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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE GROUP OF BALTIC MYTHOLOGICAL TERMS FROM THE ROOT *vel-*

In this article some results are summarized that concern the history of the words formed from the root *vel- < *u̯el-* in Baltic languages. They have been obtained by the authors in the course of the attempted reconstruction of the Indo-European myth of the God of the Thunder that pursued his adversary[1]. The general scheme has been reconstructed. It makes it possible to understand not only the function of the God of the Thunder himself whose name (Lithuanian *Perkúnas*, Latvian *Pērkons*) in its inner form reflects his function in the myth (i. e. the one who strikes the enemy, the root *per-* 'to strike'). But the same scheme can also explain some contexts and associations characteristic of his adversary. The name of the latter was formed from *u̯el-*. In the oldest traditions it designated a serpent or a dragon (Ancient Indian *Vala, Vṛtra-* etc.). A derivative of *vel-* has been preserved as a name of a mythological person *Veles* (*Volos*) in Slavic languages. But it was later reinterpreted as a designation of the evil spirit[2] as in Old Czech (15th century A.D.) *Ký jest črt, aneb ký veles, aneb ký zmek*? (Tkadleček) where *veles* occurs in a row of synonyms between the devil and the dragon.

While searching for the traces of the myth in the Baltic tradition it became possible to establish that the adversary of the God of the Thunder was designated by the same root *vel-*. In Lithuanian it was also reinterpreted as the devil according to the Christian demonology. In Baltic languages derivatives of the root *vel-* are attested in the function of a common noun (with the meaning 'the devil') and as mythological proper names as well. Etymological identity with the Slavic and Old Indian forms (*Vala*) is confirmed by the fact that the devil is opposed to the God

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[1] Cf. V. Ivanov et V. Toporov, Le mythe indo-européen du dieu de l'orage poursuivant le serpent: reconstruction du schéma, — Échanges et communications. Mélanges offerts à C. Lévi-Strauss à l'occasion de son 60ème anniversaire, Paris-The Hague, 1970, 1180—1206.

[2] Cf. R. Jakobson, The Slavic God Veles and His Indo-European Cognates, — Studi linguistici in onore di Vittore Pisani, Torino, 1969, 579—600; В. В. Иванов, В. Н. Топоров, К реконструкции образа Велеса-Волоса как противника громовержца (на основании вторичных источников), — Тезисы IV Летней школы по вторичным моделирующим системам, Тарту, 1970, 47—50.

of the Thunder as his principal adversary in the Lithuanian and Latvian folk-lore[3]. The devil (Lithuanian *velnias*, Latvian *velns*) often turns into the cattle, domestic animals with the horns or has got attributes of a horned animal himself. From the structural point of view it is important that the opposition between the Thunderer and the demon Vala in the Ṛgveda and between Perun and Veles in the Old Russian oathes (in the treaties with the Byzantine Greeks) can be paralleled by the Baltic data not only in the main motif but in the etymology of the names of the two enemies as well, cf. Latvian *Pērkons meklējot velnu un velns arvien no pērkona bēgot* (Šmits, 1940, 1946, № 32434), Lithuanian *Perkūnas velnio neapkenčia, kur tik pamato, tai jį trenkia*[4]. At the same time the oldest Baltic texts have preserved the nameof god associated with the realm of the dead that was cognate to **vel-*. The explanation of this semantic development may be offered by the comparison with Slavic where *Veles* occurs as the 'god of the cattle' (Old Russian *скотий богъ*) and with the Ancient Indian tradition according to which the fight between the God of the Thunder and the demon Vala was caused by the fact that the latter had kept the cattle closed in a cave. In its turn the line between 'the god of the cattle' and the realm of the dead may be explained by the Common Indo-European concept of the nether world as a pasture. The latter has been reconstructed on the evidence of the identical oldest data of Indo-Iranian and Greek traditions[5]. They coincide with the recently studied Hittite rituals and mythological concepts about the nether world as the pastures where the divine herds of the Sun-god and of the king who 'has become the god' (i. e. has died) are grazing[6]. The same concepts in connection with the name *Vielona* are referred to in the writings of Jan Lasicki: *Vielona Deus animarum, cui tum oblatio offertur, cum mortui pascuntur*[7]. In the forms *Vielona, Vielonia* a stem with the suffix *-n-* as in Lithuanian *velnias* is reflected. At the same time as a name of a god a stem without *-n-* is also used. It practically coincides with the Slavic name of *Veles* in its function of the god (as in Old Russian tradition) not of the demon (as in Old Czech): *Deews der Gott der alten Letten, der bey ihnen auch, wenn es die Todten*

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[3] J. Balys, Griaustinis ir velnias Baltoskandijos kraštų tautosakoje, — TD IV (1939); idem, Lietuvių pasakojamosios tautosakos motyvų katalogas, — TD II 214–216 (Nr. 3451–3460); Latviešu tautas ticējumi, sakrājis un sakartojis Prof. P. Šmits, Rīgā, 1940 (later on quoted in the text as Šmits, 1940), 1943 (Nr. 32403 ff.).

