.

The trinity can also be found in the priestesses; numerous folk tales have them transformed into threes, mention their three names and expressly report of the third that she is black in color, just as this is also reported of the third of the Magi. Today the people still know three generic names of unholy women, which also reflect their threefold unity. It knows witches, it knows truds, just as it knows whales; these three distinctions correspond to the trilogies of the gods "Wuotan, Donar, Loki", "Fraya, Frouwa, Helia", as well as the Norn trinity "Urda, Werdandi and Schuld."

And just as the "number three as a unit" is the basis here, in the sense of coming into being, further development or reigning, and passing away to become something new, so the very same three permeated the overall structure of the people from the smallest germ to the completed state as "law and religion", as "law and religion". "Wehrkraft," and as "Erwerbskraft," or organized according to classes as "Lehrstand," "Wehrstand" and "Nährstand. It is on this mighty three-pillar foundation that the Germans' state-founding power, unanimously recognized by all ages, rests as if on an ore-cast foundation.

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It was only with Charles the Butcher that the system of the highly developed constitutional state of the Germanic tribes was shaken to its foundations and destroyed. He destroyed the mighty German kingdoms of the Saxons, Bavarians and Lombards and endowed Germany with serfdom, the propertyless "Hörstand" as the fourth estate. This brought all the subsequent calamities upon Germany, which have only begun to be vigorously combated in our own day. May the fates grant that after the final elimination of the fourth estate, the "Hörstand", the old three pillars of Germanness may attain renewed stability.

Our native soil now holds all of this in sacred runes. Even if the old primeval forests have been replaced here and there by road paving, in most cases the native forest still rustles above the old healing place, albeit as a modern cultivated forest.

How pleasant it is to dream in such a primeval sanctuary deep in the beech forest! The beautifully curved fern fronds nod light green around the bluish-grey rock, from which the rich brown moss cushions invite you to a refreshing rest. The miracle flower "forget-me-not" shines forth at the edge of the murmuring spring, whose turbulent, anemone-colored waters murmur so mysteriously, full of the early days when the gods still roamed this grove.

Delicate mists float between the columns of the beech trees, and the song of the nightingale can be heard in the triple trill.

Our chests swell more mightily, our senses are sharper and more sensitive, and our soul hears the language of God speaking to us again: "Even if the solar law of the Germans has taken a back seat to the clouds of Roman law, it is still only a solar eclipse; the sad time of the twilight of its gods has not yet come for the German people!"

## German mythological monuments in the surroundings of Vienna



Snow-covered by the snow, beaten by the rain,  
deceived by the dew, I was dead for a long time.  
Edda, Begtamskvíða.

Man has become accustomed to assuming that our beautiful Lower Austria, especially the wider surroundings of Vienna, is inhabited by a conglomerate of peoples of all possible races and tribes, based on the erroneous opinion that the storms of the migration of peoples had turned this part of the country into a deserted wasteland, which was destroyed and was only colonized again by the Frankish conquests at the beginning of the ninth century. The German in Austria has forgotten too much to regard his land as a sacred ancestral estate; he has forgotten to seek a trace on this clod of the fathers, as if he were not indigenous here, but acclimatized, like the German in America; he looks over to the banks of the Rhine, up to the homeland of the Edda as if to the distant ancestral earth, and overlooks the sacred runes which his direct ancestors, as masters of the land, have indelibly engraved on this land, which has preserved the memory of their mighty progenal work more faithfully than the ungrateful epigones themselves.

It wasn't always like this; when the proud double column "Hohenstauffen-Babenberg" towered boldly in the air, things were different. At that time, in the beautiful heyday of minnesong, that glorious literary epoch, the noblest and best of the minnesingers in Austria prided themselves on having learned to sing and say at the "minniglicher Hof zu Wienne", and this "minniglicher Hof" had taken over the role of leader, and it is only half forgotten that it outshone that of the Wartburg. The Song of the Nibelungs connects the Danube and the Rhine with an unbreakable bond, and the Amelungen saga, like that of the Nibelungs, has its linguistic monuments in the country.

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How this could be forgotten is left unexamined here; for today it suffices to state the fact that such recognition means an awakening, as experience teaches.

The assumption regarding the prehistory of Lower Austria, which was previously considered irrefutable and almost solidified into a historical dogma, can be briefly outlined in the following sentences: "The migration of peoples and the Avar storms completely depopulated today's Lower Austria. After the expulsion of the Avars from these regions by the Frankish conqueror Charles, the land was abandoned. Charles colonized it and introduced Christianity here. Charles won it for the German lands."

Dear reader, don't believe a word of all this. Modern science has called new "witnesses" before the forum of world history, and they testify that all this is error and untruth.

It is true that those pages of our domestic chronicle which commemorate those "distant" days have been badly sullied and rendered almost illegible by the seething steam of blood and the smouldering conflagration of nations, and that the few written and chiselled documents which have been saved for our days seem to confirm the above dogmatic statements; but even then the art of whitewashing in war bulletins was already well understood.

The historical sources of those days flow from Roman or Frankish pens, and the historian who relies on these alone faces the same dilemma as his colleague of a future millennium who would want to write the German war of 1870/71 according to the "Moniteur" alone; he too would then be able to tell of "deserted wastelands" and the like quite gracefully.

Now, however, the youngest children of historical science, anthropology and etymology and their close relatives geology, have discovered and established the aforementioned zeniths, which I would like to call "anthropological genealogical pages", and which quite powerfully correct those dogmatic doctrines of history.

These "anthropological genealogical pages" now consist of prehistoric monuments from Germanic-mythological prehistory, and are divided into three main groups, namely:

- A. Piled up in real monuments of stone and earth, or contained in other remains;
- B. in Monuments of Language;
- C. in myths, legends and folk customs.

Before these mychological monuments are to be sought out in the landscape, the result of the rectification of Austrian prehistory may be set down here in brief outline.

The first error to be corrected concerns the southern border of Germania, which is considered to be the Danube. The peoples still living on the right (southern) bank of the Danube in Roman times are wrongly considered to be Celts.\*) These areas, called Noricum and Upper Pannonia by the Romans, were inhabited by the Boyers, a branch of the Bavarian-Swabian, i.e. Germanic, Bölker family. This shifted the southern border of Germania far down into southern Styria, where German, Romanic and Slavic tribes still clash more fiercely than ever.

The Danube, however, still became the northern border of the world-dominating Rome. Here, for half a millennium, the world empire wrestled with Germanic, or let's call a spade a spade, German freedom. Here on this vast lowland plain through which the Danube flowed, the Vienna Basin, the Romans gathered their center of power in Carnuntum\*\*), which, like two storm clouds rubbing against each other, meant that the Germans on the left (northern) bank of the Danube, in view of Carnuntum, had their center of power in a mighty fortress and royal city, which we will call "Stili-frieda\*\*\*\*), The two places now faced each other for almost five hundred years, until Carnuntum finally fell in 375, until in that year the Germans broke through the stronghold of Rome there and poured their armies over Aquileia into Italy through this breach, which had become a gateway to the nations, in an unstoppable flood of peoples, their swords clashing; until at last from this soil

\*) The Celts who lived south of the Danube in pre-Roman times had been pushed far southwards by the Germanic tribes long before the Romans arrived on the Danube. Only remnants of them remained in the "Alpmwinkel".

\*\*) Carnuntum's field of ruins lies between Petronell and Deutsch-Altenburg on the Danube. - The author's historical novel "Carnuntum" (Berlin, G. Grotetsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1988, 2 vols.) describes these battles between Germany and Rome on the basis of years of topographical studies on both sides of the Danube. The results of this research, in the form of a historical novel, present a very different picture of these events than was previously imagined according to the usual school of thought.

\*\*\*) Today Stillsfried an der March.



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Odoavakar (Odoacer) moved to Rome, overthrew the Western Roman Empire and became the first German king of Rome.

Here on this classic ground of the history of the peoples of the peoples, on which for more than two thousand years all the peoples of the old world have fought with German courage, only to be defeated here, where in more than seventy battles the iron dice of the peoples' destinies were rolled, showing world history a different course, here a second Teutoburg battle was fought, richer in success than the first, even if less well known than it; but it broke the throne of the Caesars, defeated the old world in order to build a new one on its ruins.

The descendants of the conquerors of Rome still dwell on this sacred earth, the epigones of those who fertilized it with Roman blood and liberated it with their own, from whose midst the first German king of Rome emerged. This people should honor themselves and their ancestors by erecting a monument to Odoavakar.

Now came the Migration Period, that epoch of history^ which is one of the most misunderstood in all of world history. Again we see the old reports retold uncritically and literally, we see the map become a chessboard and the peoples become chess pieces, changing residences or disappearing altogether with monkey-like speed. Even the word "people" in its still used today double meaning would have this misunderstanding could have been clarified if one had remembered the expression "war peoples", which, although outdated, nevertheless here and here and there still applied is still used here and there.

The times when peoples really migrated, such as the time of the migration of peoples erroneously is believed, fall in far earlier historical days, if this ever happened at all. Only a nomadic tribe can migrate, but not a people, and in the days of the "migration of peoples" there were no longer any nomads in our country. The Germanic peoples practiced agriculture, animal husbandry, mining, even trade, they were settled and had long been governed by the Walkers in the federation of states according to uniform German law, and for these reasons were inseparably bound to the clod they still inhabit today.

But exactly the same causes, only in a different form, as the exodus of the "Europe weary" today, explain those peoples' exodus.\*)

\*) From Fabiana, today's Mautern in Lower Austria.

The "laws of succession", which as feudal laws and in the indivisibility of peasant estates still clearly show their effects to this day, those laws of succession which only recognized the first-born, but left the second-born without property, created a proletariat according to modern terms, and this, after seeing Rome weak, gathered as a following around a second-born king's son and went out to plunder and acquire land. They set out under the name of their ancestral people, but independently of them. The possessing part of the people, however, remained immovably seated in the ancient marches and lands.

If such an army of nations was victorious, it took one third of the cultivated land from the vanquished, while two thirds remained with the vanquished; it formed the nobility of the conquered land and gave it its name, while the vanquished were distributed among the victors as subjects, who, in addition to the two thirds remaining to them as property, still had to cultivate the one third as "Herrenücker" in the root. If the attack was unsuccessful, if the army of nations was defeated by the attackers, they became servants and the name of the army of nations perished. This explains the often long wanderings of peoples, the appearance and disappearance of the names of peoples, and the emergence of the nobility and the propertied peasantry. But it should be noted that all this took place without the people itself changing its seats, which remained attached to the clod; and this was because this was not permitted by the law of nations, which was held sacred by all Germanic peoples of war at that time, and which was not subject to the "winner only a third part of the cultivated land as a "winning lot", finds its justification and explanation.

Only the Avars changed this custom, as they were not a farming people; they therefore demanded tribute in materials. However, since they also remained and lived in the land for more than a century, and since viticulture, for example, was not lost during this time, this proves that they did not devastate the land out of prudence and self-preservation, but rather spared the land. The Song of the Nibelungs, which preserves the memory of the Avars' reign from folk tradition, confirms the proverb, "Where Avarenrosse stomps, there grows no more grass" certainly not.

But now came the Franks with their land-hungry Charles. He was the first to disregard international law; he took all property from the conquered and reduced them even lower than servants by turning them into propertyless serfs. But in order to gain advantage

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he introduced Christianity as a state institution in order to give a semblance of justification and to dominate the conquered not only physically but also psychologically. However, this was an unfounded pretext, as Christianity had already existed in the country centuries before him, as can be seen from numerous church foundations and legends of saints. He was not at all interested in the church as such, but only in a good police force and the church seemed to him to be the most suitable for this.

Only those who were baptized received their former property back as "fiefdoms", they had become "serfs without property". Those who did not take baptism had to flee or fall to the executioner; their property, which had already become ownerless, was "King's property", it fell to the "Fiscus regius." - Charles, however - although he is called the Great - had not been able to rise to the modern idea of the state, which was already well known to the Germanic tribes at the time. He felt and presented himself only as a large landowner, he knew no state treasure, but treated all crown property as his direct private property. His vassals were therefore really nothing more than his estate managers.

Now followed the founding of parishes and monasteries, which were supposed to be colonizations, but in reality only included the monastery and parish staff, or the family of the new lord, or the new nobility, since the old one lost its rights as the defeated one. The people, however, continued to scurry about on the land and remained the same, just as they still are today, having settled here for at least three millennia; the vast majority of them, having become leaderless, bent their necks to the yoke and sighed and endured their fate. However, in Lower Austria itself we still have noble families that reach back to pre-Carolingian, or what is the same, to Germanic-pagan days, and these also count as "monuments".\*)

The picture of that distant, vigorous period of patriotic prehistory thus appears, sketched out in broad strokes, and it hardly needs any special reference to the enormous difference between what has been assumed so far and what is explained here.

If we now turn our attention to our "anthropological genealogical pages", specifically to their first group: "the factual monuments piled up of earth and stone", we will first answer the question of where they are located.

\*) See: "Wurmbauer, Wurmgarten, Wurmbrand" in this book.

Opposite the Romans' main place of arms, Carnunt, on the left bank of the Danube, lay the southern German pole of power, which - as we have said "Stilifrieda", towards which center of power the power of the people radiated for many centuries, and when it succeeded in overthrowing Carnunt and inflicting the death wound on Rome there, the German flood of weapons spread from this breach across the country again, in an unstoppable surge towards Rome.

This is why we find the greatest number of such monuments where the March flows into the Danube, which become less and less dense towards the north and west, which is why we find the most numerous monuments on the right bank, where Carnuntum stood, i.e. on re-liberated German soil, which spread out to the south and west like sam in a radial attenuation over the two Wienerwald districts.

These monuments, of which Lower Austria alone counts over a hundred, consist of temple sites, burial mounds and fortifications. The former two consist of earth fillings, more rarely of stone settings, because stones are too rare and precious a material in the wide plains and low hilly country, since, as is well known, there are no erratic blocks in the Marchfeld.

To begin with the most outstanding building of this kind, we might think of the large "Hausberg" of Stronegg. It covers an area of 12,000 square meters, has a circumference of 340 steps and, with a labyrinthine winding rampart, comprises an oval cone that rises 12 meters high and covers an area of 5,000 square meters, as well as a pyramid rising on a square base at a height of 475 meters and covering an area of 240 square meters. This imposing structure, which is completely preserved, is the largest in the world! The famous three tombs of the gods near Old Upsala in Sweden are 1 meter taller, while the largest "Mons" in the Adjusted States of North America only covers around 6000 square meters of space.

It is not lines, inconspicuous, hard-to-recognize hills that have fallen to the plough, no, real buildings, earthworks that required the unified strength of hundreds of hands to be thrown up with the shovel to tower over the houses of the village like mountains. Not enough of that; the "tumulus" of "Unter-Gänserndorf", which rises in a circle and terraces.

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bears the local cemetery on its plateau, proof of its greatness and unforgettable sanctification. Other similar buildings support or surround Christian churches, a fact to which we will refer again later, occasionally in the linguistic monuments.

If we now look at the shapes of these structures, we find the most diverse types, each of which is represented in several parallel appearances. For example, the simple conical or mound-shaped tumulus, then those with a surrounding ditch or with a surrounding single and double rampart and ditch, as well as single, double and triple ramparts without tumuli. All of the above-mentioned structures are circular, but there are also square-based pyramids with or without a ditch; there are also some, such as the colossal work at Stronegg, which combine both forms, even on a smaller scale, as well as linked tumuli.

Far more enigmatic and far more interesting than these above-ground structures, however, are the underground ones, which Lower Austria and the nearby Moravian and Hungarian border regions possess in such rich numbers and extent that only in Bavaria can similar earthworks be found, which are completely identical in terms of layout and technology.

On average, such artificial caves consist of chambers 2 to 4 meters long, 0.5 to 2 meters wide, and 0.5 to 3 meters high; larger dimensions can rarely be observed. Constructed on a mostly regular, rectangular ground plan, the walls run upwards in a pointed arch, rarely in a round arch, which was the final form of the ceiling due to the reduced risk of collapse, whereby of course no architectural style should be considered.

The chambers are connected and accessible by numerous, jumbled corridors, which often - presumably to confuse uninitiated intruders - form true passages that are often interrupted by vertically sunk shafts. These shafts formed the traps for the uninitiated, according to the system of wolf pits.

Incidentally, good ventilation is ensured; air shafts lead vertically outwards from chambers and corridors, often several of them from one hall; the pleasure is pure, easy to breathe, the chest never feels constricted. But other shafts also lead from this artificial underworld to the upper world. These lead in an oblique direction from funnel-shaped niches, which

narrow rapidly into the open like a sound pipe. These are undoubtedly mouthpieces intended for oracle purposes, to allow the voice of God or the spirit to emerge from the earth.

The finish is the same in all of them, only the smoothing of the walls is different. While in one cave you can still clearly see the traces of the digging tools, others have been carefully smoothed, one might almost say polished, and seem to have been covered with a fine clay plaster, which here and there comes off in fine flakes. There is no brickwork anywhere.

After this general characterizing description, some special descriptions may be appropriate here.

One of the two "sleeping rooms" is of particular interest. The "chambers" of the cave system, or as the people say, the "Erdstalle" of Ruppersthal. This is an irregular trapezoid with truncated corners; two passages open into it, one at the front opposite the camp, the other to the left of the passage leading through the first. At the narrower front of the chamber there is a platform-like inclined surface, from the foot end of which a narrow step-like extension runs along the right-hand wall, only ending at the mouth of the passage, next to which it begins again and runs to the second, left-hand passage mouth. There are two niches in the wall between the bedstead and the mouth of the aisle, the smaller of which was used to hold the lamp, but the other, being considerably larger, may have served as a cupboard. At the head of the dormitory, a kind of jelly-like structure extends across the wall, which was probably used for the same purpose as the large niche, namely as a place to store tools, weapons and the like.

A no less strange hall confronts us in the "pillar hall" of the infinitely ramified earth stable of Erdberg. At a height of 2 meters, this chamber is 3.4 meters long and appears to be supported on the left by three pillars carved out of the loess (sandy loam soil), behind which a kind of jelly of very modest dimensions (only 80 centimeters high and 40 centimeters wide) emerges.

But Erdberg also has two other highly interesting chambers. One forms an ellipse with two straight ends, in each of which there is a seating niche, while benches run along the curved longitudinal walls like in the sleeping chamber of Ruppersthal. However, these benches are not made of wood, but are cut out of the living ground by the digging worker. The special feature

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The most striking feature of this hall, however, is that instead of the light tables, in the sharp angles of the four corners, there are light consoles cut out of the loess, a unicum that is not repeated anywhere. This room was a "hall of the council"; today we would call it a salon. Every larger earth stable has one, such as the one at Röschitz with eight seating niches, one of which serves as a step to the corridor leading into it. These halls always form the end of the whole system, and are always kept in a form that differs from the other chambers and makes them particularly distinctive; often even semicircular, like half a beehive seen from the inside.

Undoubtedly the most interesting of all these final chambers is again found in the Erdberg mounds. In plan, it forms a surface bounded by a circular segment of about two-thirds circumference and a straight line and rises in a dome-shaped vault over two meters, while the straight flat wall above the entrance slopes vertically and shows only a light recess. The circumference of the rounding, however, is five meters and again contains eight seating niches, above which the vault is vaulted like a shell and in such a way that it converges in even ridges towards the center, where a horizontal slice measuring about 40 centimeters appears, from which a vertical shaft leads outwards.

These subterranean earthworks usually also correspond to the legends of "sunken" castles; the people knew of the buildings that belonged above ground to the subterranean ones, and which have long since disappeared because they were made of wood. I have brought these buildings to life with figures in my novel *Carnuntum*, so let me spoil it with regard to this poem.

The question as to whether these ninth-seal labyrinths were dwellings, places of worship or columbaria can probably be answered by saying that they were primarily winter dwellings and storerooms, and in special cases served cult purposes. Given the conservative character of each cult, they continued to serve cultural customs long after the winter dwellings had generally become above-ground, and served the Wuotans cults even after they had given way to Christianity and had degenerated into but-belief; indeed, they may even still serve them here and there today. Even as a hiding place for light-shy riff-raff, or as a shelter for the unfortunate. The notorious robber Grasl, who ravaged Lower Austria at the beginning of this century

had defied all investigations in these burrows for many years. "He was as if he had sunk into the earth" say the reports of his pursuers; indeed, he had actually slipped behind the bushes into the burrows known only to him. On the occasion of the visit we will pay to the Hermannskogel, we find a similar earth stable inhabited by a modern hermit for eight years without anyone suspecting it beforehand. The series of mainly religious buildings is completed by a number of stone settlements, such as the Steinallee on the Stolzenberg and the Hangende Stein on the Anninger near Medling. The religious buildings are now followed by the fortifications, several of which can be found on both banks of the Danube, the most imposing of which are those of the old square royal town of "Stilifrieda". In a total length of 1900 meters, huge firewalls, rising to a height of 12 meters, enclose an area of 27 hectares, and the fortification would still require a significant army force to hold or take it today, not counting long-range weapons. However, the people who erected such mighty structures were, as we will prove below, a pre-Germanic, a Germanic people. The classical soil of world history on which we stand is primeval Germanic soil; here our fathers fought for German freedom from the Romans, the Avars, Huns and Magyars, the Mongols and Slavs; here the Habsburg defeated the Przemyslid and founded Austria.

If we are impressed by the surprising number of monuments of our ancestors devoted to the cult of Wuotan in the Vienna Basin, if we are justifiably astonished by the enormous earthworks, these monuments are mute and would speak just as well for any other people, for such buildings are spread pretty much all over the world, they can be found in Asia as well as in North America, on Troy's ancient historical place as well as in Scandinavia. However, they only gain soul and life when we connect them with the linguistic "monuments" and the "legends, myths and customs", and ensure these results again through comparative parallels with analogous research in other German lands. These "linguistic monuments" not only give us the most interesting information about German mythology in its local interpretation, provide us with cultural-historical clues of unimagined importance, allow us to follow the individual peoples on the map, but - and



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this is definitely the most important point - they prove with compelling force that Lower Austria was continuously, without interruption, populated by Germans. It is true that the names of the peoples changed; Heruli, Quadi, Marcomanni, Turkilinger, Boyer, Noriker, Rugier and others appear and disappear; but here we need only recall what has already been said to realize immediately that the "settled" people remained the same without interruption, it was the "permanent" in change, just as it was its custom and custom, while name and nobility alone represented the "transitory", the "transient". "Changing" in itself. The most terrible epoch for the "seß hafte Volk" were the birth pangs of "Carolingian" Christianity and the Frankish raids; but that even these neither encountered a deserted desert nor depopulated the country - despite all the atrocities, despite the violation of international law at the time - is proven all the more by these linguistic monuments.

Before we turn to this direct, however, one more circumstance may be mentioned which helps to prove the above, even if it seems to lie outside the scope of our consideration. After all, there were no land carts in those days, and how else but through the oral tradition of a "settled" people could those "linguistic monuments" be saved over the period of depopulation? How could the "Roman heritage": viticulture have been preserved other than through continued cultivation, which again only requires a settled and cultivated people? How does this fit in with the insult that German writers unfortunately still hurl at their own ancestors today, calling these peoples "barbarians"?

If we now take a closer look at the "linguistic monuments", these are revealed to us as "place names" in the broadest sense, i.e. as names that include forest and meadow, mountain and valley, meadow and field, stream and brook, town and castle, and here the interesting result emerges that more than half of the place names still in use today date back to pre-Carolingian times, if not documented, then etymologically proven.

It is clear from this that Lower Austria was not only populated, but even densely populated, and it must have been so; how else could it have covered the enormous human consumption of the Roman wars, how else could such works as that of "Stilifrieda" can be listed. It also shows that two thousand years ago the majority of our towns and villages still flourishing today already existed, which makes the often quoted passage

from Tacitus' Germania is refuted - which, by the way, is also "Julius Caesar's Gallic War"\*) \*\*) can be corrected. If we now look at the "mythological place names", these are again divided into two series; the first series forms that group which, in addition to the name, still preserves the old sanctuary itself, which is either a building piled up by human hands or another sacred place, such as a mountain, a grove, a tree, a spring or a cave, while in the second series only the name has remained. Thus we find the name Wuotans, who was called Woldan, Wult and Hruoperaht (Rupprecht) in our regions, represented in Wutterwald, Wulzendorf, Wultendors, Wullendorf, Wilfersdorf, Wilfungsmauer, and others. His wife Frigga, in our regions called Frouwa, Peratha (Bertha, the Magnificent) and Holla (Hulda), he appears in countless names, such as: Hollenburg, Hollabrunn, Hollentann, Hollarn, Frauendors, Frauenburg. Their cult sites, called "fountains of youth", are still today unforgotten sacred sources and have become "places of pilgrimage" for Christianity or superstition. The former included Hollabrunn, Mariabrunn, Brunn and others, the latter the "Jungfernbründl" near Sievering near Vienna, the "Jungbrunnen" in the Paßthal, which forms the border between the two quarters above and below the Wienerwald. The other Aesir and Asin are also, and well known, each name repeated. Thus Donar, in many thunder pulpits; Loki the prince of the Tenfe (depth, today christianized in the devil) is found in all those places which are bound to the devil in name and legend. His daughter and female mirror image Hclia also appears very frequently: e.g. still in the pagan sense in Höllenthal, but Christianized in Helenenthal.

And like these, they are all represented in hundreds of place and field names, which, and this is to be noted, are never found individually, but always in coherent groups, whereby the

\*) Cornelius Tacitus, "Die Germania". Cap XVI "It is well known that the Germanic peoples do not live in cities, indeed, that they do not even like to live in a single settlement. They settle in solitude and isolation wherever a spring, a meadow or a grove invites them."

\*\*) Jul. Caes. Commentarii de bello gallico et de bello civili Tom. II, Cap. XXIX. the town of the Aduatuks; and elsewhere, the description of this town, situated in the farthest German west, is typical of all the surviving Quaden towns of Lower Austria in the far east of Germany; thus of "Stilfrieda", "Die alte Burg am Stein" (Deutsch-Altenburg) and others.

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The unraveling of the former special consecration of the place of salvation in question presents itself like an open book.

If these place names are now recognizable by their undeniable ancient mythical interpretations, then those of another group should be mentioned in particular, which today bear Christian names, but have unmistakably grown out of pagan-German places. We have already mentioned a few. The dragon slayer Wuotan appears as St. Michael, the dragon slayer Balder (Siegfried) as St. George, Wuotan the glorious king of the gods as Rupprecht, just as "St. Martin, who comes riding on a white horse" is also his Christian reflection. We see Frouwa, Hulda, Perahta and Ise christianized by the Queen of Heaven Mary, as in Maria brunn, Maria-Taferl, Maria-Drei-Eichen and many, many other place names. Fraya appears christianized and historicized in St. Agnes, as in St. Frein, with which a further independent group of place-names is filled, which preserve the memory of the Norn cult and the Valkyries.

But there is another word that appears in the most diverse mutilations in numerous place names, where a prehistoric building is regularly found, and always a tumulus; this word is: "Lee". Breitenlee, Schotterlee, Langenleebarn, Langenlois, Lewern and many others are connected with this word "Lee", which explains why such tumuli Lee or Leebergen and are to be placed outside the groups of the actual temple buildings. These Leeberge are now the barrows of the north, our "Wacht" and "Hüttelberge", which were piled up over the burnt-out corpse fire of a mighty man's territory, as mythology and the heroic song (Beowulf, Alfhart's death and others) confirm in many examples.

Thus this small etymological selection of blood from the place names of our beautiful Lower Austria shows that this country was and is a primordially German one, that its "settled" people have remained the same to this day, who have cultivated the earth for at least three millennia and protected it from foreign domination with their heart's blood. The focus of the evidence, however, lies in the "mythological place names"; for no one will want to claim that those names can originate from the days of the great "colonizer" of Lower Austria.

Just as old and genuine monuments to our German folklore as the "built" and "linguistic" ones are the local "legends

myths and customs". Our beautiful Lower Austria, too, is a cherished part of the sacred Harug German myth forest, whose magical chiaroscuro envelops us with its invigorating resin scent and delights us with the colorful, glowing miracle flowers that grow from its soil. We know these little flowers, we have already seen them blooming in the Harz Mountains, in the Thuringian and Odenwald forests, and are amazed that what we admired from afar is blooming so close to us here, so unknown.

Countless paths lead through the magical tendrils of the fairytale forest, here its magnificent domes arch into the proud halls of ancient, glorious castles of the gods, there the rejuvenating fountain of youth gurgles, there three female figures flit past, spinning, and here the wild army marches between the slender flat pillars, under the heavy-hanging garlands of slinging guilds with a loud "Hu Sau, Ha Loh!"\*) But we walk, undeterred by the spooky hustle and bustle, along the one path that leads to Asgard, avoiding the side paths that branch off in many directions, leading to many other destinations, and which we want to take when the opportunity arises in the future.

The figures of Wuotan and his Gemalin stood out most clearly, and here it should be emphasized immediately that these, like the gods or goddesses to be mentioned later, often appear Christianized, although it is enough to simply change the name to immediately see the very veiled Aesir shimmering through behind the Christian overdress.

As already mentioned, the king of the gods usually appears here under the name Wulz, Wult Woldan, Wut, (Wuotan), from which the frightful popanze of the children, the "Rauwurzeln", "Rauchal"\*\*\*), "Wutzel" and the "Wauwau" developed. He appears as a mantle bearer, wild hunter, wish-fulfiller, white horse rider, leader of the wild army\*\*\*), the army of ghosts and the army of the dead. The people know his one eye and his floppy hat - as a wishing cloak. Faded, stripped of his divine character, he appears as the Pied Piper in Korneuburg and in the suburb of Magdalenengrund in Vienna, which has this legend to thank for the fact that the old folk joke gave it the derisive name "Ratzenstadt". This legend repeats exactly

\*) Origin of the Zäger call: Hussa Hallo! - Loh - Wald.

\*\*) Nursery rhyme: "Don't look around, because the 'black smoke' is going around".

\*\*\*) This subheading includes the Stetnaltee on the Stelzenoerge near Stelzendorf, as the path of the Wuotes Heere (wild, furious army).

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and literally that of Hamelin. It obscures the concept of Wuotan as the god of the dead, the leader of the army of the dead. We recognize him as a Christian saint in the dragon slayer St. Michael and the numerous churches of this archangel (the oldest foundation of course) appear to have been built on places of worship dedicated to him in this capacity.\*) Mention should be made of one document in particular which, dating from the middle of the thirteenth century, preserved Wuotan's name in writing. Among the levies that St. Pölten (Lower Austria) had to pay to the church in Passau, there is also a certain amount of Haber: "minoris wsuonis guacl clotur utkuter" - called "Wut-futer". But this word "Wutfuter" means "Wutfuotar", Wuotan was the "father of rage". However, it is now known that all pagan offerings subsequently formed the income of the church and therefore this "certain quantity of oats, called Wutfuter", was once intended for the horses kept for sacrificial rites. We encounter the well-known Kyfihäuser legend in several places. As the "enchanted King Otter" in the "Otter", a mountain on the Semmering, and similarly in the "sunken old emperor" near Göpfritz, Wuotan appears as a winter god sleeping in the mountain with his herdsmen, and that the "old emperor" is historicized as "Rothbart" probably needs no further mention. The name "Otter", however, perhaps requires a more in-depth explanation; allow me to take a detour to Upper Austria, specifically to "Ottensheim"\*\*. There, house no. 107 shows an old relief depicting a child in a cradle and below it the inscription: "Year 1208, when Ottensheim was not yet named, Emperor Otto was chosen, born here in this house." Since Otto was born in 1174, however, this inscription appears to be a mistake, like many others; it is to be assumed, especially in accordance with the style, that it dates from the sixteenth century at the earliest, and only misunderstands an old tradition. Now "Odo vakar" was the first German king of Rome, who had just left our Danube regions; his birthplace is unknown, but his great successes certainly ensured him extraordinary popularity in his native country. He set out as an adventurer and became king, but like Frederick Rothbart he did not

\*) Particularly favored by the similarity of Michael with midlla- large; the "German Michel" also belongs here.

\*\*) The town and castle of "Ottensheim" are mentioned in documents as early as 777.

return home. It is therefore not too bold to assume that Ottensheim was his birthplace and to regard him as the "enchanted King Otter", as whom Wuotan historicized himself in this particular case.

We see the mother and queen of the gods Frouwa, Hulda and Perahta, in two forms, either Christianized as Mary, Queen of Heaven, and left in her old noble dignity, or wandering as a ghost of sometimes good-natured, sometimes malicious character (probably demonstrable as a punishing deity) and also downright degraded to the terror of the children. We saw her as the Christian Queen of Heaven in Mariabrunn, Mariataferl, the latter church only finally defeated a pagan sacrificial site in the middle of the seventeenth century.

The "Taferl", over which the church now arches, was an old pagan sacrificial altar that the people would not let go of. Likewise in Maria-Drei-Eichen, Maria-Bründl, Maria-Brunn and many other places. As a ghost, we know her as Prechtl and Perchtl as a white woman, as an ancestress (e.g. Bertha von Liechtenstein), even as a frightful ghost of the little ones. She cuts open the bellies of naughty children who don't want to eat what their parents put in front of them, fills them with tow and then sews them up again. Instead of the needle, she uses the plowshare, instead of the thread, she uses the locking chain. But if she is in a particularly bad mood, she lights the tow on fire before sewing it up.

Donar and his wife Siebia (Sippia, Sis) have also not been forgotten. In the legend of Greifenstein, Donar touches Wuotan. The "grip on the stone" is reminiscent of lightning, "which grips the stones (giants) as if they were made of butter", but the liberated young woman points to the liberated Gerda, who was guarded by the wintry Wuotan. The underground passages, which are said to lead below the Danube as far as Kreuzenstein, tell of the norn service practiced here. Donar appears repeatedly as guardian and protector of treasures, as does Siebia, his female mirror image; he as "St. Christopher", she as "St. Corona". Both the "Christophorus prayer" and the "Corona prayer" are prayers strictly frowned upon by the Church, which are nothing more than ancient pagan incantations covered with a thin Christian veneer. They will be discussed in detail in the course of this book. Siebia appears not only as St. Corona, however, but is still used pagan in its symbol of the sieve in many magical customs. Yes, we see the sieve itself

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It is still used today as a decoration of a stately wagoner's harness, colorfully painted and adorned with a pious saying; it is regarded as a protective device against bewitchment of the horses, because the wagoner uses it to sift the horseradish for his team in foreign lands while muttering certain formulas.

The evil Loki, also known as Voland, toned down as "Blacksmith Wieland", can be found is both as a legendary figure, as prince of the depths in the Christian devil. But since Wuotan and Donar also appear as devils from time to time, as is self-evident, mention may be made here of the special symbols by which these "three devils" are distinguished. The horse's foot, according to the sacred opiate to Wuotan; Goat's horns, goat's feet and the shape of the goat to Donar; but the chain to the bound Loki. - therefore is the famous Krampus, who with the Nicolokömmt, Donar and Loki in one person, denner is in the form of a goat and wears the necklace. The gods always traveled through the land in threes, like the holy three kings (Wuotan-Melchior, Donar-Caspar, Loki-Balthasar; the latter the Moor); but since Nicolo and Krampus only travel in twos, contrary to the mythical rule, but Krampus here represents Donar and Loki in one person, the three-gods procession on St. Nicholas' Eve is also healthy again.

It is noteworthy that just as Frouwa understands the female side of Wuotan, just as Siebia also understands the female personification of Donar, but both present such in the image of marriage, Helia is the female mirror image of Loki. But here it is not the wife but the daughter who is pushed into the foreground, and this with deep understanding. Helia is the end, death, and that is where procreation ends, so she cannot be a procreator (wife), but only a begotten or daughter. Like all of Lok's other descendants, she is therefore only intent on destruction. Only Signe, Loki's wife, makes an exception here; she endures in faithful spousal love with the bound man, and therein lies the hope of rebirth after Loki's unbinding, after the defeat of death.

The idea of rebirth after the defeat of death is based on the mythical view that Loki was originally the spirit that appeared in matter and entered into visible life; a deity to whom the character of evil was only attributed in the further course of mythical development because it was felt that evil was only produced in this physical connection between spirit and matter. That is why he was also called

a personification of the earth, married to Signe. But Signe is also a wicker, which is an excellent proof of the high level of idolatry approaching veneration of women in our Signe, who had the most evil of the gods as her husband, is the best woman. When Loki was bound - his myth is the archetype of the Prometheus myth, because he himself is Prometheus - when he was abandoned by all the gods who had sworn oaths of allegiance to him, the faithful woman endures with the outlaw, him, as far as her strength reaches, the suffering. This is a trait of true German female loyalty. That is why the myth of Signe knows the least to tell, for the best women are precisely those who cannot be approached by the gossip of the others. But happy are the people who are able to see themselves reflected in such gods.

Loki therefore never appears in the company of his wife like the other gods, but in that of his daughter Helia. Like her, he appears black, but in the legends he does not accompany her as a devil, but in the form of the beast of death, the black dog.

Helia closes the ring of the female three-deity as a Unity, and thus justifies the prayer to the Fraya, which reads:

"You who produce children and fruit in abundance," honorable goddess,  
"yours is the right to give and take life."

This mighty, female three is found even more than divinely in the Norns as guardians of fate, for the gods themselves are subject to fate. They can be found again, albeit expanded to 3 x 3, in the nine Valkyries, the nine mothers of Heimdold and other seemingly lesser female deities, as well as in the human replicas of this trinity, the three priestesses or saviors.

These are the most numerous in the folk tales; the people tell of the three sisters, three nonns ( norns), three maidens, three countesses, three princesses, etc., of whom two are always blessed, Christian, good, benevolent, bright and white, but the third is evil, cursed, half or completely black and of the devil.

In addition to the places of worship that were dedicated to the three gods, many horror legends also preserve the memory of places that were sacred to the hostile forces of nature, the giants. One such place of gloomy horror can be found in Aggstein on the Danube (see this). But the Loreley legend can also be found on the Danube,



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and bound to that very place of horror, Aggstein, just as not far from it there is a place of worship of the fair Danube woman of Lady Ise with all the charm of the German mermaid belief.

If the wintry water giant Agez only desires human sacrifice, the friendly river god Nikuz is milder, he is content with animal sacrifices, although he does not disdain human sacrifice either. He tolerates nothing unclean on his sacred cataracts, the whirlpools and eddies of the Danube. Criminals or those burdened with guilt had to leave the ship that was navigating these rapids beforehand and were only allowed to come back on board after overcoming them. The legend of the Schneiderschloßchen (Krempenstein ruins in Upper Austria) recalls the sacrifice made by Lady Ise, today's female Danube goat. The goat gave no more milk, the tailor wanted to throw her into the Danube, but got his clothes caught in her horns and fell to his death. This legend is reminiscent of goat and goat sacrifices and of the fact that the "weaver and garment tailors" were the sacrificial priests of Ises (Frouwas), which explains their modern-day mocking names, which are associated with these animals. Our carnival also has its origins here; Ise corresponds to the Tacitean Nerthus, whose attribute was a vehicle that could travel on land and water. When the ice broke, when the snow melted and the ship and chariot could sail again, this chariot ship was led through the country with joyful celebrations, and this "Car-Naval"\*) is the origin of our carnival, and no less our carnival doughnuts trace their ancestry back to the old sacrificial pastries. The fact that the human sacrifices of the Agez, which always involved the first people to reach the other bank when crossing the river, or the first to have an accident when shipping was opened, have not been completely forgotten, is proven by a custom of the ship's servants on the Danube, which, although today only attributed to them in jest, was still terribly serious not too long ago.

But the "anthropological genealogical pages" are inexhaustible, such as our ancestors engraved in highly sacred runes on the holy ground, which they defended with their blood and similarly defended against all the peoples of the ancient world.

Along the Völkerheerstrasse to Rome, along the other to Byzantium and Palestine, both of which are located here in the Vienna Basin.,

\*) Oar - cart. Cart: Naval ship (navigation).

in view of the ruins of Carnuntum, those runes offer themselves to those in the know to unravel.

The above should only indicate the field of research in broad strokes; the following pages, however, will attempt to characterize the main points of that field of research in individual pictures.

And so, in the painting of the word, a free gallery of "German mythological landscapes", not bound to any boring-schematic system, should now arise before the mind's eye of the friendly reader.



## The Hermannskogel.



Each year she made her joyous entrance, the lovely patron goddess of Ostarland, the blessing-giving Ostara. Freed from the power of the ice giants, she roamed the lands, followed by the joyous spring dance of light-hearted elves. - They swept the fields and meadows clean of snow and frost, a gentle singing and tinkling blew through the grove, the sound of resurrection on Easter morning. Ostara's army was already approaching with a powerful sound; the sap-fresh stalks shot out like arrows, grasses nodded and swayed like lances and swords, and snowdrops, cowslips and violets unfurled their banners in the fresh spring breeze. You could almost hear the joyful battle cry: "Heil, Ostara!"

Of course, we poor human children, crammed into the artificial caves of the cities, have lost our genuine, warm understanding of the workings of nature; indeed, however cozy and stylishly furnished our caves may be, they still remain prisons. After all, the "frost giants of convenience" keep us firmly forged in them with "invisible but all the more oppressive" shackles. If this were not the case, why would we say so tellingly: "We are going outside!"

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But once we follow the urgent call "into the open air", and a glimmer of the lost understanding of the great mystery of nature dawns on us there, then our hearts soon feel liberated from the icy shackles of the world of fog. In the life-awakening spring rays of the friendly, youthful sun, the swelling buds shine fuller and richer, and a delicate hint of golden green escapes from the purple-grey of the frost in a blissful urge. All palimpsest wisdom and exploring - The thoughts shake themselves off like the dry foliage of the re-greening oak, and through the fragrant tendrils of myth the eye catches a glimpse of the distant days of prehistory, through the parting veils of doubt into the eternally green sacred groves of the Germanic world of the gods. The lofty beech halls arch more proudly, they become cathedrals, and a higher light than that of the sun flows in the most golden green glow through the world-wide space.

Thus the poet feels himself removed from the world in the sewing of God; language is no longer able to follow him, it can only forebodingly clothe in fairy tales what his inner eye hears of the workings of the Godhead.

Remnants of old myths and legends billow through each other like drifting mists, forming and shaping themselves into figures from a higher, more beautiful world. A gentle breeze blows through the lofty cathedral halls, a bell-like ripple of silvery foam waves trembles through the air; a clear brook leaps out of an anemone-colored crevice and pours its waters into a small pool surrounded by a triple circle of stones and overshadowed by an ancient beech tree.

A female figure seems to be resting there. Is she youthfully charming, is she venerable and gray with age? Who can tell? High seriousness rests on her being, and her eyes blaze like a pair of sun sisters. Now a song trembles from her lips, and rustles through the sacred grove, for it is the song of life, and every breath of life resounds in the song of the saints:

The head supported by the wet hand  
Perahta, the most beautiful of these  
Lying dreaming at the edge of the well,  
saw times, saw water flow away.

She saw the flowers blossom, fade.  
The becoming and dying of suns,  
She saw the billowing glow,  
The rule of fate at the Bronnen.

She saw how she herself  
was enraptured in the circle,  
She saw how the worlds were filled with love.  
And then cried long and quietly.

## Guido von List

She looked up at the trembling stars  
with a moist, swimming gaze,  
As they want to escape the hard  
feed Into immeasurable distances.

Her bosom heaves like a flowing sea  
And feverish glow reddens her cheeks,  
Allowing rings to sway around her  
Woven of sweet desire.

There it rushes around them  
like the sound of a racket.  
An eagle with proud plumage  
Sinks down powerfully like the growing  
day At the holy well.

He snuggles up to her, she strokes  
his downy back with a foreboding pleasure,  
And presses him tightly to her breast  
And kisses him with silent delight.

Then the air stretches with God's power  
And feather and flight are gone,  
And God holds the most fortunate goddess  
in the form of a proud youth

Do not lower your head to Perahta's hand,  
the fairest of them all,  
Dreaming she rests at the edge of the well,  
Sees times, sees water flow.

The enigmatic woman had sung this song, but she lay there motionless, like the cloud of mist on windless autumn days above the restlessly rippling fountain of youth. But eL whispered on and on between the young leaves of the beech grove.

But it roars and roars through the forest; now shadowless figures approach, looking like hunting mists, there is a spooky horseman with a mighty horn, followed by many, many others, also mysterious flapping, and through the forest resounds a long-drawn roar, like the hallelujah of the stag hunt. Then approaches a procession of traveling warriors in armor and weapons, with humped shields and the horns of Urs and Wiesent, and probably also the elk's pole as a target. Here under the clouds of branches of the ancient sacred beech, surrounded by the millennia-old

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A chorale of jungle showers, the fountain of youth gurgles, through whose triple stone circle the leader of the band of warriors now steps.

The woman rises up from the mountain in an almost ghostly manner, her sunny eyes glowing mysteriously.

Silently and with her eyes averted, she picks up a handful of beech sticks at random, unobservant and unscripted, with sacred runes carved into their bark, and throws them over her head, equally unobservant and unscripted, into the small pool of the spring. The wave spirits receive these gifts like wanton children, and the little ones throw the individual sticks to each other as if they were playing ball. In a bouncing round dance they rush over the stone blocks, and only a few of them are thrown ashore - these are silently read by the woman from the mountain, Albruna. The circle of warrior figures closes around her, from the midst of which a handsome youth towers in the shimmering adornment of a man's weaponry. In reverent devotion, he and his comrades listen to the announcement of the "lots of fate" by the wise Albruna.

She arranges the sticks and, looking at their runes, begins to sing and say:

"To you, Odacher\*), King Eticho's child,  
and to all you nobles, I give devotion,  
To you high and noble, of Heimdold's lineage,  
Hear what the honorable ones grant you for news.

Already I see "castles breaking around me"  
With towering phantoms your traveling people,  
The battlements of trembling Rome are already toppling,  
Already I see you adorned in the shimmer of the crown  
Odacher, as a valiant king  
Climb the steps of the throne of the Cesars,  
the first of the Germans in splendid purple!

More beautiful purple still I see shimmering  
The heroic body wrap you, Wuotan's chosen one,  
When the blood ornament of sword death, the red drink of the sword  
around your temples is wrapped in the battle garb,  
When Valkyries kiss you for Valhalla.  
To the most glorious ride to Herian's stronghold!

\*) The Odacher (Odovakar, Odaker), who overthrew the last Roman emperor Romulus Augustulus, is credited with founding the village of Ottakring near Vienna, and his memory is still echoed in many other legends. In 493 he was murdered on the orders of Theodoric of Troßen (Dietrich of Lern).

## Guido von List

Thus have the lots of life fallen to you,  
Unveiling your fate from runic riddles -  
follow the instruction, the ruling conclusion!"

Through the sacred beech grove it roars like resounding bardite, the clear spring that leaps through the crevice, weaves its silver blades into the harp notes, which now fade away like anxious lamentation.

A clearing opens up above the Jungbrunnen in the holy forest, a lush green, flowery meadow spreads out in front of us; it is the Jägerwiese: elevated on the left by a proudly rising hill - and that is the Hermannskogel. Clouds chase around in the whirling round dance its venerable stone head, from which a rich forest talar rolls down with a murmur, spreading its hem along the meadow.

From the small "Frauengraben", in which the "Jungbrunnen" springs, and from which the Jägerwiese rises steeply, the figures move up to the Kulme of the Hermannskogel, out where the spindle-like rocky peak, the Hermannssäute (Irmensul), stands, now glistening in the most brilliant rays of the midday sun. Up there, the white rider stops and thrusts his horn with stormy force. In a chasing swirl, the misty figures move upwards and swirl in ever denser rings around the lofty mountain head.

The foggy figures fade away, sinking into layers of gray clouds that now gloomily cover the sun. The landscape sinks into a dark purple-grey shadow.

The venerable beech tree has disappeared, the rock ventilation has faded, and the rock spring, which was so lively a short time ago, now creeps along dull and sad under a wooden, half-modernized fountain box. We leave the sacred fountain of youth, today Agnes" or "Jungfernbründl", and hurry back to the Jägerwiese to climb the Hermannskogel itself, when our steps are halted by a sign that sneers at us with the "warning": "Under penalty of arrest and a fine, it is forbidden to spend the night and play the Mariandel in this forest. The Imperial and Royal District Court of Klosterneuburg."

We hurriedly crossed the hunter's meadow and hurried up the steep forest slope, without a path to the top of the old "Hutberg", to let our hot foreheads be fanned by the cooling west, as if the ugly warning post was following us through the almost leafless thicket, changing its shape like a goblin. At one point it appeared as a torture stake, sprouting from smouldering pyres, then again like a pillory stake.

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The forest was already thinning out, and only in places did the tall forest allow partial views of a delightful panorama, which the Austrian Tourist Club finally made completely accessible to us through its newly built Habsburgwarte, a panorama which, as Schmiedl claimed fifty years ago, can only be surpassed by that of the Schneeberg.

There is no doubt that the Hermannskogel is a pre-Germanic sacred mountain of the gods, a "Hutberg"\*) , as is irrefutably proven by the still unforgettably sanctification of the Agnesbründl as a former fountain of youth on its slope towards the Weidlingerthal, in the small Frauengraben. The name of the mountain range whose dominant peak it forms, the Kahlengebirge of today, refers in its pre-Roman name of the "Zeizzogebirges", which the Romans used in "Mons Cetius" clearly reveals its mythological character.

Hermann, also known as Hirmon, Irmin, Jring, Heimdold and Heimdallr in Norse, the lord of the military roads on earth and in heaven, the guardian of the gods and one of the sons of Wuotan, has the highest castle in heaven (the month of July) as his home, next to Balder, because as the guardian of the gods he has to keep watch from his high vantage point. His keen eye and sharp hearing are still known today by the people, who jokingly attribute the qualities of the god to hyper-smart people. They say of such people: "He sees the grass grow," or: "He hears the wool grow." And so, among the ancient mythical mountains such as the Zeizzo mountain (Leopoldsberg), Reifenberg, Himmel, Vogelsang, Sauberg (Kahlenberg) and others, the Hermannskogel towers above all others, and the local names of its area, such as Jägerwiese, Jägerkreuz, the Jungfernbründl, the Jungfern buche (also called Agnesbaum), the Himmel and others, as well as unusually numerous legends, give indisputable evidence of its ancient sanctification. It should also be mentioned that the local name "Himmel" is not identical with the name of the neighboring mountain Himmel, but refers to a forest parcel in the small Frauengraben, not far from the Jungfernbründl.

\*) Edda, Fiollsvinn's mal:

"Hutberg is its name and it heals the  
lame and the suffering.

Each one nourished by timeworn need,  
Who climbs it sick"

Thus the name Hutberg has not been forgotten by the people; they call the numerous rich tumuli in the country "Wacht- or Hütelberge", even if they had forgotten the meaning of this name

Numerous variations of these legends are provided by Tschischka, Bernaleken, Bechstcin, Schmiedl, Hormayr and others in the richest selection, and all this, but especially the indelible sanctification of the mountain and its source by the people, gives proof that we are here on old-classical ground of native Wuotanscult.

Another witness to our assertion is probably the futile battle that the police have been waging for many years against the "Cult of superstition" at this site.

Schmiedl wrote the following about this spring in 1835: "About 15 years ago, an excellent spring gushed forth here from a group of rocks in which a beautiful, ancient beech tree was rooted, whose trunk showed the shape of a picture of the Virgin Mary in the twists and turns of the wood. It had long been known that a pious hand had attached an image of the Virgin Mary to the trunk, and no inhabitant of the area passed by without saying a silent prayer. All of a sudden in 1817 (according to others 1811) the spring gained a reputation for miraculous healing powers. Benches and prayer stools were erected, formal pilgrimages were made, but there was so much mischief that the authorities had to intervene. The beech tree was cut down, the spring was buried and the images of the saints were taken to the church in Weidling. You will easily recognize the spot: a swamp marks the place of the vanished romantic image." So much for the old, honest Schmiedl. You can see the naivety in this report; neither Schmiedl nor the authorities had any idea what had happened to this now unfortunately destroyed "romantic picture" and the associated "mischief", and the assurance that "all of a sudden in 1817 the spring should have gained a reputation for miraculous healing powers" seems downright comical. We can only deplore the fanaticism that destroyed that venerable site. For even the swamp did not in the least hinder the influx of the people, and now they tried to control the evil by completely enclosing the "well" and closing it with a door. But neither lock nor bolt could close the fountain for long, and the sun shines unhindered into the shaft, which was to keep it out forever, for the door is open again and the lock has disappeared. The people cannot part with their sanctuary.

If we compare similar cult sites in a country close to us with the one we have just visited, the correspondence with our cult site may dispel any remaining doubts.



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St. Hirmon near Murnau in Upper Bavaria is the highest mountain in the area, it lies to the west a quarter of an hour from Murnau, on the Hirmonswiesen, above which it rises more than 200 feet. Several boulders protrude from its ridge, the central, highest of which has a conical shape and is said to have been the site of Hirmonsburg Castle. If we have to be content with the name and the outstanding figure, which is based on an ancient cult, then St. Hirmon near Bischofsmais, also in Bavaria, is more mythical. This saint is also nothing more than an Irmen column, where the saint takes the place of the old god Irmin.

Returning to our Hermannskogel, the above comparison with the Hirmon inevitably leads to the question of whether that cone-shaped piece of rock would also find a mirror image in the obelisk of the Hermannskogel? This obelisk bears the following inscription: "Astron.- Trigonomet.-Landesvermessung des k. k. Generalquart. Stab. 1834." But Schmiedl, quoted above, says that at a time when this present obelisk had not yet been erected, there was a cross on the top of the mountain, surrounded by flowers and a lattice. Was this cross not intended to preserve the ideal memory of ancient sanctification, of an Irmensul who once stood and fell there? Schmiedl's astonishment at the puzzling protection of this site in view of the peasant fury of destruction, to which the then so modern hermitages, temples, etc. in the surrounding area were defenseless and irredeemable, could speak in favor of this assumption. Be that as it may, in the Kahlengebirge, the old Zeizzogebirge, we have an ancient sanctuary of the Germanic cult of the gods, and in the Hermannskogel specifically one of the Aesir Irmin, in the immediate vicinity of the cosmopolitan city of Vienna. This area was the ancient sanctuary of the good Vindomina already in pre-Roman times, but we are so used to looking for the sacred groves and places of worship of our ancestors on Rügen and in Sweden that we have lost sight of these finds at home and must first regain it. As Jakob Grimm says in his *Rechtsaltertümer*: "Our age learns to explain the customs and works of foreign peoples, but hardly those of its near homeland."

However, this does not explain the old folk tradition of the sanctification of the Hermannskogel. What are people still looking for at the Jungfernbründl or Agnesbründl today? What do they

say? And how do the people apply them today in their superstitious belief?

First of all, it should be noted that the myths and legends that circulate about the Hermannskogel are almost frighteningly rich, and include without interruption the complete ring of German nature myths from birth to resurrection after death.

This circumstance, as well as the fact that even persecution and destruction have not been able to erase the ancient sanctification of this place from the memory of the people, which memory today has only sunk misguidedly into the mud of the most absurd superstition, like the old, noble youthful bronze itself, testify irrefutably that we are here on one of the holiest and most noble healing places of the Wuotan cult. It may be tempting to reconstruct a coherent annual myth from the countless legends that so wonderfully entwine this region, but unfortunately we must dispense with the many parallel and divergent variations, as it would go far beyond our scope to consider them.

The main myth around which all the others are grouped is as follows:

"The King of Poland hunted here many hundreds of years ago, lost his way and lay down exhausted near the spring, tied his white warhorse to the beech tree and hung his armor, which he took off tired, in the branches of the sacred tree that shaded the fountain. Then a blissful maiden approached him, whom he lovingly embraced, and who then showed him the right way to find his lost hunting party again. But the mermaid of the well won a girl from this royal embrace, and she placed her in a little basket at the edge of the well with a rich treasure of gold pieces, and gave a nearby charcoal-burner and his wife a dream that they should bring up the child they would find at the 'young (female) well' together with their son Karl. It happened. The two children grew up, and over the years the sibling relationship developed into that sacred flame which can lift people up to the gods, but also plunge them to the deepest depths. The mermaid of the fountain was not disturbed by this happy love, but she demanded of Karl that he acquire knightly merit and maintain unwavering loyalty to his Agnes, which Karl did.

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also vowed. She told him that a white, bridled horse was waiting for him at the sacred beech of the fountain of youth, and that armor and weapons were hanging in its branches; these, horse and armor, had once been the property of the Polish king. That very night, a castle grew up on the edge of the forest, which she named "Heaven" and gave to her daughter Agnes as her own. Charles and Agnes were to rule here when he returned home true to his oath. Karl had probably come home from the Turkish war, but had been unfaithful to his bride, and when he moved into the castle, it fell with him, Agnes and all the occupants, and only the name "Heaven" testifies to the place where the castle stood. Both lovers - she blessed, he damned - must wander until the end of days, and both seek to remove the curse from Karl's head by giving happiness, with which they gifted people, in order to find reunion and redemption again."

