Power, Gender, and Mobility

Aspects of Indo-European Society

Edited by
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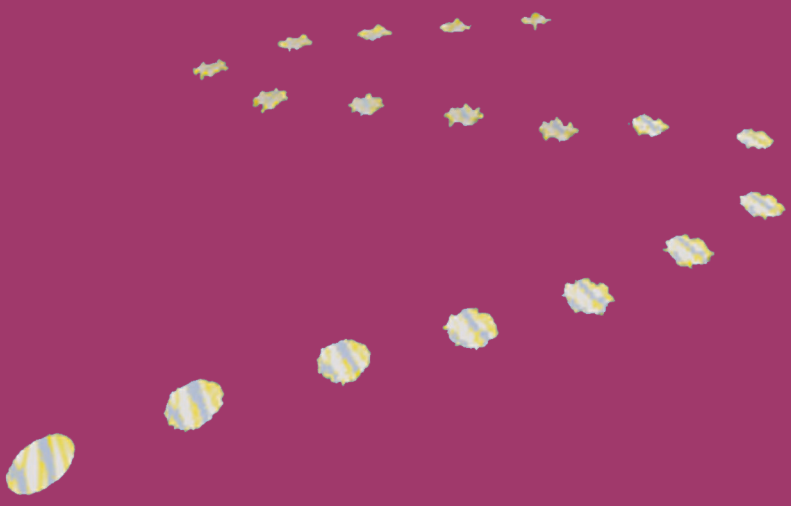

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Contents

(Proto-)Indo-European age-based male social hierarchies and groupings

Age-grades, sodalities, coevals, age-sets and the origins of Rome's *curiae* (including the *curia* 'senate-house')

KIM MCCONE
Maynooth

This study argues for lifelong associations of coevals termed 'age-sets' as a feature of Proto-Indo-European[1] social organisation, taking as its starting points (a) a PIE social system of three successive age-grades and (b) their frequent combination with age-sets. After (1) a general introduction and discussion of methodology, it focusses upon: (2) the junior grade's 'wolfish' bachelor sodalities; (3) age, initiations and other conditions of entry and exit conducive to the formation of adult age-sets; (4) Rome's 'wolfish' foundation myth and its implications; (5) coevality as an ideal attribute of sodalities in various IE cultures, the *homēlikiē* 'same-age-group' as a youthful bond maintained into adulthood and old age in the *Odyssey*, and the progress of *hēlikiai* 'age-groups' admitted to citizenship together in a given year through a cycle of 42 successive annual stages in ancient Athens; (6) the Roman antiquarian doctrine of 30 original *curiae*, Festus' statement that there were actually 35, and a probable original system of age-sets based on a multiple of 7 like the Athenian *hēlikiai*. In conclusion (7), the bonds forged between members of a (P)IE sodality were continued in adult life by age-sets calculated to enhance their members' social and military cohesion and clout.

1 'Proto-Indo-European' is used here in its traditional vaguer sense rather than as a stage specifically including Anatolian and opposed to later CIE 'Core IE' excluding it. This, however, is a matter of convenience, not a denial that the Anatolian branch represents a particularly early offshoot.

1 Preliminaries

1.1 Basic (P)IE social structure and associated vocabulary

A case for the Proto-Indo-European social system and associated vocabulary summarised in Figure 1 has been made in three earlier studies. The first (McCone 1987) posited three post-pubescent age-grades along with a dichotomy between a **korḭos* '*Männerbund*, sodality' of vagrant warlike bachelors likened to wolves and a **teu̯-tah₂* 'kingdom' of adult married soldier-farmers who, if they lived long enough, retired from military duty as elders with advisory and judicial functions. The second (McCone 1998) was concerned with the PIE words for 'king' and 'queen'. The third (McCone 2020) posited basic social stratification reflected in a terminological opposition between three upper-class [U] age-grades and generic or lower-class [G/L] counterparts (118–121) integrated by a sacral king (104–115 and 127–130), whose queen was held to be the mortal surrogate of a goddess (160–163), most likely the radiant and erotic **H₂au̯s-ōs* 'Dawn' (150–157), bound to him in a *hieros gamos* or 'sacred marriage' (131–138).

1.2 Social structure, ideology and mythology

The nature of much of the evidence adduced below raises the question of the relationship between social structure and mythical or ideological patterns. Benveniste (1969: 279–292) maintained Dumézil's original view that an Indian-style tripartite hierarchy of priests, warriors and farmers/herdsmen was a key feature of PIE social organisation, despite the lack of pertinent reconstructed PIE terms. Meanwhile, Dumézil himself (e.g., 1968: 15) had shifted to the position that "tripartite ideology" did not necessarily mirror social structure. Thus encouraged, Campanile (1990) declared it an "Indo-European mindset" unaligned with an "essentially egalitarian society" (40–41) paradoxically presided over by a sacral king (42–49). Schlerath's (1987) doubts about the feasibility of reconstructing PIE social structure did not extend to mythology, to judge from his argument (Schlerath 1954) for PIE belief in two hounds attached to the realm of the dead, and his telling criticisms (Schlerath 1995 and 1996) of Dumézil's model and methods did not rule out the reconstruction of PIE ideology *per se*.

The uncoupling of mythology and ideology from social organisation creates a false dichotomy because, as the founder of the so-called 'functionalist' school of

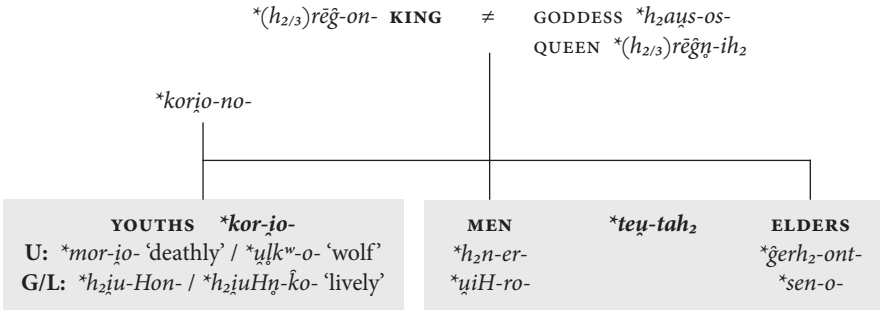

FIGURE 1. A model of basic PIE social organisation and terminology.

anthropology put it, "an intimate connection exists between the word, the mythos, the sacred tales of a tribe on the one hand, and their ritual acts, their moral deeds, their social organization, and even their practical activities on the other" (Malinowski 1926: 11). This principle is retained by the 'structuralist' approach pioneered by Lévi-Strauss, but with a crucial caveat against assuming "that a full correlation exists between the myths of a given society and its culture" and "that whenever a social pattern is alluded to in a myth this pattern must correspond to something real and attributable to the past if, under scrutiny, the present fails to offer an equivalent" rather than presenting "the pattern of a nonexistent society, past or present" (Lévi-Strauss 1978: 203–204). Consequently,

> it is always rash to undertake, as Boas wanted to do in his monumental *Tshimshian Mythology*, "a description of the life, social organization and religious ideas and practices of a people … as it appears in their mythology" … The myth is certainly related to given facts, but not as a *representation* of them. The relationship is of a dialectic kind, and the institutions described in the myths can be the very opposite of the real institutions. This will always be the case when the myth is trying to express a negative truth. (Lévi-Strauss 1978: 172)

The first citation is from Lévi-Strauss's study of "four Winnebago myths" (1978: 198–210), one of which contradicts actual Winnebago norms. The second is from his celebrated analysis of the Tshimshian (British Columbia) "story of Asdiwal" (1978: 146–197), which points out that the Tshimshian rule of patrilocal residence with the husband's kin after marriage is contravened by the hero: Asdiwal was not only born where his widowed mother lived with her widowed mother but also

went on to reside with his wife's family in three variously problematical matrilocal marriages (1978: 155–157). Furthermore, the succession of his son Waux to Asdiwal's hunting grounds in another version of the myth (1978: 165–166) is at odds with the Tshimshian matrilineal system of kinship and inheritance whereby a male would ultimately succeed not to his father's but to his maternal uncle's possessions and prerogatives (1978: 168). The basic point is that "Waux's paternal inheritance no more reflects real conditions than do his father's matrilocal marriages" (Lévi-Straus 1978: 172).

It seems, then, that mythical and social patterns do indeed correlate, but not always directly or even straightforwardly, on account of inversions and other transformations liable to be generated by a myth's own internal logic and 'dialectic' interaction with social and other realities. In structuralist terms, "myth … is an institutionalised system of symbols … which, like language, conveys various modes of classifying facts … Thought takes shape by expressing itself symbolically in and through myth as it does in and through language" (Vernant 1980: 222).

The central social role of kinship is complemented by the practice of exogamy, which promoted relationships beyond the immediate kin. Benveniste (1969: 205–276) and others have argued cogently that early IE systems of kinship were patrilineal and that a patrilocal PIE pattern of marriage follows from the notion of a husband 'leading' a wife as well as the contrast between plentiful reconstructed terms for her in-laws and next to none for his. A matrilocal counterpoise was, however, probably provided by sending young sons away to be fostered until puberty by the head of the mother's kin, as argued by Bremmer (1976; cf. McCone 1992 on P/WIE **h₂au̯-(o)n-* 'maternal uncle').

Asdiwal's marriages and patrimony or the occurrence of socially taboo incest in the myths of many peoples are typical enough instances of mismatches between mythical and normal social practices. These considerations militate against an unduly literal approach to features of IE myths, especially if they contradict social norms inferred from linguistic and other evidence. Asdiwal's matrilocal marriages and his son's patrilineal inheritance could be discounted as genuine Tshimshian institutions because of their incompatibility with that people's practice of patrilocal marriage and matrilineal inheritance. In an IE context, matrilocal residence and matrilineal succession confined to myth or legend would be similarly suspect as actual institutions in the face of good evidence for patrilocal marriage and patrilineal kinship.

Royal succession through marriage to the king's daughter or the former king's wife appears in the myths and legends of a number of IE peoples, including the

ancient Greeks (Finkelberg 1991). These have been discussed elsewhere (McCone 2020: 137–143) with a view to establishing a PIE prototype featuring either her own choice of a stranger from afar in unexpected preference to local claimants, or her marriage to an outsider who alone passed a test set by her or, more usually, her father. Taken at face value, such narratives imply a matrilineal transmission of kingship by matrilocal marriage diametrically opposed to the patrilineal and patrilocal rules otherwise governing inheritance and matrimony. Moreover, as observed by Finley (1967: 101) with regard to Penelope, a bride's own choice of a husband destined to be her people's next king involved placing this momentous "decision in the strangest place imaginable, in the hands of a woman" in "a solidly patriarchal society".

Significantly, the *Odyssey* itself offers a reality check by presenting parentally arranged patrilocal marriages as the desirable norm: the goddess Athene herself (in Mentes' guise) strongly recommends that Penelope return to her parental home so that her marriage can be arranged along with fitting bridal gifts (*Odyssey* i, 275–278); Telemachus reproaches the suitors with their failure to visit her father's house so that he could betroth her to the man of his choice (ii, 50–58); Menelaus is encountered when about to send his and Helen's daughter, having betrothed her to Achilles' son, "to the illustrious city of the Myrmidons over whom he ruled" to wed and live with him (iv, 3–9); and Odysseus' own sister had been given in marriage by her parents in return for bridal gifts and sent to live with her husband on the larger neighbouring island (xv, 366–367).

Even the two exceptions to this pattern constituted by Nausicaa and Penelope were not only complementarily partial but also unfulfilled. The nubile Nausicaa returned to the Phaeacians' city alone explicitly in order to avoid any suggestion that she had dishonoured her local admirers by herself choosing the stranger Odysseus as her husband (vi, 276–284). However, once Odysseus had made it to the palace, her father had no qualms about offering him her hand in marriage, property and a home among them, should he choose to stay (vii, 313–316). This offer, then, combined a king's choice of his daughter's husband with the latter's matrilocal residence.

Conversely, an unconventional own choice of husband was combined with conventional patrilocal residence by Odysseus' parting instructions that, if he did not return from Troy, Penelope should wait until Telemachus had grown a beard, then choose her own husband and leave the family home to go and live with him (xviii, 257–271).

Supernatural interventions such as dreams or talking geese may pave the way for the royal daughter's choice of someone whom she has never met before as her

husband (McCone 2020: 139 and 150), but another reality check is built into two key narratives of this type from ancient Iran and Gaul recorded by Athenaeus (xiii, 575 and 576a–b; McCone 2020: 138–140). In both, the king's daughter is due to signify her choice of husband by presenting a drink to one of the local guests invited to a feast by her father, but instead she bestows this upon a foreigner who has arrived unexpectedly and, in the Iranian tale, also secretly in disguise owing to the king's prior rejection of his suit. These two accounts clearly represent the girl's selection of a spouse from distant parts as an unforeseen and hence abnormal outcome. The regular preference of an uninvited outsider over the insiders approved by the father in this mythological scheme not only lacks verisimilitude but also highlights the riskiness of allowing a daughter to choose her own husband. Although perhaps resorted to on occasion, a test or tests seem more likely to have been a mythical analogue of the proven prowess and ability expected of a would-be king than a rather crude and, not least in the myths themselves, unpredictable method of determining the next ruler.

However implausible in practice, royal succession in the gift of a king's daughter or wife would make good sense as the mythical pendant of a core item of PIE belief for which there is good evidence (McCone 2020: 127–137): a sacral kingship vested in a *hieros gamos* 'sacred marriage' between the king and a goddess that enabled him to channel divinely mediated benefits into his kingdom.

That said, an actual institution of elective kingship may also be reflected by the myth's basic scheme of a royal succession not restricted to a direct descendant (typically a son, but not necessarily the oldest) or, failing that, close agnatic relative (e.g., a paternal uncle or nephew) of the previous king. Such an arrangement would, at least up to a point, follow similar rules to those governing inheritance in general among various IE peoples, namely division of a man's estate between his direct male descendants or, if he had none, his closest surviving agnatic kin.[2]

2 For instance, among ancient Germanic peoples, the heirs to an estate were the children (*liberi*) of the deceased or, failing them, his brothers (*fratres*), paternal uncles (*patruī*) and maternal uncles (*avunculī*) in that order according to Tacitus (*Germania* 20). In early Irish law, "the division of an inheritance (*orbae*) … is made by the youngest inheritor (*comarbae*), but the eldest gets the first choice, the second eldest the second choice, and so on. The youngest gets the last choice, so it is in his interest to divide the property into equally valuable portions … If a man predeceases his father before the division of the inheritance [and] if this man has sons, they are given the share which would have fallen to him … If a whole kin-group … becomes extinct … the property is distributed among a wider circle of the kin" (Kelly 1988: 102–104). When someone had died intestate, Roman law (e.g., Gaius, *Inst.* iii, 1–16, on the authority of the Twelve Tables) enjoined the division of his estate equally among his natural heirs (*sui heredes*),

However, whereas a typical estate could be divided, the essential indivisibility of kingship is, for example, given expression by the designation of just one of a king's five sons as his heir after succeeding where the others had failed in another sovereignty myth of probable PIE provenance (McCone 2020: 143–149 and 161–162), which is discussed briefly in section 2 below. At first sight, this scenario contradicts the preceding one involving the bestowal of kingship upon an outsider by a king's daughter. Nevertheless, both mythical patterns are compatible with an elective system of regnal succession biased towards a king's sons or other close male kin but with the flexibility to look elsewhere in the absence of a family member deemed suitable. Elective kingships along such lines are attested among a number of IE peoples and may well have been a feature of PIE social structure,[3] Dumézil (1943: 10) positing an IE "mythology of election" and Benveniste (1969: 303) stating that the IE peoples of central and western Europe chose kings "not by birth but by election".

Quite possibly, mythical reflexes of *hieros gamos* had a ritual counterpart in the form of an inaugural ceremony at which the newly elected king was symbolically 'chosen' as husband by the offer of a drink from his bride in her capacity as the goddess's surrogate. Another possible inference from the mythical material would be that a new king not, or at least not closely, related to his predecessor was liable to marry into the royal family if a suitable female was available. In the event that a king had no male direct descendants or close agnates deemed fit to succeed him, such a convention may have echoed a broader pattern of inheritance, if this allowed for a residual claim by or through a female in the absence of male heirs related at least as closely to the deceased. For instance, the ancient Germani seem

namely his surviving sons and daughters as well as the children of any son or daughter who had predeceased him (who divided up the share otherwise due to him as in Ireland), and only in their absence among collateral kin (*agnati*) such as brothers sharing a father with him, paternal uncles and so on in order of proximity.

3 Rome's kings were elected in the extant sources. For example, the outsider Servius Tullius became king after the assassination of Tarquinius Priscus on behalf of his predecessor Ancus Marcius' sons, and only her flawed last king, Tarquinius Superbus, was directly descended from another in the male line as "an exception that proves the rule, and indeed confirms that in normal circumstances hereditary succession was excluded" (Cornell 1995: 141–142). Fomin (2013: 269) contrasts the "survival of a more archaic electoral kingship" in Ceylon with otherwise typical Indian succession by primogeniture in the male line. Succession by the king's eldest son was not automatic among the Scyths (Herodotus iv, 5–6) or in early medieval Ireland (see Ó Corráin 1971, Charles-Edwards 1993: 89–111 and Jaski 2000), and the king's son(s) might be overlooked in the *Odyssey* (i, 386–401).

to have allowed maternal uncles to inherit if there were no surviving children, brothers or paternal uncles in that order (see note 2 above), and early Irish law makes the following provision: "a daughter is entitled to a share of her father's personal valuables, but not of his land. However, if she has no brother, she is known as a *banchomarbae* 'female heir', and is entitled to a life-interest in her father's land. Normally, she cannot pass this land on to her husband or her sons; on her death it reverts to the wider circle of her own kin. But if her husband is an alien … she is entitled to pass on to her son 'the inheritance of a sister's son' (*orbae niad*) … i.e. the property-qualification of an *ócaire*" as the "lowest grade of adult freeman" (Kelly 1988: 104–105 and 318). Interestingly, in the Iranian tale, it is "on account of being devoid of male offspring" (Athenaeus xiii, 575c) that the king arranges for his daughter to marry the local kinsman of her choice.