[4] J. Balys, Perkūnas lietuvių liaudies tikėjimuose, — TD III (1937) 152 (Nr. 52) etc.

[5] P. Thieme, Studien zur Indogermanischen Wortkunde und Religionsgeschichte, Berlin, 1952, 46.

[6] H. Otten, Hethitische Totenrituale, Berlin, 1958, 139–140; M. Vieyra, Ciel et enfers hittites (à propos d'un ouvrage récent), — Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie orientale, LIX, Paris, 1965, 128 (Nr. 3).

[7] W. Mannhardt, Letto-Preußische Götterlehre, Rīgā, 1936 (later on quoted as Mannhardt, 1936), 357.

betraf, Wels hiess, weil Deewa deenas Gottes Tage, und Weļļi von Wels die Tage des Gottes der Todten bey ihnen einerley war (Stender, the end of the 18th century, cf. Mannhardt, 1936, 626). The same synonymy is reflected in another source (Einhorn, the 17th century): *October Wälla-Mänes... Dieselben Tage haben sie auch geheßen Deewa Deenas das ist Gottes Tage* (Mannhardt, 1936, 482). Because of the identity of *Dievs* and *Vels* in these sources it is worth noting that Stender in the same place mentioned "*Deewa sirgi* Gottes Pferde, *Deewa wehrschi* Gottes Ochsen und *Deewa putni* Gottes Vögel oder Fasel" (Mannhardt, 1936, 626). Taking into account the Slavic data it is possible to see here the evidence on the association of Latvian *Vels* with the horses and the cattle. The hypothesis may be proved as to Lithuanian *Vielona* who was addressed to during the feast called *Skerstuvės* when a pig was killed ritually: *Skierstuvves festum est farciminium, ad quod deum Ezagulis ita vocant: Vielona velos atteik musmup vnd stala, Veni inquit, cum mortuis, farcimina nobiscum manducaturus* (Jan Lasicki, cf. Mannhardt, 1936, 359, 389). The evidence is trustworthy as it can be confirmed by multivarious data on the rite of feeding the dead that was performed during the Lithuanian *vėlinės* 'the day of the prayers for the dead' (also *veliaĩ*, cf. Polish *Dziady*[8]), Latvian *Veļu laiks*. During the feast *Skerstuvės* the bones were burned down: "*Die Knochen werden verbrannt und die Asche beobachtet und, da sie nicht dienet, vergraben...*", — Festa veterum Prussorum (Mannhardt, 1936, 576). In this description the ritual is reflected with the same details as in the East Slavonic rite of the burial of the Death of the Cows on the Day of Vlasiy[9] who is a later equivalent of Veles-Volos due to the substitution of the pagan gods by corresponding Christian Saints in the Russian tradition.

As the rite of the prayers for the dead (Latvian *Veļu laiks*, Lithuanian *vėlinės*) can be associated with the name of the God or a demon (Latvian *Vels*, Lithuanian *Vielona, velnias*) and with the ritualistic use of a bone one should pay special attention to Latvian *veļa kauli* 'ein Überbein'[10]. With this bone a whole series of superstitions is linked. They refer, on the one hand, to the dead, on the other hand, to domestic animals for instance: *Kad zirgam ir veļa kauls, tad tur jāpiesien rupucis klāt; Lai zirgam izdzītu veļa kaulus, tad jāmazgā ar tām ziepēm, ar kuŗām mazgāts mirons; Kad zirgam iemetas veļa kauls, tad jādabū kāds vecs kauls un jāapgriež veļa kaulam trīs reiz apkārt* (Šmits, 1940, 1949, №№ 32472, 32474, 32478, cf. 32480). In the tokens and beliefs connected with the *veļa kauls* one can find traces of the ri-

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[8] K. Būga, RR I 516.

[9] К. В. Максимов, Собрание сочинений, XVII, С.-Петербург, [б. д.] 57. Compare also the festival of the cattle *Волося* in White Russia apparently connected with Volos according to P. Shtein (see H. К-a [Н. И. Коробка] Волос, — Новый энциклопедический словарь Брокгауз-Ефрон, XI, С.-Петербург, [б. д.], 485).

[10] ME IV 530.

tual being timed to a certain day: *Vecā laikā, piekdienas vakarā, jāpagriež veļa kauls pret mēnesi un jāvelk ar pirkstu apkārt* (ib., № 32481).