Another - at least the older - group of legends calls her Bertha, and has her stolen by an old knight (or dragon), but freed again by her fiancé. The daughter said yes to a young knight who courted her, but blindly gave her heart to a rich count and sent the unhappy lover to Palestine. Deceived by the count, she wanted to call the exile back, but he but had been killed, and the shock also brought her an abrupt death. As a ghost, the white Lady now wanders through the mountains in search of her lover and can only find peace until both their ashes are buried together in a grave. Another legend tells of a young hunter who, at Christmas time, suddenly saw a church on the Jägerwiese that he had never seen before and curiously entered it. After barely half an hour he made his way home, but how astonished he was when no one wanted to recognize him; then he pointed out the hare he had shot before entering the church, which was still warm, but now turned out to be filled with gold pieces. Everyone was amazed, and it turned out that he had been in the spirit world for 30 years.\*) Only in passing is mention made here of the Lindwurm legend, which also takes place here, and is said to be the Lindwurm,

\*) Rach others 3, 7, 33 and also probably 100 Zahre. A similar legend tells the same story, only there the hunter sleeps for so long under the "split building" instead of the ghost church being mentioned. There are also other variations and extensions of the same legend

who was killed by fire, lived in the cave which today is vaulted by the Sieveriuq church.

The name Agnes merges with the historical Margravine Agnes, who resided on the Leopoldsberg at the beginning of the twelfth century, and whose veil legend, like the legend of the founding of Klosterneuburg, belongs to our mythical circle. - The veil is Fraya's swan's head, the loss of which robs her of her divinity. It is the rain cloud of spring, which the autumn storms carry off and which is only found again after the seven months of winter have passed. That is why the legend has the margravine's veil found again after seven years, and precisely on an elder bush, the old symbol of fertility, because without the swan's head - without the rain cloud - there is no fertility.

The well-known violet festival at the Leopoldsberg castle of Duke Otto the Merry gains its peculiar mythical value in this context; it is the wedding of the gods in spring, Zeizzo the handsome, the youthful Wuotan, actually his younger personification Hermut, marries Frene (Fraya) at the time of the first violets, after he has freed her from the power of the frost giants (the linden worm) by the fire of the spring sun. However, he is sent out by the gods to teach humans the art of poetry and is slain on this journey by the evil-breeding dwarves. Fraya (here called Frene), however, roams the lands in search of her beloved, filling the world with her misery.

Spring, summer and winter myths merge here in the Zeizzoberg region and have left their indelible mark in local names, customs and legends attached to the clod.

In the midst of all these mythically sacred places bubbles the former highly sacred Jungbrunnen, today's Agnes- or Jungfern-bründl, and the highest mountain of this mountain range that rises above the Jungbrunnen, towering over everything like a guardian, is the Hermannskogel, which still bears the name of the guardian of the gods, the lord of the military roads Irmin (Heimdold, Heimdallr).

It needs no further interpretation that the Polish king is the wintry Wuotan, like all the other characters in the myth, again himself in his various forms, as they correspond to the individual seasons. Agnes, however, is Fraya, Frouwa and even Helia, for:

"You who produce kinver and fruit in abundance, honorable goddess,  
yours is the right to give and take life."

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As the overseer of becoming, she presides over the "fountain of children or youth", as the painter of life she bestows gifts of wealth and health, as the prophesying nom of the future she reveals it through the proclamation of the fateful lottery and other oracles.

This circumstance now brings the "Jungfernbründl" as it is called, the "Fountain of Youth" is still worshipped today, but it is no longer fate that the faithful seek to find out there, but lottery numbers, namely those that will be drawn in the next draw. On the day of St. John's beheading (August 29), the largest number of male and female lottery sisters gather there, often numbering more than ten thousand believers, while St. Agnes' Day (January 21), despite the unfavorable season, brings together four to five thousand number seekers of both sexes.

On these two days, Sievering and especially the Gasthaus zur heiligen Agnes, whose owner was generally considered to be wiser and more reliable than the author of the "Egyptian Dream Book" himself, was the destination of a small migration of people, which of course brought with it a mass consumption of wine and all kinds of food. The "Terno Wuchteln", which were filled with numbered slips of paper instead of boiled fruit, were particularly popular and were sold for a considerable price.

The aforementioned industrial landlord then sat in the midst of a hundred-strong crowd, consisting almost exclusively of old women, listening devoutly to his words, expounding the most intricate dreams, telling the most hair-raising stories of Agnes and her two lovers, the hunter Karl and the "still much cleaner'n Kohlenbauernbuam" - stories that never lost their power of attraction, as they were given a corresponding design and renewal every year, stories that never lost their power of attraction, as every year they were given a new twist and renewal - praised an automatic machine made by a "settler who took twenty years to make it", which produced numbers for the coins thrown into it, and did the most excellent business with it all.

Around midnight, carrying a banner and singing hymns, he led his simple-minded congregation to the Bründl, Agneswiese, Karlwiese and Johanneswiese.

The latter place in particular was then the site of superstitious acts. The women sat down - in the Agnesnacht, no less! - quietly praying on the ground, listening to the

mysterious whispering voices, that there from the ground and pulled out the "St. John's roots", which are said to cast a powerful spell against all kinds of illness. Who wouldn't think of the Germanic customs of the celebration of spring and the summer solstice? And the with endowed with magical powers, the luck-giving St. John's wreaths, which, taken at midnight on a sacred night, bring power and luck to their owner? From the ridiculous to to the sublime, from the modern "lottery sister" to the sacred, mysterious myth of our pagan ancestors is only a step away. We can also see from this example that even such folk customs, which on superficial observation appear to us to be baseless, nonsensical and therefore also comical, are as a rule nothing other than highly interesting cultural-historical remnants of defeated religions.

But it is not only these places, their names and the folk customs associated with them that prove that the Hermannskogel is a primeval place of worship, there are also other phenomena that provide the final link in the chain to complete the ring. The sunken castle in the sky was discovered by chance, and this is the "earth stable".

However, the discovery of the earth barn on the Hermannskogel is not the result of scientific research, but merely an accidental discovery.

Since in the course of this book is still on other, there will be an opportunity to go into more detail about this "Erdstülle" in another place, so we will only include a newspaper article here, which reports in detail on this almost romantic discovery of the Erdstall on the Hermannskogel.

The "Illustrated Viennese Extrablatt" from 15. April 1888, Morning Edition No. 105 contains the following noteworthy essay:

## **The cave dweller from the Hermannskogel.**

(Original report of the "Ill. Vn. Extrablatt").

A few days ago, Anton Rephan, Lakirer, Joseph Schlesinger and Franz Christ went on an excursion to the Hermannskogel to inspect the construction work on the Habsburg observatory. When they arrived at the top, they had lunch, as the tourists had provided themselves with cold food, wine and other foodstuffs.

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The gentlemen then made their descent in the most cheerful mood. They had been walking casually for a quarter of an hour when Mr. Rephahn noticed that he had forgotten his cute cutlery. He hurriedly turned back, and the others followed him. When Rephahn stepped out of the wood into the clearing of the plateau, he stood still as if spellbound.

A human figure crouched in the place where they had just eaten, greedily gathering up the remains of the food. The strange creature turned its back on Rephahn and so could not see the tourist, although he could watch its every move. The creature left the cutlery, but greedily threw the remains of ham and smoked meat into its mouth, wrapped other food in a piece of paper lying on the floor, and finally looked at the bottles in search of a drop. Meanwhile, Rephahn's companions had approached. He beckoned them to keep quiet and they crept up quietly, now watching the activities of the strange figure more in the company of their friend.

A few minutes passed before Mr. Schlesinger jumped forward and headed straight for the man. The man jumped up in fright, made a leap and wanted to lose himself in the thicket, but the two other tourists held on to him.

A degenerate creature that must have been deprived of any human care for a long, long time stood before them.

A man of about 40, whose shaggy, unkempt beard reached down to his chest, whose hair fell in thin strands over his shoulders, while wide bald patches were already visible at the top of his head. His cheeks, browned by the weather and storms, were covered in places with crusts of clay, and his tangled beard and hair were also covered in dry leaves, brushwood and straw. His eyes were deep in their sockets and looked at the tourists with a gentle, pleading gaze.

"What do you want from me?" the man said in a trembling voice, spreading his skinny hands wide.

His rather tall figure, really an emaciated skeleton, was clad in a sack-like garment with two holes cut into either side, from which his arms, wrapped in green canvas, protruded. His feet were also wrapped in rags and a rope was wrapped around his loins. The man made a downright frightening impression; the tourists thought,

that he was dealing with a madman. Hanging from the rope around his waist was a food bag in which he had kept the leftovers.

"Who are you?" the tourists asked, deeply moved by pity.

"What do you care?" the man replied, shaking his uncovered head. "I am a man who talks to the trees and who is not afraid of the animals of the forest, but of people. Let me go and go your way!"

"No! We can't do that! We have to take you down and hand you over to the police. You're going to die here!"

The man laughed peculiarly.

"Do you believe that one must perish if one is lonely, do you believe that people are a need for people? They are more trouble than the beasts of prey! So let me go."

"No! You have to go!"

"Good, that's how I'll go!"

The man walked silently between the tourists. Then he suddenly made a leap, lifted up his baggy robe so that it wouldn't hinder him as he walked, and ran into the forest, where he soon disappeared. But the three Viennese did not want to leave the interesting hermit from the Hermannskogel so soon, they chased after him and followed his trail; the cracking of the dry wood, the rustling of the leaves told them the direction the fugitive had taken, and soon they saw the figure of the fugitive again.

"There he is! Over there!" shouted Rephahn, who had come within fifty paces of him.

The others rushed over and asked: "Where? Where?"

But Rephahn stood there transfixed. The fugitive seemed to have suddenly sunk into the ground. There was no sign of him. The hikers walked forward to the place where the hermit had last been seen, and after searching for a while, one of the men discovered a hole with a plank leaning against it, but not quite covering the opening.

This circumstance was quite striking, the tourists took away the board and stood before a very deep and spacious cave, and when they made light to inspect the interior of it, they noticed the fugitive crouching on the ground on a bed of straw, rags, and paper, which



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had probably often served as a bed. There were also all sorts of other items in the cave that suggested that this was the fugitive's permanent residence, such as a tea machine, a bottle that appeared to contain alcohol, a book with tenders, some pencils, a knife, a pewter spoon and a wooden container filled with salt. This also proved that the man was socializing with other people.

Whether he wanted to or not, the fugitive now had to return to the light of day.

"I beg you, gentlemen, have mercy on the happiest and most unhappy man there is on God's earth. I am not one of those whom the police are looking for, I do no harm to anyone, let me live in peace and quiet and don't worry about me!"

The man was obviously very exhausted from walking and his breath was whistling through his lungs. He took a sip of cognac, which was offered to him, and seemed visibly invigorated.

"Wait a moment," he said after a wave. "I'll bring you all my documents."

He nimbly crawled back into the cave and soon appeared with several papers that he had hidden in the camp. He showed the papers to the gentlemen. They were in perfect order. There was a baptismal certificate in the name of Karl Odwurka, born in Vienna, residing in Polrawitz, 46 years old, and a certificate of origin from the above-mentioned parish for the merchant Karl Odwurka, and finally a certificate of morality from the police, in which Karl Odwurka was certified, for the purpose of entering into a marriage, that he had never been guilty of any judicial indecency.

"Well, that's me, and now I'm asking for silence!"

The man was now talking a little more energetically and the hikers let him go. They now started talking to him, and Odwurka told them:

"Since you spoke to me in such a polite and amiable manner, I am prepared to tell you everything, but you promise me that you will then go your way and not bother me any further. So listen! Until 1872 I had a store in Kärntnerstrasse, in the house of the "wild man". I was then 30 years old and loved a girl dearly. My father knew about my inclination and he absolutely refused to allow

that I marry the mistress, who was the daughter of a very poor servant.

Me and my bride could only see each other on Sundays, and then we went out to the Hermannskogel. Here on this lonely mountain, which is so beautiful and so little visited, we were happy, here we exchanged vows and kisses, here we took strength and courage for the heavy suffering and all the renunciation that the week imposed on us. Whether winter or summer, we were here every Sunday. Then my father died. I had always been tormented by jealousy, because in order to separate me from her, I had been sent anonymous letters accusing the girl of infidelity. I had the idea of finally putting my mistress to the test, and the day after my father's funeral I wrote to her that he had lost all his money in the crash and that I was poor, destitute and forced to make a living for myself. The test was terrible. The very next day I received a letter in which my mistress assured me of her constant affection, but declared that she must yield to her parents' insistence and release me from my word.

I was close to madness. Alone, without any particularly close relatives, without a participating soul, I fled to the Hermannskogel and confided my heavy sorrow to the trees and the birds, to the shy deer that strayed towards me on the Cobenzl and on the ridge of the Kahlenberg. The silence of nature had an extremely calming influence on me, and I don't know how that came about - I often stayed there at night and finally made myself at home here. I sold my business, I gave all my securities to an old farmer's wife in the neighboring village, and I also gave her my will and stayed here."

"And how long have you been living here on the Hermannskogel?"

"It's been twelve years and I'm very happy with it. The farmer's wife comes up every month and brings me matches, spirits, salt, bread and tea. That's all I need. In winter I have bacon and some rum. I live very happily. I expected the farmer's wife two days ago, but she didn't come, and by then I was already hungry, and it is only thanks to this circumstance that I went to the clearing where I always find something, because the workers always leave

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leftovers. I also keep a diary, which will probably be found when I die!"

The tourists were deeply shocked as they listened to the story of the Hermannskogel cave dweller. They dug out their rucksacks and bags and provided the man with plenty of food, wine, cognac and matches, which he also lacked.

"And don't you want to go back to the people?"

"Never again! If the farmer's wife dies or falls ill, a replacement has already been found, I am very happy. Gentlemen! I must guide you now if you want to get home in time, otherwise you'll get lost."

The gentlemen followed the hermit, who led them to a dirt road and then showed them the way.

"Farewell! Farewell, and don't worry about me any more."

The man stopped for a moment, then quickly turned and ran off.

The branches cracked, the dry leaves rustled, then it was quiet and calm again on the Hermannskogel, and the tourists descended the mountain in silence to recount their strange adventure in Vienna.



## The Höllenthal.



Only a few valleys in the entire Alpine world can match the wild and romantic Höllenthal, which stretches along the southern border of Lower Austria between the Schneeberge and the Raxalpe. Its peaks, often towering over a thousand meters above the valley floor, the ornamental rock constructions in almost unparalleled variety, the rapid, mostly sudden transition from lovely, laughing images to the constricting feeling of gazing into the wild solitude of the high valley,

give this rocky valley a peculiar charm of scenic grandeur. It is not easy for another valley to offer such a wealth of natural beauty over such a long distance - with the possible exception of the Sarnthal in the sunny Rosengarten of southern Tyrol - as the Höllenthal; even those valleys into which firn and glaciers flow down can hardly compete with this little gem of alpine beauty, despite such effective, decorative ornamentation.

Enclosed by boldly jagged rocky crags more than a thousand meters high in the most varied play of colors, from modest gray, from shy yellow-brown to the richer carnation color, to the deep purple of the anemone, interspersed with spruce-dark forest masses, here and there suddenly illuminated by the cheerful golden green of the sacred beech, between them smiling alpine slopes and sap-fresh meadows, embroidered with the brightly colored ornamentation of finely structured alpine flowers, or the swelling moss stars in brown-reddish green, which run along the rock crevices like resting places, created for devout contemplation of the glorious nature or for a blissful contemplation of oneself, and all this beauty crowded into a narrow rocky valley, which once had room only for itself and its Schwarza, all this mighty beauty almost overwhelms the observer and wrings from him a feeling of devotion, of awakening longing, of worshipping God, a feeling which he is unable to resist and of whose dawning he does not know how to account for.

A region which is able to shake even the oversaturated generation of our days so powerfully that the roar of the waters and the pleasures sound to them hardly more than earthly sounds, that what they see seems sublime beyond the framework of the earthly, what an infinitely greater influence such a landscape must have exerted on the feelings of the childishly naive minds of our ancestors! Where we find the landscape charming, there they saw the lovely Fraya, where we call it picturesque, they recognized the noble divine powers of the rulers of destiny, and where we use the expression wildly romantic, there they bowed their knee before the looming deities of death.

The Edda also leaves room for the feeling that a landscape image evokes in naive grandeur. The old Scald could not imagine it any other way than that the landscape image, as the frame of the myth, had to correspond to it. Whether the Scald thought like Dante, who envisioned the debris field of the Mori landslide as the scenic backdrop for his poetry,

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is difficult to say, at least the landscape that floated before his senses can hardly be determined. But even such an Eddic description is proof of how the uniqueness of the landscape had an influence in the mythical sense.

One such Eddic landscape depiction, however, is the following:

"Hermuth (Hermodur), one of Wuotan's sons, was to try to free the murdered Balder from the captivity of Helia, the goddess of death; he rode there immediately on Wuotan's grinder, the eight-footed wonder horse. For nine nights he rode through dark, deep valleys until he came to the Geller Stream, where he had to ride over the gold-covered Geller Bridge, which was guarded by a maiden called the Wrangler. After receiving instructions, he continued on his way until he came to the Helgatter, which he crossed on horseback, and rode into Helia's hall."

This description emphasizes the long, dark valleys, the Geller stream, the bridge, the Helgatter, and can be supplemented by the "Well of the Wurt" (Urdas spring), which rises under the third root of the world ash tree.

Sixty years ago, the valley of hell still offered no path; only the hunter was able to penetrate its sanctuary on a dangerous path, and where we now roll comfortably along the artificial road, the primeval forest swayed its proud treetops.

The valley, however, is a side valley; no roads required its development, and so it separated itself, and the magic of its imposing natural beauty, its quiet high valley solitude and silence, which were only interrupted by the thunder of the foaming river of the "Schwarz-Ache" (Schwarza), ensured its consecration as the seat of one of the highest female deities of the Germanic people.

In Christian times, some of the names changed according to Christian interpretation, but it is not difficult to trace them back to the ancient mythical meaning. We know, for example, that Helia's dwelling place, the underworld, was identified with the Christian hell. Middle High German poets still wrote "hell" as "helle" and in "Reinecke Voss" Reinecke assures Isegrim: "sie tet ein tuk in d'helle". The old Hel, Helia or Helle, formerly thought of as a person, was mixed with the term of her castle or dwelling to denote the Christian hell.

The fact that our Höllenthal was really consecrated to Hel is attested to by many other circumstances. Thus the valley through

roaring river, the "Schwarza(che)", which, as soon as it leaves the area of this landscape (near Pitten), changes its name and from then on is called "Leitha"\*)). But everything in the area of Hel is black, and so is its river, and when it once foamed through the dark pine forest, it may well have appeared black too.

The fountain of Hel, the fountain of the Norns (Wurt) can be found in the "Kaiserbrunnen", because this name only goes back about one hundred and fifty years\*\*) and probably replaced the old name Hel brunnen, or Christianized "Höllenbrunnen", an opinion that should hardly be strange in this environment. The term "well" remained, only the determinative word "Hel" (hell) was changed to Kaiser, because if it had been completely renamed, the spring would presumably have been called "Kaiserquelle", as the modern language uses the word well in a different sense.

This fountain would now be the mirror image of the mythical fountain of the Norns, who, as we know, touch Hel. The third Norn was thought to be black, her talents always inhibit the gifts of her two sisters, or cancel them out; she is precisely Hel, the goddess of death, the end, the limit of everything human. But closely connected with Hel is her father Loki (Volland, Weland, Wieland the Blacksmith), the prince of the deep (Teufe), just as closely connected as Hell is with the devil. Now we find two side valleys in the Hell Valley, which are called the Great and the Little Hell, and in the former the Devil's names are crowded; there stands the Devil's Pulpit, the Devil's Bakehouse and the Devil's Bathhouse. Not enough of this, there is also the "Hel gatter", over which Hermuth crossed with the horse of the gods, on a foothill of the Raxalpe on the Grünschacher, where a narrow rocky gorge separates the "eiserne Thürl" ( iron door), without such a door being found or justified.

The meaning of "eisernen Thürlein" becomes immediately clear if you translate "iron" into "ice" and thus "eisern" into "eisig". The realm of Helia, the "brightness" of the Germanic tribes, was not a place filled with blazing fire like the Christian hell, but a realm of solidification, of freezing, of the coldness of death. The entrance to the icy realm of the dead may well have been an "ice gate",

\*) Leitha, "Liutaha" - the light, white river.

\*\*) Emperor Charles VI is said to have discovered this spring on a Zagd (?), hence the name; it is a fact that the water from the Kaiserbrunnen was brought to his court in Vienna by mule.

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was an "icy little door". The frequent occurrence of the local name "eisernes Thürl" in the following landscape paintings, where it always has the same meaning, will fully justify this explanation. If one also considers that that part of the Jacobskogel of the Raxalpe, which bears the name "eisernes Thürl", is already high up in the Krummholz region, where winter still reigns for a long time, when early summer has long since come into its own in the valley below, the mythical meaning of the name of this vegetation-free rocky gorge, as the entrance to the realm of ice and snow, becomes all the clearer.

Before the Höllenthal was accessible by the present road, it may only have been accessible via the rocky ridges of the Jacobskogel and through the gorge which is still called the "eiserne Thürl" today. It is well known that the rivers, especially the mountain streams, were far more important in the past than they are today, and it is not difficult to assume that the Schwarza at the outflow from the Höllenthal made it completely inaccessible.

Behind the rocky outcrop of the "icy Thürl" discussed here, the first side valley in the Höllenthal now opens up; this is the "Wolfs thal". This is where the first bridge over the Schwarza was built and is called the "Windbrücke". This bridge is probably no older than the road, and its name can be explained quite well by the icy cold wind that constantly blows there from the Höllenthal, but one should not forget that the Germanic myth was only nature religion and poetically personified all natural phenomena. "The dog howls before the Helaklamm," says the Edda and gives him the guard at the Helgatter, and here we see behind the "eisernen Thürl" the Wolfsthal, from which that wind seems to howl. But dogs and wolves, understood mythically, are congruent concepts.

We have already mentioned that Hel touches the Norns. A side valley behind the "Helbrunnen" is called the "Frauenbachgraben", into which the boldly modeled rocky reefs of the "Frauenbach mauern" fall. The name Frau, used in the old genitive case when it is found in place names, points to the cult of the Norns, and here it becomes doubly significant in that it refers the Norns directly to the realm of Helia, the underworld, where the root of the world ash tree, from which its fountain gushes, also reaches.

However, the fact that the Norns were visibly represented by the healing councillors does not need to be repeated here. In any case, in the caves which contain the old "Frauenbachmauern",

we recognize the dwellings of these priestesses. Here, where there was no lack of natural caves, there was no need to laboriously dig artificial ones, the so-called "earth stables", into the ground.

In the middle of the crevice of the narrow valley, from whose rocky clefts disheveled pines spread their wide roots freely over the heads of those walking deep below them, the three-headed snow mountain rises mightily into the deep dark blue of the frighteningly constricted sky. The highest peak rises boldly into the air, and the Königssteig trail runs clearly below it. Below it, the infamous "Bocks grube" opens its dark maw. This, as well as the salt bars to the right of it, still belong to the Krummholz region. The picturesque walls of the "Heuplacke", which rest in the Saugraben, stand out below the salt bars.

Glowing in the gold of sunset, there can hardly be a more powerful image than this view from the Steinhaus bridge. There is no human sound, no cheerful birdsong, just the roar and roar of the black Ache rushing through the deeply incised rocky bed. Only occasionally does the hoarse call of a circling vulture sound down from the clouds, or the clatter of rolling rocks reminds you of the fleeting hoof of a chamois. Then silence all around again, only the roar of the water continues in its endless melody, for - times and water flow by.

Here is the point where the magnificence of nature appears to the observer as in a magic mirror; here is the point where man shrinks into himself to the smallness of a sun-dust, before the power of God recognized in this magnificence of the landscape!

The valley becomes narrower, wilder, more torn, where the mighty rock massifs of the Schneeberg and the Rax move closer and closer. Deep down in the narrow rocky gorge, the mountain stream rolls quietly in the dark pine green-black, then in a sharp gradient throwing white foamy spray over the rolled rock fragments. The road cuts into the mountain side to the east, up to a hundred meters high over precipices; mountains and rocks pile up to the dizzy heights and seem to completely block the valley in their shifts. Then, all at once, a brief distant view opens up again with an ever-changing picture: the lushest flowers, the most lush meadows suddenly follow the most inhospitable limestone ground, from which barely a few hungry blades of grass spring.



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Every step, every bend in the path offers new, unimagined delights!

In all these masterful changes of landscape, the proud triumvirate of the Schneeberg looks down seriously and sublimely, without emotion, unchanging, a monument to the eternal over the transient.

But if we now look at this proud triumvirate, in addition to two names from more recent times (Kaiserstein and Klosterwappen or Alpengipfel), we undoubtedly find a remnant of ancient mythical sanctification in the "Donnerkogel" (Mitterkogel). The other two peaks may once have been named Wuotan and Loki to correspond to the trilogy.

As far as the Hell Valley's spell extends, we see only the serious character of the terrible forces of fate imprinted on the valley in its mythical name, and like a distant ray of hope from the heights of heaven, the three heads of the Snow Mountain look down into the "nine deep and dark valleys", which once in the early ages was the seat of the highest three gods, Wuotan, Donar, Loki.

Around the Schneeberg we also find friendly deities in names and legends. The two names "Wurm garten" and "Wurmbauer" (worm garden), as well as a lime worm legend, are reminiscent of the dragon slayer, the conqueror of the frost giants, the spring sun. The Saurüssel reminds us of the golden-bristled boar, the Mttagstein, whose cave contains no shade at midday, bears witness to ancient sanctification, and a "Hut berg" and a "Hutbergthal" also remind us of the Wuotan cult. The Schrattengraben and the Schrattenthal tell of dwarves, and "Losenhaim" reminds us of the fateless, which name is repeated as Losbühel in the large Höllenthal. In the surroundings of the Raxalpe there is the "Augenbründl", once certainly a Balders or Pholsbrunnen, a "Wetterkogel", an "Übelthal", a "Predigtstuhl" and high up in the Krummholz region a "Haberfeld", whose mythical reference is made even clearer by its location above the "Kesselboden". Sonnleitstein and Sonnwendstein need no interpretation in such surroundings. But the details that require explanation or interpretation are far from exhausted. However, only one name is discussed here. It belongs to a mountain that is "auf dem G'scheid", the "Tattermann". A scarecrow, which we still see in the fields today, covered with an old hat and dressed in an old skirt, is called a "Tattermann", and this is exactly what the doll was made and called, which used to be (and still is) called a "Tattermann".

there probably still today) at the burning of Judas or the burning of the Easter man was placed in the center of the pyre. She placed the winter giant, the Jotun before, from which misunderstood Judas became. In the old sense means "to tremble" tremble with fear and terror. That now however the following may prove that the "Tattermann" goes beyond a scarecrow: In Hugo von Trimberg we read the following passages: "One looks at the other as Kobolt looks at Mr. Tattermann." "Their (the heathens') idol, as I had read, were Kobolt and Tattermann." More quotations could be made, but let us leave Julius Caesar ("De Bello Gallico" etc., Lib. VI., Cap. 16., Pag. 16) to speak: "Other Gauls have immense images of gods, whose limbs, woven from willows, they fill with living men and set on fire, whereby these, surrounded by the flame, must give up the ghost. They believe that thieves, highwaymen or other evildoers are the most pleasing victims for the gods; but if these are missing, they are content with the innocent." If this tatterman was identical to Caesar's description, the victims may well have trembled at the sight of him. The fact that this doll was once a real human sacrifice at today's Judas or Easter fires can be seen from a more recent example in which a doll is also called a "witch" at a "witch burning", a custom which also takes place at Easter time and has the same mythical basis.

But the fact that a "Tattermann" stood and burned next to the goddess of the underworld is again consistent with the Lindwurm legends, which is not defeated here (in the area of Wurmgarlen) with the sword, but by fire, by the fire of the spring sun. That is why the realm of Hel is thought to be cold, that is why it is identical with that of winter, and that is why the Hell Valley also corresponds to the mythical requirement in this direction.

The spring goddess Ostara's lovely spring children have long since sprouted and sprouted in colorful splendor throughout the land, and snow still covers the cold gorges of Hell Valley, tree-length icicles hang from the staring crevasses, and while in the distant residence the most fragrant spring toilets officially announce spring from gleaming equipages, the frost giants are still entrenched in the Höllenthal and thunderously hurl their projectiles, the snow avalanches and ice falls, towards the onrushing spring, from their last stronghold in our beautiful Lower Austria.

## The Venusberg near Kraismauer.



But now let us begin to sing  
of the knight Tannhäuser,  
and what wonders he has done  
With Lady Venusinnen.

It was a wonderful trip in a canoe down from Passau along the sparkling silver Nibelungenstrasse! The "red flag with the white St. Andrew's cross in the upper pole" laughed jauntily from the mast of the small vessel as it glided along as fast as an arrow, lonely as Lohengrin's swan. Then opened the mouth of the Traisen between secluded meadows, and a Scheffel's song ran through the memory of the lonely Fergen:

and whispering I hear it rustling through the leaves,  
Berfahner man, you are fond of the dead. Follow  
this trail and you will unearth treasures. Far from  
here, Nibelung gold flashes.

The small boat dropped off course in a wide arc and ran into the mouth of the Traisen. That was good work for the boatman; the fast-as-an-arrow gliding was over. The inconspicuous thing was working hard against the current, but going ashore and pulling or even carrying the boat would definitely not have been "sportsmanlike". After days of hard rowing, the ancient market town of Traismauer finally lay in front of the lonely rowing boy, nestled in lovely greenery and illuminated by the friendliest sunset.

There it lay, the proud Etzel castle.

.....  
"She was much seen, she was much well known.  
Called Trasinmuore; Lady Gelle was sitting there  
and cultivated such great virtues that truly never fail".

What memories didn't the name Traismauer bring back? Trasinmuore! The place is already called Schlächter under Charles the Saxon, and is therefore, according to the assumption of those who only swear on what has been handed down to posterity on the back of a donkey, one of the oldest places in the country. This time they are also right, but the place is nevertheless far, far older than those gentlemen want to accept. Charles gave the place to Passau; the exiled Moravian Duke Privina was also raised here in front of St. Martin's Church by the border count of the Ostmark, Radpet.

and induced to be baptized. In 984, the name appears as "Civitas Traisma". Under the Romans, however, the place was named "Trigisanum".

And yet Trasinmuore is even older, dating back to pre-Roman times.

The little boat continued on past the quiet green of the alluvial forest; then an inconspicuous hill arched into the twilight shadows of the evening, as inconspicuous as a thousand others, which the eye usually glides past, as no special feature makes it stand out.

And yet - what sweet charm does not surround this hill!

Gentle clouds of mist rose from the softly rippling waves, as if light female figures were floating above the water around the light boat. Then they floated upwards to the crest of the hill, behind which the full moon slowly rose, as lonely as the boat and its ferry.

Lonely! Yes, that was his fate; for weeks on end, he was alone in his neat mahogany boat up and down the wide Danube; his rowing companions laughed at his quirks, and yet he was happy - alone. Alone? Oh no! What a sunny, shining company, born of scent and ether, gathered around him for cozy conversation! Was it his fault that others' eyes did not see them, others' senses did not feel them? And so the others thought him lonely, and yet he was in the most exquisite ring of heavenly spirits. So also today.

On the quiet meadow, in the wide stream  
I pulled lonely in the swaying boat  
My gaze was lost far away in the dome  
Where moon and star are shining down.

Many hundred year old elm trees,  
like pillars, reach up to the stars,  
And long deep shadows  
weave through meadows,  
through meadows run.

And the moon's gentle ethereal tide  
weaves silvery over it again,  
The little waves throw moonward again  
Like a ball game, the pale embers

And how the sparks sparkle upwards  
in the rich rainbow wreath,  
Catching a glimpse of grasses  
they burn up in the colorful diamond-spray glow.

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And like the sounds of the aeolian harp,  
the westerly wind's wings elicit songs  
from the midnight meadow,  
So longingly wonderful.

And there? - Floating there on the waters -  
Is it real? - Or is it a dream?  
The elves as light as fragrant weaving,  
shapes as delicate as wave foam.

The eyes' sweet glances sparkle  
like stars clear in the soft light,  
And it's moonlight that gently pierces the dark.  
Mildly pierces the weeping curls.

In confusing wanton round dance  
They glide along like the scent of roses,  
Like violets rising moonward,  
they float through the realm of pleasure.

And soft song in gentle wings  
Whispers through meadow and human breast,  
We want to wrest you from suffering,  
To which you have fallen, unconsciously.

O come to us, to the moon's brightness,  
Where we'll parade in the moonlit round dance  
Where we'll walk above the clear silver wave  
Mankind's joys and sorrows are afloat.

You rest so softly in Hutberg's bottom,  
Deep inside in the mountain's shaft,  
Every wound is forgotten there,  
Blotted out in the blissful night.

And when the flowers bloom in May  
Then you follow us to an airy dance,  
To ether-scented rows of elves  
By moonlight and starlight.

And did you soar to the light elves' throng,  
And have you sung your song to the fair lady?

Then you are happy!  
You sink back into Fraya's dome,  
And rise up, when again admonishing Spring  
awakens the flowers - come - come! -

The stroke of the oar rippled softly over the waves, and in the full moonlight the "Venusberg" lay in front of the enchanted man, framed by the dark shadow of the alluvial forest.

But now let us begin to hear  
of the knight Tannhäuser,  
and what wonders he has done  
with Lady Venussinnen.

It is not one of Richard Wagner's least merits that he brought the old national myth, which had probably already been forgotten by the higher classes of society, back into fashion as it was half a millennium ago, where the minstrels sang the praises of "Lady Venus" at all the courts and small courts, as it is now sung anew by their epigones on all opera stages, while the lower classes preserved the mythical traditions more faithfully and today the old Tannhäuserlied still flies unsung from mouth to mouth in countless variations.

The legend, which is tied to countless localities, and the wide dissemination of the song even today, testify to the fact that we would be wasting our efforts to find a historical background for the Tannhäuser saga, to assume a historical personality in Tannhäuser himself. He has certainly tried to identify the minstrel Tannhausen, who died in 1270, with our Tannhäuser, but he was too subordinate, too insignificant, to justify seeking the origin of that mythical person in him. If no historical basis can now be found for the legend, it must be found in the mythological realm and then only the question remains as to which divine figures are hidden behind "Lady Venus", the "noble Tannhäuser" and the "faithful Ekkehard".

The fact that they must be Germanic is proven not only by the deep-rooted legends in all the districts of the Swabian-Bavarian family of peoples, but also by the numerous place names in their lands. To name just a few, the following are listed: Venusberg,

a) A single layer, Bavaria, district court Vilsbiburg; b) Village and bath near Innsbruck; c) village near Zwickau, Saxony; d) a farm near Waldsee in Württemberg; a village near Breisach in Breisgau; e) village in Nicder Austria near Traismauer; f) village, *ibid.*, near Drasdorf (called Druosinindorf in 868), both in the quarter above the Vienna Woods, and finally g) a village near Dürrenstein, also in

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Lower Austria, in the district above the Mannhartsberg. This list by no means exhausts their number, nor does it include all the name mutilations, such as Venetsberg, Venisuck, etc., nor the place names to which the matter appears to be linked, but whose interpretation is based on other grounds. The best known of the latter, the "Hörselberg" in Thuringia, should only be mentioned here in passing. A similar list could be compiled of place names that contain the names "Tannhäuser" and "Ekkehard" in various combinations and mutilations.

But not only the people in all its classes knew the "Venus", but she herself lived on as an allegorical being until the late Middle Ages, despite Christianity. We need only recall here the "German Don Quixote", the minstrel Ulrich von Lichtenstein and his adventurous Venuszug, to show how vividly the old mythical view influenced medieval life.

We find a closer connection to the Venus myth in the songs of the minnesinger Hermann von Sachsenheim, who died in 1450. In most of his poems, he deals with Lady Venus, or as he usually calls her, the "Venussin". In "Schatz", a "Martinsvogel" leads him to a "Zwerge" and this to the "Venusberg", where the Venussin gives him a twelve-pointed crown for his beloved, which was made by her twelve virgins. In the "Altswert" he is taught by Lady Venus to prefer old swords to new ones, and older, experienced men to inexperienced boys. He sings the praises of the new Minne of Alsace in the "Kittel". In the "Mörin" (Mohrin), he describes the court life of "Lady Venus" and names Brunhilt as her first lady-in-waiting, the "faithful Ekkehard" as her Hosmarschalk and King Tannhäuser as her husband. In this poem, the poet describes how he is forcibly abducted by an old man and a dwarf and brought before Lady Venus, who leads him before King "Danhauser" through her "intercessor", who is the Moor, where he has to justify his lack of love.

If we go back further, we find in the "Vilcina saga" the news that Ekkehard's wife was called "Bolfriana", and that after Ekkehard's death she married Wieland's son "Wittich". Wittich's castle, however, was called "Treborg" (wooden castle or forest castle), also known as "Thornburg" ("Dornburg", which is a name given by

The castle of Lady Venus, the Venusberg, is described as such by Hermann von Sachsenheim in the "Mörin".

Just as they tried to historicize the noble "Tanhusaere", they also wanted to create a historical version of the "faithful Ekkehard". He believed that he had found this basis in the "faithful Ekkehard", whom we know as "Bundschuh" from the "Hohenstauffen saga", and then in Ekkehard II, Margrave of Meissen, whom Emperor Henry III called "Läellssimum üäslsiu" in 1041. Both hypotheses are incorrect. The closest resemblance can be found with the margrave of the same name, the keeper of Harlunge, who admittedly does not correspond to any historical personality and, as we shall see, is the flower of a common tribe with our faithful Ekkehard. His legend is soon told. When Diether, When King Ermanrich's brother died, he appointed the faithful Ekkehard as guardian of his immature children. Ermanrich seized their kingdom and treasure, besieged them in their castle, which he stormed, and had the captured nephews hanged on the castle hill. The name of that castle is Breisach. For a long time the Dispute over the geographical question between Breisach im Breisgau, Harlungzburg (Lower Austria) and Brandenburg an der Havel, which in old documents is also called Brisia, terra Briseorum, terra Brisia, surely Brennenburg is well known, as the Brandenburgers themselves call the "Burning". This question, like that of the Venusberg, is not a geographical one, but a mythical one, even though the following inscription stood above the gate of Brandenburg on the Havel: "Rex Harlungorum quondam tua moenia cinxit, te rex conuertit Carolus et Magnificat, Otto fundavit, dotavit, pontificavit, Pontificem primum statuit ibi Caesar Udonem," and at its gates lies the Harlungenberg, on which Ermanrich's blood council is said to have been carried out. All this can be found even more often in the German lands, and everywhere with equal justification, because the background is not a historical, but a mythological one.

But like Treborg and Brisach, Fritila is also mentioned as the castle of the Harlunge, also a geographical bone of contention. It is sought in Fritzlar, Friedberg on the Rhine, Vercelle and Fcltrc, everywhere with equal right and wrong, as was just mentioned with Brisach. Fritila is a name formed with the final syllable "thilia", just as Fritilo, one of the Harlunge themselves, bears the same name with a masculine inflection and the first syllable "Fri" is based on "Fria, Bolfriana".



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is, like Freitag, Fritac, also Vsafrig. The "Vilcina-Sage" also explicitly states that the people of Väringen call this castle "Frid- saela", which is again a synonym.

As well as Berchtana east for Bertha, Huldana (also Hlodana) for Hulda stands for Bolfriana, Ekkehard's wife "Bol Fria" set, from which result the "courting Fraya" explains, since "bau" in Old Saxon means Buhle, while bol means evil in Norse.

The name of Fraya's sun house "Volkwang" (Folkvangr) means "people's fields" and used to refer to the fields filled with people at harvest time. But this is incorrect, as will become clear later. "Volkwang" does mean "Volks-Anger," but in the sense of our present-day cemetery, the graveyard. Fraya and Wuotan divide themselves into those who have fallen in battle; each chooses half. This division, however, takes place in such a way that Wuotan leads the disembodied souls to Valhalla, while Fraya leads the soulless bodies to Volkwang. The hall in Frayasburg is called "Fensaal" (Fensalir). This name has also been misinterpreted as "swamp hall"; by referring to the Nordic Naming, swamps from "keu" deriving thought. Man overlooked in the process, that that name from "fan," "fanin," "fen" - Spark, Brand, fire, procreation, and therefore "Fensaal" actually means fire hall, fire hall, "conception hall".

Just as German mythology is built on the trinity of "birth, life, death", in the idea of rebirth after death, the end and the beginning (Alpha and Omega) of all things meet, which is why Fraya unites the dead in the Fensaal as the "Brandsaal" (funeral pyre, corpse fire) in order to let them emerge from the Fensaal as the "Zeugungs saal" to new life. This is how the ring of eternities closes and new life sprouts from death.

Since Fraya's necklace is called "Brisigamen", also the "Breisacher gold", this name corresponds to the hall name "Fen saal", which we have come to know through ancient local tradition as Breisach, Brisia, Brandenburg and others. When Bolfriana marries Wittich for the second time, we find that the name Wittich means "the one who lives in the forest" (Old High German: Witigouo, Old Saxon: Widga). Just as the term "Forst" is derived from Forcht, Föhre, and formerly denoted only a pine forest, but today denotes a forest in general without distinction of tree species, the word "Tann" is likewise, but less commonly used; this too used to refer solely to a fir forest, whereas today it denotes a pine forest.

is used synonymously with Forst, and thus Wittich is the word used in the Tannhäuser "living in the Tann".

Bolfria, however, is King Drasian's (Tresian in Wolddietrich) daughter, whence her castle is called Drasinburg (Tresinburg), which was again sought in Trechlinburg on the Rhine due to an error that has already been mentioned several times. In Wolddietrich, however, this castle is also called Treisenmure and is under the control of Ruodwin, Wittich's nephew.

But now we have Traismauer next to the one Venusberg in Lower Austria, which is called "Trasinmuore" in the Middle Ages and lies in the "Traismafelde", like the "Harlungoburg" in the "Harlungoseld". The second "Venusberg", also in Lower Austria, also lies next to a "Drasdorf", which appears in 868 as a "Druosinindorf".

This cannot be a coincidence and the reason for the naming here, as with all analogous fells, can be traced back to mythical traditions, to Germanic-pagan cult places.

Another variation of the legend, which is our sole concern here, is tied to Brandenburg and reads: Margrave Iron of Brandenburg acquired this margraviate after he was forced to leave his homeland. He enters into a love affair with Bolfriana and meets his death at the hands of her betrayed husband, the faithful Ekkehard. Iron's wife, on the other hand, is the faithful Isolde of Brandenburg, who, disguised as a singer, frees him from the captivity of King Solomon, but is accused of infidelity by Iron after his return home.

Just as we saw the Tannhäuser emerge from Wittich and the courting Fraya from Bolfriana, we still have to look for a bridge that leads from this to "Lady Venus". In the Middle Ages and still today in folk tales, the "Venussin" has a second name, that of "Lady Fene", which in southern Germany was the same as Fraya and which is echoed in Venelsberg, Veniluck, Veniloch, whereby it must be noted that the "V" of these names is pronounced "F".

Fraya, like the Greek Venus, was also "foam-born". She is the moon goddess who emerges from the waves every night. In ancient magical beliefs we find her associated with the round magic mirrors by means of which the Thessalian women are said to have drawn the moon down to earth in ancient times. We encounter similar sorcery in our witch trials. L. Becker and I. v. Hesner publish in the 14th issue

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of her interesting work: "Works of art and crafts from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance", Frankfurt, 1853, the illustrations of two round hand mirrors from the 14th century, whose capsules, cut from ivory, depict Venus, not in an antique conception, but in our popular, traditional design.

Magdeburg preserves the memory of Fraya in his name. In the chronicle of Christoph Entzelt von Salfeld (1579), the chronicler writes: "Carolus (the King of the Franks) destroyed in putena, in castello putenae phanum et imaginen Veneris. there stood on a chariot an image of a beautiful naked woman, crowned with a wreath of myrtle, on her breast a burning torch, in her right hand she held a round ball (think of the moon and the magic mirrors), in her left three golden apples, after her stood three bare maidens, with arms braided (into each other) and faces turned away, each carrying a golden apple, the other reaching out. The chariot was pulled by three swans or doves. The Saxons called it the Magdeburg."

Now that Lady Venus, Lady Fene as "Fraya", namely as "courting Fraya" appears to be conceived like the "Voium vnlAivaga", thus corresponding to a goddess, namely one from the times of the decline of the Wuotan myth, when it had already degenerated and flattened, so naturally both Ekkehard and Tanhauser (Wittig) must likewise conceal figures of gods. It is known that Fraya's husband was Hermut (Hermodr), Odr, Zeizzo (the Beautiful), who was sent to earth to teach people to sing but was murdered by envious dwarves.

But now the Wuotan myth knows the "silent forest dweller Widar", because:

"tall grass and greenery grow  
in Widar's wooded residence"

(Edda, Grimnismal).

the young sun god, who is born on the shortest night of the year, Christmas, and who is thought to be incorruptible, which assumption was maintained as long as the twilight of the gods had not yet dawned. When this dawned, when the gods faded into heroes or demons, it was also possible that that unpleasant song of the Edda "Oegisdrekka" could be written which mocked the gods, just as Lucian's "Talks with the Gods" were written at a time when the Olympian gods had already lost their divinity.

In that song, the malicious Loki hurls the following accusation in Fraya's face at the banquet of Oegir (Agez):

"Shut up, Fraya, I know all about you.  
You lack no flaw!  
Each of the Aesir and Elves in here  
Already took you to sweetheart!  
Shut up, Fraya, you seductress!  
Corrupt of faith!  
Through love-potion you bound your physical brother  
To the scorn of the heavenly ones!"

Frö was her husband and brother at the same time, and so Loki was able to reveal the great secret. But Widar is none other than Frö, who returns after seven months to stay with her for seven \*) months in the "Venus Mountains"; he is her second husband, who is in the "Tann house" Tannhäuser, while her first husband Odr, Hermut, Zeizzo, who now of course old sun god, is the faithful Ekkehard.

Thus the whole Tannhäuser saga can be traced back to its mythical origin, except for the one circumstance that tells of Pope Urban's irreconcilability and the green of the barren staff. But even this trait is not present in the poem of the "Rabenschlacht" received.

"Again and again," says F. v. d. Hagen's book of heroes, "Dietrich of Bern reconciled with Wittich, but not in the Battle of the Raven, after he had slain his brother Diether and the sons of Etzel. He shot his shaft (javelin) at him, and it still stands green today, so that anyone who comes there may see it.

Thus found found itself the "devil lady Venus" as Lady Fene and Bolfriana in the heroic saga as the unfaithful wife of the faithful' Ekkehard, who now sits warningly in front of her castle, as the "courting Fraya" from of the time of the decline of the Wuotan myth, finally in the heyday of this latter we recognized in her the foam-born moon and goddess of love Fraya. Her first consort Ekkehard is Odr, Hermut, Zeizzo, who walks among men, while her second is the young sun god who lives in the "Tann".

\*) The myth always reckons ebm according to seven or nine months or years, with the "transitional months" of fall being either winter or summer; hence seven (or nine) eternal nights, that is, winter months or as many summer months or days.

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But since the young one is one again with the old sun god, the Tannhäuser dwelling in the "fir tree", the Tannhäuser dwelling in "Widar's wooded land, where tall grass and green grows", is actually "the soulless dead man slumbering in the grave towards rebirth". That is why Widar, whose name clearly indicates the "return after death", is called the "silent Aesir", because the one sleeping in the grave is "silent as death". But then, when he returns

"To the Baterrache, from Ross's back  
rises the mighty Son."

Widar is described as the "strongest Aesir" after Donar, which he is after he has overcome death. Emperor Rothbart, who sleeps in the Untersberg, will also, when he returns, defeat all his enemies, and only the strong can do that.

The Tannhäuser legend, understood in its mythological purity, thus means resting in the grave with the hope of resurrection, the transition from death through birth to new life.

From this result it further follows that the legend, based purely on myth, is the property of the entire German people and therefore cannot be linked to any geographical area in a historical sense, and that all local memories, whether they are hidden in place names, documents or traditions, can only refer to ancient pagan cult sites.

The Harlungen saga, which is so closely interwoven with this saga, in turn invites interesting comparisons with the Nibelungen saga, in that both revolve around a treasure; but while the Nibelungen represent powers of darkness, the Brisinge are deities of light; while the Nibelungen inhibit procreation like the sunset during the day, the Brisinge promote rebirth at dawn. That is why the dragon lying on the Nibelung gold is called Fafnir (Fa - procreation, nir - never, end), that is why the Nibelung hoard is the sunset, but the Breisacher gold is the hopeful hoard of rebirth, of resurrection in the dawn.

Therefore, at last, the bright sun-gold of Brisigamen shines in the dawn as a radiant necklace around the mildly shimmering moon:

"You who produce children and fruit - in abundance, dear goddess,  
yours alone is the right to give and take life."

How did the Teutons not know how to clothe such terribly sublime thoughts in simple, charming and cheerful images! The goddess of death as a friendly goddess of love!

And yet, such a sublime image had to shrink, the fair Fraya had to become a "devil's wife":

"Lady Venus is a beautiful woman,  
lovely and graceful,  
Like sunshine and the scent of flowers,  
her voice is soft.

Her noble face is wildly surrounded  
by glowing black curls;  
When her big eyes look at you, your  
breath will stop."



## Aggstein on the Danube.



Iduna had fallen from the world ash tree; the green-gold veils had been stolen from the friendly goddess, and in the frosty ice dungeon Gerda languished, trapped by the terrible winter giant.

A thick blanket of snow lay over the forest. Tree and bushes bore the wintry burden, and like frozen tears the icicles hung down into the hardened snow. These were the ice fetters with which the Terrible One had put nature under winter's spell. Down by the river, the ice lay jagged in the blue-green shimmering; these were the "ice chains" with which the terrible man had bound the fair lady "Isa", the dear Danube woman, this was the giant wall with which he had wanted to dismantle the river. A rough north swept through the forest with long drawn-out notes like the plaintive sound of a harp, like the mourning song of the prisoners in the terrible ice dungeon. But up in the air a flock of hungry ravens circled the Aggstein's stone head crowned with ruins.

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The snow crunched under the footsteps of the climbers, and icicles splintered from the trees into the snow. Then the forest thinned out, a sharp gust of wind blew sandy snow into our faces, and to the left we could see broken masonry; the Aggstein had been climbed. The key in the rusty lock turned with a screech and the heavy gate creaked open; we were standing in the gate hall. It looked gloomy enough. To some who entered, the creaking of the gate hinges might have sounded something like what Dante's poet's eye read above the gates of hell: "You who enter here, leave all hope behind!"

But while the knightly predatory vultures that once roamed here may have had a hard enough time, the curse of terror that surrounds Aggstein's ruins is older than legend would have it and goes back to far earlier times than those in which "Master Jörg Scheckh of the Forest" robbed up here.

Although the castle was not built until the beginning of the twelfth century, although the seal of "Berthold of Aexstain" shows a boulder (stone) with an axe hovering above it, the name itself is older than the existence of the castle, and is also to be interpreted differently than the seal (axe-stone) would have us believe.

The Aggstein rock lies in the Aggswald forest, through which the Aggsbach stream rushes; it was from this rock that the name passed to the castle that grew from its head. Similarly, the Aggsbach was the inspiration for the Karthause, the village and the market town of Aggsbach, which were named after it. Of these three place names, however, only the name "Aggsbach" came down to us in documents from the earliest times, namely as: "Achispach locus" in a document dated October 6, 830. The basic word "Achis" (pronounced Akis) is the Gothic "agis", the Old High German "akiso" and means terror; thus the name Aggstein means correctly frightening stone and therefore this Schreckensstein lies in the Schreckenswald forest on the Schreckensbach stream.

But now the rock in the sea on which the terrible water giant of the German myth, Aegir, lives is called "Agstein"; this is the magnetic mountain often mentioned in fairy tales, which draws the iron out of the ships so that they sink to pieces. This terrifying stone in the sea, the magnetic throne stone of the water giant Aegir, fits in perfectly with the Terrible One, who also possesses the Agis helmet. Here, the terrible Aegir bore the local name Agez, with which he still appears in the fairy tale, weakened to "master thief"; for he too had to, like the other personifications of the German myth,

that, stripped of his divine qualities, he became more and more humanized, the more Christianity took root in the popular soul and the Wuotan faith developed steadily from the "Over-belief" degraded to "superstition".

Thus we see that the name Aggstein is a pre-Christian one, which goes far back into pre-Roman times and is closely related to a feared demonic being.

The naming itself, however, dates back to the days of our people's youth, to a time when neither annals nor chronicles counted the years, to a time when there was no arbitrary naming. The naive minds of our ancestors, who still thought of nature in a completely different way than the times of Humboldt, populated forest and meadow, sea and river, air and earth with otherworldly, ghostly beings, and this, depending on the impression that the landscape image aroused in him, with friendly, benevolent gods or with the hostile, evil forces with which their good gods were thought to be in constant battle.

But the Danube was - and still is today - the most rapid river in Europe, separating southern Celtism from northern Germania. This, mind you, was at a time which preceded Roman rule by many centuries, for at the time when the first Roman watered his horse in the Danube, the Germanic tribes had already advanced far to the south, had conquered the Celts and amalgamated with them, so that only in the remotest corners of the Alps were the ruins of the Celtic people still purely preserved. For this reason, a brown-haired, dark-eyed race of people is still in the majority south of the Danube, while north of the Danube the blond-haired and blue-eyed race has remained the dominant one.

At that time, centuries before the Roman invasion, the Germanic tribes were not yet able to cross the river, for they knew neither ships nor bridge building. The mighty river filled them with that timidity which is characteristic of a child's mind when it sees the incomprehensible, the incomprehensible, and so it populated its waves with nixes and mermaids, its floodplains and riverbank mountains with ewes and manes and its gloomy user areas with ghastly giants.

Thus the Danube valley from Melk to Spitz bears the name "Wachau", first mentioned in a document on June 23, 823, and a rocky hill near Dürrenstein is called "Watstein". Many more



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ancient mythical place names can be found in the Wachau, but only these two, apart from Aggstein, may be mentioned today.

"WachHilde" was a mermaid, a woman of the sea, and the giant "Wate" fathered his son Wieland with her. Wate carried this son Wieland across the sea to the sword-forging dwarves so that he too could learn the art of sword-forging. But when he later became a master of the art and the dwarves would not release him, he outwitted them and slew them. Now it is by no means a coincidence that the "Wat stone" stands here in the "Au Wach-Hildens" (Wachau). - But for centuries the Germanic tribes north of the Danube strove to cross the Danube; finally Wate carried his son Wieland, his people, across the river to the dwarves, to the sword-forging Celts in the Alps. Once the Germanic tribes had crossed the Danube, they pushed the Celts more and more southwards, so that today they only live as ruins in the most hidden corners of the Alps. In both the Traisenthal and the Pielachthal, however, there is a Wieland village, and these are proven to be ancient forging sites. But this Germanic migration had already taken place in pre-Roman times, at a time when the exodus took place differently than at the time of the so-called migration of peoples.

But crossing the Danube was not so easy, even if Wate carried his people across the river. They had waited until the winter giants had built the ice bridge, that is, until the floating ice floes had accumulated and frozen together to form an ice sheet. Now the train of peoples could cross the river. The Germanic tribes often made use of such ice bridges, the Romans did not disdain them either, and even today they have not been forgotten.

At that time, however, people believed they had to thank an evil, demonic being for this good deed and feared its deceitfulness. What could be more natural than the opinion that such a capricious being could be appeased by sacrifices to buy its favor. Here on the Danube in particular, numerous legends point to the nature of these sacrifices.

According to legend, the devil built bridges, castles and even churches, for which he demanded the first or even the first three souls of those who would enter the building first. The "stupid" devil was usually tricked by the fact that a wolf or dog, cat and rooster were the first to cross the bridge, enter the castle or church.

chased the church. Indeed, it is still customary today for the farmer who moves into a new or newly acquired house to chase the dog, cat and cockerel over the threshold before entering it himself. This is an ancient pagan custom and a remnant of the old sacrificial customs.