To conclude, the link between mythical and social features or patterns seems often to be sufficiently straightforward for myths and legends to yield valuable direct information about the institutions and practices of the societies to which they belong. However, this is by no means invariably the case, since the dynamics of 'dialectic' interaction with an environment that includes religious beliefs can produce transformations or even inversions of real-life norms in myths or legends. These can serve a reliable corroborative and augmentative purpose when they are in tune with information about institutions and practices gleaned from other sources. They can also be exploited more tentatively if their social implications are typologically reasonable and uncontradicted by other good evidence. However, significant divergence between a myth's structure or contents and more directly attested usages should serve as a warning against the uncritical extrapolation of social realities from the mythical representations in question.

1.3 Age-grades and age-sets

Kith and kin were not, of course, the only source of formal social ties (or, for that matter, rivalries), and a significant nexus of reciprocity not conditioned by claims of consanguinity or matrimony as such is explored by Benveniste (1969: 87–101) in a chapter on hospitality in an IE context. Bonds independent of kinship or marriage could also be forged between the often unrelated members of an ideally lifelong social group along the lines of present-day alumni associations and regimental or class reunions, which are based upon shared experience in an institution (e.g., a school, a university or the army) or even a particular date of

admission to it as the 'class' of year X. Membership of such associations is usually voluntary in 'modern' societies, but stricter social and ritual arrangements are well-attested elsewhere. A prominent British anthropologist of the functionalist school has identified coevality and life-membership as the first and second essential attributes of what he terms an 'age-set', the term preferred below over alternatives such as 'age-class' or 'age-group'.

> Radcliffe-Brown … defined an age-set as "A recognised and sometimes organised group consisting of persons … who are of the same age … Once a person enters a given age-set, whether at birth or by initiation, he remains a member of the same set for the remainder of his life." … Roughly speaking, a society has an age-set system when it has a number of age-sets with no members in common and distinct mean ages … Quite often, age-group systems are found in conjunction with age grades, defined by Radcliffe-Brown as "recognised divisions of the life of an individual as he passes from infancy to old age … infant, boy, youth, young married man, elder, or whatever it may be." … The grades are clearly demarcated, that is, transition from one grade to another takes place at a definite point in time, and there is never any doubt about which grade a person is in. (Our own society does not have age-grades of this kind for adults.) (Stewart 1977: 1–2)

Although sequences of just three age-grades are widespread cross-culturally,

> systems of this kind can, of course, be much more elaborate than the simple three-part model …, especially if the age-grades overlap with age-classes … or increase in number on account of finer differentiation of functions and features. The expression 'age-class' or 'age-group' denotes associations of those who are initiated at the same time and subsequently progress through the different age-grades together. The Celtic and Germanic data, however, do not enable us to go beyond the simple three-grade system. The bachelor bands attested there … seem to have attached themselves to their leader mostly for purely personal reasons and probably constituted no lifelong age-classes in the strict sense. (McCone 1987: 115–116)

This conclusion was basically reiterated in a broader IE context (McCone 1987: 145–146), and the present contribution seeks to revise it in the light of additional data pointing to age-sets as an adjunct of a PIE system of three post-pubescent age-grades.

2 IE sodalities and their attributes

2.1 'Wolves' and 'wolfskins'

The argument below that (P)IE sodalities were a prerequisite for age-sets calls for some discussion of the nature of bachelor bands, rules of admission into them and conditions for proceeding to the next age-grade as a married householder. If there was a basic PIE social dichotomy between a lower and an upper class as suggested above, it seems probable that membership of junior sodalities, adult age-sets and senior councils was primarily the prerogative of the latter (McCone 2020: 120–121).

"Man ever since the development of hunting has belonged to two overlapping social structures, the family and the *Männerbund* …, which is biologically analogous to a pack of wolves" (Burkert 1983: 17–18). Although the introduction of agriculture and the domestication of certain animals made hunting increasingly dispensable, the defensive and offensive utility of men trained to kill meant that young males often continued to be raised as hunters and fighters in a sodality or *Männerbund*. For instance, in a sixth-millennium BC "farming town where goat and sheep had long been domesticated" at Çatal Hüyük in central Turkey, "wall paintings contain clear, thrilling depictions of the ritual hunt of a band of leopard men" (Burkert 1983: 42–43). However, this phase of activity was now marked off from that of older married men still available to fight but otherwise engaged in pastoral and/or arable pursuits. Geography was naturally relevant to the choice of mascot predator, and "wolves played a great role as warrior models throughout Eurasia and North America … among Indo-Europeans, Turks, Mongols and American Indians" (Speidel 2004: 14).

A way of life centred upon pastoralism at home and hunting or raiding abroad typified the ancient Germani as described by Caesar in *de Bello Gallico*:

> Their whole life consists of hunting and military pursuits. They are devoted to exertion and hardship from an early age. Those who have remained virgins (*impuberes*) for longest enjoy the greatest praise among their fellows … To have had knowledge of a woman before the age of twenty is reckoned among the most disgraceful things … They are not concerned with arable farming (*agri cultura*) and the bulk of their food consists of milk, cheese and meat … Robberies (*latrocinia*) that occur beyond the boundaries of a given people (*civitas*) are not condemned and they declare that they take place in

> order to train the youth and reduce inactivity. Furthermore, where someone from among the chiefs (*ex principibus*) has said in the assembly (*in concilio*) that he is going to be a leader (*dux*) and that those who wish to follow him should declare themselves, those who approve of the cause and the man rise up, promise their assistance and are praised by the multitude. (Caesar, *de Bello Gallico* vi, 21, 3–5 and 23, 6–7)

An array of correspondences between Germanic and Celtic evidence (McCone 1987: 101–104 and 104–110), combined with linguistic considerations (110–114), led to the following conclusion:

> The **koryos* [sodality] consists of propertiless bachelors of free birth who lead an unrestrained life based upon hunting, robbery and fighting on the margins of the settled community … Admission and progress are attained on the strength of bloody trials. Its members are spear- and shield-bearing foot-soldiers prone to onsets of frenzy, whose wild and brave appearance can be enhanced by a special hairstyle, nudity or wearing wolfskins. On account of such traits and also because its members appear to be bestially possessed, the **koryos* is equated with a pack of dogs or, above all, wolves. Admission to this sodality entails recognition of puberty and this transition or 'rite of passage' is often connected with a change of name (Van Gennep 1960: 62, 77, 83 …). This is presumably why 'hound' and 'wolf' occur so frequently in Celtic and Germanic personal names, 'wolf' clearly predominating. Through the initiation in question, the new member becomes a wolf and devotes himself to the wild hunting life. (McCone 1987: 114)

Lincoln (1975: 103) points out that the word for wolf appears "in literally hundreds of proper names". He follows a discussion of relevant Indo-Iranian evidence with the assertion that "the ideology of man as wolf, the fiercest and most cunning of predators, is [also] well attested in Baltic, Slavic, Germanic, Greek, Roman, and Anatolian sources, and thus must ascend to the Proto-Indo-European period" (Lincoln 1981: 126; cf. McCone 1987: 119–122). Celtic can be confidently added to the list in the light of medieval Irish evidence for the likening of warriors, particularly those belonging to a vagabond sodality called a *fían*, to wolves (McCone 1986 and 1987: 103–106). Wikander (1938) has assembled evidence for Indo-Iranian sodalities whose members were typically called *márya-* in Vedic and *mairiia-* in Avestan. According to Benveniste (1969: 247), "one perceives in the distant past an institutional value attached to this term, that of a class of young warriors, because

the *maryanni* designating the class of warriors figure among the Indo-Iranian terms that we encounter in the 14th century BC in the texts of Mitanni", while references to them as wolves have been considered by Wikander (1938: 65–66) and Lincoln (1981: 125). Herodotus (iv, 105) states of neighbours of the Scyths with similar customs that "once every year each of the Neuri becomes a wolf for a few days and then returns to his former state". According to Jakobson (1966: 352),

> the community and similarity of lycanthropic beliefs in the Slavic world and the expansion of the Slavic werewolf name among the adjacent peoples (Greek *vrukólakas*, Turkish *vurkolak*, Albanian *vurvolak*, Rumanian *vărkolak*) speak for the antiquity and tenacity of these beliefs … If the 'Neuroi' in Herodotus' report really belong to the Primitive Slavs, as many scholars believe, the legends about their magic ability to change themselves into wolves … give us a glimpse of the distant Slavic past and its mythology.

As for the Russian hero Volx discussed below (5.1–2), one source "explicitly depicts Vseslav as a werewolf" and "both in the *Slovo* and in the *bylina* particular attention is paid to his changes into a wolf" (Jakobson 1966: 347). In his *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus* (xvii, 45–46) of 1555 the Swedish archbishop Olaus Magnus gives a lively description of great wild wolfish hordes that assembled for a few days every year in Lithuania, Latvia and Prussia, contained upper-class people and indulged in vandalism and drunkenness. Werewolves (e.g., Serbian *vukodlak*, Church Slavonic *vъlkodlakъ*, literally 'wolf-haired') evidently played a significant role among the Slavs and Balts (Ridley: 1976), about whom further evidence is provided by a Livonian legal protocol of 1691.[4]

Burkert (1983) offers a penetrating discussion of Arcadian werewolves and their cannibalistic initiation at the festival of Zeus Lykaios on Mount Lykaion (ibid.: 84–93), the role of wolves at Delphi including "a story that Apollo was born by a she-wolf" (ibid.: 120–121), and "the fact that the structure of Odysseus' 'sufferings' quite obviously corresponds to the werewolf pattern that turns up again and again from Delphi to Mount Lykaion" (ibid.: 133). Italic evidence includes mention of Caeculus of Praeneste's wild followers (*legio … agrestis*) "and their tawny caps of wolf's skin" (*fulvosque lupi de pelle galeros*) by Vergil (*Aeneid* vii, 681 and 688), whose reference (*Aeneid* xi, 785) to Apollo as "guardian of Soracte" (*custos Soractis*) in the territory of the Hirpini prompts Servius to comment:

4 Original German text in Höfler (1934: 345–357), English translation in Gershenson (1991: 134–139).

> For when a rite was once being performed for Dis Pater on this mountain … wolves suddenly came and seized the innards from the fire. When the shepherds pursued them for a long time … a pestilence arose thereafter because they had followed the wolves. The response concerning this was that it could be assuaged if they imitated wolves, i.e., lived by plunder. This was then done and those people were called Hirpi Sorani. For wolves (*lupî*) are called *hirpi* in the Sabines' language. Sorani, indeed, (comes) from Dis. For Dis Pater is called Soranus. Wolves of Dis Pater, so to speak.

The onset of martial frenzy is called *berserksgangr* 'going berserk' in Old Norse and was closely connected with the spear-casting one-eyed Germanic god of war and death, **Wōdanaz* (> ON *Óðinn*, OE *Wōden*, OHG *Wuotan*) 'lord of frenzy/the frenzied' (MHG *wuot* 'frenzy'; Goth. *woþs*, ON *óðr*, OE *wōd*, OHG *wuot* 'frenzied') at the head of a wild host of warriors fallen in battle (e.g., Ellis Davidson 1964: 48–72, Benveniste 1969: 302–303), who were called his *ein-herjar* (**-harja-* < **korio-*; see above and Benveniste 1969: 111–113). Adam of Bremen (*Descriptio Insularum Aquilonis* 26) states that "Wodan, i.e. frenzy (*furor*), wages wars and furnishes man with courage against enemies", and *Ynglingasaga* 6 depicts the effects upon his followers: "his men fought without breastplates and were as rabid as hounds or wolves. They bit into their shields and were as strong as bears or bulls. They slew the men and neither fire nor iron could check them at all. That is called *berserksgangr*."

A comparable state of manic invincibility is called *lyssa* (λύσσα) 'frenzy' (literally 'wolfishness' < **luk^{w}-i̯a*, a derivative of *lykos* [λύκος] 'wolf' < **luk^{w}-o-s*) in Greek (Lincoln 1975): for instance Hector "exulting greatly in might (μέγα σθένεϊ βλεμεαίνων)[5] rages terribly (μαίνεται ἐκπάγλως), trusting in Zeus, and cares naught for men or gods; for a powerful frenzy (κρατερή … λύσσα) has entered him" (*Iliad* ix, 237–239), while Achilles is similarly irresistible as "a powerful frenzy (λύσσα … κρατερή) still holds his heart" (xxi, 542–543).

Although heroes in the *Iliad* tend to be compared with lions in near-eastern fashion (e.g., West 1997: 246, Strawn 2005), wolves also figure at key moments: the Greeks and Trojans "leapt at each other like wolves (λύκοι ὥς) and man cast down man" (iv, 471–472) or "were raging like wolves (λύκοι ὡς θῦνον)" (xi, 72–73)', and

5 A phrase with bestial connotations apparent in its use with reference to the great 'spirit' (θυμός) of a leopard, lion or boar at *Iliad* xvii, 20–22, of a lion at xvii, 132–136, of a boar or lion fearlessly defying hunters and hounds at xii, 39–50, and indeed of Hector again "as when some dog catches hold of a wild boar or a lion from behind" at viii, 337–339.

the Myrmidons about to join battle along with Patroclus were "like flesh-eating wolves (λύκοι ὣς ὠμοφάγοι)" with cheeks bloodied from devouring a mighty stag after chasing it through the woods (xvi, 156–159). Stanza 20 of an Old Norse skaldic poem by Þorbjǫrn hornklofi known as *Haraldskvæði* or *Hrafnsmál* begins with the Valkyrie asking "about berserks' equipment (*at berserkja reiðu*)" and being told by the raven at the beginning of stanza 21, "they are called wolf-skins (*úlf-heðnar heita*)". *Vatnsdælasaga* (9, 1) introduces "berserks who were called wolfskins (*berserkir er úlfheðnar váru kallaðir*)" and had "wolf(skin)-jackets as breastplates (*varg-stakka fyrir brynjur*)". Since the Alemannic name *Wolf-hetan* is an obvious cognate of Norse *úlf-heðinn* 'wolf-skin' (Müller 1969), the term presumably goes back at least as far as the common ancestor of West and North Germanic. *Vǫlsungasaga* (8) tells how the heroic Sigmund and his son Sinfjǫtli donned wolf-skins (*úlfa-hamir*) left hanging on trees by two sleeping kings' sons (*konunga-synir*), began to howl and went to live and kill in the forest like wolves until they burned the skins and returned to the world of men.

A comparable transformation appears in the Middle Irish onomastic compilation *Cóir Anmann* 'Propriety of names' (§218; Arbuthnot 2007: 58 and 131), which ascribes the name Laignech Fáelad to its bearer's penchant "for wolfing (*fri fáelad*), i.e., he went into wolf-shapes (*i con-rechtaib*),[6] i.e., into the shapes of wolves (*i rechtaib na mac tíre*), when he wished, as did his descendants later, and they killed cattle after the fashion of wolves (*fo bés na mac tíre*)".[7] In the early medieval Irish saga *The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel* (ed. Knott 1936, trans. Gantz 1981: 61–106), young Conaire becomes king of Tara and Ireland as a youth but is ultimately undone by his devotion to his three foster-brothers. One of Conaire's royal taboos was "let brigandage (*díberg*) not be undertaken in your reign" (§16). This got off to a peaceful and prosperous start but, as the sons of a *féinnid* or member of a *fían*-band, his foster brothers "complained about being deprived of the profession of their father and grandfather, i.e., robbery and plunder and killing people and brigandage (*díberg*)" (§18) and began to rob a man every year. When the king failed to act on their victim's complaints, "arrogance and greed seized them. They took up brigandage (*díberg*) with sons of the nobles of Ireland around them. Three fifties of men (were) being instructed by them when they

6 See McCone (1987: 104–105, 2021: 206–207) on the virtual loss of the reflexes of the PIE word for 'wolf' in Celtic and use of inherited **kū* 'dog, hound' for 'wolf' too, an ambiguity subsequently avoided to a large extent by new expressions for 'wolf', notably *fáel*(*-chú*), *cú allaid* 'wild dog' and *mac tíre* 'son of (the) land'.

7 See Carey (2002: 48–64) on this and related material concerning "the werewolves of Ossory".

were wolfing (*oc fáelad*) in the territory of the Connachtmen" (§20). The connection between *díberg* and the *fían* emerges at various points, such as when "the brigands (*díbergaig*) leaped onto Trácht Fuirbthin and bring a stone per man with them to make a cairn, for that was the characteristic practice of the warbands/sodalities (*fíanna*) at the start" (§67). Captured and banished from Ireland, the numerous brigands (*díbergaig*) put to sea, encountered and combined with British counterparts, and finally caused Conaire's death in an attack upon Da Derga's hostel, which he was visiting. An Old Irish charm (Stokes and Strachan 1903: 293) from the ninth-century AD *Codex Sancti Pauli,* which probably relates to a game of chance to decide an inheritance (McCone 1990: 207–209), ends as follows: "If luck should befall me, may it be grain and dairy produce that I see. If luck should not befall me, may it be wolves and deer and traversing of mountains and the young warriors of the *fían*-band that I see".