The archaic character of this concept and of the corresponding rite can be proved by the coincidence with Lithuanian that is found on a semantic level. Lithuanian *navi-kaulis* 'навья косточка', 'the bone of the dead', Samogitian *naujõs káulas, novès káulas*, cf. the compound *naujìkaulis* (with the supposed explanation as an East Slavic loanword[11]) has the same meaning and the same second part (the name of a bone) as Latvian *veļa kàuls*, the first part also finds its correspondence in Latvian *nāve* (it is mentioned in connection with a bone: Šmits, 1940, 1319, № 21729, cf. also *nāves celiņš* 'die Blaue Ader über der Nase bei Kindern, welche ein fatales Zeichen sein soll'[12]) and in Slavic: Russian *навья косточка* 'мертвая кость, одна из мелких косточек ступни или пясти... по поверью, она бывает причиною беды, смерти, никогда не гниет в трупе и родится оттого, коли кто в навий-день перелезет через забор[13], Old Czech *kost návná*, Modern Czech *návni kost*, dialectal *kost nátmná, nátmni*[14] etc. Russian *Навий день* or *навский день*, Ukranian *Нáвський Велúк-день* (*Мертвéцький Велúк-день, Мáвський Велúк-день*)[15] was a day of the prayers for the dead performed by everyone (Monday or Tuesday on Saint Thomas' week, on the Ukraine — the last Thursday of the Lent), cf. the 'day of the parents' on Tuesday on Saint Thomas' week and the sacrificial offerings for the dead to eat[16].

The Common Slavic character of the corresponding rituals is beyond any question. Therefore it is extremely important that in this case the connection with the Baltic data becomes possible. The Slavic day of the pray for the dead (Russian *навий день*) might be semantically identified with Latv. *Veļu laiks, Wälla—Mänes*, Lith. *veliaĩ, vėlinės* just as Russian *навья косточка*, Old Czech *kost návná* is equivalen to Latv. *veļa kauls*, Lith. *navi-kaulis*. From this identification one might deduce the semantic equivalence of the first parts of the designations, that is, of the Baltic name of a demon or a god related to the death and of the Slavic **navь*. It is characteristic. of the Slavic demonology that in it the stem *navь* serves as a base from which names of a whole class of mythological beings connected with the death are formed: Ukr. *мавки, нáвки*[17], Bulg. *нáви* 'според народните поверия—зли духове, подобни на

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[11] K. Būga, RR I 586; II 503.

[12] ME II 703.

[13] В. Даль, Толковый словарь живого великорусского языка, 4 изд., II, С.-Петербург-Москва, 1914, 1018.

[14] K. Machek, Etymologický slovník jazyka českého a slovenského, Praha, 1957, 320.

[15] Б. Д. Гринченко, Словарь украинского языка, II, Киев, 1908, 474.

[16] Cf. А. Макаренко, Сибирский народный календарь в этнографическом отношении. Восточная Сибирь, Енисейская губерния, С.-Петербург, 1913, 164—165.

[17] Б. Д. Гринченко, op. cit., II, 395, 471.

самодивите, които измъчват родилките'[18], Maced. *нави* 'evil spirits, 12 witches that suck milk of recently confined women'. The discrepancy between the spring cycle to the beginning of which the Slavic day of the pray was timed and the autumnal one in the end of which the corresponding Baltic rite took place can be understood in the same manner as many other differences of this type: various traditions prefer one of the two possible season cycles. In Eastern and Western Slavic sources one can find not only the spring festival of the dead (the spring *радуница* or *пасха усопших*), but the autumnal one as well— Russian *Дедова неделя* in the Kostroma district, *Дмитриева суббота*, White Russian *прикладины* (November the 6th), *Деды, Большие ссенины*. During these Russian festivals one had to give the food and the drinks to the dead[19]. For the comparison of the Baltic and Slavic rites it is important that the fire was kindled in both the traditions (in Slavic it was done 'to make the dead warm'). The role of the fire in connection with the Baltic god whose name was formed from the stem **u̯el-(n)-* might be seen on other evidence too.

The Slavic festivals of the pray for the dead have many features in common with those found in Old Latvian tradition where one had to give food and drinks to the dead: "*Etliche haben auch wol den Verstorbenen Essen und Trinken bey jhren Gräbern gesetzet*". The festival timed to the October was described as a feast during which the fire was to be kindled: *Wenn sie nu (daſs wir wieder zur Sache kommen) jhre Todten begraben, haben sie derselben Seelen jährlich zu gewisser Zeit, nemblich im Herbst, im Monat Octobris, ein Convivium oder Gast-Gebot gehalten, da sie denn allerley Speise zugerichtet, dieselben in einer Stuben, die dazu praepariret und bereitet, fein außgehitzet und wol gekehret oder außgefet, auff die Erde hingesetzet, da denn der Hauswirth selbst auff den späten Abend hinein gehen, das Fewer halten, und die Verstorbenen, als nemblich seine majores, Eltern, Verwandten, Kinder und andere seine Angehörigen bey Namen rufen müssen, daſs sie kommen) essen und trinken möchten* (Einhorn) Mannhardt, 1936, 486—487)[20].

In the already cited earliest source where the word formed from the root **vel-* as the Lithuanian name of a mythological being is mentioned a Lithuanian ritual formula has been preserved that is connected with the festival of the pray for the dead: *Vielona velos atteik musmup vnd stala. Veni, inquit, cum mortuis, farcimina nobiscum munducaturus* (Jan Lasicki), Mannhardt, 1936, 359. As one may judge by the Latin translation "cum mortuis" the Lithuanian form *velos* should be understood as the designation of 'the dead'[21]. As far as *Vielona* (which is connected with

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[18] Речник на съвременния български книжовен език, V, София, 1956, 127.