In those times, however, when the Germanic tribes crossed the Niesen ice bridge, faith was not yet smothered in misunderstood formalities, people did not yet dare to practice such deception, and the first, or the three first, to reach the other side of the river were really sacrificed to the terrible Agez on his sacrificial site, the Dread Stone in the Dread Forest. The legend tells us again how these sacrifices were made. The robber knight "Dread forest", who long time held to the historical "Jorg Scheckh from the forest" because of the similarity of names was however no other than Agez the Terrible, the master thief himself, who is said to have hanged the prisoners, riding on handles, over the overhang of the cliff, or pushed them into his "little rose garden". This is an inaccessible, narrow slab of rock where the "victims" either starved to death or fell into the depths, seized by vertigo. The legends of the "robber baron forest of horrors" refer to the "sacrificial hut in the Schreckenwald", while "Scheckh vom ald" came quite undeservedly to that extraordinary honor in front of his "erufsgenossen von der Sattelnahrung" "erufsgenossen von der Sattelnahrung", because he did it neither milder nor wilder, but just as well as all the others. It is both remarkable and noteworthy that exactly the same legends are told about the castle "Schreckenstein" on the Elbe near Teilchen as about the Aggstein on the Danube, and it should be noted that both names have the same meaning.

But there are two other aspects worth considering: the Aggsteiner Mauth and the right of "Grundruhr". It is well known that all the revenues of the old pagan sacrificial sites and sanctuaries were transferred neither to the church nor to the sovereign after Christianity had supplanted paganism. The sacrifices of the Agez diminished over the centuries to the same extent that the rising culture took the horrors out of the river crossing, and so it was undertaken more frequently. Those who had previously been relentlessly sacrificed could now make do with the "Wehrgeld", similar to the old Germanic fine, and so the Mauth arose all by itself. The emergence of tolls in general is also linked to the so-called "Grundruhrrecht".

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This too has its pagan origins, namely in the sacredness of the ground of an idolatrous activity. Of course, it was badly abused in Christian times and the real cause of life was taken from the impromptu. Already Tacitus (Germ. Cap. 9, reports of the "holy" grove of the Semnones that he who stumbled and fell in it was no longer allowed to rise, but had to roll out lying on the ground. He had "touched" sacred ground, he had been brought down on it by the deity himself, and was therefore only allowed to rise again outside the boundaries of the sanctuary. In the interests of the greedy landlords, this was extended to such an extent that all property that was lost on their land due to "Grundruhr" (touching the ground), for example due to the fall of a chariot horse or a broken wheel, became their property "in all forms of law". The knight on the road brought about such a land restitution by accident, by shooting down a chariot horse, and - he was no longer a robber, but merely exercised his "well inherited land rights". Hence the struggle of the nobility against the sovereign decrees against their rights, against the stupid view of the towns and city federations, which put such "noble rights of the saddle food" on the same level as common highway robbery.

It should also be noted that the "Grundruhrrecht" is a twin brother of the "Strandrecht", which, however, enjoyed a longer life.

So it is clear from this, too, that the squat lord Jörg Scheckh vom Wald was perfectly within his rights, and was by no means driven from his property because he was perhaps taking it too hard; the cause of his expulsion from Aggstein lies merely in the customs of the time for the conversion of government bonds. In the absence of bonds, towns, castles and often entire provinces were given in pledge in return for loans. Now that the pledgee could not extract coupons from them, as is customary in our highly cultivated, modern times, he sought to extract the interest and possibly also the capital from his subjects, and to exercise the right to land in the most emphatic manner in order to protect the sovereign rights which he now represented. But now the state needed money again and had nothing more to pledge; what to do? A pretext was soon found to remove such an inconvenient pledgee as "partisan" to the eight and his property forfeited

explain. A new pledgee, who lent a certain sum, was soon found, who chased away the first and robbed until a third came, who did to the second as the latter did to the first, and so it went on happily, and everyone had to be glad if he did not suffer the fate of the Baumkirchner in Graz, who had his head laid at his feet. This was the fate of Jörg Scheckh vom Wald on Aggstein, and after him Hans von Stein, who was replaced by Ulrich von Gravenegg, only to lose it again soon after. But that really belongs in the field of national economics and not in a mythological study.

If we have now recognized Aggstein as the rock throne of the terrible Agez, as a counterpart to the magnetic mountain of the fabulous island of Aggstein and others of the same interpretation, then, apart from the reasons already mentioned for its naming and dedication, the question remains to be answered, whether the scenery actually meets the requirements to have such an effect on the naive soul of a natural people, to evoke in them the feeling of terror, of horror, to become what Aggstein was and, albeit weakened, still is today. Even today, the locals shy away from the ruins, even by day, and nothing could make them shy away from a "heated tap" \*) to spend a night up there. "Not at a G'schloß!"

Yes, the area is designed to awaken the feeling of terror in the naive mind of the child of nature. When Agez the Terrible is overcome, when the fair Lady Isa is freed from the shackles of ice, when the blue-cheerful waves roll along the Danube valley again, then everyone can try to see what impression the Aggstein makes on their mind. Anyone who feels called to do so should try the Danube trip from Melk through the Wachau in a rowing boat; there you can see - It feels better than from the deck of the "Ariadne", and it also feels different in the narrow sculler or canoe.

How the Danube, the unformed daughter of the German Alps, rushes in through the river gate at Melk into the golden Wachau, the meadow of the mermaid Wachhilde!

Narrowed by gloomy forest mountains, the dark foaming waters wind their way into a gloomy, crater-like cauldron;

\*) Campfire of the alpine hunter.

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the inflow and outflow of the river is hidden from the eye, which believes the Danube to be trapped, transformed into a wild high alpine lake.

In the middle of the thin forest mountains, out of the blackish floods, a dark colossus of rock suddenly rises up against the clouds, its crenellated stone head raised threateningly and defiantly. This is the Aggstein.

Even when the sun is shining brightly, there is something peculiarly gloomy about this view, which becomes even more oppressive when dusk folds its mysterious veil around the mountains. However, this landscape's character is downright eerie when the atmosphere of a thunderstorm oppresses the air, when those peculiar effects of color and light play around the cliffs, lightning flashes through the shattered walls, and the old pines groan as they bow to the storm. At such moments, even the man of culture has a faint inkling of what once compelled our ancestors to devotion with unconscious power, what forced them to firmly believe that an enemy of gods and men lived here, what compelled them to call the rock the Dread Rock in the Dread Forest.

When the storm roars through the forest, so that the trunks groan, the rocks whimper and the waves roar, then it resounds through the valley like the mighty sound of a harp and the poetic mind of the people's soul in its childhood dream thought it could hear the mermaids singing.

And truly, here the sentient person, who still calls something of what others do not understand his own, is overcome by a mood very similar to that before the Lurley Rock in the Rhine. This is no coincidence, however, because the Lurley legend applies to Aggstein train after train, only the people have forgotten the mermaid's name and call her the "Madwoman of Aggstein". This Danube mermaid also sits above on bright moonlit nights, probably also in the shining sunshine, combing her golden hair and singing songs of love's sorrow and love's lust. But when the infatuated foe forgets to row, she laughs wildly and hurls herself into the flood, whirling the drinker down with her into her gruesome water palace to imprison his soul under a glass bell. This mermaid, however, is none other than the terrible Agez's predatory wife, the dreadful Ran. She, too, has given her name to a stream that pours foaming into the Danube; it is the Ranna, the Ran-Ache, the stream of Ran.

But while she sings her magic songs on the rocky peak above, her nine daughters dance their seductive round dance with flattering songs on the waves of the river below. Although the people have also forgotten the names of these nine fairy maidens, they have been honored elsewhere, and it may be at liberty here to supplement the local picture with foreign parallels. These names are significant enough.

"Himinglaffa", the "Heaven-assailing", opens the round of the nine, followed by "Dufa", the one "sinking to the depths": "Blodughadda", the "Blutdürstige", follows as the third, and "Hefring", the "sich Erhebende", as the fourth. The fifth, "Udur" (doom), the sixth, "Raun" (murmuring, rushing), the seventh, "Blygia" (storm), and the eighth, "Hefring" (the rising), follow: "Dröbna" (the threatening one), and as the last of the terrible nine: "Kolga" (the flood, inundation).

These names clearly show the dangers and horrors of the sea or the river. But the water is not always frightening, east, indeed mostly friendly and reflective, but the slightest breeze can cloud the mirror. That is why the people thought of mermaids as beautiful and gentle in appearance, but capricious, malicious and mischievous in character.

But Agez is not always terrible, he even knows how to make himself agreeable to the gods and humans from time to time. He visits the gods in Asgard and, after three months, invites them back to a huge drinking party. He has his hall illuminated with gold light, where the happy Donar drinks the master's drink. But the golden light is the very sun that now dwells in the depths of the sea or the earth, it is the seed that sleeps in hibernation in the earth under the blanket of snow, it is the Nibelung hoard that Hagen sank into the Rhine, it is the Amelung hoard that rests in the waters of the Danube not far from Aggstein.

But how the people transformed such treasure myths into treasure legends, and thus arrived at the richly structured treasure digger superstition, is illustrated by other landscape pictures.

But we wanted to pay old Agez a visit at the time when he holds the Danube, encumbered by its ice fetters, captive in the ice lock of his castle, at the time when he is trying to mine the river with his "Devil's Wall".

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The gate\*) closed reluctantly behind us, and its creaking sounded menacingly, as if it wanted to object to our going, as if it wanted to ask where Agez's victim was? The path led us in a wide arc through the hard-packed snow under the gloomy darkness of the pines, which seemed almost black next to the blinking snow. Soon we were at the Danube.

There, between the blue-green shimmering of the ice anemones in the stream, they appeared, the nine wave girls, and the green net of the Ran rushed between them quite gruesomely. Over there, however, the Jauerling rose up with its Tyregg, as if to mock the boastful Agez, for the setting sun made the snow-covered rocky peak gleam like the crest of a fiery cock. It was a comforting reminder. We wrapped ourselves more tightly in our furs and rejoiced that soon "Heimdold's" cock with its golden crest would crow, at whose cockcrow the giant building would crumble and our cheerful Lady Isa with her lovely entourage of snowdrops and violets could make her entrance into her laughing, glorious Danube meadows, into our beautiful Ostarland.



## The Brühl.



Before the cruel Thurkkengrewel, the place and the Place of the district under the Enns occupied and burned with his murder gangs, and in a quite abominable and horrible way, that it pitied the stone, lived a knight so called George on the castle of Medeling with his dear wives, so their Lord and Her husband was devoted to her with love and loyalty. And there was a very clever Galan the knight of Schönegh, who came with very

\*) If you would like to find out more about Aggstein Castle, its history, legends and architecture, we recommend the diligently compiled monograph: "The Aggstein Castle in Riederösterreich", by Ignaz Franz Keiblinger, in the VII volume of Reports and Communications of the Antiquities Association in Vienna, page 98 ff. For this study, the castle as such, as well as its actual history, was all too distant.

false promises, so that she might give him her love, which, however, did not succeed with the good woman and was a useless deed, because the virtuous woman only mocked him.

Schönegh, however, had a very evil disposition and could not get over the particularly well-deserved scolding. He spoke evil against the frightened woman, so that Knight George died and blasphemed and swore an oath that he would sell his innocent wife to anyone for three pfennigs. The poor martyr was thrown into the courtyard and kept there very harshly. And there was a faithful servant who took pity on the innocence of his wives so that he secretly led them out of the dungeon and kept them safe in the forest, where he also provided them with food and drink, though not to excess.

Knight Georgen's oath delighted the evil Neydhardt von Schönegh so much that he decided to buy the poor women of Medelingen for the three pennies. But his wealth was a torment to the knight Georgen. All his days he was full of sadness and bitterness, and it was only easier for him to be tired when he was engaged in noble hunting.

Once, while hunting, it happened that a very bad weather set in; it darkened and haggled as if the world wanted to go under. Then von Schönegh's horse shied, stumbled and crashed into the rocks with the rider, so that the rider threw his soul out of his body and died a miserable death. In response to his wretched cries, which revealed his fear of death and his fear of temporal and eternal punishment for the many wicked crimes he had committed throughout his life, a poor woman was seen rushing to his aid to comfort the dying man and plead with him for mercy from the Almighty God. But the wicked man, half-dead with pain and anguish, thought he saw a ghost or the devil's work of deception, for although he was very much disfigured by sorrow and privation, he saw that the wretched woman who was now helping him like the noble Samaritan in his time of need was none other than the outcast women of Medelingen.

But in order to save his eternal part, he shattered the honour and confessed his terrible misdeed to the knight Georgen, whereupon he miserably gave up his soul.

God bless the great sinner.

Knight Georg, however, went with his recovered wife to his castle, where he lived with her for many more years in splendor and happiness.



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As both lived out their blessed deaths. This cave, which served as a shelter for the innocent, faithful housewives of the knight Georg, has been called the Pfenning Stone from time immemorial. Later, the man of Medelingen built a nunnery on the same site as a perpetual memorial, but the said nunnery has perished in various difficult times, so that it is now impossible to say where it stood. The Pfenningstein, however, still stands and shows the wisdom of him who takes all creatures into his special protection."

This "Genovefen saga" and many others buzz around Mödling's old stone castle, as well as around the rocky valley that opens its stone portal behind Austria's youngest town and is wrongly called "die" instead of "der" Brühl.

There is no doubt that this valley is one of the highlights in the area around Vienna, and long before the time when the old Schultes began to walk from Vienna per psäso apostolorum to the Schneeberg and to describe the "journey" to this mountain in a two-volume work (1805), indeed even earlier than Seume wrote his "walk" from Grimma to Syracuse (1801), the Viennese were already making pilgrimages to Mödling, because there is an excellent drop growing in the area. Who could blame our ancestors that it was precisely this drop that inspired them more than the ornamentally jagged rock formations of the Brühl? Understanding of the latter only came later.

But even later, when the understanding of the beauties of nature, the understanding of the "Brühl" itself came about. It was just fifty years ago ( 1839) that Franz FehI in "Schmiedl's Umgebungen Wiens" gave the first hints about the meaning of the name "Brühl", and it was only in recent times that the mystery was revealed. The word Brühl means something like an enclosed forest, such as a "Bannwald" or a "Tiergarten" according to today's terminology; in the early Middle Ages this valley and forest name was also still correctly addressed with the masculine article. Thus Vertraut, Friedrich des Saithovffers Wittib, bequeathed a vineyard to the Heiligenkreuz monastery, "who leads to Medlich in the Pruel". But if we now look at the meaning of the name Medling based on its oldest form from November 20, 861, which reads: "Magilicha also Megelicha and Medlica," this means as much as Müdcheneigen. Maedchengut.

This "girl's own" in connection with the "Hag des Brühls" encourages people to investigate, especially as even stranger names and legends appear in the "Brühl", which have a deeply hidden mythical core.

Let's start the hike.

With the aqueduct of the Vienna High Spring Watercourse behind us, the valley quickly narrows. Fresh pine trees welcome us with their twilight shadows and lead us almost imperceptibly along park paths to the narrow valley gate, the hermitage. This is such a magnificent miniature painting of a rocky wilderness that it seems entirely appropriate as a Sunday play to prepare the eye for the more massive rock formations of the Höllenthal and Gesäuses, or for the wild high valleys of the High Alps, to which these form the second gateway.

Above us, broken walls rise up from the cliffs; this is where the best Magilicha stood. But the landscape seems strange to us. Dark pine green in light stands lets the gray blue of the limestone cliffs shimmer through, but the picture seems almost alien, almost Italian. This is not the usual shape of the "pine" that confronts us here. It stretches upwards with a tall trunk, lacking "branches" up to almost two-thirds of its height, which have been broken off by wind and weather, spreading its crown like an umbrella near the summit and giving us a pine-like view, the likes of which we are only used to seeing in the Italian landscape. There are few pine forests that have retained such a unique character as the Brühlerforst here. This peculiarity, however, has an unconscious effect on the observer and gives the picture its very special charm.

Between these pine-like pines with their broad, mighty branches the yellowish gray remains of the old Magilicha wall now shine down from the tops of the umbrellas.

But these ruined walls have nothing to do with the old Beste, because they are a forgery. Already half in ruins, the Beste was completely destroyed in 1683 and then the Medlingers came and used the dead castle as a quarry, as if they had had a shortage of stone. At the beginning of this century, a new ruin was built in place of the old one, of which only a pile of stones remains at the end of the same century. But the castle rock - near the hermitage - is shaded, and a wide, cheerful valley welcomes us. "Two ravens" and "Meierei" - nothing more needs to be said to enchant every old Viennese.

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To be moved. But we walk along the left side of the Thallehne, still on park paths, alternating between the shade of lime, beech and pine trees, past the Jägerhaus to where the park paths give way to narrower forest paths, where the mille-fleurs perfume becomes rarer, but the strong forest smell more palpable.

A wooded mountain meadow opens up; it is almost round and in the middle of it stands an ancient pine tree of majestic proportions. The whole trunk is hung with images of saints - probably more than a dozen - and there is a lectern in front. This is the broad pine tree. There could not easily be a more idyllic spot for forest devotion. And yet, how strange the Christian cult looks here! The whole setting reminds us of Tacitus' words: "Moreover, it does not correspond to their view of the majesty of the heavenly ones to confine them between walls or to make images of them with human features. Forests and groves are their temples, and under the names of their gods they invoke that inscrutable power which reveals itself to them only in worship."

Yes, that is the first point of our mythological pilgrimage; the tree is old enough to be a real Blötkbaum, and not just its ideal memory; The tree is old enough to be a real Blötkbaum, and not just its ideal memory; this is also guaranteed by its pictorial decoration, because Christianity could not blur its sanctification, it was concealed from the apostle to protect it from the axe, and finally paganism and Christianity had merged into one another, and so it still stands today, while its comrade in Vienna today stretches its withered roots like branches into the air and is called a "stick in the iron".

A prayer without words rises from our hearts to that unfathomable power, then the cooling freshness of the forest wafts around us again.

We meet a company of ladies, very exhausted, excited, almost anxious; they are summer visitors, apparently Viennese. Their question to us about the way to Medling opens the conversation and suggests that they are lost in the maze of forest paths. But this did not explain her anxious excitement, for it could hardly be explained by a simple lost route. This was an incentive, and soon a conversation was underway, as ladies are particularly fond of sharing their adventures. We soon found out that our "tourists" were on their way down from the Hussar temple and had been walking for three hours without knowing where they were going. They

had been warned by a farmer's wife to take the "three-hour-long path"\*) , on which the "three ghostly dogs" would follow them if nothing worse happened to them. Not only were they unable to leave the path three hours ago, but three dogs followed them in all seriousness, not making a sound, always running side by side with their tongues hanging out, and always remaining at the same distance from the frightened ladies. If they hurried, the dogs hurried; if they stood still, the dogs stood still; if they "walked slowly", the dogs followed in a slow trot, always silently with their tongues hanging out. Finally, one of the ladies had the idea of hurrying off the path through the forest at random; the others followed, and the dogs were suddenly out of sight.\*\*)

These messages at this point had a different effect on us than they might have on the reader of this essay. He might smile, but we did not. We too were now looking for the "ghostly path", without discovering anything reminiscent of the fourth dimension.

After barely half an hour, we had reached a boulder about eight meters high, which is split at the bottom so that you can sleep through it; a partially preserved stone circle surrounds it and testifies to its ancient sanctity. This is the Pfenning or Devil's Stone, which is the subject of the legend mentioned at the beginning. But the name and legend are erroneously applied to it, as they apply to the rocky outcrop next to the Nicolaus Cave, where the three stones stand. The erroneously named Pfenningstein is in fact the Hangende Stein, one of those boundary stones that were so highly controversial in the early Middle Ages, the "pendentes lapides".

If the stone circle, which is attested to by similar examples, undoubtedly indicates that this "Hangender Stein" was a place of ancient pagan worship, the

\*) Labeled "long way" on the map.

\*\*) This fact was communicated to the writer of this in all seriousness and "fully" credible. A coincidence may be involved, because the lady who witnessed this is nothing less than superstitious, I can vouch for that. However, the voices of legend and opinion are worthy of note. There were also several ladies who can confirm it and, if necessary, still testify to it today. If nothing else, this at least proves how inseparably the old belief in Wuotans, the belief in miracles, has grown together with the German Folk-soul, so that a one and a half thousand year old Christianity has not been able to suffocate it.

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The memory of the people is even clearer for its former veneration. Even today, the countryman crawls through the crevice to protect himself from illness, especially from the pain of the cross. from other misfortune, especially from impoverishment. That this crawl through is unshouted (in silence) and without looking back is something every child knows. After all, these magical customs have long since become part of children's play, as this nursery rhyme and many others prove: "Don't look around, the plumpsack goes round." It is clear that this rock, split without human intervention, must have been a highly sacred sanctuary, and it is possible, even highly probable, that it was the highest sanctuary of the "Pruel", since it lies on the long road whose sanctification likewise still unforgotten is still unforgotten. But also the "Three Stones" and the "Nicolaushöhle" are also close to this path, and it is precisely the Nicolaushöhle to which the legend of the Pfenning stein and the monastery for young women applies, if one transfers the concept of the monastery to pre-Christian times and assumes nuns or healers, namely Wuotan priestesses, instead of nuns. However, they may have lived in the cave, whose other corridors and chambers may already have collapsed. But even more of the mythical names in the Brühl come to mind, such as the "Dead Man", the "Otter", the "Krauste Linde" and the "Hundskogel".

The "Heilstatt" or temple site in the "Brühl" was certainly very richly endowed with land and may also have drawn rich profits from the sacrifices as a place of pilgrimage, so that the name "Magilicha", "Mädcheneigen" with reference to the Wuotan priestesses probably gives a clue.

But if we now examine the legends for their mythical core, then, as already mentioned, the Pfenningstein legend is based on the Genovefa legend, which, like so many other legends, we encounter very frequently, and always linked to specific locations.

Since "historical" events do not always repeat themselves in different places, and since the immigration of a historical legend is hardly conceivable, it must have a mythical basis, and it does.

Wuotan, the embodiment of the pond of light and air, has Frouwa, the embodiment of the earth, as his wife, or in other words, the sun god has married the earth goddess. In winter, however, he seems to have cast her out; she lives hidden in the earth under the blanket of snow like the little flowers, like the sown grain. Only

after the death of the traitor, Winter, the spouses are reconciled and the earth goddess blossoms anew in youthful beauty. As there Genovefa, as elsewhere Griseldis or Isolde, so here the "wife of von Medlingen" took the place of the forgotten earth goddess Frouwa. Similarly, the three dogs, the animals of the underworld, are inseparable from the three female healers. It is no coincidence that the miner's cart, which he uses to transport the ore from the shafts, is called a dog.

The dog is the animal of the underworld, the animal of death. And just as birth, life and death are the oldest trilogy, this trinity is also the basis of all three-god systems, of which the Germanic world of gods can provide many examples; that is why the third person of each of these trilogies is always thought of as black and evil. But the "Otter", a mountain name frequently found in Austria, is also represented here, and this name presupposes the presence of the Kyffhäuser saga in the Brühl Götterharug, although this is either unknown or has already been forgotten. The Kyffhäuser saga, which lets Red Beard sleep, and which is recorded four times in Lower Austria alone, also has a mythical basis, like the Genovefa saga. Like the latter, it can neither be "historicized" nor "localized", for it is neither the "old emperor", nor "Barbarossa", nor one of the "Karle" who sleeps, but Wuotan with his Einherjar, in the double sense of a god of the year and a god of time. As the god of the year, he sleeps through the winter months and awaits the cuckoo's spring awakening call; as the god of time, he sleeps until the last of the battles, when the old world will sink.

"For a rich man comes to the ring of counselors,  
A strong man from above ends the dispute,  
He decides everything with conciliatory conclusions,  
What he gives shall remain forever." (Voluspa)

This is precisely the highest and most beautiful conclusion of the Germanic concept of God, that he knows no complete annihilation, but is always permeated by the conviction of rebirth after death, in the smallest as well as the greatest. The local name "toter Mann" (dead man), which also occurs in Brühl, refers to the winter, through whose death the faithful, misjudged wife is once again taken in love by her husband. Some of the other local names may be lost, others are too far away to be placed in this context with certainty, such as "Weißenbach",

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"Rabenstein" and "In den Juden". Of course, the latter does not refer to the "chosen people" people, but to the Jötunen or Joten, the giants. Which, incidentally, also significantly corrects the explanation of the names Judenburg, Judenau and other place names.

Nevertheless, this yield is rich enough to be able to recognize in "Brühl" one of those highly sacred natural temples of our ancient ancestors, who had such a high opinion of the majesty of their heavenly ones that only the whole great glorious world of God was just big enough for them to consecrate it as a temple to that unfathomable power, which only revealed itself to them in worship in the forest dome.

And from this point of view, every German may now, without fear of being accused of heresy, make a "Germanic pagan," for what could be more magnificent, what more sublime than to swing oneself, surrounded by the mysterious forest, to that unfathomable power in a prayer without words, which only reveals itself to the sentient human being in the midst of the weaving and life of free, unrestricted nature.



## The Helenenthal.



Aquae, Badun, Baden! What images do not these three short words awaken in our souls! A lovely pair of sisters of imperishable youthful charm gazes lovingly at us, and this divine couple is the story and the prehistory. The dark glowing eye is firm but serious. The eye can see that it is used to seeing the iron dice rolling under the thunder of the electoral battle, with which the destinies of nations are decided amid the boiling steam of blood and unspeakable pain. But the same eye is also able to smile kindly at blessed fields and commercial states, for

the golden word peace is also familiar to the divine. Like a child, however, the fairy-tale blue eye of the sister laughs; always cheerful and joyful, and what it may harbor in its lake bottom of fright and distress, that rises transfigured from the veils of mist of the past, like the shower figure of our lovely Fraya from the foam of the waters, when the fairy-tale light of the moon glides over it.

What does Sister History tell us? Everyone knows that, and those who don't know may read it; what else would Gutenberg have invented his "black art" for?"

But a word of warning should be given to anyone who wants to read what she says, namely not to take her word for everything, because she sometimes makes a small mistake; either accidentally or deliberately - depending on the case.

But today we want to listen to the tale of Sister Prehistory. Stretched out in the soft forest moss by the "Jugendbrunnen", she awakens sweet dreams, like Scheherezade in the famous one thousand and one nights; but it is the strong smell of resin that wafts around us, not the lingering haze of jasmine and lotus.

The prehistory smiled mischievously and pointed to the stone under which the crystalline spring of the Jugendbründl was murmuring.

"Look," she said, smiling again, "look what antics Sister History is up to!"

Really! There is a picture of the Virgin Mary hanging on the rock face, a shrine in front of it, and above it you can read: "Maria-Jugendbrunn, newly erected in 1825." But next to the picture of the Virgin Mary is a plaque that reads:

E p i t a p h e  
General-Lieut. Adolph Jungend, Struck  
by a bullet from a snake's mouth  
July 31, 1624 in the 6th year of the  
30 year religious war.

"Don't believe a word of it! Sister History has her quirks: what would the blessed Lieutenant General Jungend have had to do with the Bründl, even if he had lived, and how could his name be mentioned in the same breath as Mary's! These snakes are also said to have been very clumsy things in those days, so that people were happy to drag them along the streets; they wouldn't have brought them up there."



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"But the inscription, the "Epitaphe", name, year, date -?"

"Made up, lied! He who wrote it here knew very well that he was writing a lie!"

"A lie, but why?"

And again the divine one smiled strangely, then she drew a jug full of the crystal clear water and handed it to us with the words: "From Urda's spring the world tree was watered with the tidings of the past, so that the people's consciousness may grow strong and not wither. Therefore drink from Lady Frouwa's fountain of youth!"

The incomprehensible had disappeared.

Fountain of youth! Fountain of youth? Now everything was clear. In order to counter the popular superstition, prudent men put a false cloak on the venerable fountain of youth, as they could not destroy it after all; just as they did with the "Jungfernbründl am Hermannskogel" near Vienna. But it was of little use to them there and elsewhere; all these fountains still bubble up today, unforgotten and faithfully guarded.

And indeed, here at the Jungendbrunnen, the venerable Jungbrunnen, we are standing in the middle of one of the three mighty Wuotans sanctuaries that Baden has and which can best be grouped according to the two castles Rauhenstein and Rauhenggg and the little church of St. Helena.

It is well known that the wide plain that surrounds Vienna and is divided by the Danube into two halves, the Marchfeld and the Neustädter Ebene, has served as a playground for the armies of nations since prehistoric times. It was on this vast plain that Stone Age man hunted the mammoth and the woolly rhinoceros with his weapons splintered from the rock. Later man, who had already united to form nations or at least tribes, fought the battle for existence on this plain, albeit in a different way than in the age of tramway coachmen and coal workers. Later, the Romans came from the south and built their stone road where the iron road now runs; five hundred years later they returned home, and behind them the armies of the Germanic peoples rolled towards the spacious Germanic grave - Italia. Then came perhaps even more turbulent times. Huns, Avars, Mongols, Magyars, Turks and Tartars surged past here, because all of them had

craving for good German blows. There is no nation in the old world, no people in Europe, that has not left behind a number of cracked skulls at this level.

Under such circumstances, there was no hope of a prosperous life in the mountains, and even the most intrepid sword-wielder of those days longed to find a quieter place to live, where he could occasionally unbuckle his armor and not always have to sit in the saddle if he wanted to enjoy the home-brewed decoction that became the ancestor of our brown-reddish "Bavarian".

Thus it came about that those ancient lords withdrew behind the rampart of the Wienerwalde, which at that time was called the Zeizzo Mountains or mons Cetius, and closed all the valley gates with "castles" that opened from the mountains towards that somewhat too lively plain. Thus, as was only possible with a warlike people with warlike gods, these castles or fortresses were also temples, which is why most of the mythological landscapes are found in the mountain range that stretches from the Semmering to the Donau near Vienna. However, these castles or palaces do not include the buildings that are still preserved in ruins; these were only built more than a thousand years later and took over nothing from the old castles except the name and here and there the earth stables, the mysterious underground passages.

The names themselves, Rauhenstein and Rauhenegg, indicate a simultaneous origin, as "Egg" and "Stein" have the same meaning as "Burg". It is significant, however, that the first dynastic family to be named as owning both castles was the "Thurso", and that families of the same name also lived on Dürrenstein and Lichtenfels. As family names were hardly ever mentioned at that time, this exception to the rule is justifiably thought-provoking, and all the more so as Thurso corresponds to the giant name of the "Dürfen", the analog of "Jötunen" or "Joten", from which the word Juden was later erroneously formed (Judenburg, Judenau, by the Jews), which gave rise to many misunderstandings in history, legend, heraldry and topography. The giants, however, as the embodied forces of nature of the mountains, fit quite well as guardians of a valley gate, such as this one.

Now that we have recognized the castles of the gods built by the giants or Thurses, let us take a look at the gods of the

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Group of Rauhenstein, the center of which is the fountain of youth, the Jugendbründl.

This originates at the foot of the Hühnerberg. A significant name because chickens were sacrificial animals and the cockerel in particular is a wise, indeed a ghostly animal. German mythology recognizes three roosters, the golden-crowned, the red-crowned and the black rooster. (Here, too, the third of the three is black.) More proof could be provided, but let this be enough. But not far away there is a second Hühnerberg, probably only a precursor of the first, and the occurrence of the local name "beim Hexenkreis" is very significant.

Just as Wuotan is the first of the three male gods, and also represents them in individual form, as well as the entire lower world of gods, as is the case with Frouwa with regard to the female deities, the same relationship applies to the Hechse, as the most distinguished of the three priestesses. (Hechsa, Truda, Wala.) Especially at the time when Christianity overthrew the Wuotan cult, when the formerly highly respected, divinely worshipped "Hechsa" were persecuted as "witches", the name witch was attached to all the different gradations out of misunderstanding. So here, too, the "circle of witches", actually the term "priestesses" or "circle of healers" refers to the place where they sang their magic songs in the "ring-ring-ring-row". Today, this custom has also become child's play. But where the giants build castles, there is the realm of death, of winter, and that is why the castle of the goddess of death Helia and her sacrificial stone, the "judgment stone" or "Urdas stone", lie down in the valley. But when churches were built in the country, when, according to the instructions of Pope Gregory the Great, the churches of the Crucified were raised in place of the shrines of the pagan gods, they were baptized after saints whose names corresponded to the gods who had previously been worshipped here, and so the new little church was christened St. Helena.

Once we reach Jni Thale, we climb up the other side of the mountain and thus reach the Rauhenegger Group.

Just opposite the "Urtelstein" is the Siebcnbründlleiten, over which the path leads us through cool forest, past the Jägerhaus, to the Rauhenegg ruins. In the area surrounding the ruins, there are a number of strange local names. First of all, there is the Lindkogel. The lime tree is Wuotan's sacred tree, and a strange coincidence unites the cross and lime leaf to form the cause of death

Siegfrieds in the Siegfried legend. Next to the Lindkogel is a small wooded area called the "Eichkogel". Should the memory of Donar linger here and perhaps even the three gods once had their seat here, as on the summit of the Schneeberg, which rises above the Helia Gorge (the Höllenthal), just as the Lindkogel overlooks the Helenenthal here? There is also the small Königshöhle (King's Cave), possibly once an earth stable. This assumption becomes probable when the small valley there has the very significant name "Rauchstallbrunngraben", i.e. the earth stable is already mentioned in the name. However, it is proven that in such places the earth stables with their chambers and passages served as dwellings for the holy women, as well as for underground worship. In the Rauchstallbrunngraben, however, there is once again the mythical Siebbrunnen (Seven Wells), sacred to the wife of Donar, Siebia. Further away is a "Lehnstuhl" (not the one at Merkenstein) on the Jägerwiese. Like the one on Hermannskogel, the latter probably points to Wuotan, which means that this chair can also be interpreted as Wuotan's seat. The old allodial lord of this district may have taken possession of it as a "sun fief", as a sign that he recognized no overlord above him but Wuotan, the king of the gods. This may be supported by the mountain next to the Hühnerberg, because only the free head of the tribe was allowed to sit in judgment.

But now that some people are also allowed to use the

If the Turks were considered to be Turks, which would still have to be proven, one could recognize a settlement of this tribe in Baden with its castles. The Dürfen or Thursen in the mythical sense, however, are connected to another place name, and this is the small village of Guttenbrunn\*), which means giant fountain. But there is also a mountain behind the "Urtelstein" with the name "Burg stallberg".

All these names give a very peculiar overall picture of a mythological background.

The valley of Helenenthal, which was undoubtedly very gloomy in ancient times, especially where the "Urtelstein" (Urda's stone) blocked it off, must have reminded the naïve mind of the myth that tells how a master builder wanted to build a castle for the gods to protect them against the ice and mountain giants, and in return, he built himself the light Fraya,

\*) Gutta, Zutta, Zetta, Zötun, Zote, Riese.

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together with the sun and moon. The building was to be finished on the first day of summer (May 1). At last the gods realized that they had come to harm through the wickedness of Loki and forced him to prevent the builder from completing his work. The trick succeeded, and so the castle of the gods stood without the gods having to give up Fraya, the sun and the moon.

The valley blocked off by the Urtelstein may have appeared to our ancestors as such an inaccessible giant castle, and in fact it was also a very safe refuge for them against the armies of peoples who had their ravaging armies surging across the plain.

But it is not just place names that give Helenenthal its mythical character. Numerous folk tales still remind us today that other gods were once worshipped there than today.

Only one of these legends may be considered here, because it brings the "Heil statt des Heliathales" into contact with that of "Merkenstein", albeit not through the legendary plot, which only conceals the mythical core.

Bertha of Rauhenstein was loved by a knight of Merkenstein, whom she sent to the promised land to test his loyalty. Later, however, she sat spinning, waiting for her knight, on a pillar by the road, and this pillar was later rebuilt from the proceeds of the spinning to become Vienna's border pillar, which still stands today, hence its name, "the spinner on the cross". But this spinning Bertha is none other than the queen of the gods Frouwa, as Perahta, the shining one herself. Rauhenegg is also the source of a legend with a deep mythical core, with clear references to the underworld and the Heliathal.

The castle ghost of Rauhenegg guards a treasure, as is the custom of a righteous castle ghost. This spirit can now only be redeemed by someone whose cradle is made from the wood of a cherry tree, which sprouts from a stone that a bird carries to the pinnacle of the tower.

These conditions seem harsh, and yet the meaning is that the gods who sleep in the underworld in Helia's hall, released from their winter sleep, return in spring. The messenger here is thought of as the first fruit. Its cradle is the wood that grows from a cherry stone, namely the cherry tree itself.

Everything else is a poetic addition and a later expansion when the mythical meaning of the legend was already obscured.

In this "great" place of salvation, which consisted of the two castles Rauheuegg, Rauhenstein and the church of St. Helena, this holy three, as: "birth, life, death", or "becoming, reigning and passing away", immediately comes to light. Rauhenegg is easily recognized as the place of "becoming" through its cherry stone legend; instead of "passing away" or "death", St. Helen's Church is recognized as the place of salvation, but only Rauhenstein could be shown to be the sacred place of "reigning". And indeed, this castle is also a place of "reign":

### **The Saga of the Fehm Court of Rauhenstein.**

Dark and mysterious, the legendary tidings of a "secret court", connected with the whole horror apparatus of medieval justice, iron maidens, secret executions, underground halls, dungeons and corridors, or court hearings in the midnight! The gloom of the forest, and all that is similar, is gradually fading from popular memory. The scene of these horror stories is or was the Rauhenstein ruins.

People were only too willing to accept these legends unnoticed as "old wives' tales", as no evidence could be found on record to prove the existence of the Fehme in Austria. But, just as man had denied the existence of underground passages for so long until several hundred of them had actually been found in the country, the existence of the Fehme in medieval Austria will only be acknowledged when at least the proof of probability for them has been successful.

The first witness to be heard is definitely the folk memory, the legend. The people's legendary mouth has always been a true mouth; it never lied, and it was certainly not its fault if it was misunderstood or misunderstood. Of course, the legendary mouth of the people does not take it exactly with the names, and he could never make friends with the date. What were initially giants later became Huns, Tartars, Turks, Swedes and even Frenchmen. It seems as if old traditions were lame companions of history, for they gradually moved from an age of memory to a more recent era as soon as the latter began to fade from the clear memory of contemporaries into the legendary form of the narration of the experiences of the deceased. As I said, the event recounted by the legend had really happened once, even the

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The place is really the one that is described as the scene of the crime, only the determination of time is almost without exception a mistaken one, much closer to the present than corresponds to the facts.

This is also the situation here on Rauhenstein with the "home court".

According to folklore, it was "secretly" cultivated here in ancient times, and this should be accepted as a fact.

Now the question is to be discussed, for the protection of what right, under whose and under what name did that court meet, and why secretly and at night?

For the time being, local names should also speak here.

In the middle of the Helenenthale stands a huge boulder that completely blocks off the valley, and especially in prehistoric times, when the rivers were even more powerful and the primeval forests even more impenetrable, further progress must not only have been hindered, but must have been regarded by the naive minds of the primitive people as having been closed off by the gods themselves.

Today, our oversaturated modern world strolls through the tunnel that pierces this boulder, and finds the landscape picture "very lovely" at best, because the rocks are not high enough to be "magnificent", "picturesque" can only be a "Tamino Gorge" or at most a "Lichtenstein Gorge", and not even for a "gorge", "wild and romantic", lacking torrent and glacier.

But the rock through whose broad body the tunnel is bored is called "Urtel-Stein", and later there is a bridge, the "Urtel-Brückel", then there is a "Richtberg" and a "Lehn-Stuhl".

But the gods sat in judgment at Urda's well, and the sun fiefdom, which was mentioned above, is closely related to the sun law, the ancient folk law of the Germanic tribes, the Germans.

The king as "Koting", as the offspring of a family that counted a god as its first ancestor, united three dignities in himself, that of king, priest and judge.

The gods sat in judgment at Urda's well; but the earthly gods, the sons of the gods, the kings sat in judgment at the place of healing that was to symbolize the mythical spring. That is why in ancient times the stone and bridge were not called Urtels, but certainly Urdas stone and bridge. There, at the three commanded things

the open court in broad daylight, and certainly at other times when the need arose.

This is how it was done everywhere in the German lands, on the Weser, the Rhine, the Danube and the Adige.

But when Charles the Frankish king crushed all the old institutions with an iron fist in order to replace them with his own, when he wiped out the indigenous dynasties in order to make the people leaderless and thus more docile, the survivors of the doomed dynasties fled to the mountains with a few loyal followers and became the defiant guardians of the German solar law that had been banished with them.

Roman law had come into the country with the Latin Church as a very questionable gift from the ruthless ruler. After all, Roman law was the law of a slave state, while German law was the law of a free people. But a Charles could not be happy with the law of free men; he needed the law of a slave state that was already accustomed to advocacy and violent legal contortions in casuistry.

At night, on hidden paths, hooded figures came together in the spooky twilight of the moonlit forest to secretly cherish and nurture the old German solar tradition, so that it might shine for future generations.

It was not Charles' sword that was hidden, as later misunderstandings or deliberate deception would have us believe, for how and where and when would the sword of the victor ever have been hidden? Charles was not the founder of the Fehme, but the Fehme was the suppressed German right, which could only be practiced in secret, like a conspiracy. The hidden sword is therefore only symbolic of the hidden, suppressed right, as well as of the sword lost to the defeated.

Charlemagne destroyed the Irmensuls not only in Saxony alone, but everywhere he swung his country-greedy sword. But these very Irmir pillars were the emblems of the Germanic right of the sun, and that is why he overthrew them in order to erect others - his symbols of sovereignty - to replace the right of the sun of free German men with the intrigue-ridden right of the slave state of Rome.



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But today Lower Austria still has several Roland columns, as ideal successors to the Irmin columns, one of which actually stood at Hermanns Kogel near Vienna. But again, a mistake has been made here if it is believed that the "Roland" in the name of the column refers to Roland the Paladin of Charlemagne.

This "Roland" derives from from "ruod", right, and from "land", country, and means thus "ruodlan", none other than "Land law", and thus those pillars were nothing other than signs of land law in those places where it was upheld. That is why these pillars stood and still stand in the market squares and at the same time served as pillories and pillars to enforce the law, or to expose the offender to public scorn.

Equally noteworthy are the many "red crosses" that are spread throughout the country\*); their name comes not from the color, but from "ruod" - right. There is also one here near Rauhenstein. And of most of these "Rights crosses" are the subject of eerie legends, and their locations are considered disreputable places.

We can now report that the Thurso family, which was powerful under the Lombard kings Aistolph and Desider, must have been resident here even before Charlemagne. Thurso is synonymous with giant, and as shown above, the construction of the castles of the gods here was thought of as a giant building.

Rauhenegg is considered to be the oldest building; Rauhenstein and later Scharfenegg are said to have been built by the Thursos in 919. This can only refer to new buildings, but not to new foundations of the three castles.

It is safe to assume that this dynasty, dating back to pre-Carolingian times, was certainly not favorably disposed towards Charles, but defied him here behind the mountains. The Thursos may have granted asylum here to the old Wuotan service, the German right and the German refugees and erected a "free seat" on "red earth". Again, the "red" here is nothing other than "ruod", namely in the sense of the " legal ground" and not in the sense of the earth "reddened by blood". However, the Thursen dynasty died out in the middle of the 14th century, as the already very reduced number of

\*) See the paragraph on one of them: "The Schalaburg."

of the indigenous noble families in Lower Austria diminished more and more.

But even after the end of the Carolingian Empire, after which, in accordance with the Treaty of Verdun, Germany had become free again and had its own kings, over whose German royal crown the Roman imperial crown shone, the spirit of Charlemagne, his institutions, had remained in force, including Roman law. Later, probably since the Saxon emperors, the Fehme was under the protection of the "German emperors" until Maximilian I abolished it, but even the Freigrafen had already forgotten the meaning and purpose of the institution, the Fehme fared like the Wuotan cult, like the magic, it suffocated in the formulaic stuff of a misunderstood ritual, it had lost sight of its goal.

Later, it is said that many other secret societies were treated in a similar way.

Despite the solemn abolition of the Fehme by Maximilian, it continued to exist in secret, as the last alderman of the holy Fehme died in Dortmund in the 1920s. Traces of the old "ruotland" have also been preserved in peasant law, such as the "Feldgericht", the "Haberfeldtreiben", and many other folk customs that are far from extinct.

Now that the "Thursos" is undoubtedly a pre-Carolingian "Kotingsgeschlecht" were the first native "Freigrafen" here, who derived their judgeship from the sun, as the highest symbol of German law as "Sonnensöhne", so the popular memory may not only be of the old commanded three holy things, but of the "Thursos" cherished in post-Carolingian times "secret things". The fact that Germanic law was derived from the sun is evidenced by many proverbs, such as: "The sun brings it to light" and many others, in which the proud legal consciousness of the German people is expressed, who had previously had no idea of the limitations of advocacy. But when German law and German faith had to flee the country, it was precisely those old Kotings dynasties and their loyal followers who took the "secret respect" of the fathers' customs, the fathers' violated law, and became their protectors as the "chair counts of the holy Fehme".

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But if Rauhenstein is now recognized as a "Freigrafenstuhl der heiligen Fehme" in the sense of popular memory, the legend of "Bertha, the spinner on the cross" at the border mark of Vienna suddenly takes on a peculiarly heightened significance.

It is probably self-evident that the feudal court, as having emerged from the old royal rights, was not only liked by the - in modern terms - post-Carolingian crown pretenders not only because of the preservation of the law alone as has been understood. It served undoubtedly at the time of its beginning also the Wuotan cult and certainly also political conspiracies for the dethroned dynasty to rule again.

How now but the old royalty in the three dignities: "King-Priest-Judge" his Expression found, so the old Faith in the Three: "Birth, life, Dying". The Symbol of the old faith is now either the male or the female Three, or the mystical representative of one of these two trinities, namely the All-Father Wuotan or the All-Mother Frouwa, also called Perahta, the Shining One. This Perahta is always thought of as spinning, as spinning, mythically interpreted, expresses procreation or sexual reproduction, as confirmed by the old mythical image of spinning on, spinning on and cutting the thread for birth, life and death. In German belief, however, death was merely regarded as rebirth into new life, in order to start the cycle of creation, becoming and decay into new creation again from the outset.

So the spinning Bertha was the personification of the old German faith.

But how did she come to be sitting outside the borders of Vienna? Why was she there in tears, waiting for her distant lover or husband?

In Vindomina (today Vienna), Christianity had finally gained a firm foothold in 740; the cross was raised above the sanctuary, the proud tree of the gods, the city's palladium, was felled and Hruodperacht's sanctuary was converted into Ruprecht's Church.\*) The Christian mystagogue banished the old faith with censer and consecrator far beyond the city limits, "on the heath to the wolves" and erected a cross there as a mark. There, the naive popular belief had the banished queen of the gods spinning and

\*) See the section of this book: Bindomina.

sit weeping and awaiting the return of the mighty Wuotan" because only in his absence could the unbelievable happen! Like the divine wife, the people waited for his return; they waited and forgot his name and now think they are waiting for the return of the emperor Redbeard! But they did not forget their spinning goddess, even though she was outlawed.

Out onto the heath, where the cross stood on which the banished goddess sat spinning and weeping, gazing after her beloved Vindomina, many a sad procession moved out there. Not only those who were banished "to the wolves of the heath" but also those who were to be brought from life to death by the executioner's hand for crimes were led to that cross, for the gallows also stood there.

A wicked, and therefore very telling, folk joke compares being hanged to a "wedding with the ropemaker's little daughter".

It is well known that all those hanged were previously regarded as victims of Hangatyr (Wuotan), and it is therefore no coincidence that Vienna's place of execution was out there by the "Spinner on the Cross" until the sixties of our century, from time immemorial. It is no less well known that Wuotan received half of the dead, namely the disembodied soul, while Fraya (Bertha) received the other half, the soulless body.\*)

The joke about the marriage to the spinning roper's daughter may have been aimed at this; perhaps in later times it was believed that Bertha spun the ropes for those to be hanged, for the hangman's rope had a certain sanctity as a talisman.

In the course of the Middle Ages, the earlier simple cross became the imposing Gothic wayside pillar which still bears the name "the spinner on the cross". The cross that adorns its top has a very peculiar design; it has double arms that point to the four cardinal points like a weather vane, so that it forms a cross when viewed from all sides. This is a jalismanic magic sign in the sense of "white magic", in order to make the sign of the cross, which he hates, appear visible to the banished Wuotan, from whichever side he may come.

In a certain sense, this "spinner on the cross" is also a "ruodlands pillar", as the high court once stood just a few hundred steps away from it. If this interpretation of the

\*\*) See" above: The Venusberg near Traismauer.

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If it seems to contradict the view of the "ruodlands pillars", this is only apparent. In the past, the cross that previously stood in place of the current wayside pillar marked the boundary between the Christian Vindomina and the still pagan flat land, and - especially since Bertha was stretched on that cross - can also be interpreted quite well in the old, original sense.

The spinning Bertha, who perhaps spun the ropes for those to be judged, could be understood as the Germanic Justitia vis-à-vis the Roman one, who had to give way to Roman law, which took root in Vienna (apart from the change of religion), which would make the significance of the Way Pillar, as a border pillar between Roman and German law, thus as a "ruodlands pillar" even more noteworthy.

It is quite remarkable, however, that the town of Wiener-Neustadt to the south of Vienna has a very similar border pillar, which is also called "Spinnerin am Kreuze" and is surrounded by similar legends to the former. Moreover, these two pillars stand facing each other, namely the one from Vienna on Vienna's southern border, but the one from Neustadt on Neustadt's northern border. And neither of the two towns has a second or third monumental border marker elsewhere apart from the inconspicuous boundary stones.

It is also strange that the Helenenthal valley with the Rauhen stein castle, the mysterious seat of St. Fehme, lies pretty much in the middle between these two "spinners on the cross".

And strange! In the legend of the "Spinner on the Cross" near Vienna, the spinning Bertha is called "von Rauhenstein".

In view of this fact, the two wayside pillars appear to be less border pillars of the two towns than border pillars of the territory of the Freehold of Rauhenstein.

A very peculiar archaeological discovery has recently been made, the riddle of which is almost self-evident from the above.

The "Monthly Journal of the Antiquities Association of Vienna" No. 2 of 1889 contains the following report, taken verbatim from the same:

"An artificial hill. On an excursion to Unter-Eggendorf for the purpose of making inquiries about the old fortress border of Wiener-Neustadt, the author of these lines was informed by the head teacher there that there was a hill near Sollens" which was called "Königshügel" (King's Hill).

leads. During a visit to Sollenau, he found this information confirmed; there is indeed an artificial hill south of the road that goes from Felixdorf to Ebenfurth, about ten minutes from Felixdorf, between the said road and the field path that branches off from it to Unter-Eggendorf, about which Mr. Radler, landowner in Sollenau, provided the following information:

The mound used to be about 4 meters high, the size of a large room, and had already been partially investigated and broken up by the father of the aforementioned man, so that it is now barely half as high. It is deepened in the middle, as the investigator had found ashlar without inscriptions in the mound and removed them. Quaderns were again discovered at a greater depth. According to the aforementioned gentleman, there are three stories about this elevation:

1. There had been a Turkish camp here in 1683.
2. It was the "sharp border" between Austria and Hungary.
3. From here, Przemysl Ottokar II, who was in the land that the Babenbergs had passed into their possession.

Strangely enough, these stories do not have the king in mind "Mathias Corvinus", whose invasions in Austria could perhaps best explain the name "Königshügel" (formerly also "Königsberg").

This note is followed by the following gloss:

The news about this "royal mound" is very interesting, even if the assumptions about its origins can by no means be explained as valid. The very fact that ashlar were found inside the mound indicates that there was a solid structure here, which the Turks would not have had the time or inclination to build either in 1529 or 1683. Ottokar II, who ruled as far as the Drau, could not be expected to build a structure to overlook a country from Sollenau. To assume a border marker for the three countries of Austria, Hungary and Styria here does not correspond to the actual circumstances, since the Hungarian border was always east of the Leitha in the Middle Ages, and even today's border is disputed by the country as running too far west. There could at least have been a marker here at the point from which the border between Austria and Styria left the Piesting, and in

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This assumption, however, is also very difficult to reconcile with the known fact that the border still crossed the bridge at Sollenau and only diverted from the stream below it. At the moment we still lack any evidence to link the existence of the Königshügel with Math. During the sieges of Neustadt, the king hardly needed to erect a stronghold so far from the town, as it would certainly have been built behind the Piestingbach. Thus, all the popular opinions seem invalid, but another "incontrovertible" fact has emerged, namely that the line from the Spinnerkreuz column (near Neustadt) to the center of the king's hill falls exactly in the line of the meridian. Perhaps this will provide a starting point for further research."

Well, all these attempted explanations are on the wrong track. It is also wrong to assume that on a mound that does not exceed the size of a moderately large room, only because some ashlar were found there, the existence of a "solid" building. Nor is the name "King's Mound" with the line of the meridian, although such lines can often be observed in prehistoric buildings.

Here, too, popular memory is certainly the decisive factor.

The people kept the name "King's Hill", the memory of a camp and a "sharp border". The king, after whom the hill is named, is to be sought in antiquity and not in the Middle Ages, when mounds were no longer built. A Germanic army king probably defeated a Roman army here, erected a victory monument in the shape of this hill and buried some ashlar of a destroyed city or fortress in this hill - in the sense of a counter-spell.

To give an example, it may be worth mentioning here how the "Free King's Throne" was erected when the field court was held.

The "Free Field Court" consisted of sixteen people; the eldest was the "Count" (Grefe) or "Chief Judge", the youngest was the "Frohnde" or "Frohner", while the fourteen others were the "Schöppen".

If there was any reason to open the "Free Field Court", the Frei-Graf, in the presence of two Frei-Schöppen, had ordered the Frohnden "in shining sunshine and under the open sky, all Frei-Richter, including the Freien of the

area itself, where the court should be held, to be summoned for the next Saturday, at the right time of the day, before the ordinary and in the old law recognized royal seat, where all shall arrive at the penalty and punishment of the old recognized penance."

The "Freie Königsstuhl" was a square, open, green square; each of its sides measured sixteen shoes. When it was built, a pit was dug in the middle, into which each of the sixteen lads had to throw a handful of ashes, a coal and a piece of brick, after which the pit was covered up again and the turf, which had been lifted from the ground, was spread over it again. The chair of the baron was placed on this covered pit by the gladdener. If there was any doubt as to whether the place was a real, permanent royal chair, the emblems had to be sought first, otherwise the judgments made would have been invalid.

For this reason, when it came to court, the Frohnde carried the sixteen-foot-long pole in addition to the Frei Graf's chair in order to measure and determine the exact location of the Freistuhl.

From this process of peasant law, which certainly retains ancient features and is rooted in the same reason as the Fehme itself, if not in it, it is clear that the erection of the king's chair must have been preceded by a sacrifice in pagan times. What else could coal and ashes mean but the remains of a sacrificial fire? The sixteen pieces of brick can be found in the ashlar of our "Königshügel", and the name itself sounds very similar to "Königsstuhl".

This royal mound may have originated in the times of the migration of peoples, as the site of a victory, it may even have formed the "sharp border" of some smaller territorial king, and as such a site of painting - boundary stones were always considered sacred - it may have been a place of judgment. If coals and ashes are missing as a parallel, they may have been thrown aside unnoticed by the person who took out the ashlar.

This is how this royal mound came into being and retained its old sanctification, the origins of which had perhaps already faded away in Charles' time, while the old appreciation of sanctity remained unforgotten.

When the secret court began to meet after Charlemagne, people sought out ancient holy places to hold court there. As the local names show, there are many forest and meadow plots whose often mangled names suggest such a place of judgment, because



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There must have been not only several, but many of them, especially in the area between the two "spinners on the cross".

The hill near Sollenau, which is certainly interesting, should be such a "Freier Königsstnhl" and must have been.

If now, in consideration of all these reasons, despite the lack of documentary evidence, the existence of the Fehme in Austria could hardly be doubted, another court, which suddenly came into being in 1402, appears too unexpectedly on the scene of national history to have fallen from the sky, so to speak, without being based on a preliminary stage.

It was a very peculiar, secret court that had the frightening, terrible name, the "Geräune" (from whispering, whispering to each other).

This court was very closely related to modern civil law, and it seems that it had emerged from the Fehme in a renewed form. Its effect was similar to that of the Fehme in the paralyzing fright it spread, as well as in the short, certain and hard-hitting proceedings.

Ulrich the Daxberger, marshal in Austria, the nobles Friedrich von Wallsee, Otto von Meissau, Heinrich von Zelkiny and the Viennese citizen Albert Ottensteiner formed the superiors of this peculiar court, which enforced its judgments with military power. These five marched through the country with 200 spears (horsemen) and 200 archers (footmen), then with a troop of 50 wagons carrying answers, cats and rifles as well as provisions, in order to cleanse it of the robbers. The dreaded procession moved from castle to castle, mainly through Marchfeld, which was terrified by Bohemian and Moravian robbers. Reinforcements were drawn from the castles of the honorable nobility, and the robbers' robber castles were called upon to surrender. The peasants greeted the liberators with joy and joined the small army of revenge in wild mobs.