2.2 Nudity

Having been notified of his royal father's death by his foster-parents while at play with his three foster-brothers in chariots (§11–12), Conaire was enabled by supernatural advice to conform to a trance-induced vision of the next king by arriving at Tara stark naked (*lom-nocht*) (§13–14) and then allayed doubts about the fitness of "a young beard-less lad (*gillae óc am-ulchach*)" to be made king (§15). Tacitus (*Germania* 6) records that the Germanic infantrymen (*pedites*) of his day fought "naked or lightly clad in a small cloak (*nudi aut sagulo leves*)", further noting "the speed of the infantrymen, whom they pick out from all the youth (*ex omni iuventute*) and place in front of the battle line (*ante aciem*)". He also mentions (24) a spectacle in which "naked youths (*nudi iuvenes*), to whom the game (*ludicrum*) belongs, leap about amidst swords and threatening spears (*inter gladios se atque infestas frameas saltu iaciunt*)". Paul the Deacon (*Historia Langobardorum* i, 20) refers to Germanic Heruli fighting naked (*nudi*) with only their genitals covered (*operientes solummodo corporis verecunda*) in 560 AD, and there is early iconic evidence for naked Germanic warriors such as the one with horned helmet, belt and two spears on a sixth-century AD Anglo-Saxon buckle from Finglesham in Kent (illustrated in the Wikipedia article "Finglesham").[8]

8 For an illustration see https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:FingleshamMan1965Buckle.png.

At the Battle of Telamon in 225 BC between Romans and Gauls, the Gaisatai 'spearmen'[9] recruited by the latter from the mountainous Alps likewise "stood naked with their arms in front of the force" (Polybius ii, 28, 2) and "terrifying was the appearance and movement of the naked men standing in front, as they stood out in strength and form" (29, 2). Diodorus (v, 29, 1–2) mentions Celtic warriors "naked and wearing a belt/girdle (γυμνοὺς καὶ περιεζωσμένους)". Iconographic evidence (e.g. Moscati et al. 1991: 60–71 and 88; James 1993: 6–7, 20, 32–34 and 40–42) includes a clothed Etruscan cavalryman fighting a naked Gaulish infantryman armed only with shield and sword on a mid-fourth-century BC stele from Felsina (Bologna) and Gaulish footsoldiers with only neck torques, belts and, in some cases, short cloaks contrasting with tunic-clad charioteers on a second-century BC temple frieze from nearby Civitalba. In the *Iliad* "the youths (*kouroî*) who were most numerous and best followed Polydamas and Hector and were most eager to break the wall and burn the ships with fire" (xii, 197–198), and in a short early Irish saga (*Táin Bó Flidais*) "Ailill son of Mata said 'Bad for the honour of the Ulsterman now is the fact that the three warriors (*é-claind*, literally 'kinless') of them have fallen and they do not take vengeance for it' … Thereupon the sole-kinsmen (*an-chin*(*n*)*idî*) of the Ulstermen arise naked and launch a mighty, violent attack with great wrath and rage so that they brought the lintel down" (Best and Bergin 1929: ll. 1594–1608). Towards the end of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, recently aroused Ulstermen "come to the battle stark naked (*tor-nocht*) apart from their weapons" (O'Rahilly 1976: ll. 3937–3938). Nudity was evidently practised by the members of early Celtic and Germanic sodalities, apparently as an alternative to wearing wolfskins or the like.

Polybius (vi, 25, 3) states that the Roman cavalry "in olden times at first did not have breastplates but took their chances in belts with the result that they were ready and able to dismount and remount quickly but were at risk in close engagements on account of taking their chances naked". Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* xxxiii, 35–36) provides the information that Rome's knights (*equites*) "were called *celeres* under Romulus and the kings", then *trossuli* and finally *equites,* while Dionysius of Halicarnassus (ii, 12) saw a parallel between Romulus' élite corps of three hundred young *celeres* 'swift ones' and the three hundred Spartan youths usually called

9 Their name is clearly a Greek adaptation (Γαισάτης) of a native Gaulish word **gaisatis* 'spearman' consisting of **gaiso-* 'spear' and a suffix **-ati-* 'pertaining to'. The presumed Gaulish word for 'spear' was borrowed into Latin as *gaesum*, recorded as γαῖσος by Hesychius and cognate with Old Irish *gaí* 'spear' < **gaisos*. See McCone (1995: 6–7) on the suffix.

hippeis 'knights' but employed by Sparta's kings as infantry or cavalry according to circumstances.

Plutarch (*Agesilaus* 34, 8–11) describes how, in the run-up to the Battle of Mantinea in 362 BC, a strapping Spartan named Isadas "of an age when males bloom most pleasantly as they pass from children (*paides*) to (adult) men (*andres*)" joined in repulsing an enemy attack on his own initiative and, naked (*gymnos*) with a spear in one hand and a sword in the other, not only struck down any opponent in his way but also survived effectively 'going berserk' unscathed. Vidal-Naquet (1986: 117) deduces from inscriptional evidence that,

> both Malla and Dreros in Crete seem to have held ceremonies of admission to the adult age-classes that involved ritual nudity before the conferring of hoplite arms. The young men are called *azōstoi* ('ungirdled'), which Hesychius defines as 'those who are without arms'. At Dreros they are called *panazōstoi* and *egdyomenoi* 'those who have no clothes', and the latter term occurs also at Malla. Similarly, at Phaestus there was a festival called the *Ekdysia* ('clothes off').

Aristotle's Lyceum was so called "because it was located in a district in the valley of the Ilissus close to Athens in a gymnasium attached to a temple of Apollo and called after the wolf, because that animal was closely associated with Apollo" (Gershenson 1991: 3). Since the word gymnasium reflects the well-known Greek practice of exercising and competing naked (*gymno-*), the location of ancient Athens' chief gymnasium, the Lyceum (Λύκειον), beside 'Wolfish' (Λύκειος) Apollo's temple was hardly coincidental.

A link between youthful wolfishness and nakedness is explicitly made in the following account by Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* viii, 81):

> Euanthes, not disregarded among the authors of Greece, writes that the Arcadians record that someone from the kindred of a certain Anthus chosen by lot among the family is led to a certain pond in that region and, having hung his clothing on an oak, swims across and goes away into the wilderness and is changed into a wolf and joins a herd with the others of the same kind for nine years; that, if he abstain from human flesh in that time, he returns to the same lake and, when he has swum across, recovers his appearance with the addition of nine years' ageing. He adds, rather more extraordinarily, that he gets back the same garment.

There is a parallel with Odysseus' return to human civilisation, after nine years spent away, by swimming from a wrecked ship to land, where he was given a proper bath and clothes on the orders of the Phaeacian king's daughter, Nausicaa, after emerging naked from a wood (*Od.* v, 262–493, and vi, 110–216) "like a mountain-reared lion (λέων ὀρεσίτροφος) … whose eyes are burning (ἐν δέ οἱ ὄσσε δαίεται)" as he hungrily approaches a dwelling in search of food (vi, 130–134).

Youths, especially those belonging to sodalities, were prone to go about and even fight naked among a number of Indo-European peoples, and Anthony (2007: 364–365) presents archaeological evidence that PIE "*korios* raiders wore a belt and little else … Stone anthropomorphic stelae were erected over hundreds of Yamnaya graves between the Ingul and the South Bug valleys, in the same region where dog-canine pendants were common. The most common clothing element carved or painted on the stelae was a belt, often with an axe or a pair of sandals attached to it". Since such sodalities typically lived in the wilds and were equated with wolves, the obvious explanation of this nudity resides in the principle that "there is nearly always a critical distinction between the body which is naked and unadorned, which is animal, and the body adorned, which is human" (Leach 1982: 117). Insofar as it entailed dispensing with clothes as a characteristic of settled or civilised society and going about unclad like a beast, nakedness amounted to the same thing as wearing the skins of wild animals such as the wolf. Indeed, that was precisely the testimony of "old Thiess" in section 6 of the aforementioned Livonian legal protocol (Höfler 1934: 346): when asked how men became wolves, he first stated that they put on a wolfskin but then shifted to a claim that they were transformed by merely going into a bush and casting off their clothes.

2.3 Speed, agility and war-dances

Light clothing or nakedness were conducive to another important attribute of the typically young members of sodalities, namely speed and agility. The aforementioned early Roman *celeres* are a case in point, Tacitus (*Germania* 6) was impressed by the speed of the youthful Germanic infantry (*velocitate peditum*), and the *Iliad* frequently refers to the fleetness of younger warriors such as 'swift-footed' Achilles (πόδας ὠκύς/ταχύς ix, 357; xvii, 709; xviii, 354; ποδώκης/ποδάρκης xviii, 262; ii, 688; xvi, 5, etc.) or Meriones catching an enemy 'with swift feet' (ποσὶ καρπαλίμοισι xvi, 42). Lincoln (1981: 128) argues that the basic Indo-Iranian term for a warrior's fury was **aisma-* underlying Avestan *aešma-* 'fury, anger'. The underlying PIE root **h₁(e/o)is-* 'storm, assault' is also seen in Indic *iṣm-ín-* 'hasten-

ing, impetuous', used as an epithet of Rudra and the Maruts (e.g., *RV* v, 52, 16 and i, 87, 6 respectively), *eṣá-* 'running', Latin *īra* 'anger' and Homeric Greek *oima* 'rush, swoop'. It seems to have denoted rapid and frenzied motion, especially that of ecstatic young warriors, in the parent language. In ancient Iran, a god Aēšma was served by "the host of the two-footed 'wolves' (V.7.52, Y.9.18)" (Falk 1986: 62), *daēva*s comparable to the Indic *daiva* Vrātyas associated with Rudra and the Maruts (Falk 1986: 18 and 60–63).

The leaping war-dance of naked Germanic youths mentioned above brings to mind the Roman *Salii*, Vergil (*Aeneid* viii, 663) juxtaposing "leaping Salii and naked Luperci (*exsultantis Salios nudosque Lupercos*)". According to Dionysius (ii, 70),

> all of these Salii are dancers and of the armed gods. Their festival is … in the month called March (*Martius* 'of Mars'), being held at public cost over many days, in the course of which they perform their dances through the city … Each is dressed in colourful tunics with kilts of bronze … Each of them is girt with a sword and wields a spear, staff or suchlike in the right hand while holding a light Thracian shield in the left … such as those carrying out the rites of the Curetes among the Greeks are said to bear … The Salii are, to my knowledge at least, taken over from the Greek term Curetes, so called by us from their age as lads (*kouroi*) but by the Romans from their impetuous movement: for leaping and bounding is called *salire* by them … For they make their armed movements in rhythm to the flute … To judge from ancient accounts, the first to establish dancing and movement while armed and the noise produced by the blades on the shields were the Curetes.

Dancing was represented in Homeric epic as the special preserve of *kouroi* or its alternant *kourētes*, as in the expression κοῦροι Ἀχαιῶν (*Il.* ii, 562, etc.) or κούρητες Ἀχαιῶν (*Il.* xix, 248, cf. 193). Examples of young dancers in the *Iliad* include the Cretan king Idomeneus' chief *hetairos*, Meriones (ὀρχήστης at xvi, 617), Hector ("I know how to dance in formation to destructive Ares"; vii, 241), and the dancing *kouroi* (κοῦροι δ' ὀρχηστῆρες ἐδίνεον; xviii, 494) at the wedding depicted on Achilles' new shield. In the *Odyssey* the suitors, who are frequently referred to as *kouroi*, dance after feasting (e.g. i, 150–152 and 422–424), and the Phaeacian youth (κοῦροι πρωθῆβαι) are remarkable for their skill in the dance (viii, 261–265). Strabo (x, 3) discusses the mythical and religious significance of various Curetes, including the nine Cretan ones (3, 22; cf. Diodorus v, 65, 1) famously responsible for drowning out the concealed baby Zeus' cries by their noisy war dance. Described

as manically possessed dancing priests (3, 7), they were also said to have protected Leto from a jealous Hera at the birth of Apollo and Artemis on a mountain near Ephesus that was the site of an annual festival featuring youthful rivalry, drinking and initiations presided over by a college of Curetes (xiv, 1, 20). These at first sight disparate phenomena can be integrated by positing primitive Greek sodalities of **koru̯oi* or **koru̯ētes* as a starting point.

2.4 Fiery features

At the head of the "flame-like (φλογὶ ἴσοι)" Trojans, Hector is "raging with *lyssa* like a flame (λυσσώδης φλογὶ εἴκελος)" (*Iliad* xiii, 39 and 53). The supreme Irish hero Cú Chulainn is liable to a battle frenzy similar to Norse *berserksgangr* or Greek *lyssa* and called *ríastrad* 'warp spasm'. Among other things, this literally fires him up in *Táin Bó Cúailnge*:

> The candles of the war-goddess (Badb) and the rainclouds of venom and the sparks of flaming red fire were seen in clouds and gusts above his head in response to the seething (*fiuchad*) of truly fierce frenzy that rose above him … The warrior's moon (*lúan láith*) arose out of his forehead. (O'Rahilly 1976: ll. 2245–2278)

Although Homeric *lyssa* 'frenzy' seems more likely to derive from 'wolf' (Lincoln 1975: 98, n. 4), an analysis as a reflex of **luk-i̯a-* 'light' would be formally unimpeachable, and also semantically defensible (Lincoln 1975: 98, n. 3) in view of the frenzied Cú Chulainn's *lúan* (< **lo̯uk-s-no-s*; cf. Greek λύχνος 'light, lamp' < **luk-s-no-s*) or beam of light and the fiery effects attaching to warriors on both sides in the *Iliad*. For instance, after bestowing "might and courage" upon Diomedes, Athene "kindled unceasing fire (δαΐἑ οἱ … ἀκάματον πῦρ) from his helmet and shield" and "such fire did she kindle (τοῖόν οἱ πῦρ δαΐεν) from his head and shoulders" (v, 4 and 6). During the fierce tug of war over Patroclus' body, Greeks and Trojans fought "like fire (δέμας πυρός)" (xvii, 366), Hector was "like a flame in might (φλογὶ εἴκελος ἀλκήν)" (xviii, 154) and, even more spectacularly, Athene came to Achilles "and the noblest of goddesses encircled his head with a golden cloud (νέφος … χρύσεον) and kindled a brilliant flame (φλόγα παμφανόωσαν) out of it" (xviii, 205–206) so that "the light reached up to the sky (σέλας αἰθερ' ἵκανεν) from Achilles' head" (xviii, 214). The corpse was finally rescued as the Greeks took heart and the Trojans fright "when they saw the unceasing dread fire

(ἀκάματον πῦρ δεινόν) blazing above the head of the stout-hearted son of Peleus" (xviii, 224–226).

This phenomenon recalls the Avestan *xᵛarənah-* "the radiant nimbus that marks kings and heroes" (Lincoln 1981: 104, see Hintze 1994: 15–28). Vulcan and his fire were associated with the brigand Caeculus who founded Praeneste (Bremmer 1987), while Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* ii, 241) links flames above the young Servius Tullius, a warrior as well as a king of note, with a clearly martial instance after a Roman defeat in 211 BC: "Valerius Antias relates that a flame shone forth from the head of Servius Tullius (and) that in Spain after the slaying of the Scipios one flared in similar fashion from Lucius Marcius as he was haranguing the troops and urging them to revenge."

A clear connection between fire and wolfishness is made in Serbian folksong, where the hero Zmaj Ognjen(i) Vuk/Vuče 'Fiery Dragon Wolf' "is born, on his head wolf's hair grows, from his mouth living fire gushes, from his nostrils blue flame darts, and his arm is red to the shoulders" (Jakobson 1966: 371). Moses of Chorene gives the following account of the Armenian hero Vahagn's birth: "a red reed had its birth in the seas; from the stem of the reed came forth smoke; from the stems of the reed came forth a flame; and from the flame came forth a young man. This youth had fiery hair, also a beard of flame, and his eyes were suns" (*History of Armenia* i, 31; trans. Lincoln 1981: 106–107). The head figures prominently in the examples of fiery effects above, and blazing eyes are seen in Ammianus Marcellinus' depiction of Germanic warriors "as they raged more than usual and a certain fury shone forth from their eyes (*et elucebat quidam ex oculis furor*)" (xvi, 12, 36) or "with fury shining from their eyes (*furore ex oculis lucente*)" (xxxi, 13, 10). Ammianus (xvi, 12, 24) also tells of a fierce Germanic army led by Chonodomarius, who had a flame-coloured tuft of hair (*flammeus torulus*) fitted to the crown of his head. In the *Iliad*, Agamemnon's "eyes were like shining fire (ὅσσε δέ οἱ πυρὶ λαμπετόωντι ἐίκτην)" (i, 104) and Hector's "eyes burned with fire (πυρὶ δ' ὄσσε δεδήει)" (xii, 466; cf. xv, 607–608 and 623). As for Achilles, "the more did anger (χόλος) enter him and his eyes showed forth terribly under the eyelids as if flame" and "his eyes were shining as if flame of fire (τὼ δέ οἱ ὄσσε λαμπέσθην ὡς εἴ τε πυρὸς σέλας)" (xix, 16–17 and 365–366), while Apollodorus (ii, 64) states that Heracles "used to flash a gleam of fire from his eyes (πυρὸς δ' ἐξ ὀμμάτων ἔλαμπεν αἴγλην)".

Rejecting previous etymologies, Driessen (2003) identifies a 'new' PIE root **ĝʰelh₂-* (e.g., Ved. *hṛṇīte* 'is angry/furious' < **ĝʰl̥-n-h₂-toi̯*, Gk. χόλος 'anger' < **ĝʰólh₂-o-s*) as the base of PC **galā-* (< **ĝʰl̥H-eh₂-*) underlying Old Irish *gal* 'war-like ardour, fury, valour, steam, fighting' and Middle Welsh *gal* 'ferocity, hatred,

enmity'. *Pace* Driessen (2003: 279), this probably also underlies Welsh *gallu* 'be able' and should be identified with the well-established PIE root **ĝʰelh₃-* associated with the colour range 'golden, yellow, green'[10] but basically meaning 'burst into (bright yellow) flames, be(come) radiant/furious/strong' on account of the link between fiery brightness and warrior frenzy (McCone 2006).