[19] Н. В. Гоголь, Полное собрание сочинений, IX, 1939, 426, see also on the p. 425 the comparison with the Lithuanian autumnal festival of the ancestors.

[20] On 'the fire' see also 'infra' in the same source.

[21] In spite of the opinion of Mannhardt (op. cit., 387), who understood it as the equivalent of *vêl* 'wieder' which can be proved neither by the cited text itself nor by the context of the ritual.

velos in its sound texture and in the meaning as well) is concerned there can be no doubt that it refers either to a god or to a spirit. The twofold interpretation is possible also when one considers the word that in the first record of the Lithuanian funeral songs was written down as *Velú* in the sense of a special mythological designation[22], but that has been reinterpreted as *velių* by recent editors (who evidently bear in sight the already demythologized name of the soul of the dead). The word is found in the standard formula that occurs in a whole cycle of similar songs: *Atkelk Vėlių vartelius, atdaryk Vėlių dureles, imk už baltų rankelių, pasodink į Vėlių suolelį*[23]; *o užstokite ant Vėlių durelių, o atdarykit Vėlių dureles*; *tik jūs pirmesnì, tik jūs kytresnì, o atdarykite Vėlių dureles, o pasodinkite į Vėlių suolelį*[24].

In the light of the above-mentioned parallel between the Vedic *Vala* and Baltic *Vel-* it is worth investigating that the motif of the opening of the doors or the gates in the cited Lithuanian formulae coincides with the same image in the hymns to Indra where in connection with the Vala myth it is declared that Vala opened the gates that had been shut:

> *ávindad divó níhitaṃ gúhā nidhím|vér ná gárbham*
> *parivītáṃ áśmany aṇanté antár aśmani|*
> *vrajám vajri gávām iva síṣāsann ángirastamaḥ|*
> *àpāvṛṇod íṣa índraḥ párīvṛta dvāra íṣaḥ párīvṛtāḥ|*

'Er fand den in Versteck verborgenen Schatz des Himmels, der im Fels verschlossen war wie die Brut des Vogels (im Ei), im endlosen Fels. Gleich einem, der (im Wettkampf) die eingehegte Kuhherde gewinnen will, hat der Keulenträger, der oberste Aṅgiras Indra die verschlossenen Speisegenüsse aufgeschlossen, die verschlossenen Tore, die Speisegenüsse' (RV I 130 3)[25]. This formula coincides with the Lithuanian one not only in its meaning but in the separate words (*dvăra*, cf. Lith. *dureles*) which it consists of. It is characteristic of it that it occurs in the similar context when one asks a mythological being to drink: *píba sómam indra* 'Trink, Indra, den... Soma' (RV I 130 2). The relations between the addressor and Indra are described as those between the children and the father (*putráso na pitáram*... 'wie Söhne der Vater' RV I 130 1), so that the ritual context in which both the Old Indian and Lithuanian formulae occur is the same. The invitation to come "to us" (*Éndra yāhy úpa naḥ* 'Indra! Komm... zu uns' RV I 130 1) in "Rg-veda" is similar to Old Lith. *atteik musmup* in the above cited evidence of Lasicki.

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[22] Lietuviškos dainos, užrašė A. Juška, III, 282, note.

[23] Ib., 289 (Nr. 1178, stanza 6); see also the repetition of the formula: 313 (Nr. 1194, stanza 1).

[24] Ib., 301 (Nr. 1187, stanza 10), see also the repetition in the stanza 11 with the final words *į lémtą pulkėlį*. See also other examples of similar formulae ib., 301−333 (Nr. 1188−1204).

[25] Here and in the following text the translation of the hymns of RV (abbreviation for „Rg-veda") is given according to K. F. Geldner, Der Rig-Veda, Cambridge, 1951.

In another hymn of "Ṛg-veda" the same word (*dúro*) in connection with the name of Vala is mentioned in the story about the opening by Indra of the gates of a tower of Vala who has devoured the cattle: *tán naḥ pratnáṃ sakhyám astu yuṣmé itthá vadadbhir valám áṅgirobhiḥ| hánn acyutacyud dasmeṣáyantam ṛṇóḥ púro ví dúro asya víṣvāḥ* (RV VI 18 5) "Das soll unsere alte Freundschaft mit euch sein, mit der ebenso sprechenden Aṅgiras' erschlugest der (Die Kuhe) genießender Vala, du das Unbewegliche bewegender Meister. Du schlossest seine Burgen, alle seine Tore auf".

In Lithuanian funeral songs where a similar formula occurs some remnants of the reconstructed myth might be seen in the motif of high hills: *o susieikite į vieną kalnelį, o susėskite į Vėlių suolelį... Aš nuleisiu į aukštus kalnelius, įpanemunėlę, o paimk už baltų rankelių, o pasodink į Vėlių suolelį*[26]. According to Slavic data high hills are related to Perun[27], but in some places where the opposition between Perun and Veles is not relevant the same attribute might be characteristic of Veles[28] (one might see here the typical inversion between the two members of a binary opposition discussed in the end of the present article).