Gracious treatment did not await the inhabitants of the robber houses; they fled or fought back. In the first case they were easily put down by the peasants where they were caught, in the latter case they were not able to resist the experienced soldiers for long. After conquering the nest, they were hanged from the nearest trees by means of a very summary procedure, or actually without any procedure at all. This is what happened to the

Occupation of Leiben Castle in Lower Austria, quarter above the Manhartsberg, conquered by Daxberger in 1402. Only rarely was an exception made in favor of the mostly noble leaders by dragging them to prison and then executing them under observation of certain formalities; formalities that were otherwise considered highly superfluous and far too time-consuming.

The device may not only have originated from the Fehme, but may even have been their executive power. If this were the case, then the Daxberger would have been a Freigraf or the deputy sovereign for the Archduke of Austria, as he held the rank of Landmarschall.

Be that as it may; the device shows that the Fehme not only existed in Austria, but had even, one might say, reorganized itself in keeping with the times, whereby the legend of the secret court on Rauhenstein gains factual background not only in the mythical sense alone, to the court of the gods at "Urdas Stein", but also in the historical sense, to a "Freistuhl der heiligen Fehme" that really existed there.

Whether this spinning Bertha at the "Spinner on the Cross" is the old religion banished from the towns' soft focus, or whether she is the suppressed Germanic law, the German Justitia, her byname "von Rauhenstein" brings her into an undeniable connection with the legend of the secret court at this castle and thus establishes the proof of the factual existence of a free chair of the holy Fehme at Rauhenstein Castle.

And so friendly Baden can boast unabashedly that the now decaying ruin of Rauhenstein in its district was once the seat of a free count, that it itself stands in "ruodland", built on ruoder earth.



## Merkenstein.



Following the Iron Road, which runs from the old Vindomina to the south, one rolls comfortably along that mountain wall into which those valley mouths seem to be broken as gates, two of which have already mythologically opened up our landscapes. The first was Medling, the second the Helenenthal.

The very next valley south of Helenenthal, the next railroad station to Baden\*), forms another such gate. This, too, was closed with a "firm lock", which was previously Merkenstein Castle.

The history of this castle\*\*) will not be mentioned here, suffice it to say that its name is mentioned in documents as early as the 11th and 12th centuries, namely as Merchenstein\*\*\*) - Merkenstein? What does the name mean? Historians assume that it was corrupted from Markwartstein, suggesting that the name was given by force, which is unlikely to have been the case at the time. The names as explanatory designations, the meaning of which was usually already forgotten in tradition at that time, stuck to the places as they still do today and then, after they had long since lost their meaning as explanatory conceptual names, passed as empty place names to the emerging castle, village, monastery or town, as thousands of such examples prove. This is also the case here. Of course, legends have also dealt with the naming of Meilenstein, but only a few features of these legends are genuine, they smell too much like the disreputable legend-makers of the last century.

Let's see what they say.

According to one legend, a knight called "Leodegar" had two sons who were twins, and he was at a loss as to which of the two he should give the right of primogeniture to.

\*) Böslau.

\*\*) "Merkenstein." Reports and communications of the Society of Antiquities. Vienna First Volume. Page 143 et al.

\*\*\*) The "ch" is read like "k", as in the following names; thus Merk, instead of Merch.

In their twentieth year, he led them to a stone and said that whichever of them would find this stone after three years, he would recognize as the firstborn. Winfried, one of the two, had 'memorized' the stone. When the sons returned there with Leodegar after three years, he received the birthright, built a new castle on the stone and naturally called it Merkenstein. The question to fate mentioned here, to decide an uncertain matter, is a genuinely Germanic trait that often recurs, but there can hardly be any connection between this legend and the history of the castle in any other respect; however, this legend has no connection with the naming of the castle.

Another legend has it that Knight Walther von Merkenstein was the lover of Hulda von Rauhenstein, who, according to the custom of the minstrel service, not only sent her knight with the crusade to the promised land, but also imposed the condition on him to bring her the most pleasant and useful gift from Palestine. It is to this vow of love that we owe the Saffian, which the Merkensteiner brought back to his lady in fulfillment of his duty of love and which she planted in German soil. Incidentally, this Hulda is said to be the legendary "Spinner on the cross", after whom the old famous emblem is said to be named. However, since Hulda von Rauhenstein as "Lady Holle", as well as Bertha von Rauhenstein as "Lady Perahta", are equivalent to the mother of the gods "Frouwa", the differences in the names "Bertha" and "Hulda" in the legends of Rauhenstein and Merfenstein appear to be completely irrelevant.

The knight Walther of this legend has nothing to do with the naming of Meilenstein, Hulda or Bertha von Rauhenstein is too loosely related to our castle, and finally the transplantation of the Saffian to our regions is not considered here, although this part of the legend is correct in the main.

But what does the place name Merkenstein mean?

In Lower Austria we still have three places with similar names, namely a "Merkenbrechts" in the Kamp region, a "Merken-kengersch" in the Thaya region, and also a "Merken-stetten".

But similar place names also occur in other areas. For example, "Mergentau" near Friedberg in Upper Bavaria, "Mergentheim" in Württemberg, also documented as "vallis Mariae virginis"

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and "Mariae domus" called; in the vernacular this city is addressed as "Mergenthal." A wasteland near Heidenheim in Bavaria is called alternately "Mergenbrunn" and "Mariabrunn". Also the Marienröslein is called "Märgenroslein"; likewise the Stendelwurz, Marian or "Mergenthraene", also "maiden flower" In family, personal and field names is found this "Merzen" even more often, for example: "Merchenbaum" a baronial family; Marchwort et filius de Mergen (1160); predium in Merchenmoossitum (1160); Henicus von Merchenberge (1185); Ullrich von Merchenstein (1322) and others.

While in all these combinations the word "Merzen" is used in honorable, sometimes even sublime contexts, there are also combinations that are intended to disparage the term that this word carries. For example, the word "Mergensohn" appears in medieval town books as a severely frowned upon insult, where it includes the accusation of dishonorable birth. "If he scolds (him) before the Christians, that is, whether he has in (him) a Zohensun, or Merchensun, or Mussensun" etc.

Merch, Merz is therefore virgin, which term we find in the place name Mergentheim, and fine Latin forms directly related to the Queen of Heaven Mary (vallis Mariae viginis).

This indicates that our Merkenstein is actually a virgin stone. However, the question still needs to be decided as to what extent this virgin stone can be linked to the Germanic world of the gods and their service of salvation and magic.

And Merkenstein has more than one of these points of confirmation. First and foremost, the names of the places that are in closest contact with the main names come into consideration.

First of all, there is a point called "Buche am Stein", then the "Türkenbrunnen", the "Merken garten-graben", the "weiße Weg" and a little further away a "Lehnstuhl".

The "Buche am Stein" refers to Frouwa's sacred tree on the Ziefer or sacrificial stone, the sure sign of a place of healing of the old German Queen of Heaven and Mother of the Gods. The Merkengarten trench again refers to the serving virgins, the priestesses. The sacred beech tree (felled in 1811) was also found on the Hermannskogel near Vienna, as well as the Fraucngraben, like the Merkengartengraben here, and the fountain here. This fountain has its source in an underground passage 136 steps long and

is very significantly referred to as one of the "seven fountains". The well in one of the castle courtyards is also worthy of note; round-walled at the bottom, it merges into a regular octagon at the top. A tunnel opens into this well shaft at a considerable depth, which undoubtedly belongs to an extensive earth stable, which is inseparable from a sanctuary whose name suggests that it was inhabited by young women.

There is also an important earth stable near Mergentau in Bavaria.

As far as the "seven wells" are concerned, this designation as a field name is so often recurring that it is never to be thought of as the occurrence of seven wells, but as a mythical designation with a dark meaning. The number seven is repeated infinitely often, for example in Siebenhirten, Siebenlinden, in the good and the bad seven, in Siebenjahrgarn, Siebenmorgen, Siebenstein, Sieben Nonnen, Sieben Narren, Sieben Hunde, Sieben meilenstiefel and so on.

It is possible, and in most cases even certain, that one should not think of the numerical word seven, but of the "sieve", which plays a prominent role in ancient magical beliefs and even today in superstition.

But the sieve is the name and symbol of Donar's wife. Siebia, just as the skirt is the symbol of Frouwa, and the scissors that of Helia. This also establishes the "three" in the attributes as "skirt, sieve and scissors" in representation of the female trinity: "Frouwa, Siebia and Helia."

And yet the Merkenstein sanctuary in particular seems to be an exception to the rule, as none of the surrounding fields or place names point to Helia; nor is there a Schwarzbach stream or similar anywhere, but the "white path" is to be noted.

However, if here too the "Merzen" or "Norns" will have changed into three, and as everywhere here the third in black clothing will have followed the two white-clad ones, as "the evil-counseling, hostile norn", as the "doom-counselor" tells the two "Heilsrätinnen", the "salvation service" practiced here had a cheerful meaning. The "Siebbrunnen" may therefore have been a sacred spring in the past, where proclamations of destiny, healings and incantations may have been practiced. Close to the ruins is a small hill, inside which the ice cellar of the new castle is carved into the rock. However, there is evidence of this room

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and is considered to be a cellar of the old castle; this is probably wrong, because it lies outside the castle. It is correct to assume that this rock hall was the great hall of the earth stable, from which the many corridors and chambers branched out, as was necessary for such a temple site. There is no doubt that a large part of these passages also extended under the old castle building, one of which was connected underground to the old castle well. It is also worth remembering the small mountain cone, which stands out from the "Hoher Lindkogel" and is called an "armchair". There are an infinite number of mountains with the word "chair" in their name, and most of their names are related to the old German faith.

Was there a "feudal seat" for the judge of a court of law, or the "feudal seat" of a man's lord? The former assumption could be linked to the Merkenstein, as the "Albruna" could have sat in judgment there. The latter assumption must be left open, for the question of this male lord is almost impossible to answer. However, it should be remembered that this feudal lord should not be sought in the Middle Ages; medieval feudal law is by no means a medieval institution, but an original German one. Marbod and Armin had already exercised feudal rights, just like the medieval princes. However, it is possible that the highest priestess of this "Maiden Castle", Albruna, also exercised feudal rights, as did later abbesses in Christian times.

Here, too, it should be noted that Christianity merged pagan customs with its customs in order to make the people more inclined to accept the new doctrine. Just as many places were later named after saints, after whom the newly built churches were baptized, many place names in pre-Christian times arose from German-religious causes, and many of these place names were later - as can often be proven - transformed into Christian-religious ones.

This "armchair" is unlikely to have served a similar purpose as the "armchair on the hunter's meadow" next to the Rauhenegg although it is only separated from it by a mountain ridge, even though the sanctuary of Merkenstein with that of the Helcnenthales must have stood in indirect connection, as be immediately.

A little further away from Merkenstein, just towards the top of the high Lindkogel, which belongs to the area of the three sanatoriums of the Helenenthal valley, there are two more important names, namely the "eiserne Thor" and the "eiserne Hand".

We may only remember that the Höllenthal was in primeval times inaccessible, because the Schwarza its estuary completely filled its mouth. There too, at a considerable height, in a rocky gorge on the Jakobskogel of the Grünschacher, we found an "eisernes Thürl" (iron door), which must have once been the actual entrance to the sanctuary of the Heliaklamm in today's Höllenthale valley. The entrance led, as it for Germanic necropolis, from the south to the north.

But our "iron gate" also leads from the south (Merkenstein) to the north over the high Lindkogel into the Helenenthal, which was once also inaccessible, because "Urdas Stein" blocked the valley, which only offered space for the Schwechat. - It was not until this year that the Helenenthal - like the Höllenthal - was made accessible by an artificial construction, which in this case is a long tunnel that had to be broken through the "Urtelstein" (Urdas Stein).

But since the "iron gate" forms the third summit of the "high Lindkogel", the male "three" would be gained at the same time; namely: "Lindkogel" (Wuotan), "Eichkogel" (Donar) and "iron Thor" (Ice, solidification, death - Helia or Loki).

So here at Merkenstein, too, the iron gate, like the iron hand, actually means an ice gate, an ice hand.

Now it is also clear why there is no other sign at Merkenstein that points to the dark Helia, as her dark realm is to be found above the "Eisthore" in the "Heliathal" (Helenenthal).

That is why "Merkenstein" has the gentle, mild character of a girl's home, from which everything that could evoke terror and horror was banished. Even the gloomy ice thor with its admonishing ice hand softened in a friendly way in the girlishly laughing Merkenstein valley.

In winter, the Aesir sleep in the mountains, like the seed in the earth under the blanket of snow; Frouwa, like Wuotan, also goes to sleep in the "glass mountain", which is actually an "ice mountain", an ice castle, and naturally moves through the "ice gate" into the same mountain. In the twelfth of the winter solstice, she also makes her procession - as numerous myths, fairy tales and legends report - and then also makes her exit from the "ice gate".



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It is known that many heights of the low mountain range, due to their "peculiar position favored, to a not considerable span of time not only earlier the winter dress, but also show the first blossoms when the harshest winter still prevails at other altitudes, especially in the valley. It is due to this circumstance that the farmsteads in the mountains are usually situated on low hills or on mountain ridges considerably higher than the valley floor. Only the latest meteorological research has scientifically established the rules established, which constant observation of nature our ancestors were familiar. They knew that there winter was less severe than in the valley and up on the mountain ridges, and that the effect of the spring sun was therefore earlier and more lasting.

That's how it is on the "Iron Gate", and that's how it is everywhere known on the "Hermannskogel" near Vienna, where the festival of Wuotan's marriage, the Violet Festival, was celebrated. This also justifies the name of the "icy gate" of the Glasberg. It adorns itself early on with the delicate green of spring in order to beautify the departure of the good Lady Frouwa when she emerges from the gates that open with a roar, clad in fresh spring green and adorned with a wreath of snowdrops and celestial keys.

The time has come once again when the gates of the glass castle open, where the keys to heaven are hidden in the young greenery, waiting for those who are to come and pluck them and open up the heavens. The "Good Lady of the Mountain" strides forth again, with a lovely goddess at her side, the sweet and dear Lady Ostara, to greet and bless her beautiful Ostarland on the Danube.

But people have become blind and deaf, they overlook the golden keys to heaven, the blissful smile of Lady Ostara and think they are chasing happiness elsewhere.

The "Iron Gate" will be correct, but it includes neither the good Lady Frouwa nor the fair Lady Ostara, but all those for whom the approach and greeting of the two goddesses means nothing more than an empty dream.

To these I will leave their "Iron Thor" in peace, may they let me calmly enjoy my opinion of the Jüngfrauenstein under the Eisthor in the hearty Ostar peace.

## Eburodunum before the Wuotansthal.



Rarely, the mythological landscape image becomes the picture that the same landscape presents today, for the last two thousand years have not passed without leaving their mark even on those areas that are still shrouded in forest coolness. In place of the overgrown primeval forest, the modern forest has been overgrown with bark beetles, or vines are swinging in the air, plantings where before the sacred forest rustled; also the plow often fears the clod, which in those days of the sun god's holy boar ravaged. But still still it is not easy to conjure up the ancient splendor of the forest with the gaze of the inner eye and to see images from the "youth" of our time. of our people, that those not dissimilar to us in mature manhood, when we think back to the nursery where we dreamed of our own tomorrow.

But when all the green has gone from the once wooded sanctuary, when rows of walls and rows of buildings over the the sacred ground and the pavement covers it as if with an eternally rigid crust, then it is difficult to imagine such a place again in the forest ornament. to think, especially as the design of the ground has become a different one, and can hardly be reconsidered, let alone surveyed, in the overall picture. And that is why it is good that the old names have been ground down in the course of the broad flow of languages into those incomprehensible word formations of today's place names, just as a boulder made of marble, which is lying on a sandbank, the unrecognizable polished fragment of an ancient statue of a god.

That is why today we speak of Ptolemy's Eburodunum and Wuotansthal instead of Brno, the lovely and charming Adamsthal.

Brno - a mythological landscape? Brno, the city of "Brno markets" and "trouser fabrics", would be able to fit into a poetic framework? Who in the world would ever have traveled to Brno for pleasure, like to Salzburg or Innsbruck?

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But that is not the purpose of this description, although it may be said in passing that the lovely Brno with its pretty ring road is worth a visit by those who have nothing to do at the Brno market.

This is just by the way; modern Brno is too remote for us today with its railroad-ridden Adamsthal.

At the time when the splendid Carnuntum was still broken on the Danubius - "mirroring itself complacently in the river" - at the time when the Roman limes still ran along the right bank of the river, at the time when Brno was still called Eburodunum, its circumference was still very small and roughly corresponding to that of today's Old Brno, of an irregular shape, with rounded corners; the archetype of all old settlements like it. Firewalls surrounded it, outside these, to the south and east, fields of grain undulated, but to the west and north the mighty primeval forest folded its pine-green mantle of woodland around the defensive Eburodunum, which later to a suburb, as mightier defensive buildings grew out of the ground at its side, in and surrounding itself the later Brno was grouped together. A frequently repeated phenomenon. Above the beehive-like huts woven from willow, which were covered with clay inside and out and painted with a bright, firn-like color, two healing or temple sites rose up from the forest. "One is dedicated to Wuotan, the other to Donar. The former still bears the old name "Spielberg", but the latter is now called "St. Peter's" and is the cathedral church of Brno.

It is a fact known to every mythologist that the old temple sites were mostly transformed into castles or churches, while retaining their ancient warlike character. There, where the place of salvation gave way to a church, the pagan god worshipped here was replaced by a Christian saint, with most of its attributes, indeed even its myth, transformed into a legend. Thus, Wuotan's sanctuaries, mostly churches dedicated to St. Michael, from Donar's sanctuaries, on the other hand St. Peter's churches. Therefore even today, when it thunders, St. Peter bowls in heaven, according to ancient popular belief, hence the numerous folk tales of Christ's travels with Peter and their adventures, which were all about the journeys of Wuotan with his son Donar.

Similar "metamorphoses of the gods" are to come in the distant future.

The fact that the various saints were also appointed by different Christian saints is no coincidence. This is not a coincidence, but well-founded by the letter of Pope Gregory the Great, which was written to Abbot Mellitus of Canterbury, in which it is expressly stated: "Tell to Augustine, to what conviction I after long contemplation about the conversion of the English am come, that the idolatrous churches among that people were not to be destroyed, but only the idols therein destroy them, the building with holy water, build altars and place relics inside. For if those churches are well-built, they must be turned from idolatry to the true worship of God, so that the people, if they do not see their churches destroyed, may from the bottom of their hearts lay aside their false beliefs, recognize the true God, and gather all the more readily in the places where they were accustomed. And because the people used to slaughter many oxen at their idol sacrifices, this custom must also be transformed into some kind of Christian celebration for them. So on the day of the consecration of the church or on the memorial day of the holy martyrs whose relics are laid down in their churches, they should make huts of tree branches around the former idolatrous church, celebrate the feast day with religious banquets, no longer sacrifice animals to the devils (i.e. Wuotan, Donar, Loki), but slaughter them for food in praise of God, thereby thanking the Giver of all things for their satiety, so that, by leaving them some outward pleasures, they may become all the more inclined to inward pleasures. For it is undoubtedly impossible to cut off everything at once from raw minds, because even those who want to climb to the highest level reach it by kicking and stepping, but not by leaping." (S. Mone, History of Paganism II, 105.)

Thus, the smaller hill, which today bears the Brno cathedral church, is the site that was once sacred to the red-bearded thunderer.

This assumption is opposed, as is quite natural, by another, namely that of the Slavists. The latter claims: "In the distant past, when Christianity began to spread its mild wings over the Slavic people, and baptism had taken our fathers from paganism, two pious, godly men, Cyril and Methud, whom Moravia still venerates as its patron saints, came (863) from the far east, sent by Emperor Michael, to strengthen the people in the faith and to teach them the doctrine of salvation.

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proclaim. They were overthrown, the abominable structures of the idols greedy for human sacrifices; and from the remains of the temple of Krasopani ( the Venus of the Slavs) rose up at Cyril's behest a gloriously high house of God, from whose wide halls the praise of the only true one now floated up to the stars." (Schmidt, Brünns Umgebung. 1835.)

As "beautifully" as this is said, it is untrue. The church dedicated to St. Peter already proves the falsity of this Slavic assertion, because no male saint replaced a female deity, or vice versa.

However, just as the hypothesis of the sanctuary of the Krasopani here on the site of St. Peter's Basilica is untenable for reasons of myth research, the Cyril-Methud legend must be rejected for historical reasons.

The last remnants of Christianity disappeared with the Romans around 470 from the country (St. Severin), namely that Christianity which was friendly to the Romans and hostile to the Germans, and which was opposed to Arianism, to which most Germanic tribes paid homage. The Goths, on the other hand, had been won over to Roman Christianity, Catholicism, very early on by Bishop Wulfila, who had a preparatory effect on the Quadi as a related and neighboring tribe. Even today, the godfather of the German Austrians is called Gothe (Godel, Göd); a very significant linguistic monument. However, the belief in Wuotans and Donar was still too firmly rooted in the people to be shaken so easily. When Ruppert had founded the Salzburg church, apostles again came to the old Quadi seats in today's Moravia. Emmeran, Erchanfried, Otgar, Virilo and many others were sent from Salzburg. But it was only under Salzburg's first bishop, Arno, that Christianization was systematically pursued. The Lorch Chronicle mentions the Passau bishop "Reginhart" as the apostle of the Moravians in 818. This was long before the appointment of Cyril and Methud by the loyal vassal Rastiz. And not only in Brno alone, for the churches of Olmüy, Jglau, Kathrein and others also date from pre-Cyril-Methud times.

"And even if," said Professor Kirchmayr, the author of the Quadenwerk, during a lecture, "and even if our time wants to baptize children in the names of Cyril and Methud instead of Oswald or Leonhard, imposing Methud as the patron saint of the church on the congregations, forming Cyril and Method from paintings of Peter and Paul,

it's no use, German churches, names, books, patrons have left too many traces in the country for more than a thousand years for them to be erased as soon as possible!"

As far as the Spielberg is concerned, the word "Spiel", which means spindle, the badge of the Wuotan priestesses, the Norns, points to the mighty sanctuary of the king of the gods together with all his entourage of gods, male and female, based on the all-encompassing godlessness, as we have often found. Not only the sacred fountain of youth on today's Franzensberg, but also the subterranean passages and dungeons of the Spielberg itself, which over the course of time expanded into the ghastly dungeons that gave the Spielberg such a horrible reputation. The river names Weißache (Zwitawa) and Schwarzache (Schwarzawa), so characteristic of such great sanctuaries, can also be found here, as the mythical opposites of light and darkness, of life and death.

And the white river of life, the Weißache, foams out of the Wuotansthal.

Let us begin our hike towards these white foaming waters. There are still no bare rails winding through the gorge, no road has yet been blasted through the rocks; an artlessly trodden path, paved by the hoof of the muleteer, leads into the forest. Dense forest rushes around us.

The stallions laboriously work their way through the undergrowth. The trunks press closer and closer together, increasing in height and girth as if in gloomy heft. Long, gray-green bearded moss grows down from the expansive branches, a symbol of their dignified age. In between, younger trunks become visible, entwined high up by climbing herbs, so that many a young forest sprout, bent by the weight of rampant vines, bends down to the ground. Free-rising slender leaf pillars shine, translucently illuminated, in the golden-green light and waft like Iduna's veil before the pine-dark forest depths. Giant ferns, weeds and leafy plants, thistles and grasses press in with elemental force, knitting the ground with an impenetrable network and climbing over wildly fantastic wind breaks. To the side, views open up to higher forest spaces, narrow clearings alternate with gloomy twilights. Only now and again does a torn blue peek through the darkness, as if it were shreds of the firmament that

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the wind fluttered in by chance. The murmur of the white water becomes more roaring, more roaring - it announces the nearness of the deity!

Blocks of stone rise up from the bed of the forest stream, its white waters roaring over them. Bluish-grey rocks stretch upwards from the pine-earth grounds, at the foot of which the roaring white water sprays in numerous cataracts, and the dark anemone-colored moss banks are strewn with glittering thau brilliants. Bold, multi-pronged rocky ridges emerge from the gorges. Rising above the forest floor are broadly structured walls, illuminated by flashing sunlight, interrupted by torn chasms and crevices of violet-colored twilight shadows, or by the dark mouths of eerie caves.

There is the Wuotan cave and up there the Frouwa grotto; today, of course, the former is called the Becziskala or Byciskala, the latter the Evagrotte. Here - in the sense of the Gregorian letter quoted above - Wuotan and Frouwa were replaced by Adam and Eve. Slave, who displaced the Germanic tribes, changed the names again; he called the Adam's Cave Beczisskala after the gurgling (Slavic: eboite) sound of its invisible waters. Later explorers called it Bycziskala, meaning bull's cave, after a small bronze figure found here depicting a bull, and founded a Slavic bull cult from it.

Rugged rock faces tower up. A portal-like entrance to Wuotan's rock palace opens up. Twilight shadows waft around us. Our gaze only gradually penetrates the wide, dome-like vault. Wedge-like jagged rocks hover menacingly at our heads, as if ready to fall; between them, below, above and on all sides, yawning cavernous chasms. These are passages that lead to other halls, but below the waters gurgles with frightening groans.

This Wuotan cave still contains important findings from prehistoric times.

It had served many purposes, both as a place of worship and burial and then again as a smithy. But let us turn to the myths and see Wuotan's stone seat and see him sleeping in the roaring hall. His head has sunk down and his hoary gray beard has grown through the tabletop; he has already wound himself six times around the foot of the table, he has reached the seventh round, then the time has come when the battle will be fought on the Walserhaide.

To the right of the entrance to this cave, a few hundred steps up in the crevice, another room opens up, called the "stone hall" or the "temple", in almost Gothic forms. The name temple is also worthy of note.

And there are many other caves in this valley. But we move on, far through valleys and rocky tangles.

Again, wild crevasses tower up, surrounded by dark pine greenery. Through the "barren valley" and the "dry valley" you climb a rocky mountain. At the top, a horrible crater-like gorge opens up; this is the Makocha. Despite the Slavic name, the myth of the Wuotans surrounds us here, for it is as closely connected with the magnificent scenes of nature as it is with the soul of the Germanic people.

Wuotan's army may once have come and gone here, and even today the people know the path that the lightning takes down into the gorge during every thunderstorm. But that is forgotten, because the slave calls the gorge Makocha, which means stepmother. A stepmother is said to have once thrown her son into this gorge, which is more than 500 shoes deep, in order to inherit him. However, her son was rescued and she jumped down herself out of remorse.

Inaccessible from all sides, this terrible crater yawns upwards; once the heights of this mountain valley had collapsed and left this maw behind.

We continue through this eerily beautiful labyrinth of rocks. Once again, the forest wraps its pine-green mantle around us, as if to call out a cheerful "Waidmannsheil" to us, but the distant roar and flickering firelight distract our senses from the happy hunting to other things.

A clearing opens up before us and the ground is covered in black soot from the sad forest giants. Naked, sooty figures with tangled hair and beards stand around the clay crucible, preparing iron. These are the iron smelters and iron smiths in Imnatz Silva, of which C. Ptolemy already reports and expressly testifies that iron is extracted in the land of the Quades. And this is near Blansegge, which the slave spoiled in Blansko, where the Moravian iron industry can look back on an age of more than two thousand years.

Although this goes beyond the scope of a mythological landscape picture, it is not really the case. "Man created his gods in his own image," and there, where we



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Observe humanity, and soon enough you will find the common thread that leads to the myth.

The iron smelters here, who have filled the pit with charcoal and tirelessly fan its embers with blowpipes to smelt the ore in the crucible, have they not bound Loki, the god of fire, and are now forcing him to do knightly service?

Loki, the deceitful, limping advisor to the gods, who was finally captured and bound for his mischievous advice, is precisely the tamed fire that "becomes terrible when it releases itself from bondage"! And that is why the blacksmiths, sacrificers to the old god of fire, are still reviled today by popular belief as being skilled in sorcery and play those sinister roles in legend and myth. A notable feature of all blacksmith legends, however, is that the devil (Loki) is usually the victim who is tricked by the blacksmith. The devil (Loki) is at his service, that is, the tamed fire is the blacksmith's helper, without whom he would be powerless. But the fire is always lurking to break the shackle and corrupt the blacksmith, who, however, is well on his guard and clever enough to thwart all the malicious attempts of his deceitful assistant.

We moved on again through the green of the forest. It became brighter and more lush, the sun looked down kindly through the rustling branches; the scent of lime blossom wafted caressingly around us - around us? I sat alone on a bench on one of the many winding park paths between whispering poplar willows, blossoming lime trees and the trembling leaves slender white-barked birches. In the park, on the slopes of the Spielberg, whose interior holds such terrible secrets forever, the breeze of blackthorn and lilac fanned the bushes so gently today, such friendly sunshine flickered on the bushes, that I, forgetting the present, immersed myself dreamily in the tide of the lost millennia.

But the park path did look a little different from the moment when, lost in a dream, I felt the present disappear around me. I felt almost anxious, because the legend of the ghost church came to mind, where the raptured person only returns after a hundred years.

When I sat down on the bench here in the morning, elderly gentlemen and no less elderly ladies were enjoying themselves very gracefully in the friendly park greenery; but now, the sun was already up -

the other side was about to say "good night" - but now I was pleased to see only young ladies and gentlemen in cheerful conversation, and the birds sang and lured each other so pleasantly that the bright moon, which hovered over the Spielberg like a feathery cloud, seemed to take the warmest pleasure in it.

And then I saw Brno's beautiful women.

Some of them are slender, tall, finely structured, with light blond hair and shining blue eyes; figures like those that Eburodunum's women might once have shown. A faint suspicion arose in me that this might have been the appearance of the golden-robed royal maiden Pipara, whom Caesar Gallienus raised to the throne of Caesar and for whose possession he gave up a good part of Pannonia. That was a hard blow to the vanity of Roman women; a barbarian woman as Domina Augusta! I wonder if Pipara, the golden-locked Quadi princess, did not once walk here too?

How we see them coming and going, the beautiful Brno women! Most of them have lovely faces and expressive eyes, beautiful hair and a stately stride. They also seem to be of good disposition. Others, however, are full and richly endowed by nature, with dark eyes and dark hair. These are the Slavic women. Their glowing eyes are dangerous, especially since at this very moment the noble Silvio Pellico, whose name is so closely associated with that of the Spielberg, uttered words to me: "I love my country with a passion, but I don't hate any other people!"

But since such cosmopolitan tendencies are not befitting a mythological landscape painter, I wrapped myself in my Germanic consciousness and left the seductive magical groves of the Spielberg.

A nightingale just struck its fullest note, the thrushes fluted sweetly, and the sparrows hopped about in the bushes.



## St. Leonhard.



Here lies buried our spiritual master, the monastery brother of Oberburg;  
God grant him eternal rest!"

These words were spoken with simple and therefore quite peculiar dignity by the sacristan of the small St. Leonhard church, half-forgotten in the shadow of the forest under the rugged precipices of the Rogac in the south-westernmost corner lies hidden in Styria.

With Professor Frischauf's "Sannthaler Guide" in our pockets, we had come over from Kappel to hike over the Rogac into the Leutschthal and on to Sulzbach in the Sannthal; the St. Leonhards-Meißner was to serve as our guide. With our rucksacks and clanking crampons on our backs, we entered the lonely, age-grey mountain church. The most striking feature was a heavy iron chain that enclosed the church from the outside under the cornice. We entered; we were greeted by a simple building. The presbytery was simply vaulted, the nave was closed off at the top by a plank ceiling like a farmhouse parlor and the floor was paved with bricks; this house of worship was extremely inconspicuous; only the words of the sacristan mentioned at the beginning made an indeterminable impression on us. He stood in the middle of the little church and pointed to the floor, but there was no noticeable gravestone or epitaph. But the tile slabs of the pavement showed the stamped date 1529; that was the same year in which the Turk lay for the first time outside Vienna's walls. A further look around the modest sanctuary led us to discover a strange church decoration on the right-hand wall. Again it was chains!

"They've been hanging there since Turkish times," explained the measurer. There were two pairs of leg irons, a pair of handcuffs together with the chains, a long chain with a padlock, and a horseshoe.

The curiosity for the meaning of these votive offerings was thus - because they obviously were - lively, but the good measurer knew as much to answer our questions as most of his peers in similar cases, namely nothing. Even the most obvious

question of who that monk was and when he lived was answered in a very uncertain way.

"Many hundreds of years ago," we were told, "a monk from Oberburg was banished to this forest wilderness by his abbot; he lived here, did good deeds and was buried in the middle of the church after his death. Since his death, every year on All Saints' Day, one of the farmers who have their one-layered farms here goes to Oberburg, formerly to the abbot, now, since the monastery has been abolished, to the parish priest and asks him to send a priest to St. Leonhard on November 3rd at the expense of the farmers to hold the annual day with vigil and mass for their spiritual master who rests there."

This annually renewed request for the priest from Oberburg is all the more striking as St. Leonhard's Church is a branch church of the parish of Eisenkappel. Who might that friar have been, whom the local farmer has remembered for many centuries without actually knowing why?

We had left the little wild chapel at an altitude of 1332 meters. Our guide, Messner, who was laden with our provisions, strode briskly ahead, upwards through the shady corner of the forest, which was hidden from the world and charmingly overlooked by the rocky peaks of the Rogac. Here and there a single farmstead shone in the sunlight through the pine. After a climb of barely half an hour, we reached a magnificent rock spring, which the guide-measurer called the "sacred well".

Another riddle!

There was also a crystal-clear fountain next to St. Leonard's Church. Of course, the good man did not know whether it was consecrated, but admitted that it was possible. Understandably, our escort didn't know who consecrated the "consecrated fountain" either, but he did know that a bishop had once lain exhausted with his entourage in front of this spring on his way from Sulzbach to Carinthia and consecrated it in thanks for the refreshment.\*)

\*) Frischauf's Sannthalerführer gives the interesting information that this is a "historical" memory, which it should not be, that this bishop was probably a patriarch of Aquileia, because the diocese of Ljubljana was only founded in 1463, which would not correspond to the great age of the parishes and churches in this area. The episcopal visitation journeys at that time were very arduous in these regions because they had to be made on foot.

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However, the views that soon opened up into the magnificent wild Alpine splendor of the Sannthal pushed back all the questions about these mysteries for the time being; they were to remain buried under the rubble of memory for many years.

Later hikes through Tyrol's and Salzburg's mountains, through Austria's and Bavaria's magnificent alpine world, made me set foot in front of many a church of St. Leonhard, and taught me that it is precisely the churches and chapels of this church saint which, almost without exception, are characterized not only by their external appearance alone, but in many cases also by the peculiarity of the customs of the pilgrims, above all other churches, especially pilgrimage churches.

In its outward appearance, it is the iron chain that surrounds the church under the cornice and makes it recognizable as Leonhard's Church even from afar. To name just a few: the church on the Kalvarienberg near Tölz, the church in Ganacker, the church in Tolbath, the Leonhardskirche near Bischofshofen on the Gisela-Bahn, as well as many others. The Leonhardskirche on a mountain near Brixen is probably the most remarkable in terms of the chain winding around the church building from the outside. There, a heavy iron chain spans the church two and a quarter times; the links are each a foot long and one link is forged each year from the iron consecration offerings. When the chain has been looped around the church three times, the end of the world will come.

This is reminiscent of Rothbart's beard, which runs around the stone table three times. must grow until the sleepy sleeper awakens to fight the last battles. In the Leonhardskirchen at Aigen and Inchen hofen this chain was inside the church, the latter of which weighed 242 pounds.

If this necklace is the real symbol of Leonhard's churches, the strange offerings of the pilgrims are no less so, which are mainly forged from iron, in contrast to other pilgrimage churches where the offerings of the faithful are made of wax or silver.

These wrought-iron votive images depict all kinds of domestic animals, such as oxen, cows, horses, poultry, or parts of a human body, such as arms, legs, female breasts and the like, in childishly naive sculptures, or they form plowshares (hugely enlarged), chains and shackles and other strange things.

No less peculiar than these iron votive offerings is the worship service in these churches themselves. In the past, and in some places still today, this included the lifting and carrying around of so-called Leonhard's blocks and Leonhard's nails, which, in addition to the purpose of testing his strength, formed a kind of ordinance. It was believed that only those who had cleansed themselves of their sins through penance could lift St. Leonard's nails.

A rare booklet provides information about the peculiar customs of such Leonhard churches, especially the one at Inchenhofen in Lower Bavaria, from which some of it may be excerpted here. It is this: "Martinus synopsis miraculosum etc. 1659, reprinted at Augsburg in 1712." In this very interesting booklet, Martinus gives only a part of "the wonderful miracles which God, through the merit and intercession of St. Leonhardi at his church in Inchenhofen four hundred years ago, has had written in all the miracle books".

From these records of Martinus, however, it is quite clear that the cult of St. Leonard is not only very old, but has preserved an infinite number of traits from the German Wuotan cult to this day. This seemingly inexplicable fact becomes immediately clear, however, when one recalls the letter that Pope Gregory wrote to Mellitus of Canterbury, which was printed in the last mythological landscape picture "Eburodunum before the Wuotan Valley" on page 118 of this book in the passages referring to it.

Martinus writes, among other things:

"The pictures, iron bands (shackles, chains), iron crutches, iron hands and feet, prove how many have been helped out of their troubles. The large iron nail, which is the conscious landmark and symbol of this holy place (Inchenhofen), and which, like the large chain hanging over towards the Sacristy (which is made of the potted iron work weighing two hundred and forty-two pounds. . . . in such a measure), should be removed. Why has this nail remained safe from the church robbers and is still picked up by the churchwardens and carried from time to time? Some indeed take it upon themselves out of good devotion, to wear out their shoulders as well as with an assumed work of penance; some simple-minded people want to find out whether they can

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exert and boast their bodily powers; some wear it out of pride. Everyone can make his own opinion and opinion as he wishes, but at the same time he must remember that it is not always profitable to commit an outrage. Many a churchman has been frightened and worried under this eternal burden until he came out of it unscathed and free.

May also even this Nail  
For outrageousness one wants to carry  
Faster than lightning and hail  
Soon strike everyone to the ground."

Furthermore, Martinus gives an account of the vows and answered invocations, which makes clear the great extent of the cult of this saint. The saint: 1. loosens the shackles of innocent prisoners, who then offer them to him; 2. he also helps those who are "imprisoned for life and limb" because of crimes. In 1384, for example, Bertholdus Fischer von Weilham was sentenced to be bound hand and foot and thrown from the bridge into the Lech "because he introduced false dice to cheat others". In his distress, he invokes St. Leonhard; the shackles are loosened, he swims to shore, and Duke Stephan gives him life; 3. he "strengthens the sick and the lame"; 4. "enlightens the blind and those with bad eyesight"; 5. "gives the disturbed (insane) the use of reason"; 6. "expels the decrepit and stain"; 7. "Bring again the hearing"; 8. "Show also his power in preserving the unknowing cattle";

"For this reason, here in gratitude,  
Even after the summer season has passed,  
Many huts still offer him their favors every year.  
With shepherds and Field gift,  
They are mindful of the good,  
Inclined him, their shepherd,  
Whom they can praise enough  
from the bottom of their hearts, and with reason  
According to his high dignities,  
The praise they with the sound of horns,  
three hundred Shepherds' manor  
Each one blows his horns,  
Piercing heartbeat and ears."

9. "Gives speech to the mute"; 10 "Heals the falling sickness"; 11. "Also helps those so moved by the blow"; 12. "Comes to

the aid of sore throats, tumors and pains"; 14. "Satisfies women who are overdue, obtains the fruit of barren wombs"; 15. "Turns away bodily pains and gout"; 16. "Protects from hail, thunder, lightning, etc."; 17 "He delivers from all kinds of fever"; 18 "Awakens and refreshes those who are thought to be dead"; 19 "Reminds those who put their glow in oblivion". And finally, Martinus lists 134 "neighborhoods" by name, which every year "engaged a wagon or plough for the protection of the fruit at St. Leonhard, later Inchenhofen".

All these offerings, as they are conscientiously recorded, have their own peculiar character; here are just a few significant examples: "1437, to raise (beg) an iron image with a church journey, all in Allmosen." "1603, two iron rings to wear for a whole year." "1592, to go to church with an iron belt." "In 1445, to carry an egg-shaped image with chains weighing six pounds on a bare body under the usual clothing and to sacrifice it there." "1510, an iron ring at the neck as St. Leonhard's obliged to wear all her life." "1434, an iron Wagschienen." "1512, an iron ear." "1601, to wear an iron ring around the neck for a whole year to proclaim the sign." "1422, an iron shoe." "1511, an eysenes Kühlem." "1512, an iron hand, an iron ring, as St. Leonard's prisoner, to be worn around the neck for the rest of his life, but on hands and feet for a whole year." "1512, an iron house." "1509, Hueffeyesen." "1570, an iron barn." "1513, an iron ring on his neck for the rest of his life as St. Leonard's good willing and obliged prisoner to wear all his life." "1511, iron Schynn to beg." "1410, iron loincloth, pants and niderwad." "1428, iron picture." "1510, iron Niderkleyd."

These few examples explain the masses of wrought-iron votive offerings made by pilgrims and kept in Leonhard's churches. Today, such sacrificial objects are rarely forged, but a kind of loan system takes the place of the original sacrifice. From the hundreds of forged domestic animals that the Leonhard church of Ganacker, for example, has, each pilgrim now selects as many pieces as correspond to his livestock and redeems each of these pieces at the church door for a line of silver coins, which is thrown into the offering box. With the wrought-iron oxen, cows, horses, etc. in his hat, he walks around the altar three times during the offering and throws these pieces into the box behind the altar. From there



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the sacristan brings new supplies to his position at the church door when the need arises.

St. Leonhard's church trips are always high and colorful, and yet forty to fifty years ago it is said to have been much more grandiose. These church trips are held on the "Lienhards days", which are the first three Sundays in July, and the whole month is often called "in den Lienhards-Tagen".

The "Limhardswägen" with the colorful "Lienhardstruhm" come with the most perfect peasant splendor, and often their thirty to forty rattle around the Leonhardskirchm to three times, whereby the Rosselenker show their best art, their female relatives, who sit on the Lienhardstruhm, admire their best finery.

A legend tells:

On one St. Leonard's Day, the Kammerloher farmer and his household drove to Reichersdorf near Miesbach on a brand new St. Leonard's wagon. When, according to custom, he wanted to drive around the church three times, suddenly the four stately and richly harnessed horses could no longer move the wagon. The Kammerloher handed the reins to his head servant, got off the cart, took the axe hanging between the rear wheels, drove around the Mmat three times and said: "Now I ask you if you will let me drive?" But the cart stopped. It is customary for wainwrights to make a cross in the first spoke they put in a new wheel. The chamberlain cut one of the crossed spokes with his axe; in an instant the horses started and the cart moved forward, but from the midst of the crowd was heard the cry of an old dressmaker who had suddenly broken off a leg.

Aigen is also home to the famous pilgrimage church of St. Leonhard (Lean-Herd in dialect), which attracts many hundreds of pilgrims from the Innviertel and Rotthal regions during the Lienhard days. In the past, pilgrims brought live geese, chickens and ducks, carried them three times around the altar and then let them run through an oval window in the church wall as a sacrifice into a specially built stable in front of the church. Today, however, this hole has been walled up.\*) They also brought all their horses with them, and men's

\*) In a church in Styria - I can no longer remember which one - there was such an oval peephole in the churchyard wall, through which the horse's head was put after the third ride to protect it from illness and plague. This is reminiscent of old horse sacrifices.

like women rode around the church three times. Often the crowds were so large that the churchyard surrounding the church could not contain the devotees, so that some of them had to ride around outside the churchyard wall and throw their wrought-iron votive images over the churchyard wall during the procession. It is said that you cannot go into the churchyard without coming across such votive objects. Behind the high altar hang chains, hoops, horse bits, keys, handcuffs and leg irons, scythes, plowshares, horseshoes, horses' feet, all made of iron and of supernatural size.

There used to be a heavy iron chain in the church, which the churchwardens would lift or try to lift, but it was taken away because the constant rattling disturbed the service too much. On one wall of the church you can see St. Leonhard's picture trying to make sense of the chain. The saint stands in the clouds and holds the end of a long chain in each hand, which descends to the ground and embraces numerous praying people including priests and nobles.

However, the Leonhard's nails or blocks are stored in a wooden hut in the churchyard; this hut is called the Würdinger hut. The following iron blocks are placed in it:

1. The Worthy (Wirtinger, Würdinger). It is the headless torso of an armored man, cast in iron, with hands clasped in prayer; it is 19<sup>1/2</sup> inches high, 14 inches wide and weighs 220 pounds. The broken bearded head with the iron hood, 12 inches high and weighing 60 pounds, lies next to it.
2. The Männerleonhard (Manalean'l), also known as Raunagel, is a torso without head, arms and feet, 16 inches high, 6 inches wide, made of wrought iron.
3. The Weiberleonhard (Weibalean'l), 19 inches high, 8 inches wide and weighing 80 pounds, made of wrought iron.
4. The Kolmandl, 20 inches high, 9 inches wide, forged.
5. The Fatschenkind, 20 inches high, 5 inches wide, forged.

Once the pilgrims have walked around the church three times in prayer, men and women, young and old, gather at the Würdinger hut to try their hand at the "Lean'In". They try to lift them and throw them over their heads and backs, but hardly anyone among the hundreds is able to pass the test! Many a man says: "I have often carried a sack of grain weighing three hundredweight up the stairs, the little things there

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"I want to become master!" But now the worthy man proves his gravity: the wicked man will not bring him to his knees; he can blow as much as he wants! "You can't force him!" the bystanders call out mockingly to him; "you're not clean of sin yet!" Ashamed, he leaves the hut, and perhaps his conscience forces him to confess what he has concealed. Now a Rotthaler enters the hut, a stocky, strong-boned codger. As if mocking, he looks over the little men on whom the weak are struggling. His scrutinizing gaze lingers on the worthy man. Now he grasps him below with both hands. But these are also after it. With a shuddering horror, one thinks that grass will not grow on the back that these fists will crush during the next cherry picking for a long time. With a powerful jerk he swung the Würdinger onto his knee, then clutched it in the middle and pushed it onto his chest. The circle of admirers stands around silently, looking on in awe; all you can hear is the working of the mighty man's lungs. Now he has it on his armpit, and now he pushes the worthy onto his neck, and now he gives a jerk, and the worthy flies out in a wide arc and burrows into the ground with a dull thud. Amazement all around. The giant repeats his feat of strength several more times.

It was said that some of the strongest men were able to reach fifteen to twenty times to lift and throw the worthy in this way; but no one had yet been able to achieve what a Rotthal woman did some 250 years ago. At that time, the worthy still had his head in the right place and weighed a full 280 pounds. This overly strong woman carried him up the church tower, from where she hurled him down with such force that the poor worthy lost his head. Now it lies beside him in the sand.

These Leonhard's nails used to be in the church itself until attempts were made at the beginning of this century to stop this traditional service. The dignitary was hidden under a bridge, whereupon the others also disappeared. However, when the bridge was later rebuilt, the Würdinger reappeared, and soon his companions, who in the meantime had taken on the unworthy duties of leaf carriers for farmers, also reappeared. Although the church was and remained closed to them, they had solemnly entered the Würdinger hut.

Other Leonhard churches also have similar "Lean'In". Everywhere there are legends about the "Leonhardsnägel" being carried away;

They were buried, thrown into wells, swamps, eddies, hedges, carried far and wide, but they always returned.

The main features of the foundation legends are almost the same everywhere; prisoners are freed from extreme hardship and build the church. The people often believe that the saint "rests", i.e. is buried, in St. Leonard's Church or its churchyard; this is the case in Ganacker and presumably also in St. Leonard's Church near Oberburg, where the monk who died there in exile probably originated from this popular belief.

But the throwing of these Leonhard blocks was an ancient Germanic custom.

The Song of the Nibelungs says:

"Then she (Brunhilde) hurried, and her courage was angry;  
She lifted the stone high", the beautiful maiden well,  
and swung it with all her strength, far away from her,  
That from Sir Günther's sword, Feather began to wonder.  
The stone was hurled by her twelve fathoms away,  
And yet, over it jumped the" well gethane maiden."

And just as Brunhilde threw the stone here - like the strong Rotthaler - so did the strong Duke Christoph von Baiern hurl the great lydian stone, which is still on display in the royal residence in Munich. The memorial plaque proclaims:

"When after Christ's birth was counted,  
fourteen hundred and ninety years,  
Duke Christoph was highborn.  
A hero from Bavaria chosen.  
He lifted the stone from the free earth,  
And threw it far without a foe.  
Weighing three hundred and sixty-four pounds,  
the stone and scripture  
give the record."

The second panel gives an account of the Duke's high jump.

But there are other highly significant features that point to the great age of St. Leonard's customs. The pilgrims did not only use the image of the saint to test their strength - for originally every St. Leonard's block was such, at least symbolically. They carried it in procession from one village to another or even often, sliding on their knees, laboriously around the church. They sank it in streams and other hidden places, but due to its higher nature it always came back to light, where it was then solemnly brought back to the church. Driving around it three times, riding around it, walking around it or even sliding around it three times on one's knees is an old Germanic pagan custom. One of the blocks at

Aigen is called "Raunagel" and "Leonhardsnagel" was the name of the block or image of this saint in Inchenhofen. Leonhard's church in Buttenwiesen also had an image weighing around 80 pounds, Called "Leonhardsnagel". In place names, however, Wirting occurs as well as Nagel. The former means vortex, to which the legend of Aigen fits very well, according to which the first Leonhardsklotz of wood drifted around in a vortex. Perhaps this is where the name Wirtinger comes from and not from the concept of dignity.

In the Fichtelgebirge, however, it is said that the two villages of Nagel and Reichenbach are the Devil's body parts, which Satan therefore also claimed for himself when he tempted Christ and promised him the world, if he him worshipped him. To the Nagelberg in Mittelfranken, which mountain people inhabit, links the saga a golden chain. This, as the red silk thread, with which Laurin's and Chrimhilden's rose gardens are fenced in, leads back to the chain which the Leonhard churches which loops around it. Particularly clearly the pull towards paganism can be seen in the Brixen church, as mentioned above. The saint now wraps this chain around his congregation, as the picture in the church at Aigen attempts to depict. This means that the saint frees people from illnesses, ailments and even imprisonment if the person concerned voluntarily submits to his imprisonment. Such a prisoner then voluntarily wears a ring around his neck, body, arms and feet instead of chains for a period of time determined by the vow. A frequently repeated vow formula reads: "To wear an eysen ring on your neck for the rest of your life, as a St. Leonhard prisoner of good will and obligation." Such a ring is nothing less than a neck iron, as it was forged for prisoners, only it lacked chains, which were hung in the church as a votive offering. "To beg everything in Allmusen" and "to have the sign proclaimed" are often recurring additions to the vow formulas. This gave rise to the superstition of the so-called gout rings. In order to banish gout, an iron finger ring must be made, the cost of which must be begged for, but no thanks may be given to the giver, because the person begged for has the gift. "for God's sake".

However, these "iron rings", which play such an important role here, go back deep into Germanic antiquity. Cornelius Tacitus says in his "Germania": "A custom to which valor only found its way among some other Germanic peoples

is generally accepted among the Chatti. It consists in the fact that from their first manhood they let their hair and beard grow and do not lay aside this wild appearance, to which they commit themselves by a vow of bravery, until they have killed an enemy. Only then do they believe that they have won the prize of birth, that they are worthy of their fatherland and their parents. The cowardly and unwarlike are left with a savage face. Moreover, each of the bravest wears an iron ring, a sign of shame for this people, as a kind of shackle until he has freed himself from it by slaying an enemy. This custom is popular with most Chatti. They grow old in this decoration and are thus recognizable to both friend and foe."

Wearing and taking off this iron ring, which symbolically resembles a shackle, was therefore already a custom of the Germanic tribes in Tacitus' time, linked to vows. And such a vow in the age of the Wuotan cult was completely equivalent to a Christian vow today. Then, as now, the vow was a contract entered into with the deity, concluded with religious solemnity, which, like a debt, had to be paid off with the greatest conscientiousness.

Indeed, the ancient doctrine of the gods even connects the origin of the iron finger rings with shackles, albeit not directly. Prometheus had to wear an iron finger ring as a sign of shame for the punishment he had suffered. The gem was cut from the rock to which he was bound.

But the hanging of the chains of those who are released from their imprisonment also finds its echo in the grayest antiquity.

Pausanias offers a surprising point of comparison: "At the castle of the Phliasians there is a cypress grove (i.e. a forest, which is characteristic of all Leonhard churches) and a highly sacred temple from time immemorial. The goddess to whom this temple is dedicated is called Ganymede by the oldest Phliasians and Hebe by the younger ones. This goddess stands at The Phliasians hold them in high honor; but in the highest honor, because those who implore them for protection receive impunity, whatever their crime may be. The prisoners who are released from their bonds hang their shackles on the trees of the grove as a sacred gift."

Herodotus offers an even older, more venerable testimony. He tells us that the Lacedemonians, misled by an oracle, were in Tegea

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and, full of confidence of victory, had immediately taken the chains with them to bind the tegeates they wanted to capture. However, things turned out differently than the Lacedemonians had expected. They were defeated and the surviving captured Lacedemonians were now beaten by the Tegeaten into the chains they had brought with them.

"These very shackles," Herodotus reports, "were still well preserved in my time in Tegea, where they hung around the temple of Athena Alea."

Pausanias reports that he saw these shackles, "as far as the rust did not consume them," at the temple of Athena.

As already mentioned, legend has it that the first image of St. Leonard in Aigen was a black block of wood that was swept ashore by a fisherman. That sounds very pagan! Just as pagan, however, is the peculiarity of the blocks, which, wherever and however they may be carried away and hidden, always return to the church.

Eddies and rapids were considered to be the dwellings of the highest gods, and even today popular belief populates the Danube cataracts with eddies, whirlpools, whirlpools and what they are all called, with mermaids and mermen, and it is especially the eddy of the Danube that does not tolerate anything unholy. Only virgins or women were allowed to sail on it, fallen girls had to leave the ship; that was the law of the Danube. But it is also known of many highly venerated images of saints that they did not want to leave their favorite place on a tree or rock and always returned there, no matter how often they were moved to a neighboring church. Often they would not even tolerate a chapel or even just a shelter being built over them; they wanted to stand in the free nature of God, surrounded by the resin-scented coolness of the forest.\*)

Yes, that's really pagan! Says yet Tacitus: "Moreover, it does not correspond to the Germanic view of the majesty of the heavenly ones to imprison them between walls, or to make images of them with human features. Forests and groves are their temples, and under the names of their gods they invoke that inscrutable power which reveals itself to them only in worship."

That St. Leonhard was therefore already known to our ancestors at the time of the Christianization of the Germanic tribes or very soon afterwards.

\*) For example, the "great saint" (St. Zeno) at Mauer upon Melk does not tolerate a protective roof; as often as one was erected over the statue, the storm threw it over the next night.

These strange reminders of pagan sacrificial service in the cult of this saint prove that it must have been a pagan cult.

If it is now sound that St. Leonhard took the place of a Germanic deity, and that the old Leonhard churches thus rose from the healing places of this very deity, the only question that remains is to which of the old gods this former "pagan church" was dedicated.

Here, too, the conscientious Tacitus guides us: "Yet another kind of veneration is paid to this grove (sacred through the consecration of the ancestors and their fearsome age). No one enters it except bound, as a sign of submission to the deity's omnipotence. If someone falls to the ground, he may neither get up nor allow himself to be lifted up; he must roll out on the ground. All these customs are based on the idea that this is the cradle of the people, that here is the all-ruling God, to whom everything else is dependent and subservient.

Thus the fetter was a main symbol of the worship of the supreme god, whereby every other divine figure appears to be excluded from the outset when it comes to answering the question to which of the Aesir those healing places were consecrated, above which the churches of St. Leonard rise today.

But that's not all; the iron arm ring of the Hage stalden also points to Wuotan. Just as the hechsels were the earthly reflection of the Valkyries, so the Hagestalde was the mirror image of the heavenly Einherier, Wuotan's closest drinking companion in Walhall's Metsaal. The horse, like the sacred well associated with it, all of St. Leonhard's other protected areas point back to the father of Walhall, to the king of the gods Wuotan, "to the all-ruling god, to whom everything else is dependent and subject."

But the ancient Germanic ordeal was also preserved by the lifting and throwing of Leonhard's nails; for throwing and jumping was an ordeal: after all, throwing and jumping decided Brundhild's bridehood.