2.5 Hairstyles

"Indian, Iranian, Greek, Celtic, Italic and Germanic warriors wore their hair long" (Speidel 2004: 175; cf. Miller 1998), and some typical examples of this widespread but hardly universal practice will suffice here. Appian (*Iberica* 67) describes a battle in Spain in 142 BC between Romans and Lusitanians[11] with their "screaming and barbaric roaring and long hair (κόμη μακρά), which they shake at the enemy". A short Rigvedic hymn (x, 136) refers several times to a "long-haired one" (*keśī*) who bears fire, beholds the sun (*svar*) and is called "this light", is prone to ecstasy, associates with wild animals and drinks from the same cup as Rudra, "the quintessential keśin among the gods" (Falk 1986: 102). Strabo states (x, 3, 6) that the Greek Curetes were "long haired at the back and shorn at the front", the *Iliad* refers to "Achaeans long-haired on the heads (κάρη κομόωντες)" (e.g., ii, 323, and viii, 341) or "Abantes … long-haired behind (ὄπιθεν κομόωντες)" (ii, 542), Sparta's warriors were famed for care of their long hair (Xenophon *Resp. Lac.* 11, 3, and Herodotus vii, 208–209), and Jason returned home at the age of twenty from the centaur Chiron's tuition with his uncut locks tumbling down his whole back (Pindar *Pythian* iv, 82–83). The long hair and beards of the Germanic Chatti are mentioned below (2.6), and "in the year 1297 the Anglo-Irish parliament complained that in recent times degenerate Englishmen had taken to wearing Irish costume and that having their heads halfshaved, they grew their back-hairs long and called them 'culan'" (Simms 1996: 101).

10 E.g. Gk. χλωρός 'yellow, green' < **ĝʰl̥h₃-ro-*; OInd. *hári-*, Av. *zairi-* 'golden, yellow' < **ĝʰelh₃-*; Lat. *helvus* 'light brown', OEng. *ʒeolu*, Lith. *žel̃vas* 'green' < **ĝʰel(h₃)-wo-*; Goth. *gulþ*, ONorse *gull*, OEng. *gold* 'gold' < Gmc. **gulþa-* < **ĝʰl̥h₃-to-*. Like English *yellow*, Greek χλωρός is not infrequently used to denote pallor-inducing cowardice, e.g., χλωρὸν δέος 'yellow fear' at *Il.* vii, 479, and *Od.* xxii, 4

11 An IE people among whom youthful sodalities played a prominent role (Diodorus v, 3, 5) and whose mountain dwellers' long hair was bound back from the forehead for fighting (Strabo iii, 3, 7).

2.6 Ritual death, darkness and outlawry

Regarding the aforementioned Indo-Iranian **marɨ̯a-*, Wikander (1938: 82) opined "that the word does not have direct correspondences in other IE languages", but neither he nor Benveniste (1969: 146–247) considered a formally precise and semantically viable Old/Middle Irish match, namely the admittedly somewhat obscure *muire* apparently designating a leader with military connotations. Taking the two as cognates would imply **mor-i̯o-* 'pertaining to death' (**mor-o-*; *NIL* 488–491) as a specific designation of members of PIE sodalities (McCone 1987: 141) alongside **u̯l̥kʷ-o-/lukʷ-o-* 'wolf' and in contrast with **h₂i̯u-hₓon-* 'endowed with life' (**h₂oi̯-u-*; *NIL* 277–287) as a more general designation of young men reflecting their age and vigour. Although an active meaning 'deadly' would have been well suited to sodalities' death-dealing ways, there is reason to think that a passive sense 'deathly' was at least as prominent.

Tacitus' *Germania* (43) names the five strongest of the many nations (*civitates*) of the eastern Lugii, beginning with *C(h)arios* and ending with *Nah(an)arvalos* (acc.pl.). After describing a cult of "Castor and Pollux" among the latter, he proceeds as follows:

> but the others (*alii*), on top of strength, in which they surpass the peoples enumerated a little earlier, (are) fierce (*truces*) (and) enhance their innate ferocity (*insitae ferocitati*) by art and time: they choose black shields, dyed bodies and dark nights for fights and inspire terror by the very fear and shadowiness of a deathly army (*umbra feralis exercitus*), since no enemy can bear the novel and apparently infernal appearance (*novum ac velut infernum adspectum*).

An attractive but uncertain emendation of the manuscripts' *C(h)arios* and *alii to Harios* and *(H)arii* suggested by the likes of Óðinn's aforementioned *ein-herjar* has formed the basis of interpretations such as the following:

> Who are these people? They are the *Harii*. Tacitus here presents what has subsequently been called **Wuotanes heri* (German *wütendes Heer*) the 'raging army' or 'army of Wotan', a disguise of the army of the dead: they take the appearance of infernal beings (it is a *masquerade*), choosing the night to fight, to strike their enemies with terror, an irruption of the dead among the living. This *masquerade* behaviour is supposed to imitate the army of Odin as *Herjan*, imitating on earth the exploits of Odin's band, those whom epic calls *Berserkr*. (Benveniste 1969: 112–113)

Regardless of the proposed emendation, the deliberately darkened appearance and nocturnal habits of these ferocious fighters resembling a *feralis exercitus* are hardly those of a normal army and raise a strong suspicion that Tacitus has generalised here from an account of sodalities' attributes, as he tended to do in the case of the Chatti considered at the end of this section. Falk (1986: 19–20 and 40) points out that the head of an Indian *vrātya*-sodality wears black headgear and clothing as "the colour of night, darkness, and hence of death and danger" and "obviously counts as dead from the moment when he offers himself. As gṛ̥hapati of the vrātyas he, ritually dead, traverses the land with his host". The black (Gk. *melan-*) and nocturnal aspect of two legendary Greek figures, Melanthus and Melanion, has been studied by Vidal-Naquet (1986: 106–128), who notes (112) that Athenian ephebes wore a short black cloak at one ceremony at least. The tenth book of the *Iliad*, commonly known as the *Dolonea* and discussed in more detail in section 3.3, is self-contained and quite unusual, centring as it does upon a nocturnal adventure: after receiving arms from the two leaders of the seven hundred young fighters (*kouroi*) protecting the Greek camp's perimeter, Odysseus and Diomedes set off on foot through the darkness and a corpse-ridden no man's land, where their first success is the capture and killing of a fleet-footed young wolfskin-clad Trojan named Dolon.

When someone joined an early Irish *fían*-sodality, "from the day when … he is received as a *féinnid*, he breaks all connections with his own clan … He is *écland* ('clanless'), and has no other kindred, no social group save the *fían* … The depredations that he does … are in fact necessary to his subsistence, for as an *écland* he is also *díthir* ('landless')" (Sjoestedt 1949: 83–84). Consequently, *é-cland* 'lacking offspring/family (*cland*)' usually means 'warrior', and *óen-chinidi* 'sole-kinsmen' have already been encountered as a band of frenzied naked fighters. Since an *óen-chiniud* so called because he lacked surviving kin would have inherited plenty of property, the term surely reflects his separation from his kindred as an effectively 'dead' non-person or outlaw (McCone 1990: 205). There may well be at least a hint of this when Odysseus gives his name as 'Nobody' (Οὖτις ἐμοί γ' ὄνομα at *Od.* ix, 366) to facilitate his escape from the cave and cannibalism of a cyclops, a figure associated with sodalities in various IE cultures and quite possibly also with the ritual inauguration of their leaders (see section 3.1). The ensuing nine-year period of maritime wanderings punctuated by sojourns in what was effectively no man's land before finally returning home has been aptly compared by Burkert (1983: 133; section 2.1) to the one imposed upon an Arcadian werewolf.

Since fugitives from the law were also classed ritually and legally as non-persons or outlaws, they too were termed 'wolf' among a number of Indo-European peoples. Based upon Puhvel (1971), Gerstein (1974: 134–135) sees Germanic **wargaz* as "a strangler who deserves to be strangled … a werewolf, a demonic shape-changer whose criminality pollutes the community". The legendary Lykos 'Wolf', who gave his name to the Lycians of Asia Minor, had been expelled from Athens according to Herodotus (i, 173). The Hittite laws grant no compensation for a death inflicted in an attempt to recover a woman abducted by a man who is told "you have become a wolf".[12] The Rigveda juxtaposes an internal enemy termed *arí-* and an external one termed *vṛ́ka-* 'wolf' (*RV* ix, 79, 3; see Jamison 2009: 207–208). *Cú glas* 'grey wolf' is a key Old Irish term for a stranger or outsider from overseas (Charles-Edwards 1976: 46–53; Campanile 1979: 238–239), and an Anglo-Norman rule governing outlawry decrees "that henceforth he be held to be a wolf and is to be proclaimed 'wolf's head' (*wolvesheved*),[13] because the wolf (*lou*) is a beast hated by everyone, and henceforth it is up to everyone to kill him for the price of a wolf" (Whittaker 1895: 125). In the medieval Irish *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, "'Who of the men of Ulster raises the shield (against me)?' asked Fergus. 'One who is better (than you)' said Conchobar. 'One who drove you into exile to dwell with wolves and foxes'" (O'Rahilly 1976: ll. 4049–4052). Campanile (1979: 246) concludes "that in the juridic language 'wolf' was the technical denomination of a man banished from his people" as early as Proto-Indo-European.

The potential of a sodality in the wilds to serve as a magnet for other outlaws was demonstrated in southwestern Italy around the middle of the 4th century BC by the Bruttii, who

> had expelled many cities of Greek origin from Italy. They had also defeated the Lucanians, from whom they originated, in war and had made peace with them on equal terms. They had such fierceness (*feritas*) of spirit that they did not even spare their source. For the Lucanians had been wont to bring up their children by the same laws as the Spartans. That is to say, from the onset of puberty they were kept in woods among herdsmen without the attendance of slaves (and) without clothing to dress in or lay down upon

12 *Zi-ik-ṷa* UR.BAR.RA *ki-ša-at* (Friedrich 1971: 26, §37). Martirosyan (2010: 793) suggests a similar PIE juridical expression relating to outlawry on the strength of an Armenian parallel.

13 The sole Middle English term in a passage otherwise written in Old French: *qui des adunc le tegne lem pour lou e est criable wolvesheved … e des adunc list a chescun del occire al foer de lou*.

> in order that they might grow used to harshness and frugality from their earliest years without city habits. Their food was the prey of the hunt, their drink milk or spring water. Thus they were hardened for warlike endeavours. When fifty of their number, having become accustomed to plunder the lands of neighbours, had become more numerous as many gathered to them under the inducement of booty, they made the regions into their enemies … Then they established a state as herdsmen flocked to them in expectation of a new city. (Justin xxiii, 1)

Diodorus (xvi, 15) highlights the role of runaway slaves in swelling a band steadily transformed by a predatory outdoor life into a formidable military machine of *Brettioi* (Bruttii) capable of reducing whole cities.

Tacitus' *Germania* introduces the Chatti as a particularly warlike Germanic people whose whole strength lay in their infantry (*omne robur in pedite*; 30) and then makes the following remarks (31):

> it has become a custom, as soon as they have attained manhood, to let hair and beard grow and not to give up the facial appearance vowed and bound to courage except after slaying an enemy … This appearance pleases most of the Chatti and they proceed to grow white haired (thus) marked and displayed alike to the enemy and to their own. The initiation of all fights is in their hands … None has a home or land or any responsibility: as they come to everyone they are fed, wasteful of the livelihood of others and contemptuous of their own until feeble old age render them unequal to such a hard regime.

The members of an Irish *fían* typically lacked property and family but were entitled to hospitality from those with property, notably *briugaid* or 'hospitallers' (McCone 1984: 21–22) but also nobles such as Cú Chulainn, who boasts in the saga *Étaín's wooing* (§22, ed. Van Hamel 1933: 20–68) that he feeds Ulster's brigands (*díberga*) for a week, presumably once a year.

2.7 Nature versus culture

To sum up, the period between puberty/manhood and full adulthood was typically spent in a sodality outside, in effect 'dead' to, the kindred and normal human society. This virtual limbo separated two phases on the inside. The first was as a minor, initially in the parental home among the father's kin, but subsequently

with foster-parents related to the mother in what was effectively a halfway house between residence among the kindred proper and roaming the wilds in a sodality. The second was as the married head of one's own household, the adult role for which the hardships of life in a sodality were intended to prepare a young man. Van Gennep (1960: 114) makes the general observation that "the novices are outside society" and "among a great many peoples … during the novitiate the young people steal and pillage at will or feed and adorn themselves at the expense of the settled community". It has been seen that movement to and/or from a sodality could be marked by stripping clothes off and/or putting them on respectively. This combination can be formulated in terms of a fundamental opposition between nature (e.g., the wilds frequented by bestial sodalities) and culture posited by structuralists, who also observe a tendency to accompany "two opposite terms with … a third one as a mediator" such "as garments between 'nature' and 'culture'" (Lévi-Strauss 1963: 220 and 222). As Csapo (2005: 228) puts it, "clothing is a mediator between culture and nature: naked we are all children of nature; clothed we are fully products of culture".

3 Initiations and the age factor

3.1 Cannibalism, the 'dog' throw and canine sacrifice

Plato (*Rep.* 565d) refers to a story (μῦθος) "which is told of the sanctuary of Lycaean Zeus in Arcadia", namely "that he who has tasted one bit of human entrails minced up with those of other victims must become a wolf". Turning from the founding of the city of Lycosura (Λυκόσουρα) and the Lycaean games (Λύκαια) on Mount Lycaeus (ἐν τῷ ὄρει τῷ Λυκαίῳ) by Lycaon (Λυκάων), all names derived from *lykos* (λύκος) 'wolf', Pausanias (viii, 2, 1–3) tells how Lycaon brought a baby to Lycaean Zeus' altar and became a wolf while sacrificing it. After an excursus, he resumes the thread (viii, 2, 6):

> For they say that after Lycaon someone would always be turned from a man into a wolf at the sacrifice of Lycaean Zeus (ἀεί τις ἐξ ἀνθρώπου λύκος γίνοιτο ἐπὶ τῇ θυσίᾳ τοῦ Λυκαίου Διός) but would not become so for the whole of his life. If he abstained from human flesh when a wolf, they say that he would be turned back from a wolf into a man in the tenth year thereafter but that he would remain a beast forever if he tasted it.

Falk (1986: 30–49) examines the Indian Vrātyastoma, a sacrifice marking the beginning and end of a *vrātya*-sodality's expedition and including a request for presents from a king, and compares it with the *sattra*, a sacrifice with cannibalistic connotations secretly held in the wilds and including a presentation of food to the participating *sattrin*s by a member of the *kṣatriya*-caste, which included kings. Moreover, "just as the vrātya was understood as a dog in one passage … so do we find … groups of dogs as sattrins" (Falk 1986: 40).

In Greek (κύων) and Latin (*canis* or diminutive *canicula*), the lowest throw in dice is called a 'dog' (Kershaw 2000: 249). This striking correspondence is plausibly associated by Falk (1986: 99–111) with an ancient Indian ritual game played with thrice fifty nuts. This seems originally to have been an integral part of a sodality's initiation and the lowest score of one was named after the god Kali and avoided by the victorious *śva-ghnín-* 'possessor of the dog-killer'. The player left with only a single nut was deemed the loser and designated leader of the youths due to be sent forth, rather as the loser of the game in the already discussed Old Irish charm was destined to rove the mountains with other youths of a *fían*-band. Falk (1986: 109) notes that "Kali as the game's result is materially 'one nut (*eko'kṣaḥ*)' and as a being 'one-eyed (*ekākṣa*)'", which "also serves to designate Rudra in the Mbh. 13.146,2 (*ekākṣa*)". The Indic evidence is interpreted as follows:

> The hound marked the loser, and in the Veda the hound was associated with Rudra, with death. Since, however, Kali also designates the leader of the dice-band, it is *a priori* plausible to assume that the original game must have served to determine a leader, the 'hound' to be precise. Rudra enters men in the form of Kali, as is adequately known from the case of Nala … So, whoever obtained the hound-result was entered by Rudra, was turned into Rudra, into the hound, into the leader of the wild host. (Falk 1986: 110–111)

The PIE term for the lowest throw in dice or the like seems to have been **ḱu̯ō* 'hound, dog' (Schlerath 1954: 36), and Kershaw (2000: 257) expresses confidence "that the ritual dice game to choose a leader, who is not the winner but the loser … is Indo-European. Kali is one-eyed because the Kali outcome is one eye/nut … And this, I believe, is why Oðinn … is one-eyed. The leader is chosen by the one-eye result, and the one-eyed god enters into him: he becomes the one-eyed god". Whether or not there was a divine one-eyed PIE patron of sodalities, there is good evidence from a number of IE cultures for the association of one-eyed figures with such warbands (McCone 1999, and 2021: 214–220). That being so,

this feature may well have correlated with the role of 'one eye', whether a single nut or a single mark on a dice face, in a ritual game to determine the leader of a newly formed sodality.

Given a tendency to use suitable domestic animals as sacrificial surrogates of wild ones (cf. Burkert 1983: 43), a dog would be the wolf's natural equivalent in rites connected with youthful sodalities and/or fighting.[14] Evidence has been presented elsewhere (McCone 2021: 205–210) for PIE belief in two great hound guardians of the realm of the dead, not least fallen warriors, and for a PIE canine sacrifice connected with warriors, especially youthful members of sodalities. The latter's basic features seem to be best preserved in a Macedonian ritual recorded by Livy (xl, 6–7):

> the time for purifying (*lustrandi*) the army had come, its ceremony being as follows. The head of a bitch cut through the middle is placed on the right and the rear part plus entrails is placed on the left of a road. The armed forces are led between this divided victim … His two young sons (*filii iuvenes*) flanked the king … It was the custom, after the rite had been completed, for the army to perform exercises and for two double lines to run together in imitation of a battle. The royal youths (*regii iuvenes*) were made leaders (*duces*) of the sportive contest. However, it was not a mock battle but they ran together as if fighting for the kingship and many wounds were inflicted with sticks … That day each (son) held a feast for the comrades (*sodales*) who had performed together.