With Slavic data concerning Perun the above cited cycle of Lithuanian formulae might be compared also as far as the motif of the food and drinks offered to the god is concerned. In a transformed form the motif may be found in the Novgorod Chronicle: *ты рече, Перушище, досыти еси пилъ иялъ*[29] 'thou, quoth, Perushitse, hadst drunk and eaten to your fill'. The general scheme of such offerings coincides completely with that found in Anatolian rituals especially in connection with Hittite *akkant-* 'the (souls of the) dead' just as with those found in Baltic and Slavic rites of the pray for the dead.

The root *$ṷel$- in reference to the dead is attested in other Indo-European languages as well: Old Icelandic *valr* 'the dead on the battlefield', Old High German, Old English *wal* etc. Among the Germanic derivatives from the root that are important for the mythology of particular interest (as far as the comparison with the reconstructed myth is concerned) are such as the names of Old Icelandic *valhǫll* 'the abode of the warriors fallen on the battlefield' cf. *valfǫðr* 'the father of the dead heroes', *valkyrja* 'a maid that has to choose the hero among the dead and to transfer him to Odin', Old English *wæl* 'a man who was left on the battlefield, a corpse', *wælstōw*, Middle High German *walsttat* 'battlefield'. One should stress in particular the literal coinci-

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[26] Lietuviškos dainos, III 332 (Nr. 1204, stanzas 7 and 9).

[27] В. В. Иванов и В. Н. Топоров, Славянские языковые моделирующие семиотические системы, Москва, 1965, 12—13.

[28] Д. А. Крайнов, Волосово-Даниловский могильник фатьяновской культуры, — Советская археология, 1964, 68—69.

[29] Комиссионный список, см. Новгородская Первая Летопись старшего и младшего изводов, Москва-Ленинград, 1950, 160.

dence of the inner form and of the first half of the compound *val-hǫll* with the structure and the name of the hero of the motif of the castle or the mountain of Vala in "Ṛg-veda" and the similar story in Russian fairy-tales[30].

To the same group of words belong Tocharian A *wäl* 'to die', participle *walu* 'the dead', the stem of the masculine singular and of the nominative and oblique cases of the feminine plural *walunt-* that coincides with Luwian *ulant-* 'the dead', Lycian *lati*, 3d person singular present 'he dies' (< *(u)la-* 'to die', *se ĕke lati ddaqasa* 'and if Ddaqasa dies'[31]). It is important to note the context in which Luwian *ulant-* (opposed to the adjective *ḫuiduali-* 'living, alive') occurs in connection with the god of the sun:

ma-a-na-aš	hu-i-du-ua-li-iš	šar-ri-ia-an	
	ᴰUTU-za	da-ra-u-id-du	
ma-a-na-aš	ú-la-an-ti-iš	a-an	ti-ia-am-ma-aš-ši-iš
	ᴰUTU-za	da-ra-ú-id-du[32]	

'si c'est un vivant, que là-haut le Soleil l'abatte, si c'est un mort, que le Soleil terrestre l'abatte'. In this text the parallelism of the contrasted notions 'alive' — 'dead', 'up' — 'the earth', is important since it determines the range of variations inside the general scheme while the designations of the god and of his action remain the same. The same formula opposing the 'living' and the 'dead' (*ulant-*) is found in the fragments in other rituals of the Old Woman[33], see especially the following ᴰIŠKUR 'the god of the storm' (that is, the god of the thunder equivalent to Lithuanian *Perkúnas* and written with the same suffix *-unas*[34]) in KUB XXXV 54 III 5—7.

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[30] Русские народные сказки Н. А. Афанасьева, I, Москва, 1957, № 164. The suggested parallels seem to support the ideas of the article: J. Puhvel, 'Meadow of the Otherworld' in Indo-European tradition, — KZ LXXX (1969) 64—69, in particular, the comparison of the Otherworld represented as a meadow (See above on this concept), Vedic *gávyuti*, Homeric λειμών with Hittite *wellu*. The last word is explained by J. Puhvel from *welnu-* or even *wel-šu* (B. Čop, — Linguistica VI (1964) 44, 61, suggested *wellu-* < *wešlu-*, cf. *weši-* 'pasture', *weštara-* 'herdsman') and compared not only with Old Norse *vǫllr* 'meadow' (*walþu* < *woltu-*, see below on Slavic *volt-*), Welsh *gwelt*, Cornish *gwels* 'grass', but with Russian Волосъ — 'god of the cattle', as well. J. Puhvel includes into the same group Homeric Greek Ἠλύσιον (cf. Odys. IV, 563, for an important context; see also Ἠλύστιος λειμών or Ἠλύσιος κῶρος) from *Ϝαλνύ-τιο < *wl̥-nu-tiyo- 'belonging to a meadow'. According to Puhvel *wel-nu* (Hit. *wellu-*), *wl̥-nu* (Old Greek ἠλυ-), *wol-tu* (Old Norse *vǫllr*) and *wol-su* (Russian Волосъ) all designated a meadow or a pasture.