Thus we can recognize a former Wuotan sanctuary in each of the old St. Leonhard's churches; we may approach those doubly sacred forest churches with reverence, for they are worthy witnesses of those misty times in which Christianity sprouted its first seeds in the heart of the German people.



## Christophen.

Ave magne Christophore!  
Qui portasti Jesum Christe  
Per mare rubrum  
Nec tamen franxisti crurum  
Sed hoc non est mirum  
Quid tu eras magnum virum.

*All the songs of traveling scholars*



He who needs his feet so proficiently to walk through all countries per pedes apostolorum, as the traveling disciples of the Middle Ages of honest and dishonest thought did, may not be counted such barbaric Latin as a sin, as that scholarly song offers a taste of it, as can be read at the beginning of these lines.

After all, no people on earth has traveled the world like the Germans, from which the wealth of their wandering songs in all dialects, even in Latin verse, originates. Even if the railroad has changed many things in the customs and traditions of the people, if it has banished the institute of the "traveling craftsmen" to the museum with the rest of the cultural-historical junk, there is still a lonely little journey of traveling scholasticism that blooms and greens, which lets its songs resound when the vacancy period spreads its golden swing days over the land. It mustn't rain, of course, because then the songs fall silent and the rain-swept street inns are quiet; only the clattering of the stone jugs tells you what the unenthusiastic scholars are doing to sweeten their anger at the weather's misfortune.

So we, too, sat glumly with Christophen in the pub and gazed out into the dripping leaves, which seemed to be wedded to the fringing clouds today.

"We must have spoiled it with St. Christophoros," said one. - "The great water spirit, who is invoked and banished in the "Christopheles prayer" so that he doesn't appear in too terrible a form, is loose and almost impossible to banish for a long time!"

And so it was, for it continued to rain, as any of the unfortunates who were on the trail in the autumn of the rain-soaked one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine years can confirm with a sigh.

The joking combination of the infamous "Christopheles prayer", which the church itself persecutes as a spell, with the place Christopheles in which we were sitting, led to stimulating discussions and finally to this mythological landscape.

Christophen is an ancient place, which is only mentioned in documents as a parish in the thirteenth century (Marquardus plebandus de sancto Christophoro, 1239), but is nevertheless considered older by the otherwise very skeptical scholars of antiquity. As an exception, they believe a tradition which, according to a later inscription on the rectory, states that Bishop Berengar of Passau assigned the parish to St. Pölten Abbey in 1040, which was confirmed five years later by Bishop Engelbert with a simultaneous increase in the endowment. However, despite the assumption of this certainly high age, it is still underestimated, because the foundation of the place undoubtedly goes back to pre-Christian times, but that of the church to the time of the introduction of Christianity itself. The churches of St. Christopher, like those of St. Leonard, St. Ruprecht, St. Stephen or St. Michael the Archangel and other saints, grew out of famous pagan churches, as we have already shown several times, and here too the only question that remains to be answered is which of the Aesir was once sacrificed here.

In the legend and veneration of St. Christopher (the bearer of Christ) there are also indelible traces of Germanic paganism, with the only difference that these were not tolerated by the church, as was the case with the cult of St. Leonard, for example, but were directly persecuted and forbidden. The legend is soon told in excerpt from a book of legends printed in Strasbourg in 1517.

The saint was a pagan before his conversion and was born in Canaan; he was a giant and twelve cubits long. He wandered to find the greatest and most powerful lord to serve. So he came to the court of a king. When Offero - that was his name before he was baptized - saw that the king crossed himself as often as the devil was mentioned in speech, he asked what this meant. After receiving clarification, Offero said to the king: "If you are afraid of the devil, I have served you long enough." He went in search of the devil, found him and served him. Once the devil could not pass by a cross, then Offero saw that the devil was not the most powerful, and left him as he had left the king before. After wandering for a long time, he found a hermit who instructed him in the faith, but the cautious Offero did not yet allow himself to be baptized, since he

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still doubted whether he had now come into contact with the most powerful man. The hermit ordered him to fast, watch and pray. Then Offero said: "Show me another way to serve him." Said the hermit: "In that gorge flows a water, over which there is no bridge, no footbridge. If you want to carry people over there for God's sake, you will be doing Christ a service, for you are long and strong."

Offero did as he was told. He built his dwelling there and carried the pilgrims across the water for God's sake, i.e. without thanks or reward. One night he heard a child calling out: "My dear, my long, my strong Offero, get over!" He went to the shore, but did not see the child and returned to his hut. The child called out a second time, and he did not find him there either; he only became aware of him after the third call. He grabbed his staff made of pear wood, took the child on his shoulders and walked with him into the stream. But the water swelled into a sea, and the child grew and grew and became heavier than lead. He was afraid of drowning. As he stood in the middle of the river, he said to the child, 'How heavy you are, child; I feel as if I were carrying the whole world! Then the child said, "You are not carrying the world, but the one who created it." With that, the child pushed Offero under the water and said: "I am Jesus, your King and your God, and I baptize you in the name of my Father, in my name and in the name of the Holy Spirit. Before you were called Offero (I offer myself), and now you shall be called Christophorus (Christ-bearer). Stick your barren staff into the ground; if it bears fruit tomorrow, you will know my power!" With that, the child disappeared. Christophorus did as he was told, and that night the dry stick sprouted into a tree and bore blossoms and fruit. Christopher was very happy about this and clung to his Lord with love and loyalty. The further fate and martyrdom of the saint have no further relevance to this study, which is why they can be ignored here.

This legend is given a strange extension in Tyrol and supplementation.

On the country road from Mittenwald to Innsbruck, between Seefeld and Zirl, there is a farmhouse, the so-called Riesenhaus. It is decorated with murals on the outside and on the wall facing the road you can see two young giants fighting with each other; Heymo, holding the sword with both hands, pushes it

into the head of Thyrsis. On the opposite wall, St. Christopher is depicted carrying the Christ Child through the waves, holding an uprooted tree with top and root in his left hand and using it as a staff. A naked sea woman, half out of the water, with a crown on her head, touches the root of the tree with her left hand. On the other side of Christoph stands the mother Anna with the child Mary. The year 1507 can be read next to her. Next to Mother Anne is an angel and, a little to the side, a hermit who appears to be stepping out of his cell with a burning light in his lantern. A castle is visible in the background.

Near this giant house, in a narrow steep valley the Türschenbach flows towards the Inn. The small hamlet that lies in this valley is also called Türschenbach. Nearby, asphalt is mined, which the people of the area use as a powerful miracle cure for all kinds of diseases and livestock plagues, as well as the stone oil (naphtha), which they call Türschen oil. A plot of land not far away is called "bei'n wild'n ma'" (at the wild man).

Continuing towards Innsbruck, you will find the larger-than-life statue of Heymos, haggard, holding the dragon's tongue in his left hand, at the mortuary chapel of the Wilten cemetery.

That's what this legend is about:

The image of Our Lady of Wilten was hidden under four pillars, which is why it is still called "Our Lady of the Four Pillars". This was revealed to Heymo, who soon brought the image to light and decided to build Wilten Abbey on the site where it was found. But what he built by day was torn down by night. Heymo, who was at odds with Türsch, suspected this, sought him out, found him sleeping in a meadow and dealt him a fatal blow with his sword. The giant Türsch got up, tore a tree from the ground, roots and all, and struck out. Striding across the mountains, the blood flowed from his wound, and "where it flowed, there was the Türschen oil".

Before he died, he called out:

"Go in, innocent blood,  
And be good for cattle and people!"

But even now the monastery building was still collapsing every night. Then Heymo was watching and saw how from Sillbach a

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dragon came here. With Our Lady's help, Heymo chased the dragon to a waterfall, where he cut off the fire-breathing monster's head and tore out its tongue.

When the monastery building was completed, Heymo grabbed a large stone and threw it over the monastery with such force that it fell a long way, where it still lies today. This is how far the monastery was to be freed from the tithe.

The connection between the giant legend of Heymo and Thyrsis and the legend of St. Christopher is forgotten here, but it can be found, especially since Thyrsis and Türsch are direct giant names and correspond to Thurso, Durso, with which names the giants appear in the Edda as in many sagas.

It is certainly no coincidence that in Apollonius I. 502 a Titan king is called Ophion Gemal of the Eurynome, who, defeated by Saturn, was thrown into the sea, where Rhea threw the Eurynome after him, both of whom drowned. An Ophion is also named among the giants whom Zeus slew. Ophion and Offero sound very similar, however, and the latter name seems to have originated from the former.

In the legend, the first thing that catches the eye is Offero's wandering, like his length, which is given as twelve cubits. Furthermore, his service of carrying the pilgrims across the water, and finally the staff made of pear wood, which, planted in the ground, turns green and blossoms and bears fruit. These are genuinely pagan features which, when linked to the Heymo-Türsch legend, lead to interesting solutions.

Wate was the name of a giant who fathered his son Wieland with the sea creature Wachilde.\*) When he was grown up, he carried him across the sea so that he could learn to forge a sword. But this son, whom the father carried, was the people whom the god carried across seas and lands, that is, whom he led on their wanderings.

If Wuotan shimmers through here as a wanderer behind the mythical figure of Wate, this should come as no surprise, for Wuotan is everything, and the other individual figures of the gods are merely personifications of individual characteristics of the supreme god.

St. Christopher was also interpreted in this sense; he protected the wayfarers, and on the day on which such a

\*) "German mythological landscapes." Aggstein.

St. Christopher's image, he was protected from an untimely death. This is why the mostly huge images of the saint are mostly found on the outside walls of churches, on rock faces, such as the eleven-metre-high image of St. Christopher painted on the rock at Hollerfels near Vellach, and naturally also as inn shields, to which he was transferred from the old hospices that were built during the Crusades. St. Christopher carried his people across the sea to the Promised Land, just like the old Wate.

Now there is a dragon fight and a giant fight. The dragon fight corresponds to Balder, or to Siegfried's, as the line reveals that the blood is "good for cattle and men". The dragon's blood made Siegfried "hörnen", i.e. invulnerable, and allowed him to understand the language of birds. Although the blood of the giant Türsch is explicitly mentioned here, this does not detract from the connection, for dragons are giant animals, and Fafner is, as we know, a dragon and a giant in one person.

The giant fight, on the other hand, refers to the giant fights of the other son of Wuotan, Donar, while the building can refer to both the building Wuotan and the building giants.

So there are no less than three Aesir, namely Wuotan, Balder and Donar, and a giant, Wate, who claim to have once had their sacrificial sites at the places where St. Christopher is worshipped today.

But then again, it is the giant house between Seefeld and Zirl that throws a weighty piece of evidence into the balance here, which piece of evidence is the crowned sea-woman; Wieland's mother was the mermaid Wachilde. But just as the belief in miracles, because Offero was immersed under the water by the Christ child, believes that he has power over all the treasures that lie in the water, so Wieland's gold is also described in the legends as coming from the water, in that it was thought to have come from his mother, the mermaid Wachilde. However, this was correct in that the first gold was washed out of the river sand.

Thus it seems clear that the honor of St. Christopher replaced that of Wates, to which another noteworthy aspect is added, which, however, falls into a different sphere of thought - it is the "wandering Joten", which in the course of time has developed into the "wandering Jew", but is none other than Wuotan the Wanderer. In Tyrol in particular, the legend goes that Judas

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hanged on a Wednesday; but this Judas is precisely the "wandering Jew". The hanging is Wuotan's self-sacrifice\*) and Wednesday is the day of the week sacred to Wuotan. It is also worth noting that it is precisely in the Danube valley of the "Wachau", which we have already mentioned at Aggstein" was recognized as the floodplain of Wachhilden, the "Watstein" lying on the left bank of the Danube, the "Aggstein" lying on the right bank is so to speak opposed. Agez (Aegir), the wintry sea giant, illuminates his hall with the golden light of the sun held captive in the underworld (the darkness, the winter). However, we also recognized this mythical treasure gold as the golden seed slumbering in the winter earth, from which mythical gold treasure the legendary hoard of the Nibelungs, the Amelungen etc. developed. So here is your "Wate" the water giant "Agez", the "Christopheles prayer" contrasts St. Christopher with the "great water spirit" as the keeper of treasures, whereby the latter proves to be Agez. Since St. Christopher is also ascribed compelling power over this water spirit, as the Christopheles prayer shows, the pagan personification behind this saint must have been more powerful than Agez himself.

Wate is, as already noted, a weakened secondary figure of a mighty Aesir, but the question still wavers as to whether that Aesir was "Wuotan" or "Donar"; the former was the god of the nobles, the latter the god of the peasants. Both are wanderers; but an Eddic song: "Harbardshliödh" introduces us to Donar as the one who wades through the water.

In this song, a quarrel between the sun (Wuotan) and the summer thunderstorm (Donar) is mythically depicted. The sun is victorious; after the storm has passed, it shines again calmly from the sky. The sun (Wuotan) is depicted here as a ferryman across the border stream between giants and Aesir conceived, who otherwise is called Elbing (Ifing). In the thunderstorm myth means the representation of the sun god as a ferryman across the Elbing River, the sun veiled by storm clouds, which moves back and forth from one bank of the river to the other. This means that the storm clouds actually move once, then back again. But the sun refuses to cross and remains victorious, then finally the thunderstorms pass and go along the river to look for a ford to wade through in the "west".

\*) In the Runeuliede, Wuotan writes of himself: "I know how I hung on the wind-cold tree of nine eternal vengeance, I, Wuotan, consecrated to myself etc."

In the 'HarbardshliǺdh', this myth is already very unclear. The song is a late one from the time of the decline of the art of scalding. But it characterizes very well the character of both the knightly and the peasant god. Both quarrel, the warlike Wuotan and the "giver of sheaves", Donar, and both are right.

Wuotan brags about love taxes and deeds of war, Donar boasts of the good deeds he has done for mankind and his donations as the guardian of the land.

If we now see here the dividing stream between Asm and the giants, the Donar wading through it, if we compare this dividing stream with the Danube (see Aggstein) where the Watstein stands on the northern, left, Germanic bank and the Riesenstein-Aggstein rises on the southern, not yet Germanic right bank, the conclusion is that Wate, who carries his people across the stream, can be none other than the "wading Donar" in a legendarily attenuated form.

If, however, the "great sea or water spirit" is recognized as Agez in the Christophorus legend, then the Aesir who is superior to him and compels him must be the giant conqueror Donar, who, despite being denied passage by the actually friendly side, is strong enough to conquer the water giant through self-help and to achieve the crossing of the river by wading.

Thus, the treasure legend of Christopher actually conceals two treasures, as is clearly evident, because it is not only about the treasure gold that the great water spirit hides in the water, but also about the treasures buried in the earth. So water and earth unite here to hide the treasure gold. Even in the Nibelung myth, the dwarf "Antwari" hides his hoard of gold in the cave under the water.

Now the German belief in miracles also knows other treasure sagas which, like that of St. Christopher, point to earth and water, to earth and air, as well as to earth and fire, whereby here too the mighty three suddenly breaks through.

Even though alchemy has four elements, namely:

Earth	▽	
Water	▽	
Air,	△	
Fire	△	and from this the
Universe,	☆	the German myth knows only



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three elements, namely: air, water and fire in their influence on the earth. This trinity corresponds to: Wuotan (air), Donar (water) and Loki (fire).

Since the treasures that lie in the air, like those that lie in the fire, are only mythical, but hardly comprehensible in practical terms, it is easy to explain why the treasure legend, which is based on Donar as the lord of buried and sunken treasures, pushed the other two into the background as the Christophorus legend, because it was more plausible for the treasure diggers to deal with buried or sunken treasures than with those that lie in the fire or even in the air.

Nevertheless, we will also roam the other two areas on our German mythological hikes.

Now there is no need to point out that the belief in treasure-digging, strengthened by chance discoveries of treasures, became more and more deeply entangled in the realm of sorcery and belief in magic, and froze in the "Christopheles Prayers", as in the "mighty sea spirit" of Dr. Faust's threefold compulsion to hell in even the most crass belief.

The church had not succeeded in eradicating the old Wuotan cult, although it made the greatest possible concessions to the people. Thus, alongside the Christian creed, a good part of paganism remained alive, which soon became a belief in the devil and thus a secondary belief, but which soon developed into superstition and finally superstition.

However, in order to protect themselves from persecution, these devilish or superstitious beliefs were enveloped in formulas that resembled Christian ones, incantations were combined with prayers, and thus the infamous Christopheles prayer was created, which, despite all secular and ecclesiastical prohibitions, is still printed, bought and, with all the pre-written magic apparatus, still used today - on Christmas Eve - is prayed.

It is hair-raising what nonsense can be read on the thirty-eight tightly printed pages of the booklet that bears the promising title:

"The call of St. Christopher, or:  
the so-called Christopheles prayer."

For the time being brings this booklet the instructions for preparation under the inscription: "Science of the hearings and requirements

to obtain these requests." There is much talk of Christian exercises, in particular of "fasting on bread and water" and the like. This is followed by a myriad of real and proper spell conditions, which only fit into the witches' kitchen, albeit apparently in the Christian sense. Three or only one of them must perform the incantation alone; a picture of St. Christopher and a picture of the Virgin Mary must be set up together with a crucifix, in front of which a consecrated candle burns. However, a covered candle burns in a closed lantern. This hidden candle burns for the devil, of course, "to whom one must sometimes light a candle"; this shows quite clearly how Christianity and paganism stand side by side here. It is not unbelief, no! It is full, true faith on both sides, but misguided in the delusions of an overwrought imagination.

So it goes on in the wild nonsense that is Christianity and paganism turn right away!

The next chapter is called "Knowledge and Manner to make the Circle." This is the famous magic circle, which is common in all incantations; but as it is perhaps not known what such a circle looks like, let us try to describe it here. First, a straight line is drawn from east to west, which crosses another from north to south, as on the compass rose. Three concentric circles are then drawn around the center point of this cross. The picture looks almost like a target for target practice; it consists of four quadrants and eight ring quarters, four of which are always the same size.

In the quadrant between north and east is the cross with the image of the Virgin Mary, in the next one between east and south is the image of Christ, in the quadrant between north and west is the holy water font, while the quadrant between west and south forms the entrance and marks the place where the invoker is to kneel. The ring, which is formed by the first and second circles counted from the center point, contains the names of the four evangelists, namely: East: Matthew; South: Mark; West: Luke and North: John. The ring between the second and third circles contains one of the four words in each celestial region, progressing from east to south: Jesus, Nazarenus, Rex, Judaeorum, between which four words, separated by crosses, four archangel names are inscribed: Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel and Michael. Is the very complicated ceremony, with its many prayers and formulas, for

when the drawing of the circle is completed, frightening amounts of long prayers come, which become more and more insistent and impertinent, because they have the purpose of forcing St. Christopher, as the lender of hidden treasures, to bring them in the modest figure of 999999 ducats in full-value, customary coin, and not to reward the many efforts of the invocation with deceptive sham gold, which could turn into dungy coals or the like. This is the "true prayer of the Christophori, pray this very devoutly and very purely". This terrible nonsense of several pages is followed by an equally crass "Prayer to God Almighty", which is finally followed by the "Invocation to St. Christopher". Only now comes the actual witchcraft, namely "The summoning and citation of the spirit and the treasure-keeper". An appended "Notandum" foresees the not impossible case that the spirit would still not be inclined to bring the 999999 ducats, which is why it advises: "speak the following incantation and sharp compulsion 3 times". Of course, incredible things are already being done, and if the spirit only has some sense of honor in his body, he must come, whether he wants to or not.

The author of the "Compulsion" has also recognized this and now gives rules on how to meet the spirit in the following order: "Here, when you hear what, speak like this." "And answer the spirit's question; when he asks you what your desire is, answer him like this" "When the spirit says he has no money or such coins, speak like this." Of course, the conjuror does not allow him to act; incidentally, he behaves just as brutally as a usurer would towards his debtor if the latter does not want to honor the deliberately long paper. But the spirit understands, because the next chapter is written over: "If the spirit has brought you something, speak immediately after his good deed". Then the man becomes polite, but he doesn't really trust the spirit, because now follows the "Complaining of the treasure", and then immediately the "Abdication of the spirit", so that they can "get away from each other in peace".

This is followed by only the following four sections: "Vacation of the Spirit", "Extinction of the Circle", "Before leaving the Circle" and "Rescue of the Circle".

This was followed by many prayers to calm his Christian conscience and shield him from the devil, whom he had happily got rid of.

This so-called Christopheles prayer contains as much of Christianity as of paganism, namely not even the dust of mildew of either, for it is sheer madness, the spawn of the brains of many traveling scholars of dishonest thought, whose descendants we still encounter here and there as market criers and Theriac merchants in the countryside. It grew and grew, each one intensifying it here and there to make it really gruesome and thereby squeeze the last pennies out of the poor peasants. So this "prayer" grew and was finally printed and reprinted, and perhaps went through a print run that rivaled that of Scheffel's "Ekkehard" excels!

And the more the church, the more the state was zealous against it, because - forbidden fruit tastes best.

The rain had stopped, but the great water spirit had settled so broadly and softly into the wet herbage, as well as into the slippery paths, that we persisted in lying behind our jugs at Christophen's to indulge in the noble doings of drinkable men.

There is also a special poetry in being blessed in the countryside.

Vale magne Christophore!



## On the Völkerheerstraße.



Some of the many who roll south on the iron road every day\*) may be aware that one and a half millennia ago the same iron road was broken by our ancient forefathers through the iron strength belt of Rome for the journey to Rome, but in a different sense. The armies of nations did not roll along on iron rails back then; the iron they carried in their fist and called it a sword.

\*) It refers to the "southern railway line" from Vienna to Italy.

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Traveling is different today.

With the modern travel devices that make traveling so much easier, indeed devalue it, so that one begins to regard the region flown through, the country raced through, as nothing more than an illustrated magnum opus, which one leafs through for pretty pictures and then pushes aside unread, with these modern travel devices, traveling, for its own sake, loses infinitely in charm and also in value.

The countries have moved closer together, the roads have become shorter. The tails of the Gartons are carefully distributed along the well-trodden tourist trail, and the traveler does not notice the finer shades, the inconspicuous gradations and transitions from the peculiarity of one people to the special development of another, just as he now simply overlooks the once significant resting points of the journey, they flit past the carriage window unnoticed, a different one every quarter of an hour.

In the days of the posthorn it was different, and there were still those who, like Seume, walked from Grimma to Syracuse *per pedes apostolorum*.

One of the most interesting phenomena, however, is lost to the steam-winged traveler at the borders of peoples and languages, which rarely or never coincide with the political borders of countries. These striking phenomena, however, forced a question upon the traveler of the old school - if he had other normally constructed tools of thought, which even then were not available to everyone - which we will try to answer here.

Living language, whatever its sound, is an eternally surging stream, splitting into countless branches of dialect, which only with difficulty are kept in a halfway uniform course by the dams of written language. There it crashes over cliffs, there it glides calmly and clearly through blooming meadows, here the floods are transparent like reflecting crystals, elsewhere they are cloudy with foreign components, waiting for clarification; there the stream of language runs in a bed of two colors, although the demarcation is not a sharp one, for the inquiring eye recognizes small eddies and frictions at the color border, which seem to mix both shades.

This also applies to the border between the German and Italian tongues.

This, once far down in the south, where Dietrich, the mighty Bernese, was its imperious border guard, is today moving ever more threateningly northwards, and it almost seems to one as if the Brenner was destined to be the landmark of the language border in the art of communication; favored by un-German Roman priests and un-German unpatriotic authorities, who are fanatically promoting the ever more rampant adulteration of the beautiful Etschland.

One example for many.

When builders of the Brenner Railway painted the station name on the station building in Bozen in the Italian language: "BOLZANO" on the fronts and gables, and despite all objections, despite the indignation of the all-German population of Bolzano, it was decided not to pay any attention to it.

One fine day, the sun shone golden clear over the laughter-friendly city of Bolzano, the Dolomite peaks of the Sciliar shone in the rosy inks and King Laurin's rose garden blossomed in the most fiery ethereal fragrance. Do we hear right? Was this not a drum roll? - And there, that crowd of men with flying banners coming out of the city - are the Bersaglieri even approaching? - Shall blood roses spring from the red drink of iron down here in the valley and redden the sand, as the cliffs up there redden in the reflection of King Laurin's roses?

But no - they are already close enough to realize that they are unarmed, and yet - what is the elevator for? They are carrying ladders and painting equipment on festively decorated stretchers, and in the middle a giant pot of black paint. Now the station building has been reached. The ladders are put in place, the sound of full chords: "What is of the German Fatherland?" and while the song blew, the name "BOLZANO" has on all sides disappeared, and good German shines in fresh color in the same place: "BOZEN" - and even today, more than twenty years later, the German name of the town can still be read there.

With her friendliest radiance, the donor transfigured everything. This boyish and manly action of the Bozen Turnerschaft was particularly remarkable, for it was these splendid young men who dared to make amends to the German Bozen with courageous action.

After a powerful roll of drums, hurrahs and helo's, fresh, cheerful songs rang out again, the squads arranged themselves, again

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the banners flew, again followed by the bearers of the ladder and the color pot stretcher, and the procession moved back to the German city of Bozen.

That's what the German turners of German Bolzano did!

Further down to the south you can hear strangely constructed words, For example: il Vagerle, il Tragerle, instead of the wagon, the carrier, and the like; these are the easily explainable "frictions and vortices" that form at the language border.

If you move even further south and think you have found the German "Trident", as well as the equally German "Rovereuth", the sister towns of Bozen, you will mournfully come across "Trento" and "Rovereto"; it almost seems like an epitaph over the burial mound of a lost German post.

And that is just the beginning! For now the lost posts of Germanness are chasing each other on the military road to the Germanic tomb - Italia. Now the railroad train rushes through a rugged, bristly rocky gorge, and it sounds almost legendary that the old German name "Bernerklause" still clings loosely to it, although this too can already be nobly called "Clusa di Verona" - Verona's hermitage.

Now the train stops in front of good old Bern, the former residence of the strong-armed Ostrogoth Theodoric, the legendary and song-famous Dietrich von Bern. The mythical figures of warriors dawn before our inner eye, but these magnificent images are chased away like an evil incantation by the conductor's call as he shouts into the open carriage door: "Verona! porta vescova!"

But how completely different it was on an earlier journey in the manner of traveling scholars! In those days, the railroad sometimes stayed to the right, sometimes to the left, as the case might be, and the road was happily traveled on foot or up on tractors, according to whim and need.

I had already thought that my beloved German was behind me when, in the middle of the falsified country, German sounds unexpectedly struck my ear again, spoken in German villages and surrounded by a foreign idiom - like a forgotten island in the ocean. - This German sounded full and rough, it might hardly seem like it to some people who are used to considering only our school German as real German, but these full vocals sounded strange, as if they came from a distant century.

How pleasantly surprising it was to come across larger areas deep down in the Adige Valley, as well as in its eastern side valleys, on

in which the German tongue still sounds and in which German place names, even if partly already withered, easily reveal the German word core. And the latter even in communities that are already fully and permanently Italianized, far south of today's assumed border of the German language. These are truly and genuinely forgotten outposts of Germanness along the international highway to Rome, to the spacious Germanic tomb - Italia.

Noteworthy is the distribution of these Germanic language islands in the middle of the Italian language area on the lower Adige at "Trident" and "Rovereuth" and the eastern valleys, where they include a large area of purely German tongue - the sette comuni - but everywhere isolated, fully justifying the term "German language islands".

At that time, we traveled east along the road from Trento, leaving the Adige Valley through the "Val Fersina" over a rocky ridge into the area covered by the "Brenta" flooded "Val Sugana" towards "Venice".

The wonderfully wild rocky valley, where the road stretches over long, mighty stone embankments along the broken rocky crags, some of which have been painstakingly carved into them, awakens all the magic of the heroic saga with its proud majesty and unworldly wild valley solitude. So we traveled along these paths to Feltre, the old Fritila castle\*), and the figures of the Vilcina legend whirled around us like ghosts.

Here, where every stone, every ruined castle bears witness, the simple, rough language of the heroic saga has a doubly invigorating effect on the creative power of a poetically sensitive mind. The ruins of the castle greet you from all points of view, reminding you of how this road trembled under the hooves of heavy warriors in the early days and how those rocky cliffs, which today at most echo the sound of the post horn, once threw back the thunderous call of the army horn.

Yes, Dietleib the Dane traveled this road when he sought Dietrich the Bernese in Venice. The Vilcina legend recounts this journey literally as follows:

"Legend has it that Dietleib, on his way to Bem (Verona), learned that Dietrich was riding to Rome to meet King Ermanrich, who was his uncle. However, he wanted to meet Dietrich himself on the journey and therefore explored the next route to Venice. The way

\*) See": "The Venusberg near Traismauer".



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But the knowledgeable Gotzswin gave him this advice: "This route is shorter, for Dietrich is hardly going straight to Rome, because I was told that he wants to make a detour east to the sea to Venice and stay there for a few days before riding south. And when you come to "Tridentsthal", halfway to "Trident" (Trento) itself, turn off the path that leads to Bern and ride eastwards through the gorge (today the Fersina Valley), which you will see open before you. And when you come to the sea in the east, every child will surely tell you where Sir Dietrich is."

The legend then tells of the Dane Dietleib's further journey: "He then came to a castle, and this was called "Fritilaburg" (today Feltre).

And this was the Fritila Castle! Here in the middle of the Italian country a castle of the fair German Fraya! The pen can scarcely glide over this name without again recalling the noble Tann-husäre and recounting the wonders he did with Frau Venusinnen. But these pages have already reported on her elsewhere.

And all around, what a splendor of memories!

If you explore the names of those crumbling castles, you will find that some of them have been forgotten by the people, but in the case of others it is easy to extract the German core from the Italian-sounding shell. For example, "Pergine", which proudly dominates a sizeable market on the pass, can easily be traced back to the German "Bergen" or "Perghin". Further on we come across the castle "Hohentelfs" or "Torcegno", the ruins of the castle "Telfs" (Telvana) and, after walking further along "Grigno", reach the old German "Griegn", where the wild Tessino gorge opens up coming down from the north, from which the "Grigno" gushes forth.

You meet Germans all along the valley route, although - unfortunately - the younger generation has a preference for Italian, and this continues beyond Feltre, the old "Fritila castle" of the Bernese. Near "Primolano", in a moderately large cave, there are the ruins of the old "Kofel" castle, today known as "Covelo". This was one of those defended caves, like Lueg in Kram, Chalons in South Steyermark, like Klamm and Wölkersdorf in Lower Austria.

According to the map of the famous Tyrolean farmer Peter Anich, however, we can supplement this sparse yield.

Other maps from the Middle Ages depicting these regions can also be used for comparison; they provide important indications in the direction indicated. Particularly noteworthy are the maps by the famous naturalist and historian, the Viennese physician Wolfgang Lazius. (1514-1565.)

Peter Anich's map now lists no fewer than fourteen German castle names between Trento and Kofel, and starting from Trento these are: "Sergnan", "Puel" (Bühel, hill) "Formasch", "Grüll", "Mala", "Bergen", "Selva", two castles called "Marter", "Telfs", "Hohentelfs", "Striegn", "Griegn" and "Kofel".

In the Fersina valley, before you cross the ridge towards Bal Sugana, we even find German place names such as "Puel", "Raut", "Erlach", "Rieslach" (Risolengo), "Grüll", "Laf-raun" and "Gareut" (Frassilongo).

In Gareut we had a rest day at the "Deutsches Haus" - how pleasant this name sounded on the forgotten - Völkerheerstraße! The innkeeper at the "Deutsches Haus", Mr. Dominikus Holzer, is one of those rare innkeepers who know what their guests are interested in. He will be able to answer anyone who asks him questions in the spirit of this book and will know how to give important pointers in the direction of research, which should be mentioned here in particular.

Such "fathers of their guests" are unfortunately becoming increasingly rare in the age of round trip tickets, and are being replaced by foppish waiters and hoteliers behaving like Grand-Seigneurs. Just by the way.

The valleys that run eastwards from Rovereto, the old "Rovereuth", Val Terragnuola and Val Arsa, offer exactly the same appearance.

In the Etsch Valley itself, however, lies the purely German mountain village of Folgern (Folgaria).

These places may be considered the first group of German language islands.

The second, larger one lies on the left bank of the upper Brenta, and are its German-speaking municipalities: "Torcegno", "Vignola", "Roncegno" and "Roveda", which are almost connected to the German-speaking villages of Val Sugana.

The largest of all, the "sette comuni", which has 30,000 souls, consists of thirteen villages and lies between the Val Sugana and the Val Arsa.

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How can these three large German language islands be explained?

They consider themselves to be "Cimbri" and therefore call their language the "Cimbrian language" and derive it from the language of Marius, 113 B.C. from the fragmented remains of the Cimbrian invasion. The map of Laziis becomes more significant for our present study because it contains the following inscription near the "sette comuni": "Aqua sextiae ad quas Marius Cos. Cymbros Teutones vicit." Schmeller, the famous Bavarian researcher, considers them to be Alemanni, who probably settled here after the Battle of Tolpiacum. To both I don't want to profess either view, but I do think they are remnants of the Goths, who gathered here more densely in order to have the strongly branching Brenner road always in safe hands, so as not to be cut off from the native people, in order to be guaranteed of an always fresh influx, and to remain in constant contact with them. The influence that the exiled peoples still exerted on their homeland is frequently mentioned in history, for example in the Vita Santi Severini, which gives a similar account of Odovakar.

It was in the times of Theodoric (Dietrich of Bern) and Odovakar that the Brenner road was secured here by an important military force, and this military force kept faithful watch there through the times of the migration of peoples, it kept the Roman road open to the Frankish King Charles and later to the Ottonians and Hohenstauffen through German blood and with German swordplay; it has remained on its castle guard to this day, where it has sunk to the forgotten German watchtower.

Three rivers showed the Germans the way to world domination; the "free German Rhine" across the ocean, the "blue Danube", the famous "Nibelung road" to the east and the German Adige for the joyful military journey to the sunny south, to Rome and on to Carthage and the Carrarian islands, where the Wansch people were found as remnants of the Vandals, like the inhabitants of the "sette comuni" as remnants of the Goths and Quadi.

Hierarchy and bureaucracy have also fanatically promoted and almost achieved Italianization here in the small mountainous region between the Brenta and the Astico. And the German idiom of the old Germanic "Wegwarten" has been forgotten by the German people and left to drift away. Nevertheless, a small literary monument may be dedicated here to those tribal brothers on the Borden

of the Brenta, from the days of the extinction of the Denta lute in the spacious Germanic tomb - Italy.

This literary monument, however, is the obituary of July 13, 1890, for the nineteen-year-old daughter of the mayor of Asiago, or "Cimbrian" Stege, the main town of the "sette comuni".

This obituary, printed in large folio format with a hand-width black border, is written in "Cimbrian", but with an Italian translation. The original text is as follows:

"Hennesle, Libe Tochter von Kav. Jakel vun Rigen un Luciet vun Müllarn, nochent geentet neuzen Jahr in Morgant vun driezenen Hobiot tausend achthundert und neünzk stirbe. Vorborgenes schmechtegez Genzele, Plümle vor minsche gebracht in vrömeda Hearda in beelz Vater un Mutter ligen iar Ehlar - iar Trost - iar Gadingen vluterte in Hümmel sin oanegez un selegez Lant. O guta - o linne o dorparmaga Tochter boatan dizzan armez Fant af din Grab lödeg ableget din Vater-Ksell

Stege in 14. Hobiot 1890

J. Dr. v. Bischovarn."

In a literal translation into our High German, this touching party reads:

"Hannchen, dear daughter of the Cavalier Jakob von Riegen and Lucie von Müllarn, died in her unfinished 19th year on the morning of the 13th of the hay month 1890. Hidden, fragrant little flower, brought for a short time into foreign soil, in which father and mother placed their honor, their comfort and their hope, it flew to heaven, its only, blessed fatherland. O good, O gentle, O merciful daughter, weeping and sorrowful, lay this poor pledge on your grave, your father's friend (companion)

Stege, July 14, 1890.

J. Dr. v. Bischovarn."

There is no doubt that these islands of Germanness on the southern Adige date back to the days of the migration of peoples, or rather to the days of the fall of Rome. The mighty Longobard Empire and the mighty Bavaria not only held Upper Italy, but also Aquileia and Friuli in a secure grip. And so it was not easy for the Frankish king to establish his marches in Upper Italy and Friuli, that is, to stamp what already existed as a Frankish institution, for he did not found those marches, he had already found them.

The migratory peoples of the Germans had already built strongholds along the Roman roads to Italy with weapons factories, horse

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and other borers for permanent possession of the Roman roads. The German "Gotschee" in Kram, for example, is just such a remnant of a Gothic "Wegwarte", as the name still says today. And there is evidence of other similar "Wegwarte" along the Roman roads.

These ancient German safeguards of the "Bölker roads", into which the old Roman roads had now been transformed, were firmly held by the Germans and could not be wrested from them, even when the imperial sword had fallen from the powerless Carolingians. It became even more important again under the Ottonians, as a new period in German Roman travel began under them. But today, when the period of the erroneously conceived and erroneously named migration of peoples has found its correct interpretation, no one would seriously want to claim that the birth of those German-speaking communities took place at this time.

Of the four Roman roads that led across the Alps, only three were of strategic importance for the German migratory peoples, as for Germany itself, both pre- and post-Carolingian.

The first moved from Vindomina (Vienna) and Juvavia (Salzburg) via Virnum (Klagenfurt), crossing the Predil and the Karst to Aquileia.

The second ran from Augsburg over the Brenner Pass through the Adige Valley.

The third finally led from Chur over the Splügen to Lake Como.\*)

The German kings were naturally very keen to ensure that these three roads were always strictly guarded, and the Völsunga saga already tells of the battles over passes and bridges, which all revolved around these roads, especially the Brenner Pass, where they emerged from the Alpine valleys on the Italian side, was a fully justified concern for Germany, as already mentioned, in order to always have an open route to Italy, to always have its back covered on military campaigns, and otherwise to be protected from renewed Roman invasions.

The road over the Splügen was lightly defended; it had no ramifications on Italian soil, and was protected from the wind by the safe

\*) The fourth route went over the Great St. Bernard from Gaul to Aosta and Milan.

Pavia, Milan and Como were adequately protected. Not so the other two.

That is why we see Bern already in the fifth century in the strong hand of Theodoric, and why we see the most stubborn struggle for Aquileia in all the military campaigns of the nations. "Gotschee", like the "Wegwarten" on the lower Adige at the back of Bern, behind the Berner-Klausen.

That is why we see under the Franks Charles with the border marks against the Avars and Slavs also called those against Italy, and also under the Ottonians in strong hands. These included primarily Friuli and the Patriarchate of Aquileia, which were only granted to powerful German princes out of ancient necessity, not as a new institution, to protect the road over the Karst. The centuries-old traditions had not been forgotten in Austria either; as part of the former mighty Bavarian empire, which Charles the Saxon Butcher smashed to pieces, it had been an old co-owner of the two most important Roman roads over the Brenner Pass and the Karst. When Austria gained power, the Babenbergs immediately endeavored to secure the routes to Italy. We therefore see Portenau (today Pordenone) as belonging to the Babenbergs at an early stage.

The Brenner road, built by Caesar Drusus and elevated to a military road by Caesar Claudius, was undoubtedly the most difficult to defend because of its many branches on Italian soil. This is why we see the German marks of Bern and Vicenza erected there in the earliest days.

This road, which was probably the most important, joined all the German side roads at Bolzano with the Brenner road, and from there stretched in a line to Trento, from where the first, eastern branch branched off through the Fersina valley, like the Sugana valley. From this side branch, a branch branched off again to the south at Primolano via Bassano into the Lombardy lowlands, while the first branch led via the old Fritilla castle (Feltre) to Aquileia in order to send another branch to Treviso and Venice.

Below Trento, the main line branched out again at Rovereto (Rovereto), from where the second eastern branch branched off through the Arsa Valley towards Vicenza and Padua. From Rovereto, however, the road ran undivided and strongly protected through the bottlenecks at Saravalle and the Berner Klausen straight on to Bern (Verona) and beyond.

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These numerous, dangerous ramifications for the German armies required their strongest protection at all starting points and junctions, namely through well-fortified towns and castles. This is why, since the beginning of the Migration Period, all these margravates have only been in the possession of legendary and famous German military kings, and in the later period of the German Middle Ages were again only granted as margraves to powerful German (never Italian) princely dynasties.

According to original German, far pre-medieval custom, the castle guardianship in the Margraviate of Bern (Verona), which is of particular interest to us here, was therefore also lent to noble families, most of whom were able to trace their ancestral lines back to the Migration Period, and now in natural consequence have also in turn gathered free German servants around them.

This is how the numerous German castles came into being, of which the Sugana Valley alone has fourteen; this is how the linguistic islands that still exist today came into being along the branches of the old Brenner road, the most important of which is the "sette communi" between the two eastern branches of the road, protecting both branches of the road with its power in the German shield. Just how powerful this one road was is shown by the fact that it alone was able to field 15,000 belligerent Germans.

But up at the Brenner was the German armory, also known as Gothensaß (Gothensitz, today Goßensaß), where Wieland the blacksmith, whom his father Wate had taken to the dwarves to learn the art of forging swords\*), sat as a master. There he forged Urda's bolt with magic spells, which prevented the Roman from ever carrying a sword to Germany again.

Thus those roads which were built to the ruin of the Germans were called upon to shield and protect them, and those lonely German language islands, surrounded by the Italian idiom, those forgotten outposts of Germanism still stand before the border of the German tongue, for almost one and a half millennia, hardly known by their tribal people, as - abandoned posts!

\*) See: Aggstein on the Danube.



## The Schalaburg.



In a land that was ravaged by armies for centuries, whose peculiarity was to serve as a gateway for peoples, such a land must necessarily preserve memorials of this time of storm and stress, which leave imperishable traces until the latest ages. had to inherit. Anyone who has followed us this far needs no further justification for such words other than this reference.

We traveled the "people's road" to the south, we also visited some of the "fixed castles", which are the valley gates of the "Zeizzogebirge" against the "Wiener-Neustädter-Ebene"\*), through which plain, over Carnuntum's ruins, those very streams of peoples, bristling with weapons, flowed towards Rome; but we have not yet taken a look behind this mountain wall to show us what actually closed those "solid castles" at the valley gates.

The parchment historian is immediately ready to give the answer; he says: "The nameless land, deserted by the migration of peoples, was won by Carolus Magnus from the German land, colonized and called Ostmark. The plain to the east of the mountains (today's Neustadt plain in front of the Wienerwald mountain range), however, was turned into a desert, while behind the valley gates the new state formation took its start."

But it was not Charlemagne who did this: the mountain range of the Zeizzoberge was fortified to protect the hinterland long before Charlemagne, immediately after the Roman withdrawal from the Danube. Nor was the plain as desolate as is assumed, otherwise ancient places could not have been found on it, and it was too inviting for horse breeding and farming. But after all had one more dew to the to the mountains than to the flat country, for times of need, and the the valley gates, behind which behind the population of the Plain could save themselves when enemies approached.

\*) See: "The Brühl", "The Helenenthal", "Merkenstein" and "On the Völkerheerstraße."



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The "Vita santi Severini" of Eugippius already offers a finger pointing in this direction.

Romanity was in decline, and the Roman towns that had not yet fallen could only save themselves by taking in Germanic warriors within their walls and placing themselves under their protection. It was this a quite natural consequence, an imitation on a small scale, what before the Roman state had done on a large scale through the establishment of the Auxiliary the foreign legion. Thus had for example formerly in Carnuntum, after its destruction in Vindomina (Vienna), the prefect of the "Gentes Marcomanorum", the "Markoman (auxiliary) people".

The abandoned municipalities on the Danube, if they did not want to be destroyed, had to follow this example set by Rome itself, all the more so as a Germanic city rose up threateningly opposite every Roman Danube town on the Germanic bank. This is the cause of the emergence of all the sister cities on the Danube. For example, Passau-Innstadt, Urfahr-Linz, Mautern-Krems, O.-Szöni-Komorn, Pest-Ofen and so on.

Thus the Rugen king Feletheus had his seat in Chremisa, today's Krems, and from there he besieged Fafiana, today's Mautern, where St. Severin usually stayed. From Fafiana, Odovakar moved to Rome, where he ascended the throne of the Caesars as the first German king of Rome. From these sister cities of Fafiana-Chremisa (Mautern-Krems), the power of the Rugen Empire spread out along the Danube, radiating across the country as far as the Zeizzo Mountains.

Today's Krems, as the seat of the king, thus became the center of the new Germanic Rugen state, which naturally used the mountain wall in the east (the Zeizzo Mountains, today's Vienna Woods, or the Kahlen Mountains) as a fortification line, but without setting it as a national border. As the times that followed were very turbulent, with not only Germanic peoples from the north, but also Avarian, Hunnic and Mongolian peoples from the north-east and east, the mountain rampart behind the Neustadt plain proved to be the eastern shield of Germania as if created by nature, and this part of today's Lower Austria naturally became the real eastern marker of Germania long before the year 791. Behind the rampart of the Zeizzoberge mountains, the Germanic

life to flourish, and therefore we also find rich and important sanatoriums there.

One of the most important may well be today's Benedictine monastery Melk, which in the oldest documents bears the same name as Medling\*), namely Magilicha. That is why it was the first monastery to be founded in this region.

This ancient Germanic sanctuary is surrounded by many of them, such as the Ostara (Easter castle) of Wuotan (St. Leonhard\*\*), the "Agez" (Aggstein\*\*\*) and the mighty "Schalaburg".

However, since Christianity had already taken root at the time of the Roman exodus, even if it had not yet been able to displace the old gods, belief in them had already been shaken too much for these sanctuaries to be recognized as post-Roman; On the contrary, it is highly probable that their foundation dates back to the times of the kingdom of the Noriscans (Noricum), that they continued to exist in Roman times and only later flourished to greater splendor when the Roman yoke was shaken off.

The mountain, which still proudly bears the name "Schalaburg" today, dominates the land far and wide, the plain as far as Melk, while it appears as the outpost of a forested row of mountains, behind which the people and their possessions could seek shelter in the event of enemy trouble, in accordance with the old defensive system. The sacred temples were not only places of worship, not only did the faithful find comfort, exaltation and justice in them, but also protection against enemies, for a warlike people could only worship defensive, warlike gods.

The Romans, who had such a good eye for choosing points that could serve to support their rule, also recognized the strategic importance of this mountain, which could cover two roads. Firstly, the military road itself, which led from "Trigisamum" (Traismauer) to "Namare" (Melk), and secondly, the reserve or trade route, which crossed both of the first-mentioned places via the towns of "St. Andrä" and "St. Pölten", "Grafendorf", "Hürm" and "St. Leonhard", and sent several road branches southwards.

\*) See: "The Brühl."

\*\*) See this.

\*\*\*) See this.

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Schalaburg, the Roman name is no longer known, thus covered the fork of the two roads behind Namare (Melk) and formed a fortress triangle with the fortification of Namare and that of Mauer (here too the Roman name is missing). Several foundation walls and graves of Roman origin at the foot of the castle hill, on the road to Mauer, as well as parts of walls on the oldest buildings and on the tower of the castle, which are very likely to be Roman remains, are reminders of the times when Schalaburg served the Romans. The following history of the castle is irrelevant for our purposes, and only the fact that it has been in the allodial possession of the sovereigns since the earliest times is significant, which indicates its ancient sanctification, for it was the sovereign or the church that took possession of the desecrated Wuotan sanctuaries after the fall of paganism.

But this belongs to history, and what follows in it is increasingly distant from the goal towards which we are striving; however, we will return later to what we have said so far about Schalaburg.

That was a thing of its own. It must have been almost twenty years ago when I came here from "Loosdorf" with a dear friend to visit a mutual friend, Mr. von H. . ., who was the caretaker of the Schalaburg.

Since we had planned a hike of several days through the charming, peculiar valleys and forests around Melk, this time the rowing boat stayed at home, and instead of the boatman's costume, I was dressed as a huntsman. This would have been quite nice if my companion, who was dressed in the same way, had also grown up like a huntsman and deer hunter. But this was not the case. A shorter leg forced him to limp conspicuously, but this did not prevent him from walking bravely and constantly. Even if his limp did not go well with his hunting attire, he knew the art - he was a painter - of making use of this limp in a certain coquettish way. A pointed black beard gave his narrow, sharp-cut, pale face an almost infernal expression, which the pointed hunting hat with the cock's feather, as I said, deliberately heightened.

In fact, we heard him smilingly make the comparison with "Samiel, the wild hunter", which flattered his vanity not a little.

So we set off together from Loosdorf to the old Schalaburg.

Visible from afar, it was enthroned on a wooded hill above the wide valley, which shone in the colorful splendor of midsummer. Rolling fields spread out, and the peculiar smell of ripe grain lingered over the landscape, but also the glow of midsummer. How we longed for the forest-cool Schlalaberg, whose shade was to refresh us before we paid our visit.

After barely an hour's hike along the winding, bumpy field path, which was quite hollow and led past a small, inconspicuous "Marterl", we reached the magnificent Maierhof farm. There you could already get an idea of the tree growth, as a few thick-headed, tousled alder stalks leaned over a half-grown stream, as if they were peering curiously with their shaggy heads into the high weeds to spy some of the sparse water, which had to be sensed there more than seen.

We laughed at the amusing appearance of the trees, which seemed to us like shaggy rascals, especially as not far from them stood a distinguished company of stately lime trees, behind which two tall poplars towered like parvenues. While the alders stood humbly inclined like neglected beggars next to the calmly proud lime trees, the obtrusive agility of the poplars disturbed the picture; it seemed as if they were constantly babbling the most nonsensical gibberish. The picture was thus peculiarly animated, and joking about its momentary impressions, we walked towards the dense deciduous forest that had folded its magnificent cloak of green around the castle hill.

Then we suddenly stopped; a simple red crucifix - as one so often sees in the country - stood between the two poplars. The scenery had suddenly changed; it was only now that the strange figure of my companion caught my eye quite clearly and I said to him, half jokingly, half seriously:

"Fellow, anyone who could see you here in the moonlight with the clouds chasing you, while the castle clock sleepily snores out its twelve strokes over the land, would have to take you for the incarnate God-is-with-us!"

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But this forest scene was also after that. I involuntarily thought of Schumann's charming idyll "An eerier Star" from his "Forest scenes". I couldn't help the shivering impression that this place made on me, and in silence we followed the wide road that leads up the castle hill through the pleasant forest darkness. You don't share such moods with just anyone, even if they are a friend and fellow traveler; you shy away from being misunderstood.

We had silently reached the mighty seven-gated castle, silently passed through the seventh gate and stood in our friend's apartment. Of course, the second reason for our visit was to see the sights of Schalaburg Castle, which are as large as they are almost unknown, and which were only discovered, so to speak, by Professor Kaiblinger in Melk.

These do not consist of the seven gates, the strong towers and mighty bastions, nor of the remains of the Roman walls or the castle chapel dating from 1313, but of the highly interesting archways of the innermost courtyard, which are virtually unique in Austria, perhaps in Europe.

This arched gallery, which encloses half of the courtyard in the most delicate Italian Renaissance style, is supported by an arcade of twelve simple columns. The open gallery resting on it is formed by thirty-six arches, whose pillars are decorated on the outside with herms and allegorical figures, and above them with small Ionic half-columns. The sides, however, are adorned with the most magnificent ornamentation of the noblest Renaissance. The spandrels between the arches and the Ionic columns are each adorned with a coat of arms, in such a way that the Losenstein coat of arms is always juxtaposed with another; among these we recognize those of Starhemberg, Montfort, Scharfenberg, Zelking, Volkersdorf, Herberstein, Puch heim and others. The stylobates of the arcade pillars show the deeds of Heracles in bas-reliefs in graceful niches, while the frieze contains portrait busts in skin reliefs. Inside the arcades, the wall is decorated with medallions with portraits of ancient Roman emperors, as well as a relief of a woman drawing water from a spring with a bowl. This woman and a bust with a dog's head form the emblems of the castle.

The most interesting thing from an art historical point of view is the fact that, that the gallery, which at first sight appears to be carved from red marble, is executed in terracotta and was once colorfully

glazed. This must have created a magnificent effect when the arcades were still shining in full color.

Fifty years ago, I. Fahl wrote about this unique piece that if it were in Scotland, the whole world would know this wonder in oil paintings and steel engravings, that it must have inspired Walter Scott to create another masterpiece, but only because it is in Austria is it still unknown! And today, after fifty years, it has not become much better known.

So we had entered the house of our friend, the caretaker, with the best intentions of enjoying this unknown work of art; but, as is sometimes the case, we did not. We had not yet seen the gallery when the dawn broke and the bright full summer moon shone down from the trembling starry sky, its pale rays mingling with those of the kerosene lamp, playing in our diligently circling Romans.

Such a drinking symposium in an old castle has its own charm. The paneled walls, the ponderously vaulted ceiling, the doors and windows that are out of all the usual modern proportions, which you can easily see how badly they fit in with the modern door leaves and window frames, and how mockingly they look down on the antique-like modern "old German" furniture, all this in its supposedly harmonious disharmony has such a strangely stimulating effect, like heavy, intoxicating Malvasia. And then the ex-offo conversations!

These, too, were in tune with the so peculiar chamber; old things were discussed in the light of the most modern conception. How our conversation resembled the notorious modern "old German" furniture!

"So the red cross is so scary to you?" asked the manager's old aunt. She lowered the long stocking into her lap, silenced the clattering of the knitting needles, and looked at me with a half-curious, half-fearful expression.

"So the red cross, and in broad daylight!" she repeated, and became thoughtful. This began to interest me, although my friend grumbled something like "stupid stuff" into his beard and refilled the glasses.

Then he said half angrily, half jokingly, nudging my Roman: "You can't get rid of the ghosts you called! Now it's time to keep quiet, because if Aunt Mary's knitting needles stop rattling, it's a bad sign!"

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A small battle of words began, but as I was not at all averse to hearing "ghost stories" - for such were certainly on the cards now - I took sides with the worthy aunt, to the obvious annoyance of the caretaker. He had probably already had to listen to the following several dozen times, which of course was not yet the case with me.

"So the red cross," the lady began anew and shifted solemnly in her armchair. "The red cross! And didn't you see the bullet hole in the side of our bloody Savior?"

"I had missed that, ma'am," was my response, "but -

"Believe it, believe it, believe it", she said eagerly, gathering the breadcrumbs on the tablecloth. "Who would believe in such sacrilege! But he was also terribly punished. The knight George still haunts the place as a wild huntsman, and when autumn comes, the wild chase goes through the forest so that the yellow leaves whirl about like weather clouds - and only then in the twelfth! And haven't you seen the dog-woman out on the path? -"

"The dog woman?" I asked in astonishment and answered in the negative.

"Foolish things - with your dog-woman, auntie," laughed the steward; "that's a man, and the superstitious people around here say that he was a knight of Schalaburg, who was born with a dog's head and paws, and lived here for twenty-one years. He was so wild that he was kept locked up in his chamber on a silver chain all his life. That's what people say, but whoever believes it will be saved, and whoever doesn't believe it too!" he said, and drank his Roman empty.

Again there was no skirmish between aunt and nephew, but the matter began to excite me. The shot after the cross, the dog's head, whether male or female, the silver chain and the twenty-one years - all this aroused my interest enormously. But I didn't have time to collect my thoughts.

"I should know better than that," said the aunt very firmly, "it's the lady, the dog-woman, I've seen her myself, in the white brocade dress, with the old-fashioned fan, the big ruff around her neck, and the lace cap on the black dog's head!"

"So the dog woman is haunting the castle?" I asked, involuntarily agitated, because I was thinking of the eerie impression that the forest site at the red cross had made on me; my cigar was extinguished. "And how do they agree with the Red Cross?" this question had slipped out of my mouth almost unconsciously, and earned me a mocking smile from the manager. I felt as if I heard his "stupid stuff", but his lips remained closed; he was probably just thinking it. However, I was compensated for the hint of mockery that my friend had intended for me by a look of recognition from the old lady, and that was of value to me, because now she had gained confidence in me and told me unreservedly because she thought I was a believer. And this is important for someone who has to get his material from the people themselves. The mouth of a legend is as shy as a deer; just as the latter slips away into the bush at the slightest sound, so the latter closes up immediately and inexorably if the listener is not recognized as a believer; only trust can open it up to proclaim its wealth of legends, but mockery closes it irrevocably.

"Yes, yes," continued Aunt Marie, "the dog-woman goes quite well with the red cross and with other things too! Did you see the old, dilapidated, round building to the right of the road as you were climbing up? People think it's a pagan temple, others even claim that it was a Templar castle. But none of them know! That was the second castle, and in each one lived an "enemy brother". You can still hear them fighting from time to time. The one who owned the Schalaburg had slain the other, and that is why, when he leaves the Schalaburg, he must move into the ruins of the other, for eternal punishment, to commit fratricide there again and again, until doomsday!"