Pausanias (iii, 14, 8–10) describes a ritual battle at Platanistas near Sparta between two bands of adolescents, each of which sacrificed a hound's whelp to the war-god Enyalius the night before and also set trained wild boars to fight as a foretaste of the next day's contest. Plutarch's (*Romulus* 21) account of the Lupercalia includes the killing of goats, the sacrifice of a dog, and a run by the two colleges of young Luperci, naked apart from belts and striking bystanders with strips of goatskin. A bibulous and ribald feast between goat sacrifice and run is implied by Valerius Maximus (ii, 2, 9). According to a Hittite text dated c. 1300 BC,

14 A structuralist justification would be a viable alternative, insofar as "the opposition between wolf and man is mediated by werewolves … and others who … are excluded from society and belong to the wild" but "is mediated also by the domesticated dog" (Ó Cathasaigh 1986: 159).

> when troops are defeated by the enemy, they then arrange a sacrifice beside the river as follows. Behind the river they cut a man, a kid, a pup (and) a piglet through the middle and lay (one set of) the halves on one side and the (other) halves on the other side … The troops pass through the middle. However, as soon as they have reached the river sideways, they sprinkle water over them. (Kümmel 1967: 150–151)

In the medieval Irish saga of Mac Da Thó's pig, two rival sets of warriors participate in a fractious feast upon a huge pig that leads to a battle in which the great hound at the root of the dispute is cut into two (McCone 2021: 210–211).

Obvious dualities in keeping with the binary tendencies of sodalities emphasised by Höfler (1934: 159) include the sacrifice of two dogs at Sparta or one split into two among the Hittites and Macedonians, as well as aggressive behaviour by two groups of youths, namely mock battles in Sparta and Macedon or the whipping of bystanders in Rome. A shared feast is mentioned in connection with the Roman and Macedonian gatherings, and references in *Hiraṇyakeśigṛhyasūtra* 2.9.2 to Rudra's hosts as "gathering" (*pra-cinvantaḥ*), "dividing" (*vi-cinvantaḥ*) and "eating together" (*sam-aśnantaḥ*) leave Falk (1986: 61) in "no doubt that the sequence of the epithets follows an activity expected of Rudra's hosts", in which case it would resemble the Macedonian configuration. The prominent role of youths in Rome, Macedon and Sparta indicates a prototype primarily connected with sodalities. According to Parker (1983: 22), "each spring, when the Macedonian army reassembled, it was marched between the two halves of a sacrificed dog, which created what has been called an 'absorptive zone' for all its impurities … After the purification had, as it were, reconstituted the men as an army, they divided into two halves and proceeded to behave as an army in simulated fight." Cleansing and renewal are strongly implied by the sprinkling with water in the Hittite rite, and the Lupercalia not only took place in February, the month of *februum* 'purification', but are also explicitly associated with cleansing by Plutarch (*Romulus* 21). The Macedonian (and PIE?) pattern of sacrifice → mock battle → feast may be analysed according to Van Gennep's (1960: 20–21) threefold scheme of *preliminal* "rites of separation from a previous world", *liminal* "transition rites" and *postliminal* "ceremonies of incorporation into the new world": "'Purifications' (washing, cleansing, etc.) constitute rites of separation from previous surroundings; there follow rites of incorporation (presentation of salt, a shared meal, etc.)". This analysis would imply an original ritual assembling a warband to purge it of past impurity (separation), dividing it to test its mettle in a mock battle (transition) and then reuniting it for a feast (incorporation).

Anthony & Brown (2017) have uncovered evidence for the ritual sacrifice and eating of dogs at an early second-millennium BC site in the Russian steppes most likely occupied by speakers of an early IE language, and infer from this a rite of initiation into a sodality by the symbolic transformation of participants into a dog or wolf. The dog, perhaps along with a pig and/or goats, may originally also have been eaten after the sacrifice reflected in the aforementioned literary sources. The possibility of a cannibalistic component, implied by the Arcadian and *vrātya* rituals above, is raised by the Hittite version's inclusion of a human victim, which looks archaic in view of the lack of unambiguous references to human sacrifice elsewhere in the large Hittite ritual corpus (Kümmel 1967: 150–168). As they stand, the canine rituals in question are chiefly concerned with the periodic reconstitution of an army or a sodality. The Roman Lupercalia took place annually at the end of winter and, as regards Indian *vrātya*s, Falk (1986: 28) notes the *Aitareyabrāhmaṇa's* precept that "one dedicate oneself in Śiśira, i.e. January and February". This suggests a rite intended to prepare youths collectively for the warmer part of the year best suited to roving in the wilds, and presumably it could have applied to the initial constitution as well as the periodic reconstitution of sodalities.

3.2 The formation of sodalities, presentation of arms and Apollo's origins

Strabo describes the formation of youthful sodalities called *agelai* 'herds' in ancient Crete, also referring to customary fights within and between them:

> They take the younger (boys) to the messes (συσσίτια), the men's clubs (ἀνδρεῖα). Seated on the ground, they spend their time together in mean rags winter and summer alike, and they serve themselves and the men (ἀνδράσι). They join battle, both those from the same mess against each other or against (those from) other messes. And throughout each men's club (ἀνδρεῖον) a manager of boys (παιδονόμος) is in charge. The older (boys) are taken to the herds (ἀγέλαι). The most distinguished and powerful of the boys convene the herds, each gathering as many as he can. The leader of each herd is mostly the father of the convener with the authority to lead (them) forth for the hunt as well as races and to punish the disobedient. They are maintained at public expense (τρέφονται δημοσίᾳ). On certain appointed days, herd (ἀγέλη) joins battle against herd in time with flute and lyre, as they are also

> wont to do in (real) warfare, and they display the blows, some from the hand and some from iron weapons. (Strabo x, 4, 20)

Among the ancient Germani, youths passed from minority to manhood by similarly attaching themselves to a leader of their choice, who might even be a young man of suitable pedigree, but only after the formal and public grant of a spear and shield by a leader or relative:

> They do nothing public or private unless under arms. It is not customary for anyone to take arms (*arma sumere*) until the state (*civitas*) has judged him up to it. Then in the assembly itself one of the leaders (*principum aliquis*) or the father or relatives provide the young man with shield and spear (*scuto frameaque iuvenem ornant*). This among them is the mark of manhood (*toga*), this the first distinction of youth (*iuventae honos*). Before this they are regarded as part of the home (*domus pars*), thereafter of the commonwealth (*rei publicae*). Remarkable nobility or ancestors' great deserts can grant the distinction of being leader (*principis dignationem*) even to the very young (*adulescentulis*): they associate with other stronger and already long proven warriors and it is no disgrace to be seen among the companions (*comites*). The following (*comitatus*) itself has its grades according to the judgement of the one whom they follow; great is the vying of the followers (*comitum aemulatio*) as to who should have first place with his leader (*apud principem*), and of the leaders (*principum*) as to who should have the most and the keenest followers (*plurimi et acerrimi comites*). This is honour, this strength – always to be surrounded by a large circle of choice youths (*magno … electorum iuvenum globo*). It is an ornament in peace, a protection in war. (Tacitus *Germania* 13)

Paul the Deacon (*Historia Langobardorum* i, 23) has a Lombard king say that "it is not customary among us that a king's son dine with his father unless he have previously received arms from the king of an outside nation". Caesar (*BG* vi, 18, 3) claims that the Gauls "do not allow their children, unless they have reached the age for assuming military duty, to approach them openly, and they consider it shameful for a son of boyish age (*puerili aetate*) to be present in public in his father's sight".

OIr. *gaisced* is a compound of *gaí* 'spear' and *scíath* 'shield'. It basically denotes a set of these but can also mean 'feat of arms, prowess, heroism' by extension. G*abál gaiscid* 'taking arms' followed by a first expedition over the border, by

Lóegaire and by King Conchobor's son Cúscraid respectively, is central to two boasts in the Tale of Mac Da Thó's Pig (§§ 9 and 14; ed. Thurneysen 1935). In the last of Cú Chulainn's 'boyhood deeds' in *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (O'Rahilly 1976: ll. 608–824), the druid Cathbad one day foretold eternal fame "for armed action (*ar gním gaiscid*)" for "a young warrior (*óclach*) who should take up arms (*no·gébad gaisced*) on it". The precocious child "hears that. He comes to Conchobor to seek arms (*do chuingid gaiscid*). Conchobor says: 'Who has told you to?' 'My papa Cathbad.' 'We know him, indeed,' says Conchobor. He gives him a spear and shield (*gaí 7 scíath*)" (ll. 613–621). A day later the lad acquires horses and chariot in similar fashion and makes his first expedition over the border, which proves to be a resounding success.

As among ancient Germanic peoples, the presentation of spear and shield requires formal sanction. Cú Chulainn receives them from a king who is also related to him by blood as his maternal uncle in a ceremony separated from the bestowal of horses and a chariot, albeit only by one day. Official receipt of a shield and spear was clearly a prerequisite for admission to a Germanic or Celtic sodality, and these very weapons help to distinguish the wolfish footsoldiers from the cavalry on the third panel of the Gundestrup Cauldron illustrated in Figure 2 and discussed in section 3.3. Since the phase in a sodality would normally last for some time before progress to the ownership of horses, clerical aversion to the *fían* (McCone 1986: 1–6) probably accounts for Cú Chulainn's private taking of arms as well as his acquisition of a chariot before first venturing abroad accompanied only by its driver (McCone 2022: 44–45). Cúscraid's initial outing was actually called *cét-gaisced* 'first *g.*', and such expeditions were doubtless once inaugurated by *gabál gaiscid* 'taking spear and shield' rather than the acquisition of (a chariot and) horses. A hint of this is perhaps given by the detail that Cú Chulainn first makes for *Loch nEchtrae* 'Outing Lake' because "young warriors of the *fían*-sodality (*oaic féne*) are wont to tarry there", but finds none and moves on (ll. 675-689).

The Aristotelian *Constitution of the Athenians* (*Ath. Pol.* §42; ed. and trans. Rhodes 2017) states that ephebes were approved and supervisors appointed over them for a year's training and eating together at public expense (2–3) before publicly demonstrating their manoeuvres, receiving a shield and spear from the city (ἀσπίδα καὶ δόρυ παρὰ τῆς πόλεως) and being sent out on patrol to guard the territory for two years (4–5). Burkert (1975) has connected the name of the god Apollo, in an original vocalism seen in Doric *Apellōn* and Cypriot (dat.) *a-pe-i-lo-ni*, with Doric gatherings known as *apellai*. It has been inferred from the verb *apellazein* 'hold an assembly' in Plutarch's rendering (*Lyc.* 6, 1) of the oracle or 'rhetra' obtained from Delphi by Lycurgus that the assembly of Spar-

tiate citizens was called *apella*. Peters (1989: 211–213) points to traces of *apella*(-) outside West Greek and argues for a ProtoGreek **apel-i̯ā̆-* from which the god's name was straightforwardly derived by means of a possessive suffix *-(H)on-* as 'owner/lord of an **apel-i̯ā̆-*'. Being distinguished from *gamela* based upon *gamos* 'marriage' and from *paideia* based upon *paid-* 'child', *apellaia* presumably refers to an intervening phase corresponding to the *koureion* based upon *kouros* 'lad, youth' at the Athenian festival of Apaturia (Burkert 1975: 10). Peters (1989: 212–213; cf. Egetmeyer 2007) concludes that the *apella* "will, then, hardly have originally been a general assembly of the people with the ceremonial admission of the ephebes into society as a mere chief item on the agenda but rather a gathering of youthful bands … on the occasion of their departure from the domestic community of childhood … If this is the case, ἀπέλλα(ι) can be unproblematically etymologised by means of morphemes that are also historically attested elsewhere in Greek, namely as a *-i̯ā-* abstract **°(h₁)elh₂-i̯ah₂-* from ἀπελαύνω with the original meaning 'expulsion' and/or rather 'expedition' (hence Apollo the divine 'leader of the expeditions' …)". The parallel with the Germanic assemblies above is obvious.

In view of the association of IE sodalities with youth, long hair, nakedness, wolves, fire/light and dancing (section 2), an original role for Apollo as the divine patron of Greek sodalities would account for the bulk of what looks at first sight like a rather strange assortment of attributes: he typically appears as a beardless and naked long-haired youth in early Greek art;[15] his epithet *lykeios* and other connections with wolves have been alluded to earlier (section 2.2) and fully documented by Gershenson (1991); he is also connected with the sun's radiance and the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* tells how "far-shooting Apollo rushed out the ship, like a star at mid-day, and many sparks were flying from him and the light was reaching heaven" (ll. 440–442). The long-haired, beardless lyreplayer wearing a long tunic in a procession of goddesses and otherwise bearded gods at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis on an early sixth-century BC Attic bowl is "just the Apollo who appears most often in ancient art … the epitome of young male beauty" (Carpenter 1991: 43; cf. plates 38 and 69). His musical skill fits this picture, insofar as the lyre has already been seen providing musical accompaniment for dancing *kouroi* and Cretan sodalities on the march.

15 E.g., Φοῖβος ἀκερσεκόμης 'Phoebus (Apollo) of the unshorn locks' at *Il.* xx, 39, images on early coins (e.g., Seltman, 1933: plate X, nos. 5 and 7) or statues such as an early seventh-century BC naked long-haired *kouros* inscribed with the name Apollo in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (reproduced in Ratto 2007: 100).

3.3 The *Dolonea*, Cú Chulainn's last 'boyhood deed' and a scene on the Gundestrup Cauldron

At the end of *Iliad* viii, the successful Trojan army camps out on the plain between their city and the Greek encampment, illuminating this and the night separating two days of fighting with numerous camp fires. At an assembly summoned by a despairing Agamemnon at the beginning of the next book, Nestor's advice that the younger *kouroi* be placed on guard duty is accepted. Thereupon "guards rushed forth under arms around Nestor's son Thrasymedes … and around Meriones … There were seven leaders of the guards, and a hundred *kouroi* armed with long spears accompanied each of them. They then went and sat between the ditch and the wall" (ix, 80–87), i.e., on the boundary between the camp within and the plain outside. Agamemnon led the seniors (*gerontes*) back to his quarters for a feast, at which it was decided to offer Achilles generous inducements to resume arms. After the failure of this embassy, the book concludes with the assembled kings' dispersal to bed. The tenth book or *Dolonea* opens with a visit from an agitated Menelaus to his sleepless brother Agamemnon, as he was about to go and consult Nestor, whose own son Thrasymedes and Meriones were joint heads of the young guards (57–59).

Nestor not only agrees to check on the *kouroi* but also recommends taking others along. They duly find the youths fully alert like dogs who have heard the sound of a wild beast while watching sheep (180–193). After crossing the ditch onto the plain along with the youths' two leaders, they take counsel "in the open, where there appeared clear of fallen bodies a place from which mighty Hector had turned back, when the cover of night came, after destroying Greeks" (199–201). In this ambience of death, darkness and menacing Trojan fires, Nestor proposes a reconnoitring expedition. After Tydeus' son Diomedes and Odysseus had been selected,

> the staunch warrior Thrasymedes gave the son of Tydeus a double-edged sword – for his own had been left by the ship – and a shield. And around his head he put a helmet (*kyneē*) of bull-hide without a crest or a fixture for one. It is called a skull-cap (*kataitux*) and protects the heads of young men (*aizēoi*) in their prime.[16] And Meriones gave Odysseus a bow and quiver and a sword. And around his head he put a helmet (*kyneē*) made of hide … and outside the teeth of a white-tusked boar, set thickly here and there, held it

16 Cf. the "*aizēos* man (αἰζηὸς ἀνήρ) testing his youthful prime (πειρώμενος ἥβης)" at *Il.* xxiii, 432.

> well and cleverly … It had been taken from Eleon by Autolycus … Finally, it was placed around and covered Odysseus' head. (x, 254–271)

This *kyneē*, a dog-skin etymologically and also the term for Hades' invisibility-inducing headgear (*Il.* v, 845), had been acquired in a raid by Autolycus 'Werewolf', the name of Odysseus' own maternal grandfather. Young Meriones gave it to Odysseus on the verge of a raid like the one in which his grandsire (it seems) had taken it. Thus equipped, Diomedes and Odysseus set out through the dark night, corpses and blood (297–298).

Meanwhile, Hector proposed a reconnoitring foray from the Trojan camp. The 'swift-footed' Dolon volunteered in return for a promise of Achilles' horses and chariot and "forthwith slung a curved bow and arrows around his shoulders, donned the skin of a grey wolf on the outside and a cap of weasel skin (*ktideē kyneē*) on his head and grasped a sharp javelin" (334–335). Espying him, Odysseus and Diomedes pursued him like two dogs after a young deer or a hare. Diomedes caught Dolon and struck off his head, despite the ransom he had promised and the information he had given about the Thracian king Rhesus and his wonderful horses (350–357). Then "they took from him the weasel-skin cap off his head and the wolfskin and bent bow and arrows and long spear" (458–459), which Odysseus promised to Athene while requesting her guidance. Having hung the spoils on a duly marked tree, they made for the Thracian encampment and found its occupants asleep around the slumbering Rhesus and his horses. Diomedes killed twelve Thracians and their king while Odysseus took the horses. Returning to a joyous reception in the Greek camp, "they bound the steeds with well-cut straps to the manger for horses" (566–569). After Odysseus had set Dolon's bloody spoils aside for dedication to Athene, the victorious pair plunged into the sea and "when the swell of the sea had washed the abundant sweat from their skin and they had been cooled (ἀνέψυχθεν) in their dear heart, they went into well polished baths and bathed. Having bathed and anointed themselves thoroughly with oil, they sat down for a meal and made libations to Athene of honey-sweet wine drawn from a full drinking bowl" (576–579).