[31] O. Carruba, — Die Sprache XIV (1968) 14.

[32] KUB XXXV 45 II 25—26 = LTU 46. The translation is given according to E. Laroche, Dictionnaire de la langue louvite, Paris, 1959, 147.

[33] LTU 26 (line 6); id., 42 = KUB XXXV 43 II 2—3.

[34] Cf. C. Watkins, Indo-European Lexical Families and Their Derivation: Archaic Nominal Forms. 1. *dieu- 'god', — Indo-European Studies (Special Report to the National Science Foundation, Department of Linguistics of Harvard University), Cambridge, 1972, 9.

Compare also the similar binary opposition of 'life' and 'death' in the address to a serpent and to a man in the charm of the "Atharva-veda" (5, 13, 4c):

áhe mriyásva mā jīvīḥ
ayáṃ jīvatu mā mṛta

'O, snake, die, do not live;
Let this (man) live, let (him) not die', that is (see table 1).

Table 1. The structure of the charm

Variable predicate	man	serpent
living	+	−
dead	−	+

The same derivational and semantic pattern as in other above cited words is found in Tocharian A *wlalune* 'death' with the suffix genetically equivalent to that found in Russian *Пер-ынь* (name of the place near Novgorod where the sanctuary of Perun was situated), Lith. *perk-ūnija* and close to the derivational affixes of such Baltic formations as Lith. *velnias, Vielona*. In other derivatives of the same root one can find different formations with *-t-*: White Russian *велеты, волоты* (name of the epic heroes included into the plots that are similar to the reconstructed myth[35]) < < *volt-*, cf. *molt-* > Russian *молот* (old name of the weapon of Perun cognate to Slavic and Baltic names of the lightning: White Russian *молодня, молоння*, Old Prus-

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[35] Cf. the other works of the authors. To the root *volt-* cf. also *Волотка на бородку* (belonging to the terminology of the harvest rites), meaning the same as *Волосова борода, борода, бородка* and the like. As these terms are connected with *зажинки* (in some places they are called *волошьи, гумённа борода, дожинки* etc.), other formulas of the *zazhinki* texts are also relevant, cf. *Флор да Лавёр, приходите коня кормить* (cf. the German formula *für Wodans Pferd*, which has parallels in other Germanic languages too). See about the beard of Volos in connection with the custom to have the beard waved (завивать бородку): Сабинин, Волос, языческое божество славяно-руссов. Сравнение с Одином скандинавов, − ЖМНПр XL (1843); Н. А. Афанасьев, Ведун и ведьма, Москва, 1851, 144−145 (vain scepticism can be found in the article: А. Е. Крымський, Волосова борода: з учено-кабінетної мітології XIX в., − Юбілейний збірник на пошану акад. Д. I. Багалія, Київ, 1927). Taking in consideration the relation *Волос / Велес − волос* (ср. *бородка*), one should pay attention to the theoretically possible connection of *Veln-* with the Indo-European name of wool, cf. Lith. *vilna*, OChSl *vlъna* etc. See about it elsewhere. In the light of the above given data it seems worth noting that Velets (*Велеты*) were supposed to eat up their old parents, see А. Соболевский, Заметки по славянским древностям, − ИОРЯС XXXI (1926) 8.

sian *mealde* etc).; the difference between the vowels in *велеты* and *волоты* is the same as in *Велес:Волос*. It is worth stressing that especially in White Russian tradition one can find the most numerous number of the features similar to the Baltic variant of the myth.

In Tocharian one can find the reflection of the meaning 'ruler', 'sovereign' of the root **ụel-* > Tocharian A *wäl*, oblique *länt*. It seems particularly important that the Proto-Tocharian name of the god of the thunder (in the historically attested Tocharian languages identified with Indian Indra) had been formed as a compound with the **ụel-* 'king' as the first part of it: Toch. A *wlāñkät*, Toch. B (Kuchean) *ylaiñikte* < **wel(ā)-w(e)nakt-* 'king-god' (the second part is equivalent to Mycenaean Greek *wa-na-ka* 'god', 'king', Homeric Ϝάναξ > ἄναξ[36]). It may be supposed that the Proto-Tocharian compound reflected the link between **ụel-* 'ruler' and **ụel-* as the name of the mythological being (the ruler of the realm of the dead) opposed to (in Proto-Tocharian due to the inversion of oppositions identified with) the god of the thunder.