Then the good woman paused.

"Yes, but the red cross, the dog woman - who is the dog woman?" I asked, almost urgently.

Then the narrator glanced shyly out of the window across the moonlit courtyard, as if to make sure that the ghost was not yet wandering outside, then she continued her story:

"Who was she, you want to ask! She was the daughter of the dog knight Georg."

And again Aunt Marie gazed across the courtyard; it lay quietly in the silver moonlight, and deep shadows were cast by the graceful gallery arches on the old imperial medallions. But the old lady was not so calm; one could see that she was overcome with horror;



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because where people believe themselves to be in the realm of the spirit, they don't like to talk about it. And yet this was Aunt Mary's favorite topic of conversation. And she started again:

"So the dog woman was the daughter of the knight Georg, the same one who killed his biological brother down there. Good people had put the red cross by the road for him, just as they had put the "Marterl" over there about thirty years ago, where a rich man had been beaten to death and robbed. So - lest I forget - the dog woman's father, the knight Georg, was a hunter with heart and soul, indeed he was more of a hunter than a Christian. He only felt well in the thickest forest when he saw nothing but the stag in front of him and the hounds around him, when he heard nothing but hunters' cries, hounds barking and horns calling - I can well imagine why; his conscience must have reminded him too loudly of the fratricide. His seven large hounds always had to eat from silver bowls at his table like household companions. Yes, and when his good wife reproached him that such things were ungodly and sinful, then the rageful man answered her with a dog-whip across the back!

And that's when he went hunting again, the dog knight. That was but an unlucky day for for him, because so much game came in front of his rifle, he hit nothing - absolutely nothing. Had he come across an old woman on his way out, or was it just Friday? I don't know; but he met nothing, that is for sure. It was as if his bullets had been bewitched! Furious, like a shy bull, he returned he in the evening to the Schalaburg; the weather was as dreadful as in All Saints' Day. As he ran home, thinking about who he could take his anger out on, he suddenly stood in front of the red cross. Of course, that didn't soften his heart, because the monument to fratricide was now shaking his conscience again. Senseless with rage, he snatched the rifle from his armpit, pointed it at our Lord Jesus, and presumed to commit the most atrocious blasphemy. Seized by sheer madness, he shouted furiously at the Lord God, who hangs so patiently on the cross with outstretched arms: "Because I have hit nothing today, I want to hit you the least on your crossbeam!" Then he pulled the trigger, the shot cracked; - then it was as if a terrible scream sounded from the cross, which was repeated in a thousand-voiced echo, as if every forest tree, every leaf, every insect wanted to shout it to itself because of the monstrous

outrage. The dogs howled mournfully and scattered in senseless fear in all directions, but the clouds clenched themselves together like giant fists and struck each other so furiously that the lightning flashed and one would have thought that the sky must fall apart from the most horrible thunder. In addition, the storm whimpered in the forest and set the trees on their crowns in unmeasurable agony at the unprecedentedly dreadful storm.

Seized by the most terrible horror, the knight hurried to the castle."

There was a deep silence in the room, the Romans stood untouched, their cigars smoldering warmly. Then there was an imperceptible crack in the old paneling - we were all startled. The narrator, her eyes now sparkling with excitement, cast another anxious glance across the courtyard and the gallery - but there it was calm and solemnly quiet. It was a night made for raving and - kissing! It did not correspond at all to what was being said here, and it seemed as if the silent moon itself wanted to smile at the ghostly fear of the poor little people; and yet -.

The question came to my lips almost apprehensively:

"Yes, but the dog woman?"

Then Aunt Marie nodded her head meaningfully, shook her head slightly and covered her eyes with her hand, as if she was afraid to go on, lest she should see the dog woman again. After a deep sigh and a long silence, she continued:

"Well, the knight Georg had returned home, pale as death and trembling, when he saw the women in the castle running around in horror and not even looking at him. So he staggered into his room. There he heard the terrible news. At the same hour, his maid had given birth to a girl who had a black shaggy dog's head instead of a human head. And that's true and truthful! Then the knight Georg uttered a ghastly curse and ran out into the wild and furious weather. - No one ever saw him alive again. Soon, however, the horror story spread that he had been seen running through the forest as a ghost, followed by his seven black hounds in a furious hunting frenzy. - The young lady grew up, but she kept the dog's head for the rest of her life and was called the Hundsfräulein. Even then, the three castles of Schalaburg, Sichtenberg and Soos belonged together, and so that the poor dog woman could go from one castle to the other without being seen, as

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all three were connected by underground passages. She usually stayed in these passages and was rarely seen by people. As a result, it is not really known when she died, indeed many believe that she herself is still alive today, and that what is sometimes seen is she herself, but not her ghost. May God have mercy and compassion on her and mildly prevent her from appearing, for if she lets herself be seen, then - without mercy and compassion - an inhabitant of the castle will die within three days. - So, now I've told you the horror story of the poor dog woman. "

Aunt Marie was silent. She leaned back in the armchair with her eyes closed, and it seemed as if she were saying a silent prayer - but the conversation wouldn't flow, and the drinking was over.

We wanted to say goodbye and stood up. There were strong objections to this; "You mustn't go past the red cross now, and not past the dilapidated round building either!" said the good aunt firmly. And so we had to put up with spending the night in a guest room in the old castle.

We were soon led across the gallery to our bedroom. The moon stood high in the firmament, surrounded by the countless army of trembling stars. The heavy shadows of the arches fell sharply into the gallery, and the black towers stood out almost ghostly against the starry sky. Not a sound was audible; the deepest, most solemn silence all around. We walked along the gallery in the flickering candlelight, our footsteps eerily echoing through it, no matter how hard we tried to tread quietly. The pale moonlight mingled strangely with the flickering yellow light of the candles on the relief medallions of the images of the Caesars. Their fixed features seemed to want to come to life and grinned at us eerily from their frames, some smiling, others grim. Then we stood before the woman with the bowl at the spring.

She seemed to give me a friendly nod, and I felt as if she were an old, familiar friend.

Soon after exchanging handshakes, the door to our guest room was closed after we had been wished a "peaceful, good night's sleep".

We were already in bed, and my "wild hunter" soon revealed the most unmistakable characteristics of the healthiest sleeping talent.

But sleep fled from me for a long time. What I had heard had seized me powerfully; that inexplicable something came over me which is usually called ghostly fear, and yet so incorrectly. No one would expect me to believe in all seriousness that the dog woman would surprise me with her appearance, and yet the immediate surroundings of the castle had made such a peculiar impression on me that I must have suspected why this very spot had once become a sanctuary. I felt as if the woman with the bowl were standing in front of me and smiling at me, and then she spoke to me. - Yes, now I recognized the greatness! I had already drunk from her bowl myself! For now it is not an indistinct mystery to me, that relief with the woman with the bowl on Schalaburg.

\* \*  
\*

Many interpretations of the name have been tried. Some assumed that the woman with the bowl gave her name to Schalaburg; they were laughed at, and yet they instinctively guessed right, but did not grasp the meaning. Still others took "Schalce" to mean "Knight" as "Knechteburg", Kaseme, so to speak, to interpret the castle name. I myself used to derive the name from the word "Sal", as is correct, but I also made the mistake of this "Sal" should be interpreted incorrectly, namely according to its later Middle High German usage. With reference to the takeover of this ancient sanctuary in Christian times as an "allodial estate" by the lords of the land, I interpreted this name as "Salland", which means "hereditary property" (Stammeigen, Stammgut, acquired by inheritance), which has many word formations such as "Salgut", "Salbuch", "Salhof", "Salmann" (executor) etc. seemed to confirm this. However, "Sal" is the root word in the castle name of Schalaburg, but one must try to fathom its meaning in pre-Christian times. "Sal" is also the root word of the name of "Lady Sälde", who is called by the minnesingers in the same way as "Lady Venus", and like the latter was understood as an allegorical being. But just as the "Venussin" turned out to be a German goddess,\*) so too is Lady "Sälde".

\*) See: "The Venusberg near Traismauer

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a German goddess, and the name of Schalaburg Castle can be traced back to her.

"Sal" as a root word has the meaning of "salvation", "happiness", "Wealth" and is therefore to be placed alongside Lady Sälde in the German-mythological sense of the Roman Fortuna.

Lady Sälde thus draws from Urda's fountain the tidings of the future, and this can only be that noble goddess who "Children and fruits produced in abundance, who therefore alone has the right to give life, to take it." Lady Sälde is therefore none other than the mother of the gods, Frouwa herself.

Strange! Säldeburg, Gnadenburg or Heilsburg is the name of the Schalaburg! And the legend connects three castles with underground passages, which probably really existed and perhaps still do. The "three" again! But just as the One "who produces fruits and children in abundance" is made up of the three representatives of becoming, working and passing away, namely Fraya, Frouwa and Helia, the latter of whom is thought to be black and accompanied by a black dog, so the ghost of Schalaburg, the "dog woman", suddenly illuminated by the mythological light, emerges clearly enough as Helia, the terrible goddess of death.

The people preserve horror stories as faithful, friendly legendary images, which is why they have forgotten the interpretation of the image of the woman with the bowl. Helia is also a goddess of salvation, just as the goddess of death in a religion that believes in rebirth must of course be a goddess of salvation, even a goddess of birth.

This is how the ring closes: birth, life, death,\*) rebirth. That is why the Tannhäuser saga falls in November at the same time as the Christian All Souls' Day, because like Tannhäuser in the Feneberge (Fenusberg), the dead sleep in Fene's (Freya's) castle Volkswang, the Volksanger, (cemetery) towards the resurrection. That is why Tannhäuser leaves the Feneberg on December 24th, why Widar leaves his wooded dwelling on December 24th, why Wali, the young sun god, is born on December 24th, why Christmas is celebrated on this day, in which, according to Christian teaching, the conqueror of death, the redeemer, is born, because - new life blossoms out of death.

\*) See: "The VenuSberg near Traismauer".

If now, where Helia, the "dog woman" rules in the underground castle, the symbol of the castle appears as the woman Sälde scooping water with her bowl, then this very scooping clearly indicates rebirth, or being born in general: after all, water is the ancient symbol of eternity. As rain it falls fertilizing from the sky; it gives life to the plants, it seeps into the earth as the dead is lowered into it; but as a spring it is reborn, and therefore Frouwa reigns as Frau Holle at the fountain of children or youth.

But just as the female three is clearly recognizable here, so too is the male three. The battle between the enemy brothers is the battle between the young sun god and the winter god. Balder is shot by Hödur, the blind "archer", but he is then slain again by Wali. This is combined in the legend of the knight Georg, who emerges as a free archer and wild hunter. The silver chain with which the "dog knight" is kept bound for twenty-one years (namely 3X7, i.e. three winters) points to the bound Loki, who, as we know, accompanies his daughter Helia as a black dog. The round wall - the temple, or the Templar castle, also the castle of the enemy brother - is undoubtedly a nest of the old round tower which, like the tower of Valeda on the Lippe, also rose here. That is why the oldest churches in the whole of Germany, especially in Lower Austria, are rotundas, and some of them may not only be idealized, but actually be one of those old pagan churches to which Pope Gregory the Great's letter to Abbot Melittas of Canterbury referred.

Naturally, the priesthood of every religion, and thus every cult, is the most conservative of all the contemporaneous orders, because it is based on the word of God, and this is unalterable, rock-solid. The oldest Germanic buildings, such as those depicted on the Antonius Column in Rome, were circular with a domed roof, very similar to the beehives still in use today.

Long after the Germans had learned to build houses with gabled roofs on a rather angular base, the cultural round tower buildings, which concealed the entrances to the subterranean dwellings of the holy councilors, remained in use for a long time out of sacred custom, and finally passed on to the early Christian architecture in a form-determining way. This is why popular legend refers to all these round chapels as Templar chapels.

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associated with gruesome ideas of a secret, abominable service.

However, they were not Templar sites, but Germanic pagan temples.

However, the "red cross" should still be mentioned and its interpretation sought. There are so many red crosses in the country, but why red crosses? What does the red color have to do with the cross, especially with so many of them?

Here, the cross lets the legend as a symbol of the right; Sir George violated the law by shooting the cross, and here at this place he was punished by heavenly justice - he was given the divine right.

After the Schalaburg, as "the Sälde Burg", proved to be a place of salvation, it - or indeed the area on which it now stands - was not only called upon to provide comfort to the faithful as a place of worship, or in times of danger to serve as a place of salvation, a "fortress of God", but it was also the noble sanctuary of German law. This German law, after it had been suppressed by Roman law, was secretly taken into consideration by the feudal court, and lived on in the so-called peasant law for a long time, long into our days, here and there as so-called customary law even today.\*)

Roland's pillars were erected as a sign of old places of painting or justice, which in Christian times even bore crosses, such as the "Spinnerin am Kreuze" near Vienna, as well as the pillar of the same name near "Wiener-Neustadt".

The name Roland, however, means "ruot-land" - land law. The old meaning of the word has been forgotten and confused with the name of King Charles' paladin.

Similarly, this "red cross" and its countless cousins in the country were probably formerly called "ruot-Kreuz", i.e. the cross of justice, and thus probably referred to a place of the secret or at least the "peasants' court". It cannot be overlooked that until 1848 every lordship exercised the administration of justice himself, i.e. the landlord himself was the supreme judge. It is therefore not always necessary to think of the secret court where such ruot pillars or ruot crosses can be found. Until late

\*) See: "Das Helenenthal" and "Die heilige Fehme auf Rauhenstein."

Into the Middle Ages, courts were held in public in the open air, and the fact that this took place in familiar places is guaranteed without doubt by the always conservative customs of the people.

Only such Ruot pillars or crosses, which are surrounded by such legends as that of Schalaburg or the two "Spinnerinnensäulen" near Vienna and Wiener-Neustadt, are designated by these legends as old sacred sites, and German law will also have been secretly respected by the Fehme as an old sacred sanctuary, after it had to become a fugitive from Roman law, just as fugitive as the German gods from the Roman Church, the irreconcilable enemy of Germanism.

All that remains for us to do is to interpret the place names that occur around the Schalaburg and shed some light on those distant times and their cult of the gods.

Right next to the castle of the Sälde (Schalaburg) is a Schollach, i.e. the river of the Sälde; then very significantly a Merken village. It is only necessary to remember the landscape picture of "Merkenstein" to recognize this village as the village of the Heilrätinnen. Then there is a Steinparz and a Maria-Steinparz; "pars" means basic part, plot. If Maria had such a plot of land here, it may have once belonged to a German goddess, especially as there is a "St. Frein" appears. The Christian calendar does not recognize a saint of the name Frein, but the German pagan calendar knew a goddess Fraya. The place name Oed, which also occurs here, usually refers to a deserted Roman building. Now there is also a Loizbach and a Loizdorf, which can be traced back to "liut", licht, and means as much as Weißache as the opposite of Schwarza(che).

A Lebersdorf has nothing in common with a liver, but it does have something in common with a Leeberg; a Leeberg, however, is an old pagan burial site for cremation graves, as countless ones have been found in the country.

The great market town of Loosdorf, however, is called by its name to remind us of the fatefulness that Lady Sälde drew from the Fountain of Fate of Urda.

We have already traced two medieval allegorical personifications, insofar as they are female, back to their mythological origins.



## The German Mythological Landscape

The "Lady Venus" (actually Fenus) can be traced back to "Fene" or "Fraya", then the "Lady Sælde", also the mother of the gods and queen of heaven "Frouwa". But a third personification remains to be named to complete the "three", and this is the one who veils happiness with her black veils "Lady Sorge".

Who does not immediately recognize in this the gruesome Helia, the third evil, counselling evil-nurse, the third black-veiled healer Wala? Or the Sculd, as the Edda so tellingly calls her, because guilt is what determines people's future. The guilt of the gods determines their downfall, the guilt of men their future fate; and that is why the third, the evil-advising Norn is called the guilty. This is why she is also the knower of the deepest secrets, and why even Wuotan rides to her for advice; she is the dead Wala, whom he consults about the destinies of the future, and finally she is the one whose name the mystical song "Völuspá" bears.

\* \*  
\*

Such were the thoughts that robbed me of sleep in the guest room of "Lady Sælde's Castle". Deeper and deeper I became entangled in the web of speculation, slowly, like the hand of the clock, the moonlights moved along the wall surface, finally fading, mingling with the cloudy gray morning color. The daughter of "Narwe" had passed by in her silver-embroidered velvet cloak, and the fiery crest of the golden cock was already gleaming above the mountains.

I didn't want to stay in bed any longer; sleeping was out of the question anyway. I quickly got dressed and hurried outside, scurrying silently past my sleeping "wild hunter".

The first reddish sunlight was already playing around the pointed roofs of the towers, a refreshing morning coolness fanned my temples, and I sucked the fresh air into my lungs with the greatest pleasure.

That was good! I did have a little bit of a cat's meow; the sleepless night, the strong wine.

So I stood on the gallery and the dreams continued to buzz around me, and soon I had forgotten the gallery and everything around it, and was chasing after the creations of my imagination again.

I had completely missed the fact that an old maid - who must have been a very old member of the castle staff - continued to watch me, and that an ever-growing circle of castle servants of all ranks soon gathered around her. At last the matter struck me, as I clearly realized that I must be the object of the most lively interest of the little gathering.

Curious as to what this meant, I slowly descended the stairs and suddenly they had all disappeared, only the old maid remained standing shyly in the courtyard, looking at me almost frightened and following me with her eyes until I had stepped out of the courtyard.

Outside in the other courtyard, I met the girl who had waited up for us yesterday, who also stopped in astonishment and looked at me almost in horror. She barely managed to stammer the morning greeting and then looked after me, shaking her head.

That made me angry; I turned back. Again I stood in the courtyard in front of the gallery, looking for the bust of the Dog Woman under the ledge, and again the old woman stood behind a pillar, eyeing me anxiously. The whole morning was spoiled for me; I bravely climbed the stairs to wait in the room upstairs until we were called to breakfast and then turned my back on the castle as soon as possible. Only now did the cat's meow torment me terribly; almost enviously I looked over at my "wild hunter", who seemed far from having reached the end of his Morpheus symphony.

Dressed, I threw myself on the bed, then jumped up again and looked out of the window, where new greedy ones were already staring up at me again and chasing me away from there; - it was just a hell of a time! Once you get into such a mood, I think the lovely Fraya herself could come and embrace you, you'd be tempted to bite the tip of her nose rather than put the sweet rose seal of love on her kissable little mouth! - It was, as I said, purely for the hell of it.

Several quarters of an hour or more passed. My wild hunter was still snoring; he hadn't even reached the scherzo; - still "Fuga obstinata perfida". That was beyond my comfort zone. I lit a cigar and blew the smoke into his olfactory organ, which had been misused as a bassoon, until he sneezed violently and concluded his snoring symphony with a "Grand Finale furioso maestoso".

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We had suddenly switched roles; all my bad moods were gone, because I felt very exhilarated; but my "wild hunter" was all the wilder for it.

Then there was a knock; a servant came into the room to ask us over for breakfast. He, too, gave me an eerily inquiring look, but when he saw my wild "wild hunter", he himself became almost uncanny, for he evidently hastened to get rid of his message as quickly as possible and leave us to our morning pleasures undisturbed.

Soon we were back in the same room where Aunt Marie told us the story of the dog woman yesterday.

She was also present and handled the coffee pots. She was very excited and looked at me and my friend with the same anxious shyness that I had already observed in the servants today and which had put me out of my good morning mood. The steward was monosyllabic, but he also had such peculiar looks that I was at a loss to explain them. Should he be so happy to call a cat his own! This seemed to me to be the best explanation, and so I consoled myself for my misfortune, for a sorrow shared is a sorrow halved.

When the good aunt had finally finished her cups, she approached us to return our morning greetings, which she did almost tonelessly, visibly trying to disguise her embarrassment.

At last she asked the otherwise insubstantial question of how we slept, fixing me with a particularly sharp gaze; finally she burst out with the unexpected question: "Yes, for heaven's sake, dear friend, are you unwell? Do you look dreadful?"

I was taken aback by this question. I stood in front of the mirror and realized that the good lady was right; my eyes were red and deep in their sockets, but there were thick blue circles around them and I was also very pale. I was almost shocked at my own appearance.

"Are you unwell?" urged the lady.

"Not that - ma'am!"

"Did you sleep badly?"

"That is it," I answered hesitantly.

"Yes, you just don't want to admit it, you saw something?" the good woman rushed out, now paling herself.

"No, certainly not - madam -"

"Don't keep anything from me - the whole castle is already talking about the fact that the dog-woman appeared to you tonight. You were seen distraught this morning, and the servant saw your friend - oh, it's horrible!"

Crying was closer to the good woman than laughing, and it took a great deal of persuasion to talk her out of appearing to me. Only gradually did her anxiety disappear and only slowly did her amiable nature regain the upper hand. The sun was shining so brightly in the window that it was impossible to stay in the parlor, and so we took our leave as soon as propriety and the gracious hospitality of the steward's family would allow.

He gave us the escort, and only then did I tell him the correct solution to the cause of my sleepless night. I would not have been able to tell the good old lady this solution. She clung with the tenacity of age to the facts of the dog-woman's wanderings too much for me to have had the courage to raise doubts in her mind. Such a belief, too, is one of the habits and therefore one of the chief supports of old age; it is sacrilege to shake it.

The manager agreed with me, then we shook hands and parted company.

But we walked over to the Osterburg, the ancient sanctuary of the lovely Ostara, the patron goddess of our glorious Ostarland.



## Osterburg, Hohenegg, Mauer and the great Saint.



Coming from the Schalaburg, we stride bravely along, me and my "wild hunter", who had finally got over his bad mood and had become cheerful again. But the cloudless sky that had delighted us so far was over. Soon the landscape was bathed in the burning gold of the sun, soon it was shrouded in camouflage - the most faithful image of capricious fate. But that was what gave the landscape its charm and life, when a church tower suddenly rose out of the darkness in the bright light, like an unexpected flash of lightning, or even the snow-covered peak of the Ötscher emerged from the eternal blue, only to immediately hide behind the clouds again. The wind also blew, but it did not bring coolness; it was the time when the dwarves stole the golden hair of the noble Sibia. After a long march, we had crossed the broad valley plain and had once again entered wooded hilly country. Once again the border mountains greeted us from the southern edge of Lower Austria, once again the Ötscher's snowcap rose up - like distant flag waving, then took us a friendly forest valley in his benevolent shadow domes. But in front of us stood the Osterburg - the sanctuary of the lovely "Ostara", the friendly, ever-smiling goddess of spring with the lovely wreath of snowdrops in her golden blonde hair.

Who else but Fraya in her conception as Sonncn- bride is Ostara! The deified personification of the German virgin as a bride! And she wears snowdrops as her bridal headdress instead of myrtle! Only the English brides still adorn themselves with the humble snowdrop, which heralds the springtime of love; our German bride thinks it must be the myrtle, which she symbolically adorns when she steps down the aisle.

And how does the dear girl who flies towards us as a bride on our spring of love, promising happiness as the patron goddess of our lives, resemble the first flower?

The first flower emerges from the greening earth, the first swallow circles around the gables of the houses, and a cheer goes through people's chests, for they sense that spring is near!

The first flower? Yes, March violets, cowslips and snowdrops! Who doesn't know the violet festival that the Viennese still celebrate with their cheerful Duke Otto on the Leopoldsberg? On the Leopoldsberg, which, like the Osterberg here, was once also dedicated to the bridal "Ostara"; after all, it bore the name of her beloved bridegroom, the name "Zeizzos the Beautiful"! But who would have thought that this ancient folk festival was an old pagan spring festival with a mythological background?

The first violet, to whom else but the fair Fraya had it blossomed? The love-loving queen of love, liberated from the power of the winter giants? Who else but Iduna, rescued in the form of the swallow, who else but the friendly Gerda, the bride of FrS, who else but the woman Isa, freed from the shackles of ice, who else but the returning goddess of spring, Ostara!

To whom else did the first three flowers, violets, snowdrops and heavenly keys, blossom but to all the variously-named goddesses of Germanic love-mythology, who always signify only one noble goddess, and this one, unique goddess was and is - the fair German maiden!

As the first violet was found, so was this girl only allowed in the neighborhood in the presence of everyone; it was the high price for beauty of the soul. How fundamentally different from our modern, one would almost say frivolous beauty contests! And the snowdrop! The German bride adorned herself with it, and the key to heaven then opened up the heavenly joys of spring!

Why, why do our German brides crown themselves with myrtle? Out of foreign addiction or lack of understanding? This question is difficult to answer, but it would not be a bad idea to find out whether myrtle really is a bridal and virginal symbol.

Myrtle was considered to be a "bridal" plant primarily because it was sacred to Venus Martia, the goddess of love. But this

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because it is said to have healing powers against female diseases and to stimulate eroticism. This alone shows that the relationship of myrtle to chastity is unsound and a false interpretation of later times. Precisely because myrtle does not refer to chastity, it was detested by the chaste virgin Diana. At the nothing less than chaste festival of Myrtha, who had fathered Adonis in blood disgrace with her own father, married women appeared with myrtle wreaths. In Paphos, where the goddess of love, who was also called Paphia, celebrated a debauched erotic cult, she had sacred myrtle groves, and the city of Aphrodisias, named after the goddess of love, was built on a spot where a hare had slipped into a myrtle bush. The hare, however, is the well-known symbolic animal of reproduction, similar to the sparrow.

This last mystical feature certainly does not enhance the alleged symbolism of the chastity of the myrtle wreath. Finally, it was again myrtle wood that was the most popular material for carving images of Venus, which, according to the above, was certainly not without symbolic reference.

Of course, efforts were often made to save the honor of the unfortunate symbol of chastity by boldly claiming that the myrtle wreath was a symbol of the bride's preserved chastity. Other peoples use rosemary, epheu and immortelle instead of myrtle, but the British remain true to their ancestral custom and still adorn their brides with snowdrops today.

German brides, shouldn't Fraya's bridal jewelry adorn you more beautifully than the misinterpreted, foreign myrtle wreath?

"Blütenhain is, as we both know,  
a windless place;  
After nine avengings of the Northern son,  
Gerda wants to become a wife there!"

Yes, and it is a grove of flowers from which the Osterberg rises. That part behind the rampart of the Zeizzo Mountains is a very peculiar land in the midst of the other Lower Austria. You can see that it was protected against the first onslaught of the peoples from the east; life developed much more freely there, its buildings are more artistically decorated than the Neustadt plain can show outside. Lower Austria also enjoyed the difficult honor of being the eastern capital for almost one and a half millennia.

Germania in the heavy shield area, the part behind the mountain wall was not as exposed to the ravages of war as the part of the country in front of the mountain range with its well-closed valley gates. That is why the legends are better and more abundantly preserved here than outside the mountains on the banks of the once so wild stream of nations, on the banks of the iron army road to the south.

We passed the ruins and the mighty round tower of the Osterburg, from which underground passages are said to lead over to Hohenegg, and soon we saw the old Hohenegg with its bold towers and stately fronts looking over defiantly on a distant forest cone.

Here, too, the special nature of the country is evident, the old tenacious adherence to ancient pagan customs. The often quoted words of Tacitus find surprising confirmation here: "Moreover, it does not correspond to their view of the majesty of the heavenly ones to imprison them between walls or to make images of them with human features. Forests and groves are their temples, and under the names of their gods they invoke that unfathomable power which reveals itself to them only in worship."

Emerging from the forest onto a hill that rises above a village, a round square surrounded by trees and bushes opens up. How astonished we were! There was a large crucifix, with a bell on a pillar next to it, just like the ones we see in pictures of hermits. But there were two rows of pews in front of the crucifix, just like in a church. And this is the place for Sunday prayers, although the church is by no means too far away, as there is no shortage of places of worship there. And there are many such places of prayer around here; they are all similar. Sometimes there is a cross, sometimes a stone pillar with an image of a saint in place of the altar, and next to it hangs the bell. But there is no priest up there. When mass is said in the nearby church, the bell from the church tower gives the sign of the continuation of the service; so at the Asperges (beginning), at the Gospel, at the offertory of the consecration, at communion and finally at the end at "itemissa est". The small bell at the prayer place repeats the sign of the tower bell, and so the devout join in the mass here without having been in church; - this is real and proper forest devotion!



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But the villages themselves also have such uniquely beautiful, picturesque views, groupings and individual images as the villages of the plain hardly offer; it is a pity that these parts of the country are so unknown! Perhaps this is their good fortune, for there, where the urbanite's train goes, the idiosyncrasy neither flattens out into the most sober platitude, as in the villages of the plain, nor in the modern "new-fashioned" style of fashionable places, which is already at the point of degenerating into complete caricature.

Who can say whether the baroque Indian Schl was perhaps preceded by noble Schl forms in the distant past, from which it first developed, just as our modern Old German grew as a distorted image from the noble German Renaissance? It is precisely here, in a place of grace for good, old, German art, in the midst of magnificent castles and magnificent ecclesiastical buildings, where twelve magnificent Gothic winged altars stand within a radius of a few hours, where works of sculpture and painting, as well as the minor arts, are piled up in abundance, where even the bourgeois and peasant house appears to be imbued with the noble spirit of art, it is precisely here that one has to feel the deviations to which our modern imitation styles must lead.

Hohenegg now stands out in all its stately dignity. The huge size of the castle, the myriad of round, square and polygonal towers, with their pointed conical roofs, parapets, bays and battlements, the variously broken fronts, all this gives the most stately impression of a XVIth century castle. The imagination and inventiveness of a decorative painter would hardly be able to create a more fantastically ornamented castle picture.

But the proud builder also knew what kind of building he was putting into the beautiful Ostarlaud. How self-confident do these verses from an inscription stone sound:

"Although the house is not built  
according to the ornamental style of today,  
Or everyone doesn't like it,  
I say to all of them:  
Because that's why I'll spend my money  
So I'll build it the way I like it.  
As now the heads are many.  
Nor do I want to give order.  
But let them all be dear to me  
Who come in friendship.  
I write this right at the beginning,  
God preserve the entrance and exit."

But this beautiful castle, even though it is still under roof, the windows still hanging in their frames, is - a ruin! Inside, there are only traces of its former glory and splendor, but everything is mutilated and wantonly destroyed, as if the Turk had lived here, whom the castle rejected twice!

On the first floor, a balcony consisting of a single huge stone slab surprises visitors to the desolate castle and kindly invites them to enjoy the incomparably beautiful panoramic view from this delightful spot. But no one ventures out there. When the metal railing was stolen, the slab suspended more than twenty meters above the base rock was smashed, so that it now hovers over the abyss, threatening to collapse. Even we did not dare to subject it to a load test by stepping on it.

But the view from here is also too charming! At such a point should stand the one who, from the scholars' room, always sees the past as "the crude Middle Ages"! People who take pleasure in the beauties of nature - and the builder of this balcony showed such a love of nature - cannot be "crude"; nor do "crude" people cultivate art as it was cultivated here. This balcony was only built as a place of devotion, to listen to nature from here, as one stands on this balcony far too high above rocks and forest trees to be seen and admired, which - as is commonly assumed - is supposed to be the purpose of building our modern balconies, in our naturally much finer "Zeitläufften"!

There, from the eagle's nest-like spot, vertically above the depths of the rocky gorge, the view sweeps freely from east to south to west, the friendly villages of Wimpaßing and Hafnerbach, Mitternachtsbrunn Castle stands out enchantingly between picturesque groups of trees, then the broad plain with the colorful carpet of crops, interspersed with castles, churches and individual farmsteads; It is a picture of peace and happiness, and in the middle of it all, the ancient sacred seat of Ostara rises up. Then, in horizontal demarcation, the avenue of poplars on Linzerstrasse forms the dividing frame between this and another, more serious picture. Above the avenue of poplars, the Austrian-Styrian border mountains rise in a bold blue wave. The Schneeberg group, the Rax- and Schneealpe with Gippel and Göller, and so on up to the proud peak, loom again barely recognizable in the distant east

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of the snow-capped Ötscher, which rises dominantly here from the sea of rocks that runs westwards into the jagged masses of the Dachstein and the overcast alps.

One can hardly tear oneself away from this overwhelming image!

A slight chill shakes you, however, when you turn your eyes from this view and see the ominous devastation of the proud castle building once again in full view; a willfully made ruin, still under roof!

And it was not the enemy's hand that gave this proud, magnificent building the deathblow! This castle, a stately home that could not have been more beautifully conceived, is decaying, still under roof and roof, exposed to robbery, desecrated by the neglect of its owners!

The description of the building and the actual history of this castle, as interesting as they would be, do not fit into the scope of these descriptions, and it may only be mentioned here that it belongs to the area that we discussed under "Salland" in connection with Schalaburg. Hohenegg, together with Schalaburg and the rest of the surrounding area, also belonged to the oldest allodial possessions of the sovereigns, namely those of the far pre-Babenberg dynasty.

Crawling around in the crumbling chambers with the swinging floors, the half-broken staircases and the already collapsed walls, I suddenly came across a "Native", whose "denseness" I disliked!

"That's one of your students too!" I thought to myself, and began to engage him in conversation. With great patience, much effort and the usual small coin of the tongue solution, namely with cigars, wine and cold cuts, which were brought out of our rucksacks, I got little coherent out of this chewer, but what I learned, however seemingly insignificant it may be, was nevertheless valuable to me.

Anton Seithhuber, as he is known, has a reverent love for the "old castle", where his mother lived blissfully for so long, who still pulled the tower bell here every day and otherwise looked after the castle. He himself was born there, and visits the scene of his youthful memories as often as he can; he wanders through the decaying halls, alone, dreaming as if he were the castle ghost himself. He may well feel many beautiful and loving things, but his language does not have the power to put his feelings into words. The

Orientals call such people favorites of the gods, while we call them idiots and sometimes even mock them.

And yet Seithhuber was not stupid, he was at most "slow of spirit". Of course, you shouldn't look for historical data from such people, because even their own experiences are poorly and inaccurately reported. But as tellers of legends and fairy tales, such dream-living natures are often the most splendid fellows, and my honest Seithhuber also turned out to be one. At first I asked him about the customary tales and horror stories of castle dungeons, prisoners, decapitated people and the like, in order to test the depth of his belief in miracles. He was soon on the move; his tongue was wonderfully loosened.

He knew a lot about the underground passage that ran from the kitchen, under the large stove and led over to Osterburg. He corroborated this statement with a very precise local indication of where horses and plows had sunk in and in this way had exposed and pressed in the passage. He also knew a lot about enchanted treasures, which were said to be enchanted in the old round tower - "Yes, if you only knew the right word, and didn't let yourself be put off by any spooks, then you would be rich - very rich! Yes!"

"Yes," he continued, "I was also once - yes, also once inside, there in the thick, round tower, yes. It was a coal-black night, and the wind was blowing so hard that it came out of - yes - and in the forest it roared and roared so that one's head was almost spinning, yes. Then it struck twelve in Hafnerbach. Now it started with howling and screaming, rumbling and rattling chains - yes. But whoever wants to lift the treasure must not be afraid - not by any means, yes. Mustn't let himself be misled by anything, and certainly not talk - yes; otherwise the Black One has power over him, yes! Well - and how the rumbling got closer and closer - yes - how it finally cracked as if the tower was about to collapse - yes - well, that's when I got a bit scared, i had gotten really spooked - yes - and I ran away as fast as I could run! - Yes!"

I learned that he had "toast" and "wormwood" with him to protect him against evil spirits and also something "consecrated", and that the devil himself was guarding the treasure in the round tower. He didn't know what the conditions were for lifting it,

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or didn't want to say, which was more likely. He knew nothing about white women or other hauntings. But he did remember something vague and indeterminate about a white woman at the Osterburg.

We gradually made our way out of the castle almost unnoticed, past the graceful red marble fountain temple, which would be an ornament even in a town square, but here is mercilessly ruined. Soon we were on the path that leads over to "Mauer".

Then the ill-fated devil's banner told me in his broad, informal way about a "great saint" who was nearby. I couldn't quite make sense of the narrator and let myself be led to the "great saint".

It is a statue of a bishop, a good two men high, in a plain style without any artistic value. It is poorly painted and depicts "St." Zeno, Bishop of Verona.

Only now did I understand Seithhuber's description.

On the banks of a small stream stands the colossal statue of the saint on a boulder in which footprints are imprinted, in which the rainwater collects, which is said to be good for "evil eyes". The saint lived here during his lifetime, and he would have pressed the footprints into the stone by kneeling in prayer. The "great saint" also had no roof and no compartment over him, and as often as the parish priest of Mauer had a roof erected over the statue, wind and weather often tore it away again the next night.

Over on the hill, however, stands the ancient church of Mauer. The unusual shape of this church, in which the roof of the nave is significantly lower than that of the presbytery, the massive ashlar tower, the ancient, rough appearance of the whole building, all of this fits wondrously into such a land of myths. It should be noted in passing that this church also contains important artistic treasures.

But even this church "suffers no attack from the outside", as soon as it is plastered, wind and weather throw it down, and it does not tolerate a high roof at the front; that always collapses, and only the low roof remains permanent.

This is pure, unadulterated paganism.

First of all, the underground passage, the existence of which I do not wish to deny; its starting point under the hearth is significant.

The hearth may only be the ideal reminder of the old sacrificial altar of the old Hohenegg sanctuary, which was certainly like Schalaburg. The connection with the Osterburg is also important, at least mythologically. We have repeatedly encountered the devil as guardian of the treasure, and here we need only recall St. Christopher and the treasure legend of Rauhenegg (Helenenthal), where the condition of lifting the treasure is still unforgotten. But all of this fades into the background before the great saint.

It stands on a "pagan sacrificial altar"; the footprints are the troughs for the offerings and the sacrificial blood. That is why it does not tolerate a roof or a compartment, for Tacitus already testifies that the German gods also did not allow themselves to be enclosed in temple walls. The church at Mauer, which stands isolated on the hill, also proves to be a pre-Christian place of salvation. The wild G'jaigd probably moved there and tore away the roof because it was in the path of the spirits. There are many similar examples.

So here again the "three"; Ostarburg, Hohenegg, Mauer, and in the middle of the three the Opferstein!

Which eye did the great saint replace? Wuotan gave his one eye for the drink from Mimir's well, and the rainwater that collects in the footprints is good for - "evil eyes". "Helblindr", the half-blind, one-eyed man, is Wuotan's nickname as the winter god, and in his special form as the Balders murderer Hader (Hödur), he is even completely blind, because Loki has to guide his arm to the mistletoe shot. In fairy tales and legends, too, his attenuations occur as half or completely blind; thus in the many one-eyed giants, in the one-eyed Siegfried slayer Hagen of Tronje, even in the old blind boar.

This is precisely why Wuoton is also invoked as a healing god for eye ailments, and why all "Augenbründln" (e.g. at Edlitz behind Reichenau etc.) also point to anciently sacred "Phols-" or Wuotansbrunucn". The Pholsbrunnen had just stamped the god's horse (Phohlen, Füllen) out of the earth.

In this highly interesting sanctuary, we can therefore recognize the following threefold division:

"Osterburg", as a place of becoming, of birth;

"Hohenegg", as a place of salvation or life; where in pagan times was the place of things, but in the Middle Ages the seat of lordship and judgment: and finally

"Mauer" as the sanctuary of perishing or death.

Mauer, which was undoubtedly the old burial place for cremations, remained dedicated to the cult of the dead even in Christian times, as the unusually rich inventory of graves and precious gravestones from the earliest times to the later Middle Ages clearly shows, as do other objects owned by this church.

This short, enjoyable day of hiking has opened up unimagined things through the local eye and the honest Seithhuber's simple stories, and has provided a new building block for the expansion of a long-forgotten era from the youthful age of our people.

But evening was beginning to fall and a thunderstorm that had been threatening all day was approaching. So we hurried to Loosdorf to start the journey home to our old Vindomina, possibly without rain.



## Wurmbauer, Wurmgarten, Wurmbrand.



"Tarus Draconum genuit  
et Draco Taurum".

I once came through the Klosterthal from Gutenstein on a beautiful late fall day, without any destination or plan, as sometimes happens when you are whisked away to a corner of the valley for a summer retreat. And beautiful, marvelously beautiful, is this monastery valley, so that I needed no other travel companion than this noble beauty!

Densely forested mountain masses tower up on both sides of the road, which usually stretches higher than the valley floor along the mountain slopes. Here and there, small stands of deciduous trees rise up out of the pine darkness in a cheerful green, or a broad carpet of lush mountain meadows laughs pleasantly through the shady overhang of the deciduous wood, whose leafy edges shimmer in the most golden green light into the shadowy cool chiaroscuro of a blissful resting place.

Cyclamen and dark bellflowers, tall ferns and low juniper bushes covered the forest floor where the grass grew sparser. Down below, the "kalte Gang", a cheerful mountain stream, roared upwards, and above, the forest rustled out its eternally unsung song. The cowbells sounded muffled, occasionally drowned out by a cheerful "Juh-Juh-Schroa" or the shrill call of a golden eagle circling high above.

This is true and genuine Alpine character. There are the individual farmsteads scattered along the mountain slopes, with their gleaming white foundations and the dark reddish-brown woodwork of aisles and foliage and the broad, stone-weighted gabled roof; there are the grazing herdsmen, and there is the yellow stagecoach, from whose buck the half-forgotten "brother-in-law" blows his old "Post turner" echoing. Everything is still original, peculiar, unaffected.

Soon a side valley opens up on the right, soon on the left, with further views of more distant mountain waves, the blue in blue.

But the valley gets narrower and narrower. The mountains move closer together, they become darker, higher, and individual rocky spires rise menacingly from the pine gloom, which has already completely displaced the cheerful green foliage.

A forest valley opens up on the left, the "Schwarzgraben", and above it rises the broad mass of the Schneeberg Steinhaupt. "Happy hiking greetings to you old boy up there! From below you also look quite splendid and you will never tempt me to tread on your proud crown as I once did! If you don't climb up, you'll save yourself the trouble of coming down, or even falling down and much more! Farewell to you!"

The mountain giant looks proud and commanding, high above the dark forest, at the edge of which lie the Wegscheider's farm and a sawmill. This is really a "Gauermann picture"! It was for these reasons that the famous animal and landscape painter of the old Viennese school drew his motifs, and anyone familiar with his true-to-life paintings will only fully understand them at such points.

The valley closes again, but it becomes narrower and narrower, lonelier and lonelier. The "cold corridor" roars more wildly, it rushes through the forest; it seems as if the end of the forest valley has been reached here, as if it had been dismantled by giant walls. The walls of the Kuhschneeberg mountain loom overhead, the gloomy Kohlberg stands to the left,



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On the right is the pinnacle of the "Hut-Berg", at the foot of which is the courtyard of the "Wurmbauers" is located.

The art road continues along the narrow forest valley, still a good distance behind the Wurmbauer, until a brambly rocky lane opens up again on the left - the "Nestelgraben" - from which the "kalte Gang" (cold passage) shoots out in white foam. There the road leaves the valley and winds its way up to the height of the "Gscheids" in long, winding serpentine before descending into the Borstthal valley.

The ordinary traveler usually misses the fact that he leaves the valley here and turns off over the mountains; he just follows the road without bothering much about the construction of the mountains.

But my stroll ended here; "Wurm-bauer", "Hutberg", "Nestelthal"?

I had been working hard on the edges of the overflowing "cold course" into the tall grass and spread out the map in front of me. It was to solve the runic riddles of this accumulation of names for me again today.

The valley has not yet reached its end here, it only changes its name from "Klosterthal" to "Nestelgraben", and this winds its way upwards, becoming ever steeper and narrower up the "Mamau meadow".

A new riddle: "Mamau-Wiese"? But up at the Mamau meadow lies the "worm garden" and behind the the "Oed". On the Mamauwiese stands a "St. Sebastian picture" and: springs the "St. Sebastian's water", which at the falls the "Hühnerbhels" forming some waterfalls worth seeing towards "Buchberg" flows, connecting itself with the Sirning. But before "Buchberg" is reached, it flows at the "Predigstuhl", at the ruin "Losenheim", the "Sonnleithen" and the "Hengst thal", and flows into the Sirning, which shortly before had reached the "Pfennigbach" has excluded. Further to the east, however, lies "Stuppach", then Glocknitz, the old "Glochniza", where the hereditary tomb of the Counts "Wurmbrand-Stuppach" is located, and even further to the east, near the castles of Steyersberg, Pütten, Krumbach and Kirchschatz, the castle stable of the former castle "Wurmbrand", just before the Hungarian border.

I lay in the grass dreaming of the strange trail I had found. The shadows fell wider into the valley, playing golden:

the rays of the departing sun shone through the branches of the proud pines and their comrades there on the protruding rock teeth, and the lower backgrounds sank into the dark purple-blue. The peaks of the mountains and the rocky crags shone in ever brighter glowing colors, but higher and higher the veil of night rose from the valleys, pale gray and almost spooky. Darker and darker was the arc of the sky, here and there a cheeky little star twinkled out, but the cricket chirped in the grass. On and on the torrent roared and rushed by my side, and it rushed through the dark forest like a distant organ sound.

Then the full moon rose in silent majesty from the silhouettes of the rock walls, casting its pale lights over the picture. Here the rushing water seemed to glide crystal clear over a bluish shimmering block of stone, there to reveal a shallow depth as transparent as an emerald. But whitish, like swans at play, the spray cavorted in a wanton play from step to step, spraying, melting and rising anew in an endless game.

Whitish mists drifted down and swirled in an airy round dance above the waters and their silver-bell-like tinkling and singing. - Then a little mermaid peered curiously out of the sounding flood of foam, and the mists circled around it, and they sang and danced, and the waters and the winds made music to it.

The little mermaid pointed at me and laughed mischievously, saying to the laughing elves: "That's another one of those who have the worm in their brains, or do you mean it differently, dear "Mümelein"?"

Then the light elves laughed, and one of the "Mümeleins" said that I looked just like all those who bothered with what a dead donkey carried on its back in colorful scrolls, what the learned noble guild called certificates and diplomas. And again the malicious misty figures laughed. But then they floated upwards, and the fair little mermaid called after them that they would like to see the mermaid's sisters, the "Glocken-Nichsa" and give my regards to "Fanin-Nichsa" if you visit them.

The "Mümeleins" floated away to the Mamau meadow, their home.

I had heard wondrous things; the mermaids gave the names to the waters and the places named after them! Glocknitz and the Glocknitzbach, which the modest Slavists claim for themselves, were called "Glocniza" by the "Glocken-Nixe",

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and the Pfenningbach of Fanin der Zeugin, Mehrerin (see Venusberg).

And how these teasing spirits jeered at me, how they compared the precious lines of writing on the parchments to the burden on a donkey's back! Oh, about these little mice and mermaids! It is not without reason that these goblins are gifted with a female form! But still the wanton mermaid, half mocking, half curious, looked over at me.

Then I took heart and called the mermaid: "My dear mermaid child! I could also order your greeting to your sisters the Glocken-Nixe and the Fanin-Nixe, and the others, if you trust me with your name, because after the cold walk I can hardly name you, my Bielholdchen!"

Then she laughed so brightly and did so many somersaults that the white spray splashed around my head.

"You advise correctly, but know that man must never. If we are not to flee from him, ask him our name and kind, for our nature is different from the way we visibly approach you. Therefore leave off asking."

So we began to talk about the times and what had happened there. Many things became known to me, including this:

A long time ago, a grayish lime worm lived here in the Schneebergs Nähen, up in the ravine next to the "Mümeleinwiese" (Mamau wiese); it is still called "in der Öd" and in the "Wurmgarten". The worm devoured everything, man and beast, and devastated the area. Then it happened that a man pacified his farm with stakes. He burned the stakes before he put them in the ground to protect them from rotting. Suddenly the lime worm came snorting straight at the man. He was not lazy, but thrust the firebrand into the lime-worm's throat, causing the brute to burst. The land was freed from the beast. But the people called their savior Wormbrand and gave him many a load of red treasure gold in honor. The lime-worm slayer then built himself a castle in the same place, to which he gave his name, and from that hour onwards he carried the worm with the firebrand in its maw on his shield as an eternal memorial.

I have answered the multitude that such a little story is of no importance, because no one in Perga

ment, which is to be deplored, because I know some people who only swear by what is written and say that everything else is old wives' tales. The first Wurmbrand would have been the very noble Lord Poppo von Wurmbrand und Stuppach, as he is named as the first witness on a deed of donation from the Archbishopric of Salzburg; and he lived around the year 1013. That's it, because no manuscript would have come down to us from earlier times, ergo - -

But then the little mermaid laughed out loud, and again did several somersaults over the boulders, as if they were all padded with eiderdown instead of unburnt lime. When she realized, however, that I was not too serious about the donkey skins, but that I was not contemptuous of other news as a document, the mermaid woman became serious again, and began anew to tell of the past.

I soon realized what a deep meaning lay behind what the mermaid's little mouth was revealing to me in veiled words.

Kotinge called themselves the kings and their clans in the heathen Germania, the old, ancient Aryan tribal legends. According to the ancient Aryan legends, however, the royal dynasties descended in a straight line from the "gods". The Eddic song "Rigsmal" and the Siegfried saga "prove" this precisely. Since now the tribal and heraldry the Wurm brande, in accordance with their "speaking" coat of arms, contains the Siegfried legend in its oldest version, so this proves the descent of the family from an old Aryan Kotings or royal family. This is because the oldest Siegfried saga has the Lindwurm killed by a burning tree, just as in the worm brand saga; only in much later sagas did the "Balmung" replace the "Feuerbrand".

Now, curiously, the very same legend is found in ancient Assyrian inscriptions\*), and the question arises as to whether the connection between the Siegfried legend, or the worm-brand legend, and the Assyrian legend is conceivable.

According to recent research, which I fully agree with, the Aryans came directly from the north and "sent" their migratory hosts simultaneously to the west and east, to Europe and

\*) Liehe: Kaulen, Assyria and Babylonia.

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Asia\*). The main mass of the people, which we today call the Germans, has been in the country since primeval times, and may have displaced the perhaps red-skinned Ur-race. Accordingly, the Aryan tribal sagas came to Europe and Asia at the same time, as a common flowering of a tribe, developing everywhere according to local conditions into their special form.

This would explain the relationship between the worm fire saga and the Assyrian one. But a daughter relationship between the worm-branding saga and the Assyrian one would also be conceivable, even probable.

The "Sachsenspiegel" explains the immigration of the Saxons into the German land, and thus also the emergence of the real, not the so-called original aristocracy.

Before conclusions are drawn from this, the two important paragraphs of the "Sachsenspiegel" may be excerpted here; they can be found in Book III, Article 44, §. 2 and 3:

"§ 2 Our ancestors, who came here to the land of Saxony and drove out the Thuringians, had been in Alexander's (the Great of Macedonia) army; with their help he had conquered all of Asia. When Alexander died, they were not allowed to settle in the empire because of the hatred and fear of him among the people. They sailed away with three hundred (500) keels, all but fifty-four (20, 40 in other readings) of which perished. Eighteen (8) of them came to Prussia and occupied the country; twelve occupied Rügen and twenty-four (40) came here to the land of "Saxony".

§ 3. since there were not so many of them that they were able to cultivate the field, and when they had beaten and driven away the Thuringian lords, they left the peasants undefeated and allowed them the field for such rights as the Lassen (peasants) still have today; the peasants are descended from them. From the peasants who forfeited their rights (their property) came the day laborers, who work for their daily wages.

In Assyria, too, the royal dynasties were thought to be of divine origin, and the possibility is not excluded that a scion of that dynasty, whose ancestor was feint in the inscriptions as dragon slayer, came to Europe with the Saxon army of Alexander, whose successors planted tribe, family legend, name and coat of arms here at the foot of the Snow Mountain. Just because

\*) "Origines Ariacae" by Karl Penta and "Acht" by H. H. T. F. Schliep.

the Wurmbrande are part of the ancient aristocracy, as the legend of the gods is linked to their coat of arms.\*) they may have sat here for a long time, defied the Saxon slaughter from here, and finally pushed eastwards towards the Huns, where the "Burgstall", the place where Wurmbrand Castle stood, still reminds us of their shield.

Once we have come this far, we return to the lindworm or dragon saga.

The Siegfried saga, like the worm brand saga, is a Germanic early spring myth, and therefore belongs to the first group of the often-mentioned tripartite division, i.e. in those of emergence, of birth, and therefore naturally also falls within the cult circle of the spring goddess Ostara.\*)

Noteworthy are the Easter customs in which - in contrast to the customs of other festivals - fire and water are combined. In addition to the Easter fires, which are lit on the mountains here and throughout Steyermark, Easter water also plays an important role. Today both are popular amusements, but in the past both were part of the cult of Ostara. On the night of her festival, or at dawn, the girls washed their faces in the "spring of salvation", and they still do so today "to stay beautiful," as they say. But this must be done in silence, even without greeting the person they meet or returning their greeting, so as not to inhibit the effect in accordance with the ancient laws of magical belief.

These customs, which, as I said, are still practiced today, are of great mythical age and are based on the belief that the festival of joy can only be celebrated purified by fire and water. The Easter egg is also ancient. In the Persian (i.e. an Aryan) story of creation, it is said that the firstborn of creation, the primordial bull, broke the world egg with a blow of his horn, from which the individual beings of creation emerged. In the spring, during the "Perchtenlaufen", the disguises of the "Perchten" but cowhides with horns, which form the headdress of the Perchten. This indicates cow sacrifices, which were made in the spring of Frouwa or Ostara, and since Easter falls at the time when the sun is in the image of the bull,

\*) See above, also my historical novel: Carnuntum, Berlin, Grote, 1889.

\*\*) See: ..Osterburg, Hohenegg, Mauer and the "great saint" of this book.

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that the marriage of the gods was commemorated in the spring under the form of a bull and a cow.

Many myths increase this probability almost to the point of certainty; for example, the well-known myths of Io, Europa, the cult of the "ox-eyed" Hera on Argos, who had a white team of cows, like Nerthus, who is none other than our Ostara.

Just as Pan, as Aries, loved Luna in the month of Aries (March), the conjunction of the sun and the moon in the month of Taurus (April) was depicted as the marriage of the sun god and the moon goddess in the form of a bull and a cow. This is why Easter is a movable feast, because it is naturally linked to the first full moon in spring. The full moon is the magic ring of which the oracle said that the woman would only remain faithful to the man as long as he had this ring on his finger; it is the ring Träufner (Draupnir), which was burnt with Balder; it is also the ransom of the eighteenth rune, of which Wuotan sings in the runic song:

The eighteenth (Runelied) I will never ever tell  
a woman or a girl,  
This is the best conclusion of the songs,  
What only one of all knows  
Except for the woman who embraces me in  
marriage and is also my sister.\*)

The solution of this runic song, however, like the hidden meaning of all these more or less erotic myths, is the resurrection of nature, the rebirth in the incarnation.

Accordingly, the ancient Germans called the Easter period a wedding, which name could only have a pagan meaning, but in Christianity, like so many other words, had lost its original meaning, and wedding in today's sense is nothing more than simple nonsense, since the point of comparison (low time) is missing.

If it is time in the sky, one can think of a high time and thus designate place and time in their connection, which would clarify the original meaning of the word. But when is it time in the sky? In the spring day and night equinox, which, in mythical terms, means that if the sun were to miss this time, winter would rule the whole year. That is why those dragon and lime-worm

\*) Frouwa was Wuotan's wife and sister, just as Zeus and Hera were also thought of as being in brother-sister marriage.

battles in which the dragon loses are in the spring, but those in which the dragon wins are in the fall.

When it is said in the song of "hörnen Siegfried" that the dragon became a man on an Easter day and announced to Chrimhild that he would regain his human form in five (seven) years in order to marry her, where she would then have to go to hell with body and soul and dwell there until the last day, then years are to be understood here as months, and hell as the dormant life of the gods - under the earth in winter. This means that the dragon, who is defeated in the spring (St. George, April 23), possesses Chrimhild for six winter months (he keeps her hidden six fathoms deep) and loses her and his life at Easter time to Siegfried, who also possesses her for only six months, after which time he too succumbs to the winter giant (dragon, Hagen). This battle is commemorated around St. Michael's Day (Sept. 2nd), but Christianity was understandably not allowed to let the dragon be the victor.

This makes it clear why the term "Easter" expresses the highest bliss and why the word originally meant the climax of a love affair. The reference is clear: the sun hero fights with the dragon for the captive Ostara, frees her and the wedding day is called "Easter Day". This is why lovers call each other "Easter bliss" (Titurel, Tristan), which is why the Easter light, the Easter fire, the Easter candle and even Wurmbrand's firebrand are a sign of salvation. If the concept of marriage is so closely associated with Easter Day, then the Easter egg hunt behind the bushes of the garden also has an ancient pagan erotic meaning, in exactly the same sense as the slipping of the harbor into the myrtle bushes was interpreted and gave rise to the legendary founding of the city of Aphrodisias. The meaning of the Easter hare that lays the Easter eggs is no longer a mystery.