After being initiated into the status of *kouroi* and acting like them for a night, Odysseus and Diomedes marked their return from the outside to their regular status in the three basic stages identified by van Gennep (section 3.1): *preliminal* separation/purification from the previous state by taking a cooling natural dip and then a civilised bath; *liminal* transition by anointing and presumably clothing themselves; *postliminal* (re-)incorporation by sharing a meal. Substitution of Homeric mature warriors and *kouroi* for later hoplites and ephebes makes it possible to view

the *Dolonea* in terms of Vidal-Naquet's postulate (1986: 141) of a "twofold structure: on one side the hoplite, who fights by day, in ranks, face-forward, supporting his fellows, on the level plain; and on the other the ephebe (or the Spartan *kryptos*), who fights by night, unaided, resorting to tricks … skulking on the frontier … Surely we have here Culture on one side, Nature on the other; on one side Savagery …, on the other Civilization". In a similar context, Vidal-Naquet (1986: 119) remarks:

> It is in such terms, perhaps, that one might explain why on the Chigi vase in the Villa Giulia in Rome there is a line of men creeping through the undergrowth, over against the line of horsemen and the line of hoplites (the Chigi vase is Late Corinthian). And it is by reference to the same opposition that we can understand why Nestor has two different initiations into the art of war in the *Iliad*, first as a young man, lightly armed, taking part in a cattle raid at night, and then as a heavily armed adult (*Iliad* 11.670–762).

The young Trojan 'wolfskin' is killed on a mission to the Greek camp motivated by the promise of Achilles' splendid horses and chariot. Having been effectively initiated as temporary *kouroi* by receiving arms from the youths' two leaders, the Greek pair set out on foot into the darkness of night, rather like Tacitus' fearsome and ferocious Germanic nocturnal fighters (section 2.6), and returned home from their nocturnal foray in triumph on magnificent captured steeds. As observed earlier (section 2.2) in relation to an account of an Arcadian spending nine years as a werewolf and then swimming back across water to resume his human appearance and clothing, Odysseus' return to human civilisation after nine years away was similarly marked first by a swim through a wild sea and then by a civilising bath and receipt of clothes after emerging naked from a night in a wood like a ravening lion with blazing eyes.

Cú Chulainn's first expedition above was initiated by his formal presentation with arms and concluded by his return in a chariot with trophies of his extraordinarily successful fighting and hunting, which had roused him to such an extent that he demanded combat from his own people. Topless women were sent out to him instead and the boy's embarrassment made it possible to seize him. His ardour then had to be cooled by putting him into a vat of cold water (*i ndabaig n-úar-uisci;* O'Rahilly 1976: l. 815). The first vat burst, a second one boiled but a third was only heated moderately. He then emerged, was clothed by the queen and seated at the king's knee. As Ó Cathasaigh (1986: 160) puts it, "he has been re-incorporated into society: his wolfish ferocity and strength will henceforth be subordinated and indeed harnessed to his social role".

Like the *Dolonea*, Cú Chulainn's final 'boyhood deed' is an artful literary refraction which not only individualises the presentation of arms and ensuing departure but also greatly compresses the length of time normally spent away from home in a sodality before returning home and acquiring equine transport or *vice versa*. A more realistic 'rite of passage' from footsoldiers to equestrian warriors by successive immersion in a vat presumably containing water is depicted in the image in Figure 2 of an internal panel belonging to the second- or first-century BC Gallo-Thracian Gundestrup cauldron in the National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen. The lower row of males facing the vat for immersion is identified as a sodality not only by the shields and spears which they bear but also by an obvious wolf facing them. The upper row consists of riders moving away from the vat, presumably after being initiated into their new status by immersive 'baptism'.

3.4 The transition from vagrancy to a settled existence, and the growth of a beard

The two principal ceremonies identified above were hardly mutually exclusive. Formal presentation of a spear and shield ratified a youth's passage to the age-grade typically spent outside the home territory. Sacrifice of a dog, probably accompanied by a purificatory ritual and feast, hallowed sodalities once they had

FIGURE 2. Rite of passage on the Gundestrup cauldron, with details showing a rider from the upper row (left) and sodality youths on foot from the lower row (right). Photo: Roberto Fortuna & Kira Ursem (National Museum of Denmark, inv. no. C6562-74).

been formed, probably by joining a leader of choice like the ancient Cretan and Germanic youths as described by Tacitus (cf. Caesar as cited in section 2.1) and Strabo above. The important point for present purposes is that both rituals were group affairs, since even individual presentations of arms seem typically to have been combined into a collective public act. The youths involved seem likely to have been coevals as a rule, insofar as they had reached the age for initiation together on account of having been born in more or less the same year.

Leaving a sodality seems also to have involved rites of passage such as the aforementioned immersion ceremony, a typical way of marking death to an old and rebirth to a new way of life. This too is represented as a group affair on the Gundestrup cauldron. Falk's discussion of the Indian *brāhmacārin* or Veda-student includes the following observations about that system and an earlier one from which the *vrātya*s are also held to have evolved:

> The period of study for an individual youth follows a fixed pattern described, for instance, as follows by HGS [*Hiraṇyakeśin-Gṛhya-Sūtra*] 1.1–14. At the age of about eight years the child has his hair shaved, is bathed and brought to the teacher … He receives a new garment and a belt as well as a skin … Around the sixteenth year he ends his study of the Veda. On a riverbank he removes his clothing, casting belt, skin and staff into the river. Then his hair and beard are shaved, and he is washed and anointed. He receives

> golden jewellery, new clothing and sandals. He travels on a wagon to the village … He returns to his parents and marries shortly thereafter (HGS 1.19,1) … There are sufficient indications that the teacher once had not just one but a group of students … According to the educational process just depicted the student spends some eight years with the teacher. That this was once different is shown by some texts which speak of a twelve-year study of the Veda … interrupted by an intermediate dedication dividing two periods with different objectives … In this second period lasting three … or four … years the student is supposed to live in the wilderness … and wear black clothing … (in a manner) very reminiscent of the vrātya (66–68). So far, we have found … remarkably numerous parallels in the nature of Veda student, Vrātya and Sattrin that extended to organisation, vows, denial, clothing, poverty and a connection with death (70). (Falk 1986: 66–72)

Bathing, shaving and the removal/donning of clothes are prominent in the two main transitions above, the second of which features the provision of wheeled transport and is a prelude to matrimony. Marriage was a group affair in ancient Crete, where "those selected at the same time (κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν χρόνον) out of the boys' herd (ἐκ τῆς τῶν παίδων ἀγέλης) are obliged to marry all together (γαμεῖν … ἅμα πάντες) but do not take the married girls to themselves straightaway until they are up to managing house affairs" (Strabo x, 4, 20). In the Hittite legend at the beginning of section 5.1, thirty brothers of the same age are inadvertently offered their thirty younger sisters in marriage upon returning home after years away, although the youngest objects just before the tablet frustratingly breaks off. A band of young male bachelors could also resort to more violent means of jointly acquiring wives. Romulus and his followers seized Sabine maidens at a festivity held in his recent foundation, Rome (e.g., Livy i, 9). In the *Odyssey* (xxiv, 104–113), the sight of the hundred or so recently slaughtered and similarly aged young suitors descending to Hades causes Agamemnon's ghost to speculate that they had either been drowned at sea or killed on shore while rustling livestock or trying to gain possession of a city and its women. The Russian folk hero Volx (section 5.1–5.2) bids his seven thousand young followers "keep hacking old ones and young ones, leave none in the realm for breeding, leave only by selection – not many nor a few, seven thousand – darling beautiful maidens", whom they duly marry after their victory (Jakobson 1966: 334–338; ll. 170–174, 176–178 and 195–199). A historical example is provided by the Mamertini, who were sent forth from Samnium in central Italy *en masse* at the age of twenty (section 5.2) and entered the service of Messana in Sicily but then expelled or slew its male citizens, taking over their

wives, children and control of the city in 289 BC (Polybius i, 7, 2–4). The evidence thus clearly indicates that, when members of a sodality returned home or settled elsewhere, they would normally marry, frequently or even ideally as a group.

The Old Irish legal tract *Críth Gablach* (ed. Binchy 1941) asks:

> Why is this man [the lowest grade of freeman] called a *fer midbad* [arguably 'man of middle huts']? Because he has come from childhood (*a mmaici*), from the law of fosterage (*a ddligiud altruma*), and has not reached manhood (*nad·roig fer-taid*). Is a particular age assigned to the *fer midbad* who swears concerning penalties? An age of fourteen years is assigned. The reason he cannot maintain testimony is that he who has not already taken property or inheritance is not capable of testimony except regarding every trifle before seventeen years (§6).

"The other *fer midbad* who maintains testimony is more substantial" (§7: *trebairiu*, comparative of *trebar* 'substantial, propertied, solvent, prudent', a derivative of *treb* 'farm, household') and is aged

> from fourteen years to twenty, to encircling beard (read *cúairt-ulchai*). Though it be that he acquire the estate of a cow-freeman (*bó-aire*) before he have an encircling beard, his oath does not avail except according to the oath of a *fer midbad*. Moreover, though he be without taking inheritance until old age, his oath still does not go beyond the *fer midbad* … His food-render … is the food render of an *óen-chiniud*, a man who does not occupy/cultivate (*nad·treba*) property or land for himself … No one is allowed to set up his house as long as he is a minor (*maice*, lit. 'of childhood') until he is capable of separate landowning (*sain-trebad*) and of taking possessions, (and this applies to) a *fer midbad* as long as he be an *óenchiniud* … If the property of his house increase until it be the property of a cow-freeman (*bó-aire*) or something higher, the due of his fore-purchase increases to him until the render of his house accords to his rank. (§9)

Clearly, there was an overlap between the unmarried *fer midbad* and the propertiless *óenchiniud* already seen as a naked berserk and implicit *fían*-member[17]

17 Whose lack of property is clearly implied by the aphorism *féinnid cách co trebad* "everyone is a *fían*-member until (taking up) householding/farming" in *Cormac's Instructions* §31, 10 (ed. and trans. Meyer 1909).

(section 2.2). By contrast, the "baptised freeman (*aithech baitside*)", the lowest grade of adult landowner recognised by *Críth Gablach*, was expected to be married, pious and "without robbery, without plunder, without killing people (*cen gait, cen brait, cen guin doíne*)" (ll. 142–145), in effect untainted by the *fían*-activity of *díberg* 'brigandage'.[18] It appears (McCone 1990: 203–205) that a youth short of property was a lower *fer midbad* between fourteen and seventeen and then moved up to the higher level, any further progress being dependent on the acquisition of sufficient wealth. A young man over fourteen who had acquired this was an upper *fer midbad* forthwith and would progress to the grade of *bó-aire* or the like on attaining the age of twenty. The term *fer midbad* thus seems to have covered two distinct types: an *óenchiniud* fated to remain a *fer midbad* until he either inherited the wherewithal to move up the social scale or died, and a young heir destined to proceed to a higher status in his twentieth year. Evidently, the age of departure from a *fían*-sodality depended upon when or, indeed, if one acquired the wherewithal to settle down at a suitable social level, something which had presumably eluded the propertiless aged warriors among the Germanic Chatti (section 2.6).

Fosterage plays a prominent role in Rome's foundation legend and related narratives (Bremmer 1976: 73–74) likely to derive from a PIE myth in which an exposed king's son is initially suckled by a she-wolf in the wilderness (section 4). In the earlier Indic system inferred by Falk above, some eight years spent in the parental home were followed by a further eight of effective fosterage under a teacher's tutelage along with other boys and another three or four as a member of a band in the wilds before returning home to be married. In early medieval Ireland, "the laws distinguish two types of fosterage. One is fosterage for affection (*altramm seirce*) for which no fee is paid. The other type of fosterage is for a fee … The arrangement to place a child in fosterage is a legal contract" (Kelly 1988: 87). A legal tract on sick-maintenance (*othrus*) called *Bretha Crólige* (ed. and trans. Binchy 1938) states clearly that the "grade of childhood (*grád maice*)" ceased at "the end of seven years" and likewise that the "sick-maintenance of a child (*mac-othrus*)" applies "until the end of seven years", being succeeded by the "soft food of fosterage (*máeth-biad altruma*)" from seven to ten, and thereafter by "a man's sick-maintenance (*fer-othrus*)" (§52). Spartan boys were taken from the parental home at the age of seven and enrolled into 'herds' (*agelai*) of 'jointly nur-

18 Cf. the "profession of their father and grandfather" *brat 7 gat 7 guin daíne 7 díberg* practised by Conaire's foster-brothers, the sons of the *fían*-member Dond Désa in *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* (ed. Knott 1936: ll. 193–194).

tured' (*syn-trophoi*; Plutarch *Lycurgus* 16, 4), a compound semantically equivalent to Irish *com-altai* '(jointly nurtured,) foster-brothers'.

Icelandic law specifies the period of legal fosterage as from eight years or less to sixteen years and a literary example of fosterage beginning at the age of seven is found in *Laxdœlasaga* 16 (Kühlmann 2017: 46–47). As just seen, *Críth Gablach* explicitly makes fourteen the age of transition from fosterage to status as a *fer midbad*. The alternative of seventeen in *Cáin Íarraith* (Kelly 1988: 88) seems most likely to be an innovatory encroachment upon the period spent in a *fían* in line with clerical hostility to that institution (Kühlmann 2017: 62–63), perhaps simply by treating the three-year phase of lower *fer midbad* or similar *flescach* 'whipster' (Kelly 1988: 82 n. 107, Kühlmann 2017: 58 and 60) as an extension to fosterage.[19]

The Russian hero Volx formed a sodality of fifteen-year-olds (section 5.1). According to Xenophon (*Cyropaedia* i, 2, 3–15), the Persians in the time of Cyrus the Great had a "free place of assembly" next to the palace and divided into four parts: "of these, one is for the children (*paides*), one for the adolescents (*ephēboi*), another for the adult men (*teleioi andres*) and another for those over the age of military service", the last group being then referred to as *geraiteroi* (4). The passage from child to ephebe took place in the sixteenth or seventeenth year (8), adulthood was reached after a further ten years (12), and after twenty-five more one joined the elders (*geraiteroi*) who sat in judgement (13–14). One stage had to be successfully completed before proceeding to the next and the education of their *paides*, presumably after spending their earliest years in the parental home like the Spartan *syntrophoi* above, was only available to the wealthier citizens as a rule. The adolescents, whose main activities were hunting, military training, policing and carrying out the king's commands, lived together beside the place of

19 This could account for the discrepancy in *Cáin Íarraith* between seventeen years of fosterage for a boy but fourteen for a girl (Kelly 1988: 88). The above statement about the end of childhood at seven in *Bretha Crólige* §7 is directly followed by "thereafter they are compensated according to the honour of their father or of whoever fosters them to the end of seventeen years, after which they are compensated according to the grades of freemen (*a grádaib féne*) or their own honour-prices (*as-a ndírib féin*)". While this could be a provision "for fosterage to continue up to seventeen for both sexes" (Kelly 1988: 88), it need imply no more than treatment as a minor between the age of seven and seventeen. That would include the last three as a propertiless lower *fer midbad*, the dependence of whose compensation upon the status of his father or foster-father, despite his apparently no longer residing with either, would be in keeping with the inadmissibility of his unsupported testimony in a matter of substance according to *Críth Gablach* §6.

assembly and were mostly unmarried. Widengren (1969: 84–95) deduces a similar system from Middle Persian sources stating that a male would be a student (*kōtak, rētak*) from seven to fifteen years of age, a young man (*yuvān mart*) from fifteen to twenty, then an adult and finally an elder exempt from military service. Such four-grade systems are quite widespread (Schurtz 1902: 59 and 125), and Falk (1986: 94) notes close Indian correspondences: *brahmacārin* (8–16 years), *yuvān*, *vratacārin* or *marya* (until 20), 'middle-aged' *madhyama-vayasin*, and 'final-aged' *uttama-vayasin* or elder. Burkert (1983: 90–91) argues that the nine years spent as a werewolf by certain Arcadians can hardly have been initiated later than the age of sixteen.

The available evidence points to 7 years as the normal age for being taken into fosterage and a range of 14–16/17 years for admission to a sodality. The 9 to 10 years apparently prescribed for membership of a sodality in ancient Persia and Arcadia would imply departure from it around the mid-twenties, but the age of 20 and/or growth of a beard figure prominently in *Críth Gablach* and elsewhere above as the sign of progress to full manhood. A minimum age of 20 for marriage and pressure to remain an unmarried member of a sodality beyond that among the ancient Germani may be inferred from Caesar's statement (*BG* vi, 21, 4–5; cited in section 2.1) that they esteemed males who remained virgins for longest, and condemned sex with a woman before reaching the age of twenty. This watershed was marked by the growth of an encircling beard not only in the case of the early Irish *fer midbad* but also in legendary Greek examples. Pindar (*Olympian* i, 67–71) has Pelops' thoughts turn to the wooing of Hippodamea when hair covers his chin. Odysseus' son Telemachus, having spent the twenty years or so since his father's departure for Troy at home as something of a 'mother's boy', eventually asserts himself at the prompting of Athene (in Mentes' guise), undertakes an expedition abroad and, after returning from this, is mentioned as having an evidently new beard (*Odyssey* xviii, 176 and 269–271). Conversely, beardlessness could be seen as a sign of immaturity, as when the people of Tara question the claim of a "beardless young man" to the kingship in the *Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel* (section 2.1), or an older warrior like Nad Crantail is reluctant to fight the "beardless lad" Cú Chulainn in *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (O'Rahilly 1976: l. 1450). Since a male does not usually acquire much facial hair until his late teens, beards could hardly have distinguished a sodality's younger members, whose very beardlessness may have marked them off from married adult males. For instance, on the Gundestrup cauldron the beardless young warriors appearing on the internal panel illustrated in Figure 2 and some others contrast with older looking bearded individuals on one internal and several external panels in alternation with female

figures.[20] More mature members of a sodality would presumably be free to grow their hair long on the face as well as the head. This practice is attested among ancient Germanic peoples such as the Chatti (section 2.6), and Cú Chulainn's implicitly bearded adversary Nad Crantail was a *fénnid* '*fían*-member' (O'Rahilly 1976: l. 1397).