The same meaning as in Toch. A *wäl-* may be supposed in such Slavic and Baltic derivatives of the root **ụel-* as Old Church Slavonic ВЕЛИИ (designation of full-right members of Old Slavonic social group) and ВЛАДЫКА (name of a head of a social group), Old Russian *володыка*, dialectal Ryazan *велес* 'ruler'[37] (semantically equivalent to Tocharian A *wäl*), *волос* 'power', *волосить* 'to rule'. See also such names of common property as Slov. *last* 'property', Czech. *vlastnictví* 'property' and *vlastník* 'owner', Serbo-Croatian *властѐла* 'nobles, having large estates, feudals, aristocracy', Russian *волость* 'volost, small rural district'[38] having exact semantic equivalent in Lith. *valˋsčius*, cf. Lith. *valstiẽtis* 'peasant', see also Venetic names in *Volt-*, *Vols-*[39]. The same meaning is reflected also in Mordovian loanwords: Moksha *V'el'en' pas*, Erzya *V'el'en' k'ir'd'i pas* (name of the god-protector of a village community), *v'el'en' k'ir'd'i azərava* 'female protector of a village', cf. also *v'el'-at'ä* 'the chief of

[36] Proto-Tocharian **w'* > Toch. B *y* (cf. A. J. van Windekens, Études de phonétique tokharienne, V; VII, — Orbis XII (1963) 2; XIV (1965) 1; Вяч. Иванов, К происхождению микенского греческого *wa-na-ka*, — Первый симпозиум по балканскому языкознанию. Античная балканистика, Москва, 1972, 48—52). Semantically important may be the comparison with the Hittite king becoming the god (see above, note 6), cf. also typological parallels and bibliography in J. Zandee, Le Messie. Conceptions de la royauté dans les religions du Proche-Orient ancien, — Revue de l'histoire des religions, CLXXX (1971) 1 3—28.

[37] В. И. Даль, Словарь живого великорусского языка, 4 ed., I 431; Словарь русских народных говоров, IV, Москва, 1970, 106.

[38] The connection between this meaning and the semantic sphere of the Volos-Veles type is still reflected in such Russian charms as *Вóлости тебя возьми* 'let Volosts take you' (where *Вóлости* may be substituted by names of Volos and Perun).

[39] M. Lejeune, Voltiomnos, Volsomnos, Volsounos, — BSL XLIX (1953) 41—51; В. Н. Топоров, Фрагмент славянской мифологии, — КСИС XXX (1961) 31.

a village', *v'el'-ava* 'the female chief of a village'. To this Mordovian god the prayers are addressed in which one asks for more grain, cattle and children; for the protection against the fire and the evil man; the prayer ends in an offering to 'eat and drink' which completely coincides with the same offerings to the above mentioned Indo-European gods, Perun included. During the women's ale feast victims are offered to the god, cf. also the autumnal sacrifice *saltan-keremät*, which is performed near a sacral oak similar to that of the Indo-European god of thunder. These Mordovian data are particularly interesting since in Mordovian there is another borrowed name of a god: *Pur'g'in'e-pas* 'god of the thunder'[40] cognate to Lith. *perkūnija* 'storm', *Perkúnas* 'god of the thunder'. Thus both the terms of the reconstructed mythological opposition were borrowed to the Volga-Finnish languages apparently from Baltic.

The social-territorial meaning reflected in the above given set of Baltic and Slavic words is found also in Mordovian *V'el'e* 'Pleiades; swarm; village'[41]. The corresponding name of the Pleiades occurs in Russian, Old Russian *волосыни*[42] (with the same suffix *-ūnjā* as in Toch. A *wlalune*, Lith. *perk-ūnija* and Russian *Пер-ынь*), *волосожары, стожары < волостожары* (see above on *волост-*) etc., Serbo-Croatian *влашићи*. This Russian name is connected also with the god Volos whose cult became associated with that of a bear in the Northern parts of Russian and in the regions near the Volga[43]. The link between the Pleiades and the cult of the bear and/or the Great Bear may be confirmed by the Old Russian text of Afanasiy Nikitin where both the constellations are mentioned together (the former being called *Волосыни*[44])

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[40] See also Finnish *perkule, perkele*: U. Harva, Die religiösen Vorstellungen der Mordwinen, Helsinki, 1952, 157 ff., 295 ff.

[41] On *V'el'e* lives *Ñišk'e pas*, cf. also *Sisem-dešt* '7 stars': Г. Н. Потанин, Очерки северо-западной Монголии, IV, С.-Петербург, 1883, 730. This Mordovian name of the Pleiades differs from such Finno-Ugrian words as those found in Livonian and Hungarian (with the inner form 'sieve' as in Chuvash): L. Mandoki, Asiatische Sternnamen, — Glaubenswelt und Folklore der sibirischen Völker, Budapest, 1963, 519 f.

[42] At the beginning of the 17th century still found in the Pskov dialect: Tönnies Fenne's Low German Manual of Spoken Russian, II, ed. by L. L. Hammerich and R. Jakobson, Copenhagen, 1970, 19 (32: 1 — vollosini 'de Souenstern').

[43] The light of the Pleiades is a good sign for a bearhunter: Н. Н. Воронин, Медвежий культ в Верхнем Поволжье в XI веке, — Краеведческие записки государственного Ярославско-Ростовского историко-архитектурного и художественного музея-заповедника, IV, Ярославль, 1960, 46 (§ 1).