After all that has been said here, Easter is to be understood as the marriage of the spring goddess Ostara, crowned with snowdrops, but the question of who she took as her husband remains unresolved. Was her husband the Osterman of the children's tale, or the Easter of whom Valvasor speaks? In the "Geschichte des Möllendorfer Klosters", Paulus also gives cow horns to the fairy of Ostara as symbols of the crescent moon, which we also find in Frouwa and Fraya, as well as in other related mythologies.



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Accordingly, Ostara's bridegroom is the young sun god, and it makes no difference what name he had in this particular case. Since no other name than "Easter" or "Easter-man" can be proven for the time being, one can safely accept the Easter man, behind which, however, the young sun god himself hides as the bridegroom.

At Easter time, the gods return from the underworld, and among them Bacchos, laughing, horned and with a bull's feet. This explains the saying from the mysteries of Dionysus (Bacchos): "Taurus Draconum genuit et Draco Taurum"; in German: "The bull has begotten the dragon and the dragon the bull."

The "horned Siegfried" is also depicted as having a laughing temperament and, before he lost his divinity, may well have emerged from the underworld with bull horns like Bacchus. Only later were these forgotten and replaced with the horns. The cycle of the year was already shown above in the Siegfried legend; he kills the Lindwurm, but is later murdered by Hagen himself. The "horned Siegfried" must therefore have been Ostara's bridegroom.

There is nothing to prevent the assumption of a bull cult in German paganism, and this is confirmed by old national and family coats of arms, i.e. old symbols of salvation, such as the bull's head in the coat of arms of Mecklenburg and the name of the country as well as the coat of arms of the Steyermark.

The French heraldist Menestrier says the following about the Styrian heraldic animal, the so-called panther:

"La Styrie, Province d'Allemagne, de sinople our taureau fourieux d'argent, ardent de goucleur par les oreilles, la gucule et le naseaux. Ceux qui n'ont pas entendu que Stier signifie en Allemand un tareau, et qu'il fait des armoires parlantes dans l'ecu de Styrie, en ont fait un animal monstreux de la forme d'un griffon."

Dr. Karl v. Querfurth adds this remarkable gloss to this passage: "So we have to learn German from a Frenchman! Reinhard also says that the coat of arms of the Steyermark was originally a talking one, namely a bull. (Stieria, Stiermark, Steyermark). Similarly, we read well-founded deductions by the learned Spener, which lead to the view that the Styrian, so-called panther, was originally a bull,

and in the famous Zurich coat of arms he is actually depicted with horns like a bull."

So much for the heraldist v. Querfurth.

But if we consider that coats of arms are signs of salvation - talismans - were therefore not chosen arbitrarily, so we see the bull cult specifically for Steyermark proven by the coat of arms and, in connection with the Easter fires still cultivated in Steyermark today, the Ostara cult authenticated in the aforementioned sense. But also in a strange heraldic connection the dragon (lind worm) can be found on the coat of arms of families and towns in the Steyermark. It should be noted that the county of Pütten did not belong to Lower Austria in the past, but to Steyermark, which means that the ancestral cradle of Count Wurmbrand should actually be placed within the old borders of Steyermark.

The relationship of the bull to the Lind wurm (dragon) is made even more interesting by the very curious circumstance that at the time when the Steyermark became a duchy, two border counties were established; one in the north was Putene (Pütten), the other in the south Pettau. Both counties now bore the dragon, but without feet in the coat of arms; the Pettau county, however, also had the brand in its maw. Since the Styrian bull, through ornamentation, perhaps even under the influence of the Wurmbrand-Pütten-Petau dragon, was transformed into the panther, it is not unlikely that the Traungauers, the first dukes of the Steyermark, were not only related to the Wurm brands, but even to their tribe. If this combination is correct, then the Wurmbrande are the ancestral lineage; they have the name and the unstamped coat of arms; the Pettau would be the Sekunda lineage, since they had the fire, but the lime worm stamped on the feet in their coat of arms; the Tertia lineage would be that of Putene, whose dragon stamped on the feet also lacks the fire.

That, if this assumption is correct, the Traungauers certainly belonged to the main tribe can hardly be doubted; as margraves, as well as dukes, they naturally bore the national coat of arms, which, as already mentioned, was ornamented like a dragon to form a panther.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that the archive of the Wurmbrand-Stuppach family, now counts of the Empire, contains a coat of arms picture

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from the year 1130, in which the lind worm appears with the firebrand in its throat.

The historiographer of his family, the genealogist Count Johann Mihielm von Wurmbbrand-Stuppach, who lived in Frankfurt as President of the Imperial Court Council under the Emperors Leopold I, Joseph I and Charles IV, seems to have known or at least suspected that the Wurmbbrandes, "Kotinge", must be descendants of a pre-Christian Germanic royal house, for he wrote in the family history:

"The age of the family cannot be named because it has always been, but in ancient times it was much more glorious than it is now."

Could such a meeting of bull and dragon be a mere coincidence? No, certainly not!

"Taurus Draconum genuit et Draco Taurum!"

Once the mythical connection between the Ostara cult and the healing signs of the bull and the lime worm has been established, the first legendary worm fire, the lime worm slayer, is also explained mythically. He is not the "man", not the "worm-farmer", he himself is the young sun hero, he himself is Ostermann, the bride-man of Ostara. This interpretation also fulfills the ancient Aryan condition which called the kings "sons of the sun", a title which naturally had to disappear in Christian times, but which is still in use today in other Aryan states which have not yet adopted Christianity, e.g. in Persia.

According to what has been said here and with reference to what has been demonstrated in the section of this book: "The Helenenthal and the Holy Fehme on Rauhenstein", it can be assumed with certainty that the Wurmbbrande were once also in possession of a freehold of the Holy Fehme, like the Hohenzollerns, the Hohenlohe and others - the Hohenzollern arms collection at Sigmaringen, curiously enough, still possesses a memorial to the Hohenzollern freehold, in a dagger, a so-called "Dag". (Pictured in Demmin's Weaponry). The honorable chairman carried a short sword, which had three blades joined into one. When the "Thing", namely the session, was opened, he placed the "dag" on the table, pressed a spring and the three blades opened. This was supposed to indicate "offen Dag" "open day", the "court is opened".

Perhaps the family still owns an unrecognized device somewhere with the characteristic letters S. S. G. G. or with a cross and a V underneath.

But this is only in passing, as a reminiscent look back at an earlier picture, to prove that everything is connected and that only in the context does a complete picture of our long obscured past unfold.

But now to the interpretation of the peculiar local names. The Wurmbauer probably refers to the place where the first of the Wurm brande had its seat in prehistoric times, a very simple farm, but by no means a medieval stronghold in the style of Hohenegg. This was possibly already the case in pre-Roman times, but at the latest immediately after the destruction of Carnuntum in the year 375 of our era, that the Wurmbrande settled here. After all, it is possible, indeed highly probable, that the Wurmbrande with their family name and coat of arms only settled here in 375 and moved from their former ancestral seat on the other side of the Danube, because there is also a village in the Waldviertel of Lower Austria with the name Wurmbrand. There, as can hardly be doubted, the Wurmbrande settled before the beginning of the migration of peoples, or, to put it another way, before the destruction of Carnuntum in 375, in which they undoubtedly played a prominent leading role, and settled here to guard the Alpine passes after they had just fought for the road over the Semmering to Italy.

So much for the prehistory of the Wurmbrand house as reconstructed by place names.

Now behind the "Wurmbauer" stands the highly significant "Hutberg", which leads us out of the framework of prehistory and back to mythology. The Wurmbrande were Kotinge, as the Siegfried saga proves in its heraldic saga. The old legend of the gods has been wonderfully preserved in the family saga of the dynasty, but in Christian times the first of the dynasty was gradually humanized and, for understandable reasons, his former divinity was no longer remembered. The dragon slayer, the Osterman, became a simple "man", he was depicted as human. The legend does not mention the progenitor of the lineage, nor the manner of the progenitor's death. The legend takes it for granted that he "took a wife, fathered children and died". But since we recognized him as a son of the sun, whose mythical

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mission it was to beget a royal family, so we suddenly feel the gap. He had to take a "woman from among the people" in order to father a human child; he had to leave the world in an extraordinary way to take account of the finite nature of human life, since otherwise he would have had to endow his mortal wife with immortality. German mythology, however, knows of no example of apotheosis in this sense, just as it knows of no example of deified human beings. In the next section: "Ad pontem Ises" this will become even clearer; here only this much: Since the first worm fire was, according to the myth, a son of God in human illusory form, he was not allowed to die, but also not to stay on earth longer than until his intention had been fulfilled and he had produced human offspring with the mortal woman. Then he had to leave her. But because he was not allowed to die, he undoubtedly went into the mountain, namely into the "Hut berg" behind the Wurmbauer, where he sleeps like Rotbart in the Kyffhäuser, to the hat of the Semmering road to Rome that he had opened up. There is no doubt that this part of the Wurmbrande legend has been lost, and there is also no doubt that this part of the legend will have once known that he was the guardian of his family and would give them divine protection in times of need. In the masculine sense, he will have been the same family ghost of his lineage, which in the feminine sense is the "white woman" of so many royal houses (e.g. Hohenzollern). This family ghost is always the divine ancestor or the divine ancestress of a family, who was recognized as its guardian spirit even in Christian times. So much for the special reference of the "Hutberg" to the worm fire legend. In general, the "Hutberg" is the mountain where the gods sleep in winter, like Tannhäuser in the Venusberg, (see: The Venusberg near Traismauer) like Wuotan and Untersberg. (See this one.)

The lind worm is just the death of nature in hibernation, at time, since all procreation ceases. Therefore must the young sun god kill him, whose representative herein the person, or rather said, in the tribe of the Wurmbrande, of the kings, priesthood and judgeship united in himself, was resident. The entrance to the wasteland and the worm garden, the interpretation of which is clear, is through the "Nestelthal". A well-known superstition says that through the "Knotting nests" the duties of a marriage would be inhibited by magical prevention. And really is the Nestelgraben

a sterile rocky gorge, quite suitable for a dragon's dwelling. The Mamauwiese as the home of the Mümleins or elves has already been explained. St. Sebastian is the constant companion of St. Roch, both of whom are venerated as patrons against the plague. However, the god who sends an evil is also the god of healing against it; this was already evident in the great saint?) The winter god is the plague god, just as Helia appears as the "plague maiden", as the "Pestweibele". Indeed, even when cholera was so rampant in Vienna at the beginning of the 1950s, the mythical figure of the plague woman was revived, and the common man had many stories to tell about a black woman as the personification of cholera. Such mythical personifications are immortal. St. Sebastian's Well is such a well of salvation, and the legend really is that those who fled up there during the plague were spared the disease; after the killing of the lind worm, the procreation disrupter, nature revived on Ostara's wedding day.

Losenheim is the place where the fateful lots were read, and there is also the sermon chair, which has nothing to do with the preachers; it is just a sacrificial stone. Buchberg is the place where the gods play with the golden disks "in the blossom grove" after a defeated winter. (Ball game, discos throwing.) The Pfenningbach is the stream of the fan, the procreator, multiplier"! With him we go out into the fertile land, to Stuppach, to Wurmbrand.

\* \*  
\*

A gusty wind blew roughly through the wood, the old pines creaked and bent in the autumn storm; dust swirled up. The snow mountain had pulled its camouflage cap over its ears, and that is an unmistakable sign of the approach of bad weather. The "cold course" roared as if it had come to a boil; but my fair Nixfrau had disappeared. The air was leaden gray over the storm-swept rocky ditch and gave a hint that it was not far until sunrise, but gloomy clouds hindered the young day's entry into the valley. Above, it was already glowing alarmingly, and from afar there was an indeterminate murmur, announcing the imminent sound of thunder.

\*) See: "Osterburg, Hohenegg, Mauer and the great saint"

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Then I hurriedly took my leave of the resting place, which had become my night shelter without my intention, and sought to reach Voisthal over the heights at a brisk pace in order to reach the "Höhbauern" or the "Singerin" to find a hospitable roof, along with compact bodily necessities.

I found them excellently, and later also the mail, which brought me back to Gutenstein under pouring rain and the most glorious thunderstorm symphony.

The fair mermaid of the "cold course" did not want to appear to me, although I did not ask her "for name and kind."



## Ad pontem Ises.

Some of the Suevi also serve Isis. The cause and origin of the foreign service is a mystery to me; only the image of the god itself in the shape of a liburna (ship) on a cult introduced from abroad.

Tacitus, Germania, cap. 9.



The Romans had not yet soaked their horses in the waves of the Danube, the Danube peoples had not yet suspected anything of the fierce she-wolf south of the Alps, the "Limes" did not yet run along the blue river, and yet it already carried ships and yet cities flourished on its banks, cities of which posterity thought the Romans built them, the Romans gave them their name.

There are also some who believe that the name of the river, the Danube, is Celtic; "Dan-oba", "thundering water", the Celts would have called out to the first Germanic tribes as they gazed in wonder at the roaring river suggests.

But the word "Danube" is Germanic and means something like the resounding, thundering floodplain\*) through which the majestic river rushes in the noble surf.

What a different picture the proud river must have presented in pre-Roman times, before the displacement of the primeval forests gave rise to the modern cultivated forest, which supplied the river with more than twice its present volume of water. What a different picture the Danube must have presented when its beauty was still unsullied by artificial roads, river regulation and entourage, sitting in its proud rock temple under the crown!

Where the ancient market town of Ardagger stretches out, there was already a Germanic settlement in days gone by, as the pilgrimage church of St. Otilie still stands on a hill above it today. This was a Germanic place of worship, a place of healing for the Norns, the goddesses of fate. And they all had reason to wander there, and all those who trusted the roaring river in the swaying vehicle from there had only too much right in those distant days to ask fate a question before beginning the perilous journey.

Two mighty primeval mountain pillars suddenly narrow the Danube valley. Rigid and shoreless, the colossal rocks of bluish granite rise from the foaming waters, karstified pine thickets overgrow the precipices and struggle for air and life in a wild battle.

The last highest procession of the "Windsbraut" has torn a wide alley into the pine masses, fallen tree corpses rotten from

\*) "The first syllable "Don" leads back to "Thun", "Thon", "Dun", Latinized as "dunum", "durum", which Silbe repeats itself often, e.g. Bojodurum, Passau. In a Bavarian saga, the bridge that leads to the castle of "Sybilla Weiß" is called the "Thonbrücke", which is reminiscent of the "Donnerbrücke", which leads into the realm of Helias as a counterpart to the rainbow. The name "Thonbrücke" now refers to the lake called "Dunum" by Fredegar, into which the Arula flows; this is Lake Thun in the Bernese Oberland. On Lake Lucerne there is an area called "Thun", and on Lake Hallstatt there is also a "Thunfeld"; the place name "Thundorf" also occurs very frequently and always on bodies of water. The ISIS renewed fishing regulations of the imperial city of Eßlingen prohibit fishing "in the Thonauen", and the "Strudel unter den Wehre" and "Schleuß" of the Wühlen are also called "Thonauen". "In the Thonen under the mills, where the water is called Thonau according to old custom". "Donen", "dunen", "aufdunnern" is still used dialectally for noisy state, for Sunday-like pompous clothing. The term "des Stromnamens" therefore means "the mighty honor of the mighty river", and this with good German - not Celtic - words.



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creeping overgrowth, serving as a base for other descendants of their lineage. There a broken down trunk in the greenish-black water, surrounded by the white foamy spray, thundered by the roaring fire of the raging tide. King Petzo hums his way through the tangled undergrowth, and the mighty aar, the king of the air, sits high above.

This is shown by the view that the bold Ferge casts into the yawning maw of the terrible river pass.

Gone is the play of the glorious blue water, gone are the countless islands with their alluvial forests glowing in the most golden green light, through which the friendly river winds its way in a playful mood; gone is the play of youth, as the battles for existence draw near.

United in one bed, and this one bed compressed to barely half its width, the waters roar and roar in a swirling surge into the darkened rock gate, into the cauldron-like closing gorge.

A shuddering horror must have seized the fugitive when he became aware of such a sight; he must have stopped and made a pilgrimage up to the place of sanctuary on the "Odiliensberge",\*) to ask for salvation advice from the healers up there; then the group of fellow passengers may well have cast lots among themselves to see which of them would die in the waves through voluntary sacrifice and which of the others would secure "shipman's salvation".

The lot had been cast. The Vala had broken the sacrificial cake into "as many pieces as there were travelers before her, but one piece was blackened in the coals of the sacrificial fire. One by one, one of the men grabbed a piece of the cake from the Vala's apron. One had drawn the sacrificial lot.

Then the others had stripped him of his clothes, bound his hands and feet, but had thrown him from the ship into the gurgling tide, garlanded with flowers. His robe, his weapons and his hat were nailed to the bow of the ship amidst the murmur of blessings. These had become signs of salvation, protectors of the voyage, they guaranteed "shipman's health".

\*) The rune belonging to the third group of runes, Odil or Othil, is named after the place of salvation and is described as the mountain thorn or thorn of death, dedicated to Helia.

Now the dreadful was over; only now did the sharp toil begin, and many a sacrifice flowed into the healing treasure of the healers on Mount Odile

The next day, the journey began. The mooring ropes were thrown loose, the oars creaked, and slowly the clumsy craft pushed off the bank and into the foaming, roaring river. The sun was still low behind the blue mountains, but the morning sky shone golden through the dense forest

The river is still clothed in its serene blue, but the gorge is approaching darker and more menacing, opening up more and more like the ravenous maw of a ravenous lind worm.

A muffled roar from afar. The ship is already beginning to sway. Gurgling and chortling, a chaos of waves rushes towards the ship, as if it were afraid to plunge into the thundering bottleneck, but in the impact of the waves pushing after it, the struggling crests of the waves crash together in a milky spray and break against the dark rocky reefs in a raging fury.

Nightingales and cuckoos from the forest-dark mountains answer the many-voiced wave-song, and above it floats the indeterminable roar and noise of the forest, like the sound and tinkling of the winds around the individual rock needles from the broken steintobels, which stand there like the giant pipes of the primeval organ.

Then the ship shoots into the whirlpool; it rears up and sways, the oars creak, the frames groan, the men shout the call to the oars, but all this is barely audible against the thunder of the water.

There, the black-green tides roar over fallen rock debris, between which clutched overpowered tree giants, there, the waves roll foaming and rumbling into the self-drilled small openings of the rocky bays, from which they roar back again and again and again to swing again white-washed wave wreaths in the eternally undanced wave dance.

There the gray-green tide turns again in a whirl, like the sliding eye of a hulking water giant, and above it the foam ruffles like a bristly brow. There, the green net of the predatory Ran rushes, and the wave girls seem to throw the moaning ship to each other like a catching ball in a grim game.

The rocks tower higher and higher, the tide rages ever more roaringly, and it seems to have reached boiling point.

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Borne stands a jagged rocky island midstream, surrounded by the roaring and raging of the terrible surf. A deep, dark funnel opens up, surrounded by a grayish ring of white foamy spray.

Then the ferryman hurls a white goat with over-gilded horns into the vortex with a mighty swing, while the men tug at the oar beams to get out of the area of the all-devouring vortex. The ship's dance is terrifying, but the most dangerous part has been conquered. The sun is already shining mildly over the jagged cliffs, the thunder of the surf is already fading behind them, and only a sharp roar and whisper accompanies the ship as it passes the spar.

Here and there, the foam-like wave ropes still roar, but their fury is broken, the heavy ship glides calmly, almost without swaying, along the hermitage. Then another rocky bar pushes its way across the bed, and the waters roar and crash to the right in a sharp "evil bend". Now the ferruginous man breathes a sigh of relief; the rocky lane opens up, the rocky valley disappears behind him, the green of the laughing meadows and the bluish-green alder bushes rise bell-like above the blue-cheerful waves, and a vast land spreads out before the eyes of the joyful ferruginous man. The friendly sanctuary of the fair Lady Ise "Ip-Isa" has been reached-

\* \*  
\*

The picture has changed today. On board the "Ariadne" one finds the river pass from Ardagger downwards "really quite nicely"; at Grein even "romantic", at Struden "picturesque", then one finds St. Nicola "very lovely", and is deceived at the eddy, because one sails with the steamer where once the rocky reef of the "Hausstein" had blocked the current and created the eddy. It was blown away; the Danube was deprived of a dangerous rapids, but also of one of its most charming landscapes is poorer.

Now the steamer speeds through the further, naturally "romantic" rocky lane and finally arrives at "Persenbeug" castle on the evil bend. The steamer circles the "Ybbs wheel". The picture is yawningly called a "friendly" one, and the tourist then goes into the salon to enjoy a steak and fried egg as a reward for his efforts of admiring nature.

Like Ardagger above, Persenbeug (Bösenbeug) below is, so to speak, the control room at the entrance or exit of the long river pass. Like Ardagger above, the gloomy nomenclature sanctuary "Odilienberg", Mbs shows the cheerful mermaid sanctuary of Lady Isa. Both, however, lie at a gateway to the sanctuary of the Donaunix and the Danube mermaid, which is located in the never-freezing vortex and whirlpool of Hausen, where we once again encounter St. Nicola, just as a Nicola chapel follows the Bingerloch on the Rhine. But just as Nimz the mermaid father appears here in "St. Nicola", so he also appears with his other name in the river name Ister, as in the song of: "Iso the fisherman good and wise"; female, however, in "Nehalenia" Nicha, Nichse, Ise and Isa. These two names are divided into. The generic names Nix and Nixe, as well as the personal names Iso and Isa.

The service of which Tacitus now speaks was by no means that of the Egyptian Isis, but that of our good German "Frau Isa", who is still known to the people today as the "Danube woman" and who had one of her main sanctuaries in Ybbs. Perhaps the Tacitean report, which forms the motto of this treatise, refers precisely to our Ybbs.

The Romans called the place "ad pontem Ises", the oldest spelling of the place in German is: 1075, Ipsburg of the little river, however: 837, Ipisa Fuvius; thus Ip = Isa.

The "Tabula Peutingeriana" thus corrects Tacitus' report by correctly saying Ises instead of Isis.

But, as I have already said, the people have not forgotten their "Danube woman", and Vienna even has a charming statue of the Danube woman in its city park, which is admittedly not a "Lady Isa", but can at least be considered as such.

Let us take a closer look at the "German mermaids", since we have entered the realm of mermaid belief. Here, too, there are local deviations from their Nordic per sonifications, as preserved for us in the Edda, just as with all mythical figures.

The German mermaids are never dwarf-like, but are equal in shape and size to humans, and this is their main difference from the Nordic elves, who, by the way, are not always, although mostly, dwarf-like small. The female sex is predominant among them. Only main rivers usually have a male nix, such as the Rhine and the Danube, which, however, have a female nix.

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The mermaids of the tributaries are then regarded as their children. But even this rule has exceptions, as the legend of the mermaid (Nix) of the Pulkaubach and others prove.

The female mermaids are always radiantly beautiful and can only be recognized as mermaids and distinguished from humans by very minor external features; they have green teeth, strikingly large, green or water-blue eyes and fish blood. If they can be seen out of the water and then clothed, they are recognizable by the always wet hem of their clothes or the damp tip of their always bright white apron; they are also said to differ most favorably from their warm-blooded human sisters in that they are said to be less talkative on their walks than the latter. Admittedly, they lack the most stimulating topic of conversation, which provides our dams with so much material for the wittiest of conversations, namely - according to reliable reports - they are said to keep few servants; this probably explains a lot.

But when they join people, they are very intimate in their dealings; they come to the market to buy food, where they often put fish scales on the pay table instead of silver coins. They also visit people in their homes and let them visit them again in theirs. It may also be recalled how a farmer once found his friend the Nix of the Pulkaubach not at home and used this opportunity to free the souls of the drowned held captive by the Nix under glass bells. The farmer quickly knocked over the glass bells and the "poor souls" rose up in the form of air bubbles.

The young female Nixe come to the spinning parlors or under the village lime tree in the moonlight, even to the church dance, and spin and tell stories and sing and dance like other girls.

But people have to be very careful when dealing with mermaids, because almost all mermaid tales have a demonic streak of malice, deceit and cruelty running through them. And it cannot be otherwise; after all, they are the humanized characteristics of water in all its manifestations in the life of nature. The male mermaids as its strong and wintry characteristics, the female mermaids as representatives of the cheerful, laughing, summery character. Dam the mermaid is old and gray-haired and

the tree is depicted as being cultivated, which is why it has been Christianized by St. Nicholas, who makes his entrance on 6 December. He may be a grumpy old man, but he is good-natured because he gives the children the joys of winter, the last fruits of the year: apples, nuts and "Kletzen", i.e. dried pears and the like. But he puts it in the "Totenschuh". What a gentle, endearing reminder of death, without scythe and rattling leg! He has left the frightening to Agez and her to Ran. But even the friendliest, most dallying little stream with its often pond-like wide ponds, how malicious, how cruel it can often become when it suddenly swells and rolls raging across the meadows. All this is reflected in the myth of the mermaids. Moving from the general to the particular, it should be mentioned how many an unsuspecting fisherman fell into their nets, and how many a bold fisherman was embraced by their foam-white arms and kissed to death by them. This is their man-stealing quality.

The very fact that sacrifices, even human sacrifices, were made to the mermaids, and perhaps are still made today, proves how much one feared their treachery and wanted to propitiate them through sacrifice.

However, in order to fully explain and justify this perhaps seemingly exaggerated term, we may take a look back at the period immediately preceding the introduction of steam navigation on the Danube. This was before 1830, the year in which the first steamboat sailed from Vienna to Pest.

All Danube ships - with the exception of the steamers, of course, which are built on a keel - have a flat bottom, are very long in relation to their width and are completely unadorned and unpainted, so that the raw wood is visible everywhere, which in no way gives the ship a friendly appearance. In addition, the Danube ship lacks the proud decoration of mast and sail, and even the cheerfully waving flag. Uninterrupted, hard work with constant danger to life and limb make the Ferch\*) as hardy as it is weather-hardened, and so the cumbersome "Hohenauer", as the boat train is called, is not at all that peculiarly charming sight that a ship under sail or rudder usually affords. Even when traveling down the valley, the heavily laden and

\*) The Middle High German *ferge* of the Song of the Nibelungs is still unforgotten in the Shipman's language, in which the ship's servant or shipman is still used today. "Ferch, is called.

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The "Plätten" and "Kehlheimer", "Traunerin" and "Wachauer" or "Regensburger", with their frighteningly deep water, are not exactly attractive. Depending on their size, they always have two to four and often more terribly long rudders at the bow and stern, properly called "rudder beams", each of which is operated by three to six or even more men. This is because the ship drifts downstream with the current, i.e. it moves at the speed of the flowing water without any driving force of its own. As the ship therefore has no driving force of its own, it naturally also lacks a steering gear and would be unsteerable in the waves if the steering were not replaced in some other way. This is done with the rudder beams, which are often over thirty meters long, both forward and aft. With the help of these rudder beams, such clumsy ships can be steered with infinite ease and speed, and can admirably wind their way through often narrow, winding and many-branched waterways that run between visible and overlying, ever-changing sandbanks. Only when one has experienced a trip down the Danube on such a seemingly clumsy craft, which looks more like a Noah's Ark than a ship, can one understand that all and any artful navigation on the Danube is impracticable, and that its violent use is a useless and costless endeavor.

At the front of the Kranzel (bow) is a Ferch with the "Einsetzschale", which replaces the "Lot" or "Senkblei". This is a pole over two fathoms long, which is divided into so-called "G'minde" in a very peculiar way. Today, a "G'mind" is assumed to be six Viennese inches, but it has a different origin. The upright fist with the thumb held vertically used to be the unit of measurement of the "G'mind". This "Einsetzschale" is painted black and shows a white ring at the lower end, three feet (i.e. six G'minde) away from it, which is itself half a foot wide, i.e. a "G'mind". This is followed by a black ring of the same width and another white ring of the same width. Up to this point, nine G'minde have been clearly marked. Now a narrow white ring follows from the tip at a distance of five and a half shoes, i.e. eleven G'minden. The G'minde numbers run from the tip as follows: At the beginning of the first white ring 6, at its end 7, at the beginning of the second white ring 8, at its end 9, and finally at the narrow white ring 11.

The Ferch in the Kranzel now regularly pushes this measuring rod into the water when it becomes shallower and reads the "G'minde" in monotone, after which the "Nauführer", the commander of the vehicle, commands its steering.

The monotonous G 'mind reading resounds under the creaking of the oarlocks and the oarsmen's call: "Hö-ruckh, Hö-ruckh!": "seven, half-eight, nine, five, half-five, six . . ." and so on. Here and there you can hear the bottom of the ship scraping over a gravel bank, but nimble as an eel, the rudderless ship, so obedient to the helm, winds its way through the sandbanks until it has free passage ahead of it again, where it then drifts on motionless again and the launching hull is put out of action.

Even the steamboats have to reckon with the launching hull and the old ferry practice; the high school of nautics does not allow itself to be argued up by our stubborn Danube female. Brilliant current charts of the Danube do exist, which express every depth and every current velocity precisely in figures, and show every sandbank, every gravel bank, every heap and every island, but these charts were no longer correct the day after they were drawn, and were downright wrong the day after they were published. And this is because the relief of the river bed is just as changeable as its water, because where there is a river depth of more than fifteen feet today, there may be a sandbank tomorrow, and vice versa. The Danube skipper, whether upstream skipper or steamboat captain, has to find his way anew on every trip if he does not want to "lend" his way, and this is the reason why Danube steam navigation also had to give way and return to the practice of ferrying, which its first captains tried to ignore half a century ago and even a little later. It was only after they had sailed up, down and leaked countless times, to the unfeigned delight of the old ferries, that the tried and tested Danube skippers, so-called "Nauführer" to helmsmen and lo and behold - it worked. Since then, no one without exception has been able to advance to captain at the Austrian Danube Steamship Company unless they have served for several years as a sailor - in other words, right from the start, in fact and not just symbolically.

As far as the ship types of those Danube ships are concerned, they are certainly as old as their peculiar handling; indeed, they may hardly have been different in Roman times. Certainly, the Danube lords of those times, the Roman Liburnians, also relied entirely on similar.



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The steamboat captains were mocked in the same way as they were a few hundred years later, and they were just as certainly forced to retreat in the same way.

The main types of Danube ships, ordered by size, are as follows:

"Kehlheimer-Plätte". The wreath (bow) and stern (stern) are strongly raised (curved upwards) and pointed. Average length 42 m, width 7.6 m.

"Wachau chamois". Wreath sharply raised, sharply pointed; figure eight slightly raised, bluntly pointed. 30.5 m long, 4.75 m wide.

"Siebener Zille" (ruffled. Wreath very strongly raised and sharply pointed; aft bluntly pointed and slightly raised. 38 m long, 5.67 m wide.

"Regensburg chamois". Crown sharply pointed, strongly drawn on; figure eight bluntly pointed, not drawn on.

"Rosenheimer-Plätte". Wreath sharply pointed, slightly drawn up; aft broad, flat. 22.75 m long, 5.76 m wide.

"Swabian flat point". Wreath bluntly pointed, slightly raised; eighth broad, flat. 22.75 m long, 5.76 m wide.

"Trauner-Plätte" (Traunerl). Built like the Rosenheimer-Plätte. 24.66 m long, 3.80 m wide.

"Salzburger Plätte". The same as the previous one, but the wreath is not mounted. 22.75 m long, 5.76 m wide.

"Vinegar-Waidzille". Built like the Traunerl. 8.85 m long, 2.54 m wide.

In addition to these main types of Danube ships, which are officially recognized, there are also rafts in use on this river, which are again divided into beam rafts and store rafts and are very different both in their width and in the number of their wings.

If the downstream journey of these ships is also very interesting, this is even more the case with their "Nau-" (upstream) or mountain journey, as the old guild ceremonial of the Donauperchen is still practiced today, especially on the "Nauffahrt". This, like all its customs, is also ancient and has retained many mythical features originating from paganism.

Since the introduction of steamers, the old "Honauen" or "Hohenauen",\*) as the ship trains are called against the current, only

\*) The emphasis is on the "nau"; i.e. Ho-nau, Hohe-nau.

The load is now limited to one ship, whereas in the past a Hohenau consisted of four ships roped together. The total load of such a Hohenau was 6000 hundredweight, divided into four ships according to experience. Each of the ships was submerged 4 1/2 feet or 9 G'minde deep and the total Hohenau required a force of twenty pairs of heavy stallions, so-called "Pinzgauer", which were still harnessed by an equal number of draught oxen at particularly raging points, such as in whirlpools or eddies. Even the first steamboats were still harnessed with twenty or more pairs of oxen in the whirlpool; only the newer steamboats are able to navigate these rapids independently without the harness.

As for such an old Hohenau, it was strictly organized according to ancient custom, and was divided from the outset into two parts, the horse train and the boat train.

The cavalcade was under the control of the three chief horsemen, who were called "Merigamer"\*) in the local language. The first was, or rather still is today, called the "outrider", the second "Afterrider", and the third "Marstaller". Each of these three had a servant, called a "Bock", who was therefore called Vorbock, Afterbock or Marstallbock. - The fore rider was in command of all the merigamers and was directly under the command of the "Hohenauserstaler" who commanded the Hohenau and was in the bow of the first ship. The after-rider rode the last horse in the Zwiesel, into which the towing rope was shorn. This was, of course, the heaviest stallion in the train. As the after rider was the last in the cavalcade and had all the riders in front of him, he was also the one who drove the train and determined its speed. All the other necessary riders were called "Scharreiter" and were divided into "Fähnlein", each with three riders. The first of the "Schar riders" was (and still is) the "Hundsseilrider". The "Marstaller" and his "Marstallerbock" were responsible for feeding the horses during the journey.

From the Zwiesel, in which the horse of the after-rider went, the rope now ran back to the ships. However, as it was too long not to sink into the water in front of the ships due to its own weight, it rested on three small barges before it reached the first large ship. These first three barges

\*) Meri = Mähre = horse; gam - man (bridegroom - bridesman) thus, horse man.

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(also known as Klobenzillen, Seilplätten) were each manned by a Ferchen, the "Vorfahrer", the "Mitterfahrer" and the "Vornuasahrer". Only now did the first and largest ship follow, the actual "Hohenau", which gave the whole train of ships its name.

This ship had loaded 1750 hundredweights. At the front of the Hohenau's wreath stood the Hohenauseßtaler with the launching hull and commanded the entire train. The crew of this ship consisted of the "rope carrier", the "helmsman", the "assistant helmsman", the "Koch", the "Bruckknecht" and the "Seilbiegler", along with the other unnamed crew. However, the "Bruckknecht" and the "Seilbiegler" were in the small ship that ran alongside the Hohenau and was called the "Seilmutzen" because it had to carry the rope. The bruck servant had the rope to hand, which the rope bender knotted.

These two had (and still have today) a very life-threatening service, since especially the "changing" of the rope, namely when the horse-drawn train is transferred to the other bank, or the hauling rope is to be laid at a different angle to the keel line of the ship, requires great skill and great caution. When "changing" the rope, it often swings out unpredictably or throws loops, and it is not uncommon for it to cut off a foot or even kill someone.

The second ship, which now followed in tow of the Hohenau, was the "Hoheuaunebenbeier", which carried a cargo of 1450 hundredweights. Its crew consisted of the "Nebenbeisahrer" in the crane, the "Hilfssteuerer", the "Hangersknecht" on the rope and the "Wasserer"; at the stern of this ship hung the "Kuchelzille", the cook's vehicle.

These first two ships formed the front section of the platoon, followed by the rear section at the "Schwemmerseil", from where it was called the "Schwemmer". This also consisted of two ships. The first of these two was loaded with 1550 cents and was called the "Schwemm Hohenauer". Its crew consisted of the "Schwemmcrseßtaler", the "Schwemmer-bruckknecht" and the "Schwemmersteuerer".

The fourth and last ship, the "Schwemmernebenbeier" with 1250 hundredweights of cargo, was served by the "Schwemmernebenbeier" and the "Schwemmerhängersknecht", who was also the "Krümer" or the "lost man". On the eighth,

this last ship had a large barge, the so-called "Hafergaiß", in which the oats for the horses were loaded.

It is self-evident that such a multi-layered train also had to develop a peculiar ceremonial for departure, and this is still in full swing today, when the "Hohenau" consists of only one ship.

The horses are already harnessed and mounted when the rope bearer, who comes from Hohenau with the Seilmutzen, brings a stone jug, the so-called "Plutzer"\*) full of wine and fills a small cup with it. The outrider now stops his horse, and the rope bearer greets him with the following words: "Bring you the holy blessing of St. John." He then drinks the cup empty except for a small amount, which he now pours out by swinging his arm backwards over his head. The forerunner now empties the freshly filled cup, as the rope bearer did before, and pours the rest of the cup behind him over his head. Then he hands the cup back, saying! "In God's name, the holy blessing of St. John." This is how each of the horsemen does it, until the horseman after him takes the last drink from the Merigamer. Then the Scharreiter says: "In God's name we ride."

And now the rope is reeved into the two-point hitch of the after-horse, and the rope carrier drives back to the Hohenauer, constantly throwing out the rope with the side sockets, where he hands the rope over to the Hohenauseßtaler, who in turn now reeves it into the "Schwing" and gives the signal to depart.

Now the rope bearer hands the wine plaster to the Hohenau-Seßtaler, who now drinks the St. John's blessing to the rope bearer, observing the same ceremony as the rope bearer did to the horsemen. The rope bearer now drinks to the Bruckknecht, the latter to the Seilbiegler and the latter to the other Ferchen in exact order of rank, all of whom also pour the last drop over their heads to the back.

In spring, when the crews for the current year are assembled and the first voyage sets sail, every Ferch is careful not to fall overboard, because the "first one" always drowns; his replacement is already on board, that's the lost man. One is at the

\*) This is a very pot-bellied stone jug with a narrow, short neck, handle and narrow base

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Rescuing this "first", even today, is still very slow and always comes too late. The fact that one even gives the appearance of wanting to help is only for the sake of being able to justify oneself to the authorities; "I did everything I could, but it just wasn't possible!" In the old days, when the courts were not as inquisitive as they are today, and took it for granted that every now and then someone would die from drinking too much water, there was no pretense of trying to save him; even the hand was not extended to the "first one" to help him, he was left to drown quietly, and the words of consolation were called out to him: "Nandl (Ferdinand) give yourself, the Lord will have it no other way." This was the farewell salute to the victim that the river had chosen for itself, the farewell salute that still resounds today if there are no inconvenient witnesses nearby.

But the others shout: "Catch the hat and let the rogue run!" One must have the hat of the drowned man, even at the risk of one's life it is taken out of the water, to be nailed to the front of the "Hohenau".

The cry of "Nandl" or "Jagkhel give yourself!" has therefore become a term of endearment towards the little fox, which was once bloody serious and has not lost much of this seriousness even today.

Only someone who has sailed the Danube for a long time in a rowing boat, who has caroused with the ferries in the ferry hostels, who has been with the ferries to rescue ferries, who has been rescued from water distress by the ferries themselves, can judge this; but not someone who yawns and shouts "wildly romantic" on board the Ariadne and looks up in the "Danube Guide" whether the next point of the river shows one or more asterisks, so that he can measure the degree of his "admiration of nature" accordingly.

This is just by the way.

When the Hohenau has the three Danube cataracts, the eddy, the whirlpool and the Greiner gush, happily behind it, and a newly taken ferry, a so-called "stinker", is on its first journey, it is baptized by the "Nauferch", the leader of the fine train, and receives its "nickname", which remains with it permanently. Who wouldn't think of the christening of the Neptune at the equator?

At the next "Land", the Nauferch has to pay the stinker he has baptized a few glasses of wine, of which he gives him the first one

to confirm the baptism and the nickname, whereupon the waitress places a bouquet of flowers on the hat of the person being baptized. A similar custom also prevailed in Bavaria after passing through the "Strum" next to the Greiffenstein monastery.

From all these customs of the Donauferchen, as from other less obvious traits, ancient pagan sacrificial and consecration customs emerge quite openly, which hardly need any interpretation.

Who would find it strange that "Lady Isa" was worshipped in the form of a ship that is still remembered by the people today? But more about that later.

Such a drowning of the "First" is historically mentioned from the year 1739, in which year Elector Karl Albrecht of Bavaria did his "most pleasurable rafting", as the diary kept about it literally reports:

"Enclosed after is also the 17. of the same (17. July 1739) hereafter between the city of Passau "and the Hochstift Passau; Castle Neuburg on the Ahnn, a forerunner of the penultimate train with 2 ship's horses for one misstep slipped in into the Ahnn river and miserably drowned, Without being able to provide any help in this regard, it would have been necessary to save the rest of the crew and horses from the imminent and equal danger in time, in order to prevent the ship from being pulled away: In that, praise to God, the lead ship, which had to be returned, was soon brought back to the port, so that those and those of the court servants who were in the greatest fear and in the greatest danger were brought to safety. Therefore, we do not want to refrain from sending a message to the memory of this incident."

Well, the man could have been saved, but the rope had to be cut off. In such a case, the anchor is dropped and the ship, wherever it is, stands firm and safe. Moreover, these very ships were surplus to requirements, almost double manned, and there were more than enough idle hands on them to save - yes! if one had wanted to save! The forerunner was the "first" of this train of ships and, according to ancient custom, was not allowed to be rescued.

The court historiographer, of course, did not know this, because no one told him, and therefore wrote in his diary what it was thought good to tell him about this case; dictum scriptum.

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But as it is the nature of the German and therefore also the nature of his mythology that next to the most terrible seriousness the most goblin-like joke hops along, so the human sacrifice, which the Strom-nix relentlessly demands, is precisely this sacrifice that has also become a joke, which of course expresses itself in a brutishly indelicate way.

The main cataracts, whirlpools and eddies, are regarded as the dwelling places of the Donau-nix, and these do not tolerate anything impure or sinful. In the past, those who felt themselves to be laden with evil would leave the ship there and only board it again once these whirlpools were behind them.

Even today, it is still a lot of fun for the Ferchen to ask the girls on the ship for their innocence; if the girl has not kept her innocence, then she has to redeem herself with a coin or leave the ship. The folk song: "Swabian Bavarian girls - Hurrah! - the boatman must drive" alludes covertly to this custom. However, it is understandable that such exams treat this delicate matter far less discreetly than the song; the Ferch has no idea of what is called 6lao4 gloves.

Even if we never talk about the Nix directly, but only about the "Strom" (stream), it is still always the Nix or the Nixe that is meant, and only the condemnations of this ineradicable and barbaric Ferchen superstition by church and court have made the Ferchen cautious. He therefore speaks of the stream and means the Nix.

The dwelling place of the mermaid is always remembered in the cataracts - in the Danube especially in the whirlpool and eddy - which is why fishing is also forbidden in such waters, as many fishing regulations testify. The sanctuary of God must not be desecrated by the greed of man, and just as the sanctuary became a sanctuary for the fleeing man, so too the fleeing animal seeking protection at the sanctuary of the deity should be pacified there from its persecutors.

The fact that the eddies and whirlpools of the Danube must have been a highly sacred place of salvation is attested - as already mentioned - by the pilgrimage site of St. Nicola, which is held in high esteem by Ferchen, and of which Merian already writes in his topography of 1677: "But after" one has passed through (whirlpools and eddies), St. Niclas Chapel stands on a mountain, and a house four by it, and a man with St. Niclas' image drives up, to whom everyone gives alms at will."

However, this "sacrificial St. Nicola" is the pre-Christian Nikuz, the mermaid father, from whose name Nichus, Nichusja, i.e. Nix and Nixe were formed. However, this mermaid father is again connected with the father of the gods Wuotan, indeed, he even merges with him, just as all sub- and secondary deities always lead back to the highest pair of gods Wuotan and Frouwa.

For comparison and confirmation of this word, it is only necessary to recall the parallel results of the treatises on "Aggstein" and "St. Christopher" of this book.

But even as a ghost, this Strom-nix has not been forgotten and is even documented. The "gray monk" who in 1045 threatened Bishop Baturich of Würzburg (according to others, Bishop Bruno of Regensburg) so terribly from the Hausstein above the vortex when he was sailing down the Danube with Emperor Henry St. was the very same Nikuz, the old Donau-nix.

We also commemorated the Lorelei legend of the Danube at Aggstein, where we showed the complete correspondence with the Rhine legend, and only complained that the people had forgotten the name of the mermaid and called her "the madwoman of Aggstein" for short. Like the Lorelei, she also sits on the rock, combing her golden hair, singing her enchanting songs while she weaves roses into her hair. Woe betide the skipper who hears her voluptuous love song; he forgets the rudder and the current and sinks with his vessel in the gurgling surf, embraced and kissed to death by the white arms of the man-stealing mad mermaid.

The mothers of the wives, who have been brought in by the male Nix to assist the Nix in childbirth, must be very careful not to let themselves be lured by the accumulated treasures that the Nix offers them. Woe betide them if they take more than men are wont to pay them for such services. The girl who dances with the mermaid must be very careful that the "green tooth" does not kidnap her, just like the man who makes the mermaid dance. As delightful as the mermaid's stalks are, bathing in the moonlight as well as in the sun's glow on the shore or sitting on the nearby trees or rocks, the young man must keep his heart, for rarely does such love lead to a happy destination. He must either lose his life if he allows himself to be pulled beneath the waves, or the wave girl will be killed by her own mermaid parents when they discover the sweet secret. The mermaids are no less cruel to their own kind than they are to humans. Many



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Legends tell how a jet of blood then rose up and reddened the whole water; then the lovers or one of them had to forfeit their lives; rarely, instead of blood, milk, an apple or a flower rises up as a favorable sign.

A flattening of the mermaid belief from Christian times is the popular opinion that the female mermaids were seduced human children, which is why they often try to save people, even at the risk of their own lives, before the mermaid abducts them to the deep. However, this opinion is a misunderstood development of the mermaid myth and has no mythological basis.

But just as the myth of the male Nix in Nikuz touches that of Wuotan and merges into it, the female mermaid myth leads via Isa, the mermaid queen, to that of Frouwa, the queen of heaven. Just as Tacitus describes the cult of the goddess Nerthus, whom he explicitly mentions as the earth mother, just as he speaks of the cult of "Isis", just as the cult of Isa was celebrated here in the land. And the most prominent place of worship on the Danube, and most probably even the one mentioned by Tacitus, was our Ip-Isa, the Roman "ad pontem Ises" our today's Ybbs.

The symbol of the goddess was a vehicle, half ship, half chariot, in which she traveled through the lands at the time when the ice cleared the river and the snow cleared the road. She was honored with festivities, music and dancing, feasting and revelry, all metal, i.e. every weapon, was locked up, no war was started or continued, only happy people wanted to see the goddess and make her happy. Engagements and weddings took place under her protection, and her festival has been called Carnival to this day, after her symbol\*), the chariot-ship, the Car-Naval.

This procession of the chariot ship is still common today in many places in Austria, especially in the Austrian Alpine countries, where several places have been celebrating a joint ceremony for ages, and the form and ritual do not differ at all.

The vehicle of the goddess is always a chariot decorated as a ship, with hooded figures sitting on it, behind which, however, there are only distorted images of old folk memories. Incidentally, it should be mentioned that it was precisely this chariot ship that Sebastian Brandt had in mind when he wrote his "Ship of Fools". More clearly

\*) Car = Karren, wagon; Naval = Navis, ship.

than the popular custom, folk legend preserved the memory of the celebration of the goddess.

From the many folk tales that commemorate the procession of the goddess with the ship, only one of the most characteristic may be mentioned here to show how the people still remember the procession of the goddess today.

It is said that not far from the high "Thor" or roof stone, the so-called Hartkogel, half an hour's walk from the village of Mitterndorf, a mountain consisting partly of bare rock and partly of dense forest, is the abode of the wild hunt, or wild hunter. These evil spirits ride through the air on a kind of ship-shaped sledge, which has a sharp edge like a plowshare. The draught animals are harnessed to evil maidservants who are more opposed to their masters than is proper, but the load consists of true devils, bad people and maidservants who died during the year and could not yet be harnessed because they can only be shod on Christmas Eve. At the end of the last century there lived a blacksmith in Mitterndorf called Stromer, an old fat drunkard. The wild goat came to him every Christmas Eve around eleven o'clock, unhitched, and now the blacksmith worked with the windows covered. There was howling and shouting, for he was repairing the horseshoes or shoes of the maids who were already in the train, but was fitting the new ones. They howled and whimpered miserably as he did this. When everything was finished, the cashier held out a bag full of money to the blacksmith and told him to take his wages, but the old Stromer was careful not to take more than he deserved, for he knew that otherwise the wild hunt would have taken him away at once.

The ship-like shape of the vehicle is very characteristic here. The plow, as well as the share of lazy maidservants.

Even more significant is another local legend from Ybbs, which Father Reginbald Möhner preserves for us in his book of travels through Austria at the time of the Thirty Years' War. He writes:

"9. Augusti anno 1635.

. . . . . and arrived at Ips in the evening. Ips is a shipping port and there is a toll. Outside the town on the water lies a

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Franciscan monastery, where I met my old acquaintance P. Fredericum di Soli. We spent the night together in the alehouse. After midnight and all night I heard a great noise, as if a Hohenau (boat train upstream) was coming up. I boldly asked in the morning whether it was also possible to hear them sailing in such darkness, but was told that they were ghosts."

So if we see here in Ybbs the ship of the goddess fabled, namely as a "ship's train", we see in the legends, which go more inland, the chariot ship prevailing, even entering into mythical relationships with the plow. This may serve as proof of how the service of all female (as well as male) deities flowed into one another and found its climax again and again in the supreme goddess, from whom it had emanated, serving a special personification.

It is impossible to overlook a highly significant feature that Tacitus tells us about the procession of the goddess Nerthus, and which would certainly also have been part of that of the woman Isa. The goddess traveled through the countryside in a chariot draped with cloth, and when she tired of her procession, she was driven back to her sacred lake. There the goddess was bathed, but the slaves who served her were devoured by the lake, for the sight of the gods was not granted to mortals.

However, this tradition, which has so far been underappreciated, provides the key to solving many mythological questions, and in particular the guideline for determining the divinity of one of the most famous of the legendary heroes, namely the explanation of Lohengrin.

Melusine was a mermaid and commanded her husband not to see her on certain days, otherwise she would have to separate from him forever. According to the well-known legend, he broke the commandment and the separation took place. Only years of penance reunited him with his beloved Melusine at the hour of his death through the mermaid's kiss of death.

The myth of Cupid and Psyche is similar. The latter had also transgressed the commandment to see her invisible lover; she surprised him in his sleep and he departed. Only in death - for this is depicted in the fairy tale, albeit concealed among the many atonements and purifications - only in death did Psyche reunite with the divorced man.

A kobold legend tells that there was a house spirit in a house who helped the maid in all things, but always remained invisible to her despite her most urgent requests. At last he promised to show himself to her if she would come to the cellar with two buckets of water. When she arrived, she saw a naked child lying there with two knives stuck crosswise into his chest. With a cry of horror, the curious woman collapsed. The goblin laughed and poured the two buckets of water she had brought over her head to cheer her up.

These few examples show that humans - as the service of Nerthus expressly states - are not allowed to see gods in their real form, and that the sight of gods was only granted to those consecrated to death. Thus the sacred lake swallowed the slaves of Nerthus, and only in death could Cupid reunite with Psyche, and the Count of Lusignan with Melusine. In the later kobold saga, this trait is still recognizable in a weakened form.

Lohengrin was also forced to leave Elsa after she asked him for his "Name and Kind". This trait shows his divine descent, which Richard Wagner knew very well, or at least suspected. The fact that Lohengrin thus steps out of the framework of the Graal saga is quite incidental; it is quite the same case as with Siegfried and Brunhilde in the Nibelungenlied. Lohengrin, too, came as an older mythical figure into a newer poem as a legendary figure; he was historicized like Tannhäuser.

Now, however, the swan that accompanies Lohengrin points to the water kingdom; he is therefore a mermaid, just as Melusine is a mermaid. Both appear to the human children who love them in an assumed illusory form and are only allowed to enjoy the brief happiness of love with humans in this form; if the condition imposed is transgressed, then they must part. This condition is not always linked to sight alone.

A man was once struck by a chestnut. He woke up and saw a downy feather lying on his chest. He quickly jumped up and plugged the keyhole of the parlor door. There sat a beautiful naked woman weeping on his bed and begged him not to refuse her exit, for it was the law with ghosts and spirits that they had to go out again from where they had slipped in. The man liked the woman, gave her clothes and lived happily with her for many years. Once he wanted to see if she could take on her feather form again,

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and pulled the stopper out of the keyhole. Then her clothes fell to a heap, and a sudden gust of wind drove the downy feather through the keyhole so quickly that the astonished man never had time to close it. She never came back and left him and the children she bore him behind, never to be seen again.

The downy feather is reminiscent of Frayas's swan's crest, and will certainly have taken the place of the trude in that legend. The contact between the swan - in the downy feather - and the Lohengrin saga is also recognizable in this saga.

But as a swan young dew, Fraya also comes into contact again with Frau Isa, the representative of the water kingdom, whereby Lohengrin's connection to it becomes ever clearer, for he too has already been recognized as related to the water kingdom through the water bird, the swan. For the time being, the name Lohengrin is probably open to interpretation, for even the old spelling "Lohengarein" must have been made quite unclear from a name that has already been handed down in a mutilated form. In this case, the name is also a minor matter. After all, Lohengrin is recognizable as a divine being who has relations to the water kingdom, and therefore falls into the category of manes.

Since Fro is a son of the Vanir Nord, i.e. a Van himself, who only later joined the ranks of the Aesir, we can think of his marriage to Gerda. Gerda is held captive by the winter giants; Elsa is also in dire straits at the hands of Telramund, from which Lohengrin rescues her. She marries the Swan Knight, just as Gerda takes the Sun Hero as her husband; both marriages are brief. Frö - as Balder - is killed; Lohengrin has to leave his beloved because she asks for his "name and kind". The fates of both couples are thus the same, only the reasons for the divorce are different. However, it should be emphasized that, contrary to all other divine brides, Elsa is not a divine being but a human child, and as such is regarded as the human progenitor of the Counts of Cleve, just as Melusine is the divine progenitor of the Counts of Lusignan, whereby the Cleve progenitor is of divine, but the Lusignan progenitor is of human descent.

Despite this difference in the contrast between divinity and humanity in both genealogies, they have the same mythical basis and form a different form of the genealogy of ancient royal dynasties, one of which we learned about from the Counts Wurmbrand. As there

the first Wurmbrand had turned out to be the Ostermann, namely Balder or Frö, who took a human-born woman as his wife in order to father a noble "Kotings-Geschlecht", so in these two legends a divine being appears paired with a human being for quite the same reasons. The union of a god, whether male or female, in love or marriage with a human-born being of the opposite sex, for the purpose of producing a higher tribe, naturally gives rise to a group of legends that differs from the other myths, which can only be loosely connected with this one, since the human-born spouse here must interfere with the further development of the deity towards eternity and rebirth through his finiteness.

Since no perfect analogies and parallels could be established, the Melusine and Lohengrin sagas had to be of Celtic origin in order to get rid of the inexplicable more easily.

Just as one naturally expects the end of the ancestor in the worm brand legend, because the first worm brand in the legend is humanly conceived, but the legend immediately appears incomplete if one recognizes the mythical ancestor as a god, because the myth tells us nothing about his departure from his wife, while his death is otherwise tacitly taken for granted, in those ancestral and heraldic legends which emphasize the divinity of the ancestor or ancestress, the parting of the immortal part of the ancestral couple must also be remembered, which had to take the place of the humanly necessary death.

Thus these myths only allow conclusions to be drawn about the nature of the divine being, the immortal part of the ancestral couple, while the development of the love of marriage, as well as the resolution of the covenant between God and man, is very different and not bound to any mythical model.

The worm-burning legend does not recognize the human progenitor, and since she forgot that the ancestor possessed divine nature, she also forgot to dissolve the marriage alliance. According to the nature of the legend, this may perhaps have been a rapture to earth, to which the name of the mountain behind the worm-builder, namely the "Hutberg", justified.

It is different in the "Melusine" and "Lohengrin" sagas.

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In both the divinity of one of the two spouses is unforgotten, in both the love relationship expands into a marriage bond. Since such a union cannot be dissolved by death, it must be brought about by a justifying cause, which naturally can only be the fault of the mortal party.

As already mentioned, this circumstance is the reason for the actually unmythical conclusion of the saga.