Solon's (poem 27) early sixth-century BC division of a man's life into ten seven-year periods begins with the following three: a non-pubescent and still immature child (παῖς μὲν ἄνηβος ἐὼν ἔτι νήπιος) loses his (first) teeth "in seven years" (i.e., by his seventh birthday; ll. 1–2); after completion of another seven years, "he manifests the signs of incipient pubescence/adolescence (ἥβης ἐκφαίνει σήματα γιγνομένης)" (l. 4); in the third seven, while his body is still growing, his chin becomes hairy (γένειον … λαχνοῦται, ll. 5–6; i.e., he grows a beard). This scheme broadly corresponds to the less strictly symmetrical sequence inferred above: (a) a minor in the paternal home, until the age of 7 as a rule; (b) a minor in fosterage with the mother's kin, until the age of 14 (or up to 2 or 3 years later); (c) an adolescent in a sodality, until growth of a man's beard conventionally placed in the 21st year (i.e., when aged 20). Solon's symmetrical scheme recognised (a) early childhood (1–7 years as a *pais an-ēbos*), (b) later childhood to the onset of puberty (7–14 years as, in effect, a *pais prōt-hēbēs*),[21] and (c) adolescence to growth of a man's beard (14–21 years of *hēbē*, i.e., as an *ep-hēbos*). Odysseus had been promised riches (κτήματα) by his maternal grandfather Autolycus 'Werewolf' if, after reaching *hēbē* (ἡβήσας), he came to his mother's great house (μητρώϊον ἐς μέγα δῶμα; *Od.* xix, 410–412). When he did visit, he received a permanent scar from a boar before killing it on a hunt with his maternal uncles (413–466). His son Telemachus, by now almost twenty years old and growing a beard as just noted, was approaching *hēbēs metron* or the "full measure/limit of *hēbē*/adolescence" marking the end of that phase: for instance, while he was away on his expedition to Pylos and Sparta, the suitors' evil ringleader Antinous prayed for Zeus to destroy his life "before reaching the limit of adolescence (πρὶν ἥβης μέτρον ἱκέσθαι)" (*Od.* iv, 668), and after his return Penelope, who would not countenance marrying again and leaving home "as long as my child was still immature (νήπιος) and irresponsible", concedes "but now … he is big (μέγας) and reaching the limit

20 A complete set of fine photographs is published in the companion volume (Farley and Hunter 2015: 260–271) to an exhibition on the Celts at the British Museum in London, to which the Gundestrup cauldron had temporarily been loaned for display.

21 At *Iliad* vii, 518, Hector proposes making "boys approaching puberty and old men with greying temples (παῖδας πρωθήβας πολιοκροτάφους τε γέροντας)" guard the city while the Trojan army passes the night out on the plain.

of youth (ἥβης μέτρον ἱκάνει)". Full citizen rights such as attending the place of assembly were reserved for those over thirty at Sparta (Plutarch, *Lyc.* 25, 1) and Solon (27, 9–10) recommended life's fifth hebdomad (28–35 years) for matrimony and offspring. However, the coming of age at about twenty known as *hēbēs metron* is explicitly linked with marriage at *Iliad* xi, 221–228, where it is noted that the maternal grandfather of the Trojans' Thracian ally Iphidamas fostered (ἔθρεψε) him "but, when he reached the limit of glorious youth/adolescence (ἐπεί ῥ' ἥβης ἐρικυδέος ἵκετο μέτρον), kept him there and gave him his daughter" only for him to set off for Troy after marrying (γήμας).

The individual departure of a boy aged 7 from the parental home to be fostered by a kinsman of his mother's should have been straightforward enough as a rule, but the need to recruit viable groups for admission to and release from sodalities seems, in practice, to have been met by allowing some leeway after the 14th and before the 21st birthdays of individual participants. In the former case, a youth's admission to a sodality may also have been postponed for a year or two after the minimum age of 14 if he was not deemed physically mature enough. In the latter, a further requirement of sufficient property to marry and set up house would probably have prevented individuals lacking the necessary means from leaving a sodality until well after the age of 21 or sometimes never. Nevertheless, in view of further evidence presented below (section 6) a somewhat idealised basic sequence of seven-year phases may well be of considerable, indeed PIE, antiquity.

4 Romulus, Cyrus, Cormac, Zeus and the (P)IE myth of the suckling she-wolf

Before concluding that "testimony about wolf-children … may be safely given over to the student of Comparative Mythology" (1863: 32), the pioneering anthropologist E.B. Tylor made the following observation in what seems to have been the first study of the topic:

> Stories of children being brought up by animals are found among the popular myths of several parts of the world. Of these, the tale of Romulus and Remus is the best known example. Here the idea of children being suckled by a she-wolf is joined to another incident often found in the old wonder-tales, the setting adrift of children in an ark, after the manner of the infant Moses in the ark of bulrushes. The infant Cyrus is said to have been brought up by a bitch. (Tylor 1863: 29)

According to Livy (i, 3–8), Amulius replaced his elder brother Numitor as king of Alba, killed his sons and made a Vestal Virgin of his daughter. When she bore twins and claimed the god Mars as their father, Amulius ordered her to be imprisoned and her offspring set adrift on the River Tiber. However, the vessel carrying them floated to dry land, where they were suckled by a she-wolf (*lupa*) drawn to their cries. Faustulus, the king's herdsman, found her licking the twins, whom he brought home and presented to his wife Larentia. "Thus born and brought up, when they had first reached maturity, they … traversed the woods hunting. Their bodies and spirits having thus been strengthened, wild animals alone no longer sufficed but they attacked robbers laden with booty, divided the takings among the herdsmen … as the band of youths (*iuvenes*) grew daily" (i, 4; cf. Plut. *Rom.* 6, 3). The twins were ambushed by their victims at the Lupercalia, when "naked youths (*nudi iuvenes*) run in sportive frolic" (5, 2). Remus was captured and handed over to Numitor. Faustulus now told Romulus of his suspicions about the twins' origins, while Numitor guessed Remus' true identity after learning that he was a twin. After hatching a plot with Numitor, killing Amulius and restoring their maternal grandfather as king of Alba, the twins led an emigration to the place of their exposure and upbringing. Disagreement about the new settlement's name and the ambiguous outcome of auspices agreed upon to decide this led to a conflict in which Remus was killed – by his own brother after insultingly leaping over Rome's nascent walls according to some. Romulus thus became the sole founder and ruler of Rome, the population of which grew as the new city became a place of refuge for all and sundry.

In this narrative, a king's grandsons were exposed in the wilds, reared successively by a she-wolf and herdsmen, and revealed in the wake of a quarrel, one of them finally becoming king of a new state. Herodotus' account (i, 107–130) of Cyrus the Great's (†529 BC) birth and accession to the throne displays a similar pattern.

Warned against his daughter's child in a dream, the Medan king Astyages married her off to a quiet Persian and left the elimination of the son later born to her in the hands of Harpagus, who ordered a herdsman to take him to his mountainous home and abandon him in a remote spot. The name of the herdsman's wife "was Kyno in the Greek tongue but Spaka in Medic, for the Medes call the hound (*kyn-*) *spak-*" (110; cf. Avestan *spā* 'hound' < PIE **k̂u̯ō*), and she persuaded him to switch the royal child with their own still-born son and let her rear him as their own. At the age of ten the boy was chosen king in a children's game and had an aristocratic Mede's son flogged for disobedience. The latter's father protested about this presumptuous act to the king, who duly summoned the lad, was

struck by his courage and appearance, and elicited the truth from the frightened herdsman. Harpagus was gruesomely punished for his negligence by being given his own sons to eat, and Astyages' magi declared that the threat posed by his grandson had been removed by his kingship in the game. Cyrus was restored to his real parents and "kept saying that he had been reared by the herdsman's wife and praising her throughout, and Kyno ['Bitch'] was always on his lips. So the parents took up this name and … put about a rumour that a bitch reared the exposed Cyrus" (122), a rationalisation with a parallel (already obvious to Tylor 1863: 29) in a variant of the Roman legend.[22] Harpagus helped Cyrus to defeat Astyages and replace him as king, thereby founding a Persian empire. In Justin's broadly similar account (i, 4–6) apparently deriving via Trogus from a since lost source,[23] the herdsman's wife asked him to bring her the exposed child and, returning to the wood, he "found beside the child a bitch (*canis femina*) offering her teats to the little one and defending him from wild animals and birds". When he got home with the infant and the bitch, his wife was so taken with the boy that she persuaded her husband to let her nurture him and to expose her own new-born son instead. Later, she was called Spaco 'Bitch' and the boy was named Cyrus.

The first publisher (Talbot 1872) of an Akkadian account of King Sargon's (†c. 2300 BC) early upbringing noted evident affinities with Moses, Romulus and Cyrus. Soon afterwards, J.G. von Hahn (1876) included the last two with 7 Greek, 3 Germanic and another 2 Indo-Iranian examples on a large table (inserted between pages 340 and 341) devoted to an "Aryan expulsion/exposure and return formula" (*arische Aussetzungs- und Rückkehr-Formel*) comprising 13 main items grouped under the three headings of birth, youth and return. An apparently independent subsequent formulation (up to return and confrontation with parents) by Freud's student Otto Rank (1909) also included Romulus and Cyrus, but the latter was absent from a longer and later one by Lord Raglan (1936: 174–175). Unlike Von Hahn, both recognised non-IE examples of this "biographical pattern", as Taylor (1964) terms it in his summary and discussion of all three as well as Campbell's basic heroic "monomyth" (1949). De Vries (1961: 281–282) acknowledges the contributions of Von Hahn and, with reservations, Lord Raglan before presenting (282–290) his own more detailed and systematic "model of a heroic life" (*Modell eines Heldenlebens*), which refers to a range of heroic figures, includ-

22 Livy i, 4, 7: "there are those who think that Larentia was called *lupa* ('she-wolf, prostitute') for making her body generally available and that this gave rise to the story and miracle".

23 Perhaps the *Persica* of Ctesias of Cnidus, court physician early in the reign of Artaxerxes II (404–359 BC).

ing Cyrus as well as Romulus and Remus, at suitable points. In this scheme, IIIB "the expelled/exposed child is suckled by animals" has 10 subdivisions including (b) "by a she-wolf: in Greek saga, Leucastus and Parrhasius, in Roman, Romulus and Remus, in Irish, Cormac mac Airt" and (g) "by a bitch: apart from Cyrus, the Greek hero Neleus should be mentioned here" (De Vries 1961: 285). De Vries' otherwise largely neglected taxonomy was used by Ó Cathasaigh (1977) as a framework for his analysis of "the heroic biography of Cormac mac Airt".

The Roman twins and Cyrus of Persia have enjoyed a high profile in studies of the heroic biographical pattern ever since its overall shape and particular components such as a she-wolf, bitch or other animal wet-nurse began to attract scholarly attention about a century and a half ago. The legendary Irish king Cormac, by contrast, has been almost completely ignored outside the field of Celtic studies. For instance, although Cyrus and Romulus figured prominently in Binder's (1964) study of the "expulsion/exposure of the royal child", Cormac was absent even from his concluding inventory of 121 examples, as well as from Lewis' (1980: 152–195) overlapping one of some 70 instances.

According to the earlier of two somewhat different, not least in dynastic orientation, but obviously related versions of his birth-tale,[24] Cormac was conceived in a one-night stand between Art, the king of Tara, and his host's daughter Etan, on the eve of Art's death in battle and replacement by his adversary, Mac Con. On her way to Lugne Fer Trí, whom Art had designated as his son's foster-father, Etan gave birth but, while she and her handmaid slept in the aftermath, the baby was taken off to her cave by a she-wolf. When informed by her of the child's disappearance, Lugne offered a reward. Cormac was found playing among the wolf's cubs at the cave's mouth by a certain Grec, who brought him to Lugne and was duly recompensed by him with lands for the Grecraige. Lugne's predictions of the lad's future greatness included one that he would be "a *fían*-warrior" (Hull 1952: l. 57). One day, Cormac struck one of his foster-brothers at play and was taunted with his unknown father as a result. Lugne then revealed that he was the former king of Ireland's son and the pair set out for Tara, where they were well received. Cormac was recognised as "the son of the true king" after rectifying a false judgement by Mac Con, who was deposed in his favour. Ireland enjoyed great prosperity throughout the new king's reign.

24 *Genemuin Chormaic* (ed. and trans. O'Grady 1892: i, 253–256, and ii, 286–289; ed. Hull 1952) and *Scéla Éogain 7 Chormaic* (ed. and trans. Ó Cathasaigh 1977, 119–127). For summaries of both and a discussion of the dynastic aspects, see Ó Corráin (1986: 147–151; summarised by McCone 1990: 254–255).

Despite some striking basic similarities, the details of this account are too different from the prestigious legend of Rome's founder for direct derivation from it to be at all plausible. As Ó Cathasaigh (1977: 54–55) puts it, "the suckling of the hero by an animal is an integral part of the international heroic pattern" but "it is only in the form of a 'twin saga' that the Romulus story could have been known in Ireland and there is nothing in Cormac's biography to suggest that it has borrowed from such a source". In all three narratives just summarised,

(a) the lives of the children destined to rule are threatened by a hostile king, who is either (i) a 'usurper' replacing their (grand)father [Romulus and Remus, Cormac] or (ii) an actual (grand)father determined to thwart a prophecy [Cyrus];
(b) as a result, they spend their early life in the wilds, having been either (i) expelled soon after birth and exposed there [Romulus and Remus, Cyrus] or (ii) born there to an absconding mother [Cormac];
(c) they are first protected and suckled by either (i) a she-wolf living in a cave [Romulus and Remus, Cormac] or (ii) a bitch [Cyrus], and
(d) then brought up by either (i) humble herdsmen [Romulus and Remus, Cyrus; in the latter's case through (i+) a deception involving a substitute baby] or (ii) inferior dynasts [Cormac];
(e) a dispute leads to the revelation of their true origins as a king's descendants;
(f) they go on to depose their persecutor and become king either (i) in his stead [Cyrus and Cormac] or (ii) elsewhere [Romulus, after the restoration of his maternal grandfather, emigration and the death of Remus in the wake of fraternal strife].

As the aforementioned inventories made by Binder and Lewis substantiate, various at least partially comparable configurations of what Ó Cathasaigh (1977: 20) fittingly terms "the international heroic biography" are too widespread for it to be regarded as the specifically IE phenomenon implied by Von Hahn's 'Aryan' tag (cf. Ó Cathasaigh 1977: 4). For instance, Cornell (1995: 62) concludes with some justice regarding the background to Rome's foundation legend that "the recurrence of the same motifs in so many different contexts cannot be explained by literary or oral diffusion, or by common inheritance within a particular ethnic or linguistic family … Rather, they must be seen as popular expressions of some universal human need or experience, occurring in times and places that are worlds apart". In that respect, "it seems true that the heroic biography is concerned essentially

with life-crises, and there is much to be said for the view that the episodes in the heroic biography are the mythic correlatives of the rites of passage (border experiences) identified by Van Gennep in his classic work" (Ó Cathasaigh 1977: 22). Campbell (2008) similarly invokes the more or less universal phenomenon of "so-called rites of passage … (ceremonials of birth, naming, puberty, marriage, burial, etc.)" (6, citing Van Gennep in n. 9) and claims (23) that "the standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: *separation–initiation–return* … the nuclear unit of the monomyth".

Needless to say, universalist approaches to the basic pattern do not rule out IE or other genetic explanations for particular manifestations of it, especially if they contain correspondences in detail that are not easily accounted for in terms of universals. To begin with, the correlations between the three myths/legends documented above go considerably beyond those posited in any of the overall schemes but are closest to Von Hahn's, which was based exclusively upon IE sources. Alternants (i)/(ii) in (a) and (b) are easy enough to envisage as options coexisting within an essentially unitary prototype, whereas (d)(ii) seems likely to be an Irish modification of it motivated by the well-documented dynastic preoccupations of many Irish sagas (note 24 above, McCone 1990: 233–255 and 2020: 75–90). That would leave (d)(i) plus a possible optional extra (d)(i+).

Isolation of (f)(i) would likewise result from taking (f)(ii) as a peculiar Roman development as a result of grafting the 'expulsion/exposure and return' of a future king/hero upon an original legend of foundation by youthful emigrants under two leaders (cf. the 700 *kouroi* under Thrasymedes and Meriones in section 3.3), typically brothers as in comparable but evidently independent Gaulish and Lombard migration legends (section 5.2). As Alföldi (1974: 132–133) puts it, "the account of the young herdsmen, fugitives and criminals who flocked to Romulus and Remus and built up a flourishing city in a very short time is the mythical dressing up of the same form of organisation that brought about the sudden rise of the Brettii [aka the Bruttii discussed in section 2.6] in 356 BC on the basis of toughening and possession as werewolves". Mommsen's (1881) view of Remus as a relatively late addition designed to justify the Roman Republic's dual consulate has since been broadly accepted, but not without ongoing puzzlement and debate about his removal so soon after being invented as Romulus' twin (see Wiseman 1995: 16–17). Classen (1963) made the attractive suggestion that Remus' contentious premature death signified the aborting of a proto-republican dyarchy and imposition of monarchy, albeit as part of a scarcely credible proposal that it was always part of the foundation legend because this was created in its entirety

during the early republican period. These difficulties can be overcome by positing three successive main stages in the indigenous legend's early evolution: as a starting point, (1) a straightforward original account of Rome's foundation by the twins Romulus and Remus[25] at the head of a sizeable emigrant sodality (cf. the Gaulish and Lombard parallels); during the regal period, (2) incorporation of a typical 'expulsion/exposure and return' pattern[26] more or less concurrently with Remus' early death (but probably not yet as a result of fraternal strife) to make way for a monarchy under Romulus; in the early Republic, (3) introduction of fraternal strife, a dispute about auspices involving chicanery on Romulus' part (Dion. Hal. i, 86; Plut. *Rom.* 9, 5), and Remus' violent death in a virtual civil war for the reason suggested by Classen.