[44] The Great Bear is called in the same text 'carriage' (*кола*), cf. the similar designation in Phrygian and Tocharian (from the same root) and in Baltic (Lith. *ratai* in *Didieji grįžulo ratai* from another root). The typological parallels might be found in Ancient Near Eastern traditions (cf. also Hittite *hišša* 'beam of the Carriage = Ursa Major' cognate to Old Indian *īṣā* etc.), bororo (C. Lévi-Strauss, Mythologiques, I, Le cru et le cuit. Paris, 1964, 228, 334; the archaic character of the vehicles in America is suggested by recent archaeological discoveries: S. F. de Borhedhyi, Wheels and Man, — Archeology XXIII 1 (1970) 18—25). The parallels in Northern Eurasian languages (such as Old Icelandic and Lapp) might be found also to the designation of the North Star as the Elk in the same text of Afanasiy Nikitin.

and by typological comparison with similar concepts in different Eurasian and American traditions where the names of both of them are interchangeable[45]. The recent study of the "astronomical code" of American (particularly North-American) myths has shown that those animals that serve as classificatory devices — "binary operators" ("opérateurs binaires" in Lévi-Strauss' terms) are associated either with the Ursa Major or with the Pleiades[46]. The similar interchange explainable as resulting from the inversion of relations between the two opposed members of mythological oppositions ($x^{(-1)}$ in Lévi-Strauss' notation) might explain the Avestan name of the Pleiades *Perune* which just as the cognate Kafir name of the god of the war has been compared to Slavic Perun by R. Jakobson[47]. The suffix in this Indo-Iranian name of the Pleiades is historically identical with that in Eastern Slavic *Волос-ыня*, Lith. *perk-ūnija*, while the roots of both the synonymous terms denote the two members of the reconstructed Indo-European binary mythological opposition. To quote Lévi-Strauss, "d'une variante à l'autre d'un même mythe apparaissent toujours des différences exprimables sous forme, non de menus incréments positifs ou négatifs, mais de rapports tranchés tels la contrariété, la contradiction, l'inversion ou la symétrie"[48]. Such regular correspondences between different variants of the myth make it possible to reconstruct its Indo-European source on different levels and in different "codes" (linguistic, social, geographical, astronomical etc.).

To understand the relation between the astronomic codes and other codes in which the reconstructed myth is translated it is important to note that on St. Vlasiy's day in the province of Tula there was a ritual of *addressing the star*: when the stars were seen on the heaven, the s h e e p h e r d e r s used to come out on the street, stand upon the f l e e c e and sing: Засветись, звезда ясная, по поднебесью на радость миру — крещеному... Ты заглянь, звезда ясная, на двор к рабу такому-то. Ты освети, звезда ясная, огнем негасимым белояровых овец у раба такого-то. Как по поднебесью звездам несть числа, так бы у раба такого-то уродилось овец болей того[49].

In the same source[50] the old custom (later on already non-practiced) was described according to which a w o m a n considered to be guilty of evil plans was

[45] Cf. William B. Gibbons, Asiatic Parallels in North American Star Lore: Ursa Major, — Journal of the American Folklore, LXXVII (1964) 236—250.

[46] See especially C. Lévi-Strauss, Mythologiques, IV (L'homme nu), Paris, 1971, 185, 489 a. o. On South-American parallels see previous volumes: C. Lévi-Strauss, Mythologiques, I—III, Paris, 1964—1968 (indexes s. v. Pléiades. Grande Ourse etc.).

[47] Р. Якобсон, Роль лингвистических показаний в сравнительной мифологии, — Труды УП МКАЭН, V, Москва, 1970, 612.

[48] C. Lévi-Strauss, Mythologiques, IV (L'homme nu), 604.

[49] И. Сахаров, Сказания русского народа, II, кн. 7, С.-Петербург, 1849, 11—13.

[50] Ib.

punished by being put into the ground alive; it was said to be done in particular to push out the *Cow's Death* (the other means to get rid of it consisted in rituals that were performed on St. Vlasiy's day and were similar to those practiced in Vel' district (Вельский уезд) of the province of Vologda: the villagers brought to the church the butter called *воложное*; they put it before the image of St. Vlasiy, the cows were driven to the church and the holy water was sprinkled on them. In connection with these rituals the wide use of the wool is to be noticed (particularly the custom called *зорнить пряжу* 'to 'dawn' the wool', i. e. to bring out the wool at dawn 3 mornings running). All these motifs — the star, the dawns, the punishment of a woman, the cattle, the wool etc. — are characteristic of a whole series of myths and legends describing the transformation of a woman into a star (or of women into a constellation) as a result of her (their) persecution or punishment. These parallels seem particularly important since it is possible to reconstruct a plot in the Baltic and Slavic tradition in which took part the God of the Thunder (*Per(k)-ūn-*), his adversary (*Vel-es-/-n-/-t-*) and the wife (or the daughter) of the god of the thunder punished perhaps for her deception.