If in Wurmbrand we have mythically recognized the son of the sun (Balder, Ostermann), then Lohengrin is to be found as a Van, as the sun god who has risen from the sea, thus explained as Frö, who rises from the sea drawn by the swan and dives down again with the same animal. But since, according to the mythological rule, all personifications always lead back to Wuotan-Frouwa, there is no real difference here either, and all these ancestors prove to be rejuvenated figures of Wuotan-Frouwa in their conceptions as progenitors and progenitors of famous royal dynasties of Germanic prehistory.

Thus Lohengrin is first and foremost a Nix, then a Van, finally the northern son Frö, as the young sun god rising from the sea, and, as a further consequence, the youthful Wuotan himself; since as such he is immortal, his parting from the mortal woman must be a justified one, for otherwise he would have had to deify her, that is, confer immortality on her, for which German mythology knows no example. The Melusine legend offers exactly the same result in the opposite gender relationship, in that the mermaid Melusine develops in mythical extension into the woman Isa, who becomes the guardian of the fountain of youth, Lady Holda, and beyond this into the mother of the gods, Frouwa.

Therefore, the correct conclusion of the Melusine saga is the forbidden eavesdropping on Melusine, and that of the Lohengrin saga, the question of "Name and Kind", as Richard Wagner rightly emphasizes.

We have now reached the end of this "German mythological landscape" dedicated to the belief in mermaids and the cult of the Lady Isa. Especially in the characterization of the lower mermaid people, which is made possible by countless mermaid legends, a perfect picture of the personification of water in its flowing or standing state is presented, down to the smallest detail. It appears friendly, inviting to enjoyment, willing to serve and amiable, but capricious, even irascible, even cruel. With admiration we survey a highly developed poetic composition.

We see a rich poetic creative faculty flourishing here to its most fragrant bloom; with joyful amazement we survey this richly structured picture, which may serve us to confirm the unrivaled inwardness of the mind of our Germanic forefathers, to whom in this respect only one people of the old and the new world can be placed on an equal footing, and this one people are the ancient Persians, who are of one tribe with us, who are Aryans with us.



## St. Corona.



He who travels south from the old Vindomina on the venerable military road of the peoples, the more he slips out of the gray fold of the metropolitan fog, the more he sees the blue mountain range swinging above the brown-green plain, above the wine-green terrain in wide, blissful rows of rings, rising from the horizon like a fairy-tale formation rises in a wide ring of innumerable tops, peaks and pinnacles, some of them snow-covered, but all of them surrounded by the cool forest darkness.

But he who walks the road like a poet, who turns the page after slipping out of the foggy cloak of the big city, the fair blue cloak of Lady Säliden, no longer sees the horrors of the wild hunt for acquisition that rushes past him, no longer sees the devil of the present time, who no longer knows how to captivate even Dr. Johannes Faustus, because he is no longer Mephistopheles, no longer even a ghost called Auerhahn, like the one who seduces Christoph Wagner, but bears the genuinely realistic name: "Egoism."

The devil may have become invisible, and some scoffers deny his existence, but he has become far more diabolical than he was in



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Dr. Faust's time, in that he took full possession of man's inner being and abandoned his old name.

But the poet who walks this road cares little for such devilry, the nightingale flutes more sweetly for him, and the liquid gold in the Roman sparkles more refreshingly for such happy ones.

Hail, Lady Sælde! Under your banner wonderful, many a journey I did cheerfully!

And whoever feels like joining us on our hike, and whoever is not afraid to wear out one or two more pairs of soles than usual, should join our poet's journey into the blue; soon there will be someone who knows the way - even if it's Gotzwin of the Vilcinasaga, who knows the way and has already served us as a pathfinder when we hiked from Trident to Fritila Castle\*).

And whoever wanders through the beautiful "Ostarland" towards the blue mountains, escaping the dusty roads, will feel his heart expand at the sight of the approaching mountain splendor in its proud power and glory; all this ever-increasing grandeur will force itself into his senses so that his heart will almost stop beating.

The further away from the town, the further from the Iron Road, the more open the terrain becomes; waves of blue-dark forest alternate with light meadows and strips of golden fields, interrupted by vineyards with grapevines, in between individual farms, crumbling ruins or the church tower of a village.

If one has sharp eyes, then he may still look across the plain after sunrise; he may still see the tower of St. Stephen, which rises above the more than two-thousand-year-old sanctuary, which was formerly sacred to the Ase Frö, from which the "Stock - im - Eisen"\*\*\*), or he may look for the stone pillar on the horizon to the left and the same one to the right, both called the "Spinner on the Cross", both border pillars of the "Free seat of the holy Fehme of Rauhenstein", one near Vienna, the other near Wiener-Neustadt\*\*\*), and many a wandering memory will dawn on him, strengthening his mind and feet for today's journey.

But where the last edge of the plain blurs towards midday in the scent of indeterminable distance, the mountain rises mightily

\*) "Aut der Völkerheerstraße "

\*\*) Stand, Vindomina.

\*\*\*) See: Helenenthal and the holy Fehme on Rauhenstein.

Mountain after mountain, peak after peak, side by side and on top of each other, and you think you can see into all the basins and valleys, all the gorges and ravines that descend from all the peaks and ridges, walls and cones, where the chamois still graze in herds and the noble aar draws its circles.

Take another look, and take your fill, for soon the forest will have wrapped its dark, shadowy cloak around us; then we'll continue on forest paths, avoiding the road and the everyday world, which is not compatible with the sacred forest sanctuary!

Hail to the huntsman, even without the deadly weapon! A true huntsman does not always think of the gunshot, for his first duty is not to destroy but to protect the inhabitants of the forest, and to such a true huntsman, our huntsman's salute!

Our mostly untrodden paths lead over the mountains; map and compass are our guides. Down in the valleys the fruit ripens, the wine, on the slopes along the path that leads us to the mountain, dense bushes grow, and at the edge glow rose hips and ripen ineradicable blackberries. Behind us, the Vienna-Neustadt plain stretches out into the distance, bordered in the far east by the blue crests of the Leitha Mountains. The higher the path takes us, the wider the plain lies in front of us in the changing light of chasing clouds, showing us once again its fields and meadows, towns, villages and castles in a captivating picture. A brown crested lark hops along the path, and the lively song of the rock thrush can be heard from the bushes.

That was the farewell greeting.

Bell-like overhanging beech trees, resembling a layer of green cumulus cloud from afar, now take you up and let the curtain fall behind you; for no backward glance to the jingling bells and glittering glitter of the human world should disturb your sublime forest devotion.

Soon the forest floor rises on both sides, and you climb up a ditch towards a sparsely dripping stream, which, because of its youth, still lacks the language of murmuring; only your attentive ear can hear the soft whisper of individual droplets - It is the babbling of a mermaid child. Soon, however, the two mountain faces fall away more steeply towards you, not particularly high, but dense forest covers them, like their ridges and hollows. European beeches form the stand over long stretches, maples and scattered oaks and lime trees in other places. Dense, low scrub fills the clearings, and there the feathered birds chirp and chirp and trill and sing the feathered

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world, there crawl ants and the mighty stag beetle, and overhead the colorful butterflies flutter like condensed sunbeams. The ridges over which the compass now guides you do not offer great views, for the peaks are covered by the forest, but a secret light and darkness caresses your heart and senses, for the sanctuary of the high forest has now opened up before you.

Mighty, straight, columnar beech trees rise up from the rusty-brown, musty foliage through which your footsteps rustle. High up on the smooth, shaft-like trunks, colossal branches reach out at sharp angles, like the ribbed vaults of Gothic cathedrals, and support the mighty canopy of foliage, which only allows the sun's rays to glide down to the ground as multiple refracted reflections; rarely does your delighted eye catch sight of a sliver of sky blue barely the width of a hand. Here and there the woody yellow flower stems of the orchids peep out of the loose foliage, more rarely the brightly colored species; then the half-man-high fronds of ferns or other herbs waft around you, epheu climbs trunks and boulders, the dainty herb of the wild strawberry creeps along the ground, and the king of all forest plants, the noble woodruff, sways gracefully on its square shaft to offer you its forest greeting.

The robin and the noble finch, the black-winged shrike and the noble nightingale enliven this noble temple of Iduna with their never disharmonizing jumble of sounds, to which the woodpecker tirelessly beats the beat. The hike continues; past the rumpled bed of a deer, over the track of a boar, a herd of deer peers curiously at you with their clever lights, the agile squirrel hops from branch to branch, and all the animals show curiosity and a trusting nature, for they know very well that you have no gun barrel hanging from your armpit and that you have left your "forest man" at home. Nor do you think of powder and lead today; your chest expands in the golden green light of the resin-scented forest canopy, for: Forests and groves are also your temples, and you too call upon that unfathomable power under the name of your gods, which reveals itself to you - and to me - only in the noble forest sanctuary, at the great healing seat of the most sacred Mother Nature, in the most intimate forest devotion!

Such forest images hover around you on this multi-day hike, always the same, and yet again and again in the

most colorful change, manifold and yet always the same in the most enchanting beauty. Far away from the world, isolated from the forest, alone with yourself and your feelings, you have finally recognized the deep meaning of the myth, of finding the blue miracle flower, which opens the door to the hidden treasures, to the blissful golden hoard of primeval sacred forest teachings.

Then the mountain forest opens its wafting veil of green, and a view opens up that refreshes your soul.

The Hochschöpfung rises up before you, one of the most famous vantage points in the Vienna Woods, but at its foot the most smiling meadow carpet is spread out, and as if grouped by a landscape painter, the individual farmsteads lie scattered across the valley; between them the cattle bells and the bleating of the herds sound like the ringing of the little bell, the church of St. Corona.

A procession of pilgrims with crosses and flying church banners moves along the narrow, winding country road, and the simple hymn they sing with untrained voices is so powerful amidst the sounds of nature, the rustling of the forest, the sound of bells and herds, the chirping of crickets and birdsong.

The place was once, and sometimes still is today, called "zum heiligen Brunnen" (to the holy well); this caused reflection. The well, which appears to be set in a wooden box next to the church, which sits enthroned on a hill, is still valued today as a source of salvation. We encountered many such springs on our mythological expeditions, but the name of the saint? - Who is or who was the holy Corona, who replaced the good well woman Frouwa or Holle or Hulda here?

In front of the church there were vendors selling the usual wares of pilgrimage churches; I noticed a thin booklet that promised me information, which I immediately bought for several kreuzer. And indeed it did not deceive me, for on its title page it read as follows:

"Nine-day devotion to the holy Corona. Znaim, printed and published by M. F. Lenk. Printed in this year."

A wretched woodcut depicting the torture of St. Corona is also printed on the title page. The half-dressed martyr is bound by her feet to a palm tree and by her hands to another palm tree, while a double rope is wound around her body, which is tied to two winches, each of which is tied to the other.

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is served by many men. Hovering from above in an aureole is an angel downward wearing two tiered crowns.

The scene is somewhat unclear, but the "Preface" provides the desired clarification. As this is by no means a critique, only that which is useful to our purpose is taken verbatim from this "Preface"; everything else, however, is mildly shrouded in silence. This booklet is unfortunately not as detailed as that of the "Calling of the Saint Christophorus";\*) it is far more meagre than the latter, and probably only the remainder of a once more detailed magic recipe. The censorship may have deleted most of it, and especially for our purposes the most interesting; nevertheless, what remains is a pointer for our research, which is considerably furthered by the parallel with the "Calling of the Saint Christophorus".

After instructions on how to initiate and carry out the nine-day devotion, the "Preface" continues:

. . . . that God may send you the holy corona, that it may give you to open by the will of God. And in the night, when you want to go to sleep, say all the prayers by a consecrated wax light, and namely 9 days and nights in succession with great devotion and zeal, the holy Lady Corona will come to you in your sleep during these days or on the 9th day without fear. Then the holy Lady Corona comes to you in your sleep, without fear and shyness, sweetly and pleasantly as your prayer has worked, and leads you to reveal what you have desired, or she brings you to bed what you want, which she showed, then go and do it without shyness, and make a vow to the holy Corona, as long as you live, to celebrate her evening in honor of her, praying By and other good works, that she is praised and honored by you, has also often been tried and found right."

"St. Corona had been a captain's daughter under the emperorship of Antoni-Froh, who was the 9th in 1610\*\*)

See: "St. Christopher".

With all respect which has to be paid to the stupidity of such "Sudler" as that of the "author" of this "nine-day devotion" it can hardly be assumed that he seriously cried in the year 1610; a printing error will have to be assumed here, so that the year would have to be taken for 161

Here, too, it should be emphasized that both church and state salt away such works of art, but that they are nevertheless ineradicable; here, too, it is true - already in the sections "Christopher" said in this regard.

and reigned for 19 years. St. Corona had a captain for a husband, a great man in Egiutisten (?), but escaped from him and was imprisoned because of the Christian faith, so that, because she remained steadfast, she was tied to 2 trees pulled together by force, when St. Corona was torn from the middle of each other, then half of her body remained hanging on each tree, the same day is celebrated on May 2nd."

The prayers themselves, which this booklet contains for the consolation of the poor and miserable, are far milder than those to St. Christopher, and, as I said, have in any case already been somewhat purified of the old magic; nevertheless, they still betray quite clearly their relationship to old incantations; for example, this passage:

". . . . Remember, O holy woman and martyr Corona how the dear God has created you so blessed and so graciously pardoned you, crowned you with the crown of glory for all eternity, crowned you so richly and thus as a threefold queen, and made you a heavenly treasurer, so that the poor people of the world may be able to enjoy a better life. . . . you should grant them and help them out of their need and poverty."

It goes on to say:

. . . . come to my aid; . . . . grant and favor me with merits, I fall at your feet and ask you as a treasurer and helper of all the poor and needy, would you help me out of my great need and poverty, and not with a sum of money, namely as much as would be useful and beneficial to my soul and body, or with a sum of money, as much as would be useful and beneficial for my soul and body, or with the right kind of money, which your beloved Spouse Jesus Christ has made you subject to and made . . . . you treasurer of the poor, because I am so poor and miserable . . . ."

After several more prayers, three "exhortations" to the saints followed, which were probably "invocations" in the past, of which this passage in the second exhortation is significant:

. . . . exhort thee (formerly: adjure thee) by thy great torture and torment, which thou hast suffered, between two trees drawn together, to the top of which thy holy hands and feet were bound, and thereupon were forcibly let down and thrust up, and all thy limbs were torn with great torture, torment and bloodshed because of the great love of God, I beseech thee etc."

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The third reminder reads:

. . . . . and you have been given power by God over the treasures of the whole world, and whoever asks you . . . . . you have power to give temporal goods to the poor and needy, so that you may also give me to the poor and needy etc. . . . . I ask you. . . . . give and lend me such a gold coin or a temporal good, if not against my salvation for the need of my body and the salvation of my soul."

The end of the booklet forms the "banishing", "After grace received from the spirit".

The most important places of this "spiritual thanksgiving" are the following sentences:

. . . . . but now I promise, . . . . . that I will not use the grace I have received badly . . . . ." - ". . . . . But I command you, you good and willing spirit, and order you to return to your proper place, which God has ordained for you, and in joy and good will without turmoil and harm to my body and soul, may the Most Holy Trinity help me to do so. "

This is the content of the booklet, and the result is as follows:

Like St. Christopher, St. Corona is regarded as a giver of treasures, and since she was torn apart in the air, the treasures in the air are subject to her, just as those in the water are subject to him. She is also accompanied by a spirit, like the latter; but just as the latter is a water spirit (the great sea spirit), so - although not named - the "good-willing spirit" in St. Corona's retinue is probably an air or fire spirit. In order to avoid tedious digressions, this spirit is immediately referred to as the well-known "gold or money dragon", which is none other than lightning itself.

The pagan myth behind the popular, not ecclesiastical, belief in St. Corona is therefore a thunderstorm myth, and one that belongs to the spring cult, as the festival on May 2, after the gods' wedding was commemorated on Walpurgis Night on May 1. It is curious that the emperor is called "Antoni-Froh"; Frö, however, is the young sun god who had just married Gerda.

The tearing in the air is the tearing of the thundercloud by the lightning, and the blessing that the thundercloud gives is also the rain that lets the seed slumbering in the earth germinate in spring. The treasure gift of Corona is therefore very

simply recognized as the fair goddess of spring, and since she is called the threefold queen, she took the place of the female three, namely the trinity: Fraya, Frouwa, Helia.

This also makes their place of salvation on the hill (Hutberg) next to the holy well clear, since water is the symbol of eternity and rebirth.

The church of St. Corona was only built and provided with a priest by Emperor Charles VI in 1722, but an altar to St. Corona was already mentioned in a document in 1444, which had been rebuilt in the ancient wooden chapel there. Despite this, the old place name "zum heiligen Brunnen" has remained in the vernacular alongside the official "St. Corona".

The popular belief in St. Corona is, as already mentioned, far milder than that in St. Christopher, and therefore also more widespread than the latter. It is linked to the belief in the "Donnerkelle" and the "Sternsteine" are closely linked, and numerous legends tell of farmers still living today who owe their wealth to the "Golddrachen" (gold dragon), which throws the sacks of gold into the chimney at night.

Anzengruber used this folk belief with wonderful skill in his charming novella "Der Sternsteinhof". The "star stone" is a meteor that the farmer had walled into the foundation wall of his farm as a talisman, to which he ascribes all blessings, and which he then, when he is at odds with his daughter-in-law, now the star stone farmer's wife, wants to dig up again at night in order to take the blessing from the farm.

In Bavaria, in the village of Koppenwal, there are two churches, one of which is also dedicated to St. Corona. It is customary there for pilgrims to sleep by the altar stone during devotions in order to be spared the pain of the cross during the harvest. This further points to the saint's relation to agriculture, and since the blessing she bestows is related to the fertilization of the treasure that lies dormant as seed in the earth, since her relation to the spring weather has emerged, it is no longer difficult to recognize her as a special personification of the female three, namely as the German harvest goddess Sibia, the wife of the thunderer Donar.

But now the "benevolent" spirit accompanying them has also been found, the friendly peasant god Donar, who, as a fiery dragon, bestows blessings on the man of the land in lightning and falling meteors.



Nevertheless, the poor and the oppressed, with cross and bunting, with bells ringing and birds singing, may they wade to St. Corona singing their hymns; may they be granted the heavenly comfort that they draw from hope, for if they were to wade to people, they would be denied even this hope that faith in "St. Corona" grants them.



## The Untersberg.



We had happily taken leave from the mild comforter in St. Corona with a refreshing minnetrink; it was a truly mythological seven-man drink, and the brand it was supposed to bear should have read "Hoop Biter".\*)

\* Lady Sälden's banner fluttered high above us, and even the most vinegary, sour drink could never corrode the happy hiking mood from our minds.

With a cheerful scholars' song on our lips, we left, and soon Iduna's veil of green again enveloped us in a pleasant coolness.

If you are a friend of lonely mountain valleys, if you don't long for the questionable pleasures of the city, if you are happy with sour wine and menus not always prepared by French chefs, but want to see dust-free greenery and the sunniest midsummer sky above you, then follow us on the lonely high paths that we have now set ourselves the task of treading.

\*) Joking names for bad wine. Seven men must hold the one who drinks a glass. Three men's wine: One holds the drinker, to whom the third pours the wine. Hoop biter: The wine bites them off the barrels.

We had conquered many a mountain slope, many a rocky ridge, always fleeing the road, the people, as if we had been banished to the wolves. We were surprised by the sunset, which followed us in search of us and finally caught sight of us through the gaping cracks in the walls of the high Araberg ruins.

Then it was time to flee from the chasing night. In Furth, we were overtaken by it, and no amount of resistance helped; even our bodies craved the kitchen, the cellar and the cozy camp.

The mists are still circling around the high forest mountains, they are still chasing through the air like Frö's ship, glowing with the morning greeting of the awakening sun, then you have time to put your hat on your right ear and leave the dwellings of men, for now the soul's need demands to soar like the lark to revel in the higher ether of the glorious mountain world!

You must now guide your steps through the Steinwandklamm gorge, through the proud rocky alley between the high walls, over into the Laimweggraben, until you reach a mighty stone crevice that leads into the rock like a gate. Mossy boulders and scree block the entrance, and if you force your way through the ivy, through the brambles and juniper bushes into the crevice, you will see the peeping owl with its blinking lights, you will hear the rushing and roaring of earthly waters, for you are standing before the source of the Mira, which gushes forth here from the Untersberg's womb as a mighty mountain stream.

You must know that you are standing here in front of the entrance to the underworld; the Untersberg is a "hollow mountain", its caves are filled with water, and the Mira is their outflow. But that is not all. A sunken emperor sits enchanted inside with all his armies, men and coats of arms; he sleeps in front of his stone table and only blinks his eyes if you have the heart to reach him, which is not as easy as eating cheese. But the "sunken emperor" doesn't always sleep, sometimes he rides out with a terrible tosm, and then you'll have to hurry if you don't want to run straight into his path. All the jackdaws and hooded crows, all the little owls and boohoos around are evil spirits, just look at their evil eyes and how they roll the big lights sparkling.

If you then follow the valley up to its end, you will find yourself in a wild rocky cirque. Rock rubble all around is overgrown with friendly fir greenery; ferns, mullein and

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Juniper bushes sway between the stone debris, above which a pair of falcons circles. A rocky mountain path leads you over to the rocky crown of the Kirchwaldberg, and from there along the rocky ridge, then over drifts to the Untersberg, which stands close in front of you. But the path up there to the Wallfahrtskirche, which sits enthroned 1165 meters above the mirror of the Adriatic Sea, is arduous. The miraculous image is an inconspicuous wax statue, which is the destination of many pilgrimages, especially by mountain people. The path to the summit is still steep from here. It used to be covered by a high forest; today you walk over decaying tree trunks and half-decayed, fallen jungle trees, between high crowns, because most of the forest has disappeared.

"To gain a pasture to raise livestock", say wise people and smile wistfully, because they "don't want to say" that this cutting down is actually an outrage against the forest. - The ringing and bells of the grazing cattle can be heard, your ear can hear the bellowing and bleating, but the certainty dawns on you that proper thinning would have been more expedient than cutting down.

But when you stand on the bare summit of the Untersberg, which is 1341 meters above sea level, your heart expands and you surprise yourself with a cheerful "Juhschroa."

But it is also after that!

At first, when you find yourself here in the clouds above the teeming and swirling of the smaller mountain world and your gaze sweeps round and round over all the majesty and beauty, you feel as if the old emperor had not betrayed such bad taste in choosing this very mountain as his Tusculum; indeed, you even feel a slight touch of envy, for the thought flashed through your mind that the old gentleman down there might well have already slept off to give you his sleeping chair. How pleasant it would be to dream there, for a whole century! Would we like the world better then than we do today, or would we be able to do as the old emperor did and say with a wink: "Another hundred years!"

That must be the right thing to do; why else would the lost emperor not want to leave his den, why else would he be so furious when he goes out, just to get back home quickly and continue sleeping? If he liked it up here, he would certainly have no desire to return to the mountain!

But if you chase away such mischievous joking from your senses and look with laughing eyes into the laughing nature of God all around you, your gaze will be captivated by a mighty mountain picture as you look towards midday. In front of you, you think you can throw a stone across, the Schneeberg rises on a broad ledge up to 2075 meters above sea level. Its precipices and precipices are sharply cut, such as the broad rift that seems to drop almost vertically into the Buchbergerthal. Behind the Schneeberg's shoulder, to your right, the teeth and spikes of the Rax and the sharply marked crevice of the Schneealm peer over like single sharp teeth, then the torn ridge of the Gippelmauer and the cliffy Göller. Then, like a dark wall, the Veitsch and at the very back the massif of the Schwabengruppe. Further into the sunset, the mountain world appears to you like a wave of stone; proud peaks, the Dürrenstein and the sharp peak of the Oetscher, the Hochalpe and the Reisalpc, line up in and over each other, and there, where your view is able to glide out through the confused mountain wilderness into the flat country, you can see St. Pölten, Schönbrunn, and the Hungarian lowlands blurring in the mist. After sunrise, your indulgent gaze floods over countless hilltops and hills as far as the Neu städter Ebene, and to the north, the long and broad chain of the Vienna Woods. But first the deep views down from the narrow ridge of the summit into the mountains in front and their ridges and ditches, with their forests and valleys and the glittering silver threads, the mountain streams!

From here, your gaze penetrates far into the Styrian countryside, and eastwards into Hungary and northwards across the border into the land from which the Quadi came, but the haze of your gaze hinders your distant flight and you are unable to gauge where the border of the horizon melts into blue pleasure.

And up there you may now look around to see which of the thirty-two lines of the compass rose your feet should carry you to; over to the Schneeberg, where you will find an inn in the rocky solitude of the high valley, where you can dream away several days with a hearty drink and snack, where you can watch figures approach and disappear, led by the resin-scented evening breeze, figures to condense as you could hardly have dreamed of; You may also stroll along the ridge, over to the Gippel or Göller, or down to the lovely Gutenstein, through the Matzinggraben, where

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the mossy sacrificial stone and the three spindle stones on the edge of the Matzinghöhe, venerable monuments of ancient northern sanctuaries. You may also turn your steps back to the old Vindomina, whose St. Stephen's Tower some people claim to have seen from up there, but that remains to be seen. The main ridge of the mountain range, whose highest peak carries you, surges mightily towards you, and it lingers just as mightily in the direction of midnight, and that is where your heart draws you after all. There lies the mighty river gate between the Zeizzo Mountains and the Moon Forest; the beautiful blue Danube flows out of this rocky gate to greet the old, cheerful Wim, the same Danube that is suckled from all the mountains, the heads of which you can see here in countless numbers, from the countless springs, fountains and streams that rise in the lonely high valleys, the high mountains far away from the world, surrounded by ruins.

But who was that old emperor who down there so blissfully who dreams, and who runs about so wildly in the valleys and sometimes also in the mountains when he stops for an exit, because he sees things that do not seem pleasant to him, otherwise he would be much gentler, because pleasant things rarely force one to frenzy; so who was that sunken emperor, do you want to know, dear friend? Yes, who would know how to tell! Some suppose it was Emperor Charles; but which of the Charles they do not know; many think of the great Saxon butcher.

But he could hardly have enjoyed such popular favor here in this country, considering that not far from here lay the Wurmgartm, where the Kotings of Wurmbrand sat on the Wurmhof, who were hardly Karl's friends; neither they nor their shield companions, who secretly defied here in the corners of the Alps.

It is far more likely that this prayer would have been said at the circling methorn, with a powerful core curse on Karl, than a frumb blessing. But the prayer reads as follows:

"Helli Krotti Wudana, ilp oks un osken Pana Witekina ok Kelta of den aiskena Karel; vi den Slaktenera; ik kif ti un Ur un two Scapa, un tat Rof. Ik slakte ti all fanka up tinen iliken Artisberka."

In today's German, this would read something like this:

"Holy, great Wuotan, help us and our lord Wittekind, likewise the Kelta against the shameful Karl. Fie on the butcher! (slaktenera). I give you a bull (Ur) and two sheep, and

the people; I will slaughter all the prisoners on your holy Harz Mountains."

This formula of a Saxon prayer against Karl, which is preserved in the archives at Goslar\*), speaks of the Harzberg; but a similar one may also have spoken of the Untersberg here. If we remember the results of our hike via the Wurmhof and Wurmgarten to Wurmbrand, especially with regard to the bull cult, the use of this Saxon prayer will hardly seem strange any more.

We also know that prisoners of war were sacrificed to the gods, and we know that many serfs and servants voluntarily followed mighty male masters to their deaths because they thought they were going to heaven with their masters; nor did any of them want to be the last to be sacrificed. In the line of sacrificial death, they followed their master to Valhalla through the "ringed gate", which opened of its own accord to the procession, but also closed again by itself, rattling, and cut off the heel of the last one, which is why the last one always limped. A despised man who was just good enough for the "limping one" was therefore always chosen as the last victim.

This is where the myth of the gods meets the cult of the dead.

We have shown in many examples that the gods spend the times of winter in the Hut-, the Fene- (Venus-) the Wuotans- mountains, that they move into the mountains at the turn of summer and come out again at the turn of winter. The same applies to people after their death; they sleep in the grave, awaiting resurrection in the rebirth. But the dead also leave their graves as ghosts, and even such dead people wander through the land like the wild hunter following the limping man; indeed, often the god can hardly be distinguished from the man. Of course, it is said that Wuotan is historicized in Friedrich Rotbart, the Rodensteiner, the various Karlen, etc., but nowhere can the line be drawn with certainty. Wherever Christian rulers are concerned, as in these examples, one can certainly infer a mythical background, namely Wuotan or one of his asm, but hardly in the case of such "Leeberge", which demonstrably served as burial mounds, but where the name of the person buried there is not known.

\*) Published in Hannöv. Magz. Thl. 26. page 484.

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forgotten, or at best echoes darkly and mutilated in legends or place names.

It is different with the "Untersbergen", of which there are several. Their very name refers to them, and the legends also testify to them as places of the underworld, as abodes of the deceased in their nature as "disembodied souls", as which they went to Wuotan; as is well known, Fraya took the "soulless bodies" into her Volkswang, the Totenanger or Freithof.

But since Wuotan spent one half of the year in Valhalla and the other in the Wuotan-, Hut- or Untersberg, but always had his army and shield comrades, the Einherier, gathered around him, it is obvious that the Untersberg was a Hutberg of Wuotan, and that the sunken emperor could be none other than the king of the gods himself. The entry and exit of the wild army in the summer twelfths at noon, as well as in the winter twelfths at midnight, can be explained in the same way. So you may put our Untersberg in the same row with the Kyffhäuser, with the Untersberg near Salzburg and with many other Wuotans- and Hutberge, as far as the German tongue sounds.

But, adventurous fellow traveler, look down into the forest cauldrons, how the shadows "lengthen", how the grounds begin to steam, to brew the mists for tomorrow; if I may advise you, take your leave and turn your heel towards the summit. In the unknown forest it is an unpleasant thing to be surprised by the night, especially if there is no comfortable shelter with a hearty drink and snack, with a clean bed for a restful night.

A fern frond to the hat, a resounding salute, and then happily down over the Mirafälle to Pernitz.



## Vindomina.



S. L. V. S.

Inasmuch as you, dear fellow traveler, after many a cheerful day of wandering, which strengthened your chest and heart, are willing to return to the "artificial caves" of your urban dwelling, inasmuch as you have emerged from the rocky realm of the Alps descending, crossing a blissful hilly country, you soon reach the shores of the great stony sea, whose rigid and yet again such lively tides and waves, so infinitely many of the beautiful rushing around you, that you would probably not be able to tire of being swayed by those waves, to let yourself be sung and told by its melodies from the dawn of time to the present. Yes, I would like to be like that highly honored ancestor of the Brunnstädt family, under the celebrated diadem

S. L. V. S.

fight victoriously for this sea of stone until my blessed hour of death, for that sea of stone into which I now lead you at the end of our wanderings, that sea of stone is my dear Vindomina, and

They love and conquer

my sacred adage for singing and saying.

Was there once the ancestor of the Brunnstädt family of the noble Waid I was busy at work when a cave opened up in the deep forest, inside of which sparkled a funny little body of water on which a mermaid swayed singing. She wore a shining diadem like a crown, from which the enigmatic letters S. L. V. S. shone like magical moonlight. The huntsman won Vielholde as his wife, and she became the progenitor of the family.

But the town of Schleusingen was built where the fountain stood. The man from Brunnstädt had probably read "Slus" and made Schleusingen out of it; but this was a misunderstanding, because the letters were to be understood in this way: "They love and conquer."

And if you don't shy away from the effort of climbing our mighty St. Stephen's Tower and look out from above between the



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twelve mighty pinnacles, each of which is a tower in itself, even though, seen from below, they hardly seem bigger than a toothpick, when you hover there at a dizzying height above the tangle of roofs, the swarm of ants in the streets, then your soul will rejoice, for you will see the cheerful vine wreath that a friendly god has wrapped around the fair Vindomina, you will see the blonde-gold harvest wreath that a gracious goddess has added to the vine wreath. Beyond you can see the mountains and valleys we have passed through. There the Hermannskogel with its Habsburgwarte rises out of the Zeizzoberge, and there the mighty Schneeberg Steinhaupt, at the foot of which lies the Helaklamm, in which the Helbrunnen murmurs its intoxicating songs. There stands the Untersberg, behind which the Wurm-garten stretches its sterile rocky gorge, and there the Brühl spreads out, and behind it the Helenenthal with all its sanctuaries winds its way to Merkenstein. On that barren hill there rises the legendary boundary pillar of St. Fehme, the old crumbling spinner on the cross.

And if you turn your eyes to the depths and look at the many towers and domes, you will recognize by the course of the streets how the city has grown in ever-widening rings, like the growth of a tree, over the millennia. In the millennia! Because it always makes me laugh when I hear it said in all seriousness that Vienna was founded in 1158 by Duke Heinrich Jasomirgott! As if you could found a city like an "International Bank of Exchange!" Then look down, dear friend, at the proud cathedral, the stone heart of Vienna, there at the dome of St. Peter's, there at the inconspicuous turret of St. Ruprecht's, and there, where the palace of the papal nunciature stands "at the court", but where the little church of St. Pancrasius once stood; but remember these places well, of which you shall "hear wonders said", and then - well then you too will laugh at the opinion that Vienna is no older than 732 years, just as you laughed no less at the assumption that it was founded at all.

Those four "sanctuaries", which were built long before the Avar apostles Conuald and Gisalrich in Vienna in the eighth century, which existed as "sanctuaries" of the cult of Wuotan, provide information about the existence of Vienna in far pre-Roman times, and moreover prove that even in these distant times Vienna was a - relatively -

important settlement, as it had four temple sites, a rare number.

In pagan times there were two, at most three, but usually only one place of healing; the presence of four places of worship, however, proves the importance of the ancient Vindomina, which the Romans later renamed Vindobona, as was their custom everywhere.

The good Vindomina already existed and flourished for an immeasurable period of time when its "first founder", Caesar Claudius, declared it a municipium between the years 4! and 54 and fortified it in the Roman manner. Vienna did not share the fate of Carnuntum, which was destroyed by the Quadi in 375, but saved itself, like many other municipium, e.g. Fafiana, today's Mautern on the Danube, survived the storms of the migration of peoples by placing itself under the protection of some Germanic army king, as is also proven by Fafiana. Thus it came into possession of the Babenberge with its Roman fortifications, and it was not until 1880 that the last Roman tower fell victim to the reorganization of Vienna - unfortunately, unfortunately! - fell victim to the reorganization of Vienna.

The Roman fortifications were a welcome base for the Germanic kings and dukes who alternately owned Vienna; the Viennese of those distant days, however, only changed masters, but they themselves remained in their houses, which they have continued to occupy from generation to generation to this day. The Huns and Avars did not destroy Vienna for quite the same reasons.

The Song of the Nibelungs, based on old folk tradition, has King Etzel marrying Chrimhilde in Vienna, just as it mentions the towns of Tulln, Traismauer, Pöchlarn, Hamburg and the market town of Melk. Just as popular tradition presents a relatively favorable picture of the rule of the Huns, history presents a similar picture of the rule of the Avars in the country; the Huns and Avars were by no means as bad as the Frankish historians would have us believe; they were not nearly as cruel as the "Great" Charlemagne.

It is historically attested that the Avars spared the towns and their inhabitants and knew how to protect and exploit their advantages for themselves. The farmer had to supply them with crops, horses and cattle; the townsman with weapons, clothes and jewelry; but otherwise they left citizens and farmers "undefeated", just as the Saxon Mirror reports of the Saxons. Likewise

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that Christian missionaries were able to travel unhindered through the Avar Empire. In fact, two of them, Conuald and Gisalrich, came to Vienna in the year 740 (i.e. 418 years before the "foundation!"), during the time of the Avars' rule, and consecrated a subterranean Wuotan shrine to a Christian church, namely St. Ruprecht, and undoubtedly also the Shrine to St. Stephen - but more about that later.

But Vienna has even older monuments to prove its uninterrupted existence after the Roman expulsion. Under the rule of the Rugians, the last Roman provincials left the country with the body of the last pillar of Romanity on the Danube, namely the body of St. Severin. But the Rugians did not assert themselves as masters of the Danube lands for long, as the more powerful Ostrogoths seized control. Jornandes explicitly mentions "Vindomina" as one of their cities. The Ostrogoths ruled the country until the year 530, but a curious monument has survived from this period, namely a tomb that was uncovered in 1662 during the construction of the Leopoldine wing of the Hofburg. It consisted of a sarcophagus that had been broken earlier, containing human bones mixed with earth and jumbled together, but with a small, elongated round box made of pure gold, closed at the top and bottom with lids. In the golden box was a second one made of ore, in this a third one made of silver, and finally in this a rolled-up gold leaf with the inscription in Gothic: "Nasci o Kut salida / ist jaindre Dasvina / menida ab Satana / ubl akranis manva / bi huam dindos knoba / Kabaugona."

In the translation into our German, this corresponds to the following words: "Save, O God! There is Dasvina sacrificed, whom the evil Satan threatened when she was ready to bear fruit; you, before whom the people's knees are bowed!"

This is therefore the grave of a Christian woman, namely the Goth Dasvina, who died in childbirth. This important monument, which probably dates from the middle of the fifth century, is also the only East Gothic monument to have been saved from literary history.

On the one hand, this shows that Vienna not only did not perish during the migration of peoples, but that it remained populated, that Margrave Leopold did not own a hunting lodge here

and could have\*) that the "Great" Charlemagne could not introduce Christianity here, since it had demonstrably existed for a long time before his invasion of the country.

It is not the purpose of this study to go into this further; the statement of the facts will suffice. It is thus proven that Vienna not only already existed in pre-Roman times, that it must have been very populous, that it has remained populated without interruption since its foundation, that it was never a desolate, abandoned city, and finally that it was already devoted to Christianity before Charlemagne's arrival, thus at least an age of over two thousand years must be assumed for the uninterrupted settlement of Vienna. How else could the layout of the ground and the property boundaries have been strictly preserved in the old lines, from which the growth of the city since prehistoric times can still be traced today, where the course of the Roman roads, their urban layout and the irregular streets of the old civil city still correspond completely with today's network of streets and alleys in old Vienna. A ruined city was never populated again, as can be seen in Klagenfurt next to the ruins of Virunum am Zollfelde, Salzburg next to Juvavia, Altenburg, Petronell and Hamburg next to Carnuntum and many other examples.

The ancient Germanic sanctuaries of Vindomina are as follows:

A. The sacred grove with the sanctuary of Frö, our present-day St. Stephen's Cathedral;

B. The Hutberg of the Hruoperaht, our St. Ruprecht's Church;

C. The sanctuary of Donar, currently St. Peter's Church;

D. The sanctuary of the winter Wuotan (Uller), where the Church of St. Pancras later rose, and perhaps a fifth place of worship;

E. Dedicated to Fraya or the female three, known today as the church "Maria-Stiegen" or "Maria am Gestade".

Let us now turn our attention to the decidedly most important shrine of the Germanic-pagan Vindomina, which, Christianized as St. Stephen's Cathedral, still maintains its primary status in our good old Vienna today and can thus claim the certainly venerable age of more than two millennia as a place of worship.

\*) According to an engraving on the Eszterhazy Palace in the Naglergasse, the Zagdhaus of Margrave Leopold in the ruins of Roman Vienna was supposed to have stood on the site of this palace.

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In order to understand how this could take place, however, it is necessary to take a closer look at the way in which the converts had initiated the process of turning the people away from paganism and towards Christianity. First of all, two fundamentally different periods of the Christianization of our country must be considered: the peaceful, pre-Carolingian period and the period of the fire and sword of Charlemagne and his successors. The first period dates back to the second century, when Christianity had already taken root among Marcus Aurelius' legions. The doctrine gradually spread, and Severin was particularly active in promoting it, although he should not really be presented as the apostle of the Danube Germans, as he was hostile to the Germans and friendly to the Romans, always protecting the latter against the moves of the German kings and working in their favor. After Severin, it was the Goths who, as zealous Christians, helped to spread the new faith more and more; even the Avars and Huns did not stand in the way of the preachers of the Gospel anywhere. But the second period of "conversion" began terribly with the Walloon Charles, which was staged by fire and sword according to Muhammed's example.

Charlemagne's goal was by no means Christianity, which was only a means to an end for him; he regarded it as an institution of the state, which he used and abused in a similar way to the way the modern state uses and abuses the police. That is why he cared little about conviction, but much more about formal acceptance through baptism, about the purely external ceremonial service, in order to keep the convert under control through priestly supervision. Anyone could think and believe what they wanted, provided they were baptized, went to church, paid their tithes willingly and punctually and kept the prescribed exercises and fasting days. That is why we find under Charles the previously unknown fact, which can only be explained by what has been said, that thousands were baptized in one day, but also - when they felt strong enough to do so - just as quickly, just as many became "apostate" again. In those sad days, baptism lost its sacred character and, under Charles, degenerated into a simple ceremony of submission.

But even in the first period of the Christianization of our people, the weapon was used, but more in the sense of an order than a real rape. The example of the felling of the Donar oak by Boniface may explain this.

The Germanic tribes were, after all, a warlike people and that is why they regarded their gods as defensive heroic ideals. It is too obvious to appear incomprehensible that a people accustomed to such proud gods could find little to applaud in a mild, suffering god of humility. For this reason, efforts were made to give the sufferer hanging on the cross a belligerent, warlike glow. Even today, the clergy, especially the monks, speak of "spiritual weapons"; they speak of "battles with the adversary", the "Antichrist"; of "nine legions of devils" and the "heavenly hosts". Indeed, the "Heliand", an Old Saxon poem of the ninth century, describes Jesus as an army king and depicts his apostles and disciples as the followers of such a king.

This warlike Christian god, carried by the "Ecclesia militans", who was preceded by the host of dear saints, the "Ecclesia triumphans" in cloud tops, now actually stormed the old Wuotans castles, which were surrounded by ramparts and moats like fortresses\*) and proceeded - factually and symbolically - exactly like a storming army king against a castle to be conquered. Once the castle of the gods had been conquered and taken, which understandably could not be done without swordplay and split skulls, the symbol of the defeated Aesir,\*\*) enthroned therein, was treated like a captured enemy king. The victorious church did not deny the existence of the old pagan god out of clever calculation, nor did it kill him, but it showed his powerlessness in the face of the seemingly powerless, yet strong crucified one. The Aesir, once so humiliated, was soon reduced to a demon, a devil.

But in order to offer the people the "Gentiles" now consecrated to the crucified In order to make the "church" more sympathetic, the church itself consecrated a saint whose legend showed similarities with the myth of the displaced pagan god, around which legendary figure the pagan myth, together with its belief in miracles, then entwined itself in the course of time, so that soon double figures arose in cult and custom, as we see with St. Leonhard, St. Christopher and Corona.

\*) See "German mythological monuments in the surroundings Vienna", "Eburodunum", "Schalaburg" etc.

\*\*) Images of gods, as the Greeks and Romans knew them, were foreign to the Germans; they only had symbols for their deities

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where church faith and popular belief are virtually at odds with each other.

St. Stephen stood in for Frū, who in popular belief and in fairy tales is called the "Horse Steffen", just as the people call our St. Stephen's Tower the "old Steffel".

The pagan symbol that was found now had to symbolically bear all the ignominy of a captured pagan king in order to dramatically display the powerlessness of defeated paganism. If it was a sacred weapon of the gods, it was broken. It almost seems as if the so-called "sacred lance" of the imperial regalia of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, which is currently preserved in the Imperial and Royal Treasury of the Vienna Hofburg, was such an ancient weapon of the gods, as it appears to have been broken several times and soldered with silver. The fact that it is attributed to St. Mauritius makes this assumption even more likely, since this saint often took the place of Wuotan. However, if such a symbol was of any other shape, it was thrown in front of the ramparts, overthrown there, displayed next to the entrance to the Christian church and heavily burdened with chains. If the symbol was finally a tree, then the tree was cut down (Donar oak of Boniface), its wood had to serve to promote the new church building, while the trunk had to support a shrine (Hietzing, Maria-Drei-Eichen, and many many others); or it was dug up and placed back in its old place, with the roots pointing upwards, mockingly. So arose the Viennese landmark, the "Stock- im-Eisen."

This strange landmark of the pagan Vindomina still stands today not far from its old position at the "Stock-im-Eisen-platze" with its roots pointing upwards.

What could be more natural than that the land and all other property of the old free city of the gods, together with the conquered castle of the gods or pagan church, passed into the undisputed possession of the church and immediately formed its mostly well-funded income. This was also the case here when St. Stephen's Church was founded more than eleven hundred and fifty years ago. The time in which this took place was probably the year 740, when the two Avar apostles were born in Vindomina, unless it can be traced back to even earlier times, at best to the reign of the Ostrogoths.

The sacred grove, in which the sacrificial steeds of Fro were bred, surrounded the sanctuary, the boundaries of which are still clearly defined today

according to the boundaries of the clerical property around St. Stephen's Church. All the houses and farms around St. Stephen's Square, with the sole exception of the western row of houses, have been owned by the clergy since time immemorial, without the land registers being able to indicate the title of ownership. This is quite understandable; the property was owned many hundreds of years before the first land register was created.

But the exception of the western row of houses is only an apparent one, because the ecclesiastical property also extended to a row of houses to the west of the square, which was demolished at the beginning of this century. This ran parallel to the current western front of the square between this and the western front of the cathedral, while the western row of houses that exists today only rose after the twelfth century on the site of the city wall that existed there. At that time, St. Stephen's Church was still located outside the city on the "green belt."

The next street names shed even more light on these strange facts. Today's Singerstraße was still called "Heidenhainstraße" in the Middle Ages, and the "Grünangergasse" and the ancient "Blutgasse" stretch backwards. The latter name, however, does not come from blood, but from "bluot", "blot" meaning "sacrifice". The old "Gottesfrohnnde" or "Opferer des Fro" could not do without the "grüner Angers", just as little as the "Abdecker" can do without it today, who became his actual successor, who once also held the position of executioner in Vienna, and was of course a dishonest person.

However, this respect stems from his former status as a pagan priest, which is why he was also considered a magician. This also explains why Christianity denied the Germans the pleasure of eating horse meat, which had previously been their main food, because the horse, as an ancient sacrificial animal, became a scornful animal and its carrion was given to the despised drudge.

But further on was the entrance to the old Fro-haag from the ancient Kärntnerstraße, the "Völkerheerstraße nach Rom", and therefore today's "Stock-im-Eisen" was the sacred border tree of the grove of gods, which stood and fell here with the Wuotans cult, and still stands today as its monument, admonishing German Vienna to remain German, mindful of its honorable shield office, to keep the watch at the eastern gate of Germania faithfully for the future.



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At the entrance to the most holy Fröhaage, however, the symbol of Frö, the proud Lärch fir, was not only felled and toppled, but also tied up with a lock and neck iron like a maleficant, both of which are also still preserved and visible, only the chain seems to have been lost.

But the folk tale was right, which describes the "Stock-im-Eisen" as the last tree of the Vienna Woods that once reached this far; it knew that it had been a border tree, only it had confused the term forest with that of the Haag.

Alongside the shrine to the horse god, the horse market was of course also held, and it can therefore be no coincidence that the "Stock-im-Eisen-Platz" was not only called the horse market at the beginning of this century, but that it actually was.

Frös sacrificers were the blacksmiths, whose oldest, so to speak, was the high priest, which dignity was insulted in Christian times in the "harsh judge" and "hangman", and separated from the blacksmith's trade. Nevertheless, the blacksmiths still retained that dignity in popular memory, which is still expressed today in the fact that the blacksmith is regarded as a wizard who knows more than how to eat bread.

But even the blacksmiths themselves had traditionally kept a dark idea of this in their guild, and every blacksmith who first saw the old, sacred, fallen tree trunk in his life, hammered a nail into the trunk - at first secretly - then when the meaning was forgotten, publicly, and so it came about that the time-honored landmark was preserved, which without this iron armor would have long since crumbled into dust and mold. But the hammering of the nail into the trunk had yet another meaning; it was regarded as a confirmation, a nailing down, so to speak, of some fact or promise or agreement. Even today, when the meaning has long been forgotten, people jokingly believe that this word or lie must be nailed down. This custom was also one of the many symbolic legal customs that have disappeared with German law. No one will deny that, naturally, only sacred places - such as the fallen tree of the gods - could be used for such nailings.

Another reminder of the Wuotan cult are the catacombs, which are part of a vast system of "earth barns" that undermined the entire inner old town, but which was destroyed by the construction of St. Stephen's Church as a result of the

old structure was partially disturbed when the foundations were laid. The cellar vaults of St. Stephen's Cathedral are hidden more than five storeys below each other in a still completely unexplored extent, partly walled up and connected with many other passages, the course of which folk legend knows exactly how to determine. These passages not only connected the four sanatoriums underground, they also led outside the city to the Danube area and had the unavoidable well at the Lugegg, where its half-buried opening was still visible in the last century and bore the characteristic name, the "Marcus Curtius Hole". The well-known "Basilisk myth" originated from the same well and a house near it is still called the "tasting worm". A myriad of other legends circulate in the vernacular about these passages, of which the "ghostly cat" is reminiscent of Fraya, the "lady with the death's head" of "Helia", the legend of "the maidens" is reminiscent of the "Norns" or "saviors".

However, the Aesir driven out of the Fro sanctuary chased around the proud munster according to the cathedral legends, and the cathedral master builder immortalized the these demonized Aesir figures as demonic grimaces, crushed under the weight of the saint, in impotent rage - as adversaries, letting off their blind threats. Unfortunately, it is impossible to describe and interpret these strange figures without pictorial decoration; it would be too prolix and yet difficult to understand, which is why only their general description will be attempted here.\*)

The hall arch of the giant doorway, named after these figures, bears seven statues of saints (ten apostles, four evangelists) on either side, while above the doorway the "Salvator mundi", a tympanum carried by angels, is depicted floating down. Below these statues, symbolizing the "Ecclesia Triumphans", appears in the Romanesque frieze on the right

\*) The detailed description of these figures and proper interpretation, which is the merit of the research of the writer of these lines, can be found in Lauser's "Allgemeiner Kunst Chronik", Vienna, year 1889, issues 9, 10 and 11 under the title: "Die deutsch-mythologischen Bildwerke am Riesenthore der Stephanskirche zu Wien." In 1850, Eduard Melly wrote a monograph under the title "Das Westportal des Stephansdomes in Wien" (Vienna, Gerold, 1850), which attempts to interpret these images from the Old Testament, but in an unfortunate way. Otherwise, this monograph is exemplary and still unsurpassed today.

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and on the left a lion as the symbol of the Antichrist, who "creeps along roaring, looking whom he may devour". Nevertheless, this lion is not the apocalyptic beast in the biblical sense, but in the Germanic-Christian anti-pagan sense, for the figures visible behind the two lions point directly to the Wuotan myth, and not to the pure, mythological form of it, but to the secondary religion of the Danube Germans of those distant days, which was already developing into a "superstition" and which became so sadly famous several centuries later in the witch trials.

We see all kinds of conjuring spells being used by the dwarfish "giant" figures to disrupt the construction of the Christian church; all the forces of nature, wind and weather, thunder and lightning, earthquakes and floods, fire and cloudbursts are united here as adversaries; The master builder fights his victorious battle with all of them, and finally we see him at the front of the portal, the axe of armor - his weapon against the demons of nature - shouldered, sinking to his knees in homage to the builder, as if he wanted to exclaim jubilantly: "Gloria in excelsis Deo!" The cathedral is built despite all the spell of inhibition, praise the Lord for all eternity!" Opposite the master builder sits the client, Markgraf\*) Heinrich Jasomirgott, invites the people with a light gesture to enter the newly erected church.

Yes, the newly erected cathedral, because that building, which was consecrated in 1144 or 1147, was only a new building, not the foundation of a church.

The first building, possibly before 740, but hardly after 740, was undoubtedly the old round tower of the sanctuary, which was possibly already a walled stone building. Corresponding to this circular form of the old "pagan churches"\*\*), the first Christian churches were built as rotundas, and only in later times did the church buildings constructed on the rectangle follow, whereupon the complicated basic form of the Gothic cathedral emerged in the further course of development. There is no doubt that the old St. Stephen's Church was such a rotunda, which later had to give way to the larger and ever larger church that laboriously developed into today's St. Stephen's Cathedral.

\*) He was not elevated to Duke of Austria until 1158

\*\*) See: "Schalaburg".

The next most important place of salvation was Hruoperachts, today's Ruprechtskirche, although it was far, far behind St. Stephen's Church.

The two Avar apostles Conuald and Gisalrich, who have already been mentioned several times, consecrated a crypt, i.e. an underground church, in 740, which was certainly one of the chambers in the old earth stable system.

According to the master plates of the Vienna Stonemasons' Guild, Franz von Eisleben is said to have built the above-ground church in 766 (392 years before Vienna was founded); according to others, this would not have happened until 783 under Bishop Virgilius of Salzburg, who is said to have consecrated it in honor of his predecessor, St. Ruprecht.

The inscription inside this venerable church itself gives the year 740 as its year of origin.

These few dates refer to two foundations: 740 for the underground church buildings and 766 and 783 for those above ground. If one assumes that construction began in 766 and was completed and consecrated in 783, then these two dates could be reconciled. It is only interesting to note how this fits in with Charlemagne's Christianization, who only decided to march against Thassilo II in 788 and appeared for the first time in Vienna (founded only 367 years later) in 791. Here the usurper already encountered Ruprecht's Church, which had already existed for fifty years, but he also found St. Stephen's Church, and presumably St. Peter's Church and St. Pancras Church as well, although these two are still doubtful. The only strange thing is that the foundation of both St. Ruprecht's and St. Peter's Churches is attributed to him. But even more so. Who does not notice the contradiction that at least two churches exist in an existing Christian city, while this city is said to lie in ruins in a devastated, deserted land that must first be settled and won over to the German land?

We have already emphasized that the underground church consecrated by the two Avaren apostles was not dug into the earth by them, but was found before. But Jans the Enenkel, a Viennese who wrote and lived in Vienna between 1190 and 1250, also testifies that St. Ruprecht was once a pagan temple. In the course of this book we have seen too many Hutbergs to have to say that this heathen temple was a sanctuary of Wuotan in

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a Wuotan mountain, as there are still over two hundred in the country, because we were only able to visit the smallest part of them.

St. Peter's Church grew from Donar's sanctuary, just as the Prince of the Apostles was the successor of the old Donar everywhere; likewise, St. Pancras' Church rose from the sanctuary of the wintry Wuotan. Here, too, we find the number three, as the people highly venerate the "three icemen", or the "three grumpy saints", whose names are St. Prankrazius, St. Boniface and St. Servace. They are patron saints of the spring frosts, and the countryman anxiously awaits their three nights, in which the last night frosts are to be expected.

The church "Maria am Gestade" on Fraya is also likely to be since otherwise we would lack a female one in all the sanatoriums. Since the legend also tells of subterranean passages there, and since the local name "Stoß-im-Himmel", which is often found at sanatoriums, is also striking, and since the name of this church is reminiscent of water, it is not too bold to assume that it was also founded in pre-Christian times.

And so look down to the church "Unserer lieben Frau am Gestade", where you will see its graceful hexagonal tower with its charming Gothic dome, but only the "Gestade" is quite a distance away. Well, this is just a coincidence, because in the past the Danube really did flow along the edge of the steep bank above which the magnificent building rises; half a century ago there was still a tower at the Passäuerhof, in which the iron rings were still left in place for mooring the ships.

And if you look further up after midnight, dear friend and traveling companion, you will see the broad mirror of the Danube in its new bed, and beyond it the wide expanses of water of the old riverbed with its wonderful, secluded meadows.

And if you should ever feel the desire to visit those healing places of wonderful jungle splendor, which is only possible by rowing boat, then it will be my pleasure to accompany you there.

There your eyes behold jungle images that the wildest imagination would never conjure before your soul. And through urgent undergrowth between many hundred-year-old rusts, tightly knotted

tangles of climbing hops, clematis and dulcamara, nettles and thistles and other herbs block your entrance; thousands of all kinds of insects surround and buzz, crawl and flutter around you, a vast number of representatives of the bird world flit and chirp around you, and if you look up into the highest of the jungle canopies, you may well spot the eyrie of a sea eagle. But such splendor can only be found on the islands, which are rarely or never visited and therefore only accessible by boat. There you can see them, lying like floating green cumulus clouds on the blue surface.

And this is the old Nibelung Road, and down there lies old Vienna, and the road to Italia, the Germanic tomb, runs southwards; and here the roads cross on the wide plain where the Teuton so often swung his good fencing iron and gave his enemies a good blow.

And so we would have prospered until we parted. Good luck to you, and keep me in your friendly memory for the future. I may well say that I hope to see you again cheerfully!

So young and old will rejoice.  
Praise thee, my God, manifold.  
Lord, I pray, it is yours too.  
So let Vienna here be my joy!



# **BERSERKER**

## **BOOKS**