Elimination of (d)(ii) and (f)(ii) leaves a rather specific underlying prototype with claims to PIE antiquity, but there remains the issue of the 'Italo-Celtic' she-wolf versus the Persian bitch. De Vries (1961: 293) points out "that not only heroes but also full gods fit into the scheme. We have already been able to insert Krishna in India, Zeus, Apollo and Dionysius in Greece … into the examples in our lists". In Apollodorus' account (i, 5–7) of the birth and early career of the king of the Greek gods, Cronus swallowed each baby born to his wife Rhea in order to thwart his foretold deposition by his own child [= (a)(ii)]. She, however, gave him a stone instead of the sixth [= (d)(i+)] and Zeus was born in the Cretan cave of Dicte [= (b)(ii)], nourished by a she-goat's milk and hidden from his father by weapon-clashing Curetes [= (c)(i)↔(d)(i)]. Subsequently, the adult Zeus rescued his brothers and sisters, led them in a successful war against Cronus and the other Titans, and took over the kingship of the gods [= (f)(i)]. Only (e) is missing here. There may be no suckling she-wolf/bitch or nurturing herdsmen as such, but the former has been replaced as wet-nurse by an animal typically tended by herdsmen and the latter by a 'wolfish' band of Curetes (see section 2.3) as nurturers. In other words, there has been a straightforward transposition of human and animal roles. Successive phases with animal and human helpers have also been made simultaneous.[27]

25 See Wiseman (1995: 5–6 and 170–171 nn. 23–30) on clear traces of an older tradition that Romulus and Remus founded and, for a short time at least, ruled Rome together.

26 For which clear 5th-century BC iconographic evidence is provided by the images of a lioness or the like suckling a child on a funerary stele from Felsina in the Po Valley and a cista from Praeneste in Latium (Wiseman 1995: 65 and 66 figs. 6 and 7).

27 Alternatively, the animal and human could be combined in a single nurturer. Pelias deprived his brother Aeson of the kingship and sought his son Jason's death. After being rescued by a ruse and brought up in the wilderness by a man-cum-horse, the centaur

In the Old Norse *Vǫlsungasaga* (5), King Vǫlsung was murdered by his daughter Signý's husband, King Siggeir, and his ten sons were captured, bound to a beam and exposed in the wild wood. The only survivor of a she-wolf's nightly attacks was Sigmund, who managed to kill it with his sister Signý's help. He then (6–7) retired to an underground lair, where he was tended by his sister, who bore him a son called Sinfjǫtli. After donning wolfskins taken from two sleeping kings' sons, Sigmund and Sinfjǫtli roved as wolves for a time before Sigmund killed his father's murderer with his son's help, returned home and became king (8). Having killed the wolf, Sigmund ultimately becomes a 'wolf' for a time, rather as the Irish hero Cú Chulainn 'Culann's Hound' is so named on account of taking over the role and identity of Culann's great guard dog for a spell after slaying it.

The unnaturally benign behaviour of a wild she-wolf towards a human child in the ancient Roman and early Irish versions contrasts with the more or less natural performance of a similar sustaining role by domesticated animals, a bitch and a she-goat respectively, in the ancient Persian and Greek ones. It seems a good deal more likely that two different and more obviously suitable domestic animals should have been substituted for a wild wolf than vice versa. In the much less closely related Germanic version, the she-wolf also plays a key role in the hero's eventual progress to kingship, but this time by acting with natural malignity and devouring his nine brothers to leave him as the sole survivor after managing to kill her. Since the only plausible point of departure for these variants is a nurturing she-wolf, (c)(i) may confidently be ascribed to the prototype to the exclusion of (c)(ii). If a wild sodality was substituted for a she-wolf in the Zeus myth, it follows that the she-goat there had replaced herdsmen, thereby corroborating (d)(i) in the prototype, which has now been reconstructed in sufficient detail to clinch its PIE provenance.

In the PIE construct posited, a threatened/threatening child of royal birth is expelled from society to the wilds, where he is first reared by a she-wolf and then brought up as their own, in effect fostered, by a lowly herdsman and his wife until (after his true origin has been revealed as a result of a quarrel) returning home and deposing his persecutor. The understandable question "but why a normally vicious wolf?" was answered by simply substituting a domesticated canine wet-

Chiron, Jason returned home at the age of twenty (Pindar, *Pythian* iv, 101–119, and *Nemean* iii, 53–54). He was sent off again on a quest for the golden fleece (Apollodorus i, 107–109), and his second homecoming was followed by the gruesome murder of Pelias (Apollodorus i, 143–144).

nurse in Persia, but in Greece the wolf's ideological relationship with sodalities (section 2.1) led to a more far-reaching rationalisation by inversion to a milk-providing goat and a protecting band of armed Curetes. Obvious social correlates for nurture by a she-wolf and upbringing by herdsmen in the PIE myth are provided by evidence for a PIE practice of sending a young male away, firstly from the parental to another home for fosterage and then from regular human society to live in the wilds as a 'wolf' in a sodality (sections 1.1 and 2.1), until he met the conditions for readmission to his kindred and people as a man in his own right (section 3.4). This correlation in turn corroborates both the mythical and the social reconstructions.

That said, taking the myth as a straightforward representation of real life would entail the absurdity of actual admission to the 'wolf' phase as an unweaned baby and the subsequent fosterage of children of high status with lowly herdsmen. Rather, this is a typical enough case of the 'dialectic' refraction of social norms through a lens of what might be termed 'mytho-logic'. The outcome is amenable to analysis in terms of an already mentioned (section 2.7) structuralist pattern of binary opposites such as nature (–) and culture (+) plus a mediating third term (0) "which is neither '+' nor '–' but both at once" (Leach 1982: 8–9), not unlike the amber signal between red and green on a traffic light (Leach 1974: 21–25). The real-life sequence inferred from the available evidence was: infancy in the paternal home (+), fosterage with the mother's kin (0), membership of a 'wolfish' sodality in the wilds (–) and return home as an adult (+). However, a tendency in narrative to present both defining polar opposites before the mediating third term (McCone 2020: 106 and 112) generates the following sequence: high birth at home (+), expulsion to the wilds and nurture by a she-wolf (–), fosterage by lowly herdsmen tending animals on the margins of human society (0) and a return home as a young adult along with recovery of high status (+). The culture/nature (+/–) dichotomy is obviously relevant: birth within society (+), nurture by an animal in the wild (–), fosterage on the margin (0), return to society (+). So too is high (+) versus no (–) and intermediate low (0) status: royal birth (+), animal/sub-human wet-nurse (–), lowly human fosterage (0), attainment of kingship (+). The location of his expulsion from human society and exposure to the wilds at the very beginning of the hero's career also serves to establish his extraordinary 'liminal' nature as a figure destined to cross, re-cross and straddle diverse boundaries.[28] Once these 'mytho-logical' distortions have been taken into account, the

28 See section 3.1 on Van Gennep's use of the term *liminal* for (rites of) transition by crossing a threshold (Latin *limen*) from one place, phase or state to another. Cf. McCone

reconstructed PIE myth may be plausibly linked to a social system featuring basic stratification (McCone 2020: 116–125), fosterage (Bremmer 1976) and sodalities (section 2).

5 Coevals, 'sacred spring' and age-sets

5.1 Sodalities of coevals

In line with Radcliffe-Brown's first criterion in section 1.3, references to groups comprising males of the same age in sources from a range of early Indo-European cultures would be an obvious first step in making a case for age-sets as a PIE social institution. A suitable starting point is provided by the passage below from an incompletely preserved Old Hittite text that seems to be concerned with the foundation and fate of the city of Zalpa:

> The queen of Kanis bore 30 sons in 1 year. Thus she (said): "What an evil (*u̯alkuu̯a-* [Lehrman 1993]) I have given birth to!" She filled vessels with excrement, put her sons inside, let them (down in)to the river, and the river carried (them) to the sea, the land of Zalpuwa, but the gods took the sons up from the sea. They brought them up. As the years passed meanwhile, the q[uee]n also bore 30 daughters. She brought them up herself. The sons return to Nesa … When they went to Nesa … their mother did not recognise [th]em. She gave her daughters to her sons. The first sons did not recognise their sisters, but the last one [said]: "Let us [not] take our sisters! Do not sin! [ ] s[lept?] w[it]h them [(Otten 1973: 6–7)

Here too, the classic motif of expulsion/exposure and return plays a crucial role, the first transition being effected by the equally classic device of setting a vessel containing the child(ren) afloat on water as in the case of Romulus and Remus. For present purposes, however, the most salient features of the Hittite account

(1990: 188): "Being by definition abnormal, the hero does not fit neatly into ordinary human society and categories. As a superhuman but usually non- or only half-divine frequenter of the margin between men and god(s), society and outsiders, culture and nature, life and death etc., the hero can move freely between these worlds without belonging properly to any of them. Ambivalence and liminality are the hero's essential attributes".

are the literal brotherhood of thirty royal coevals and the plan to marry them simultaneously, on their return home, to thirty coeval girls, who turn out to be their younger sisters. Frustratingly, the tablet breaks off at this crucial point, but Romulus and his followers did acquire wives *en bloc* by seizing Sabine maidens at a festival. The Hittite 'trigesimuplets', with the likely exception of the dissenting youngest, may well also have married at the same time.

The Rigveda depicts the Maruts, the divine prototype of a *marya*-sodality, as another biologically unrealistic number of coeval youthful siblings. Macdonell (1917: 21) notes that "they form a troop (**gaṇá**, **śárdhas**) … Their number is thrice sixty or thrice seven. They are the sons of Rudra (ii, 33) and of Pṛśni … They are brothers equal in age … having the same birthplace and the same abode. The goddess Rodasī … seems to have been regarded as their bride". For instance, the Rigveda calls them *rudrásya máryāḥ* (i, 64, 2/2), *rudrásya sūnávaḥ* 'R.'s sons' (i, 85, 1/1), *pṛśni-mātaraḥ* 'having P. as mother' (i, 185, 2/4), *sá-vayasaḥ* 'co-eval' (i, 165, 1/1), *yúvānaḥ* 'young' (i, 165, 2/1), *ájeṣṭhāso* (*á*)*kaniṣṭhāsaḥ … bhrā́taraḥ* 'brothers without oldest (or) youngest' (v, 60, 5, 1/2).

In Rome's struggle against Lars Porsenna, Mucius Scaevola's co-conspirators were "three hundred leaders of the Roman youth (*iuventutis Romanae*)" according to Livy (ii, 12, 15), and "three hundred men of the same age (τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχοντες ἡλικίαν)" according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus (v, 29, 3). The early Irish saga *The Driving of Fróech's Cattle* (*Tain Bó Froích* §1, ed. Meid 1967) introduces its eponymous hero Fróech as follows: "There was a good household with him until the end of eight years without taking a wife to himself. Fifty kings' sons was the number of his household, all of the same age (*com-aís*) and of equal standing with him". Allowing for typical clerical reticence on the subject (cf. Cú Chulainn's final 'boyhood deed' in section 3.2), this was obviously a *fían*-sodality of as yet unmarried kings' sons (cf. the sons of Dond Désa and their aristocratic sodality in *The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel* in the final paragraph of section 2.1). Corroboration is supplied by a number of members conforming to the canonical five, fifty or a further multiple thereof for an IE sodality (McCone 2020: 145–146), and by their spectacular display of hunting prowess as they approached the fort of Fróech's prospective royal in-laws (§5). In the account of *Bran's Voyage* (*Immram Brain* §32, ed. Meyer 1895), "Bran took to sea … [with] three nines of his co-fosterlings and his co-evals (*di-a chom-altaib ocus com-aísib*)".

Fróech and his band seem to have been about two years older than the average twenty or so when his thoughts turned to marriage. By contrast, the hero of the already mentioned Russian folk-poem (*bylina*) of Volx Vseslav'evič (Jakobson 1966: 301–368) and his followers were unusually young: "when Volx was twelve

years old, he started to pick a retinue (*družina*) for himself; he picked the retinue for three years, he picked a retinue of seven thousand; Volx himself is fifteen years old, and each man in his retinue is also fifteen" (ll. 52–57). After successfully leading his men on an expedition against a distant realm, "Volx enthroned himself as Tsar, wedding the Tsarina … and the valiants of the retinue all took unto them those maidens as wives and … became townsfolk" (ll. 195–201).

A similar expedition, this time an unsuccessful maritime one undertaken by young men of normal marriageable age, is envisaged in the last book of the *Odyssey*. Having espied the hundred or so recently slaughtered young suitors descending to Hades, Agamemnon's ghost declares (*Od.* xxiv, 104–113) that they seem "like all chosen and same-aged (ὁμήλικες, 107)" ones picked from the "best men" who had been drowned at sea or killed ashore on a raid for livestock or in a fight "for a city and women".

In these widely distributed mythical and legendary examples, its members' birth in the same year appears as a significant attribute of a youthful brotherhood or sodality. The evidence for communal initiations presented above (sections 3.1–3.2) suggests that, as a rule, this ideal was adhered to sufficiently closely in practice for all, or at least most, members of a typical sodality to be treated as coevals. Departure from such a group normally involved the acquisition of women and/or marriage. This too was represented as a joint affair in ancient Crete (section 3.4) as well as the legends of Romulus and Volx, was at least planned for the thirty coeval Hittite brothers, and was envisaged as a plausible aim of Penelope's hundred or so simultaneously slain and apparently coeval suitors.

5.2 Bands of young coeval emigrants and the 'sacred spring'

Birth in the same year was also a fundamental criterion for constituting a large band of youths for the purpose of emigration by a mechanism that was widely used in early Europe according to Dionysius:

> At first it was a sacred band of youths (ἱερά τις … νεότης) setting out … in search of a livelihood in fulfilment of an ancient custom that I understand was practised by many barbarians and Greeks. For when … their own resources were no longer sufficient for everybody … and [this] necessitated a reduction in population, they used to dedicate men's offspring of the year to some god, equip them with arms and send them forth from their land … Those who had set out … used to take as their home the land that had ei-

> ther received them in friendship or been conquered … Following this custom … [they] devoted the offspring of that year (ἐνιαυσίους γονάς) to some god and sent the lads away from home when they had reached manhood (ἀνδρωθέντας). (Dion. Hal. i, 16, 1–2)

This procedure looks very much like a *ver sacrum* 'sacred spring' as described by Festus in relation to historical events involving the Mamertini, Messana and the outbreak of the First Punic War.

> When a serious pestilence had befallen all Samnium, the chief (*princeps*) of that nation, Sthennus Mettius … explained that he had seen in repose Apollo instructing them to vow a sacred spring (*ver sacrum*) if they wished to be freed of that evil – i.e., they would offer up whatever should be born in the next year. Twenty years after they had been relieved by this action, a pestilence of the same kind attacked them. Having been consulted again, Apollo replied that their vow had not been completed because men had not been offered up: if they expelled these, it would be certain that they would be freed of that disaster. These, then, having been ordered to leave the fatherland … came to the aid of the Messenians … The latter, in order to repay this service invited them into their body (politic) and to a share of their lands. They also accepted a single name, being called Mamertini. (Festus 150 L)

Both sources depict a response to pestilence, food shortages or overpopulation by devoting a year's offspring to a god. For male babies that entailed being consecrated on reaching manhood some twenty years later and sent forth under arms and a god's protection to seek new homes and wives together. Coevality was clearly the very essence of this practice, which makes sense as a means of placating the gods at a time of pestilence but hardly as a remedy for the pressures of overpopulation. Rather than a twenty-year wait, these called for the direct reaction seen in Livy's and Paul the Deacon's descriptions of the Gaulish and much later Lombard incursions into Northern Italy. Similarities between the Gaulish emigration and a *ver sacrum* are underlined in Justin's summary of the lost *Philippic Histories* by Trogus Pompeius, the grandson of a Gaul.

> We have received this account of the passage of the Gauls into Italy … The Bituriges … supplied the Celtic land with a king. This was Ambigatus, excelling in virtue and fortune, both privately and publicly, insofar as Gaul was so productive in men and crops during his reign that the abundant multi-

> tude scarce seemed able to be governed. In old age he, wishing to relieve the kingdom of the burdensome multitude, revealed that he was going to send his sister's sons Bellovesus and Segovesus, both active young men (*iuvenes*), into the abodes that the gods should grant in auguries. They were to take off as large a number of men (*hominum*) as they wished so that no nation should be able to ward off their arrival. (Livy v, 34, 1–4)

> When the lands of their birth could no longer take them, the Gauls in their abundant multitude sent three hundred thousand men like a sacred spring (*ver sacrum*) to seek new abodes. (Justin xxiv, 4, 1–3)

> When the peoples had grown into such a multitude that they could no longer live together, it is said that they divided the whole host into three parts and sought to discover by lot which of these would have to leave the fatherland and seek out new abodes … [Those chosen were] under the command of two leaders, namely Ibor and Aio, who were brothers (*germani*) in the prime of youth (*iuvenili aetate floridi*) … Therefore, they set out from Scandinavia. (Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* i, 2–3)

In the Russian legend above, Volx began at the age of twelve to recruit a 7000-strong sodality of coevals and, when he and they had reached the age of fifteen, led them straight to foreign conquest and marriage. The basic 'Mamertine' type of *ver sacrum*, by contrast, earmarked young men born in a particular year for the risks and uncertainty of a joint quest for wives and new homes abroad when they reached the age of twenty, which was associated with growth of a beard as a sign of manhood and hence fitness to leave a sodality, marry and settle down (section 3.4). By then they would be on the verge of the fourth hebdomad (21–28 years) of their lives, when a man was in his physical prime according to Solon (27, 7–8; μέγ' ἄριστος ἰσχύν), thereby maximising their chances of meeting the imminent challenge successfully. Although the extant sources do not mention a specific age and their followers were apparently drawn from a broader age spectrum, the leaders and participants in the 'Gaulish' emigration were explicitly called *iuvenes* and two youths in their prime also led an emigration that ultimately brought the Lombards to North Italy about a millennium later. All three of these emigrations were prompted by a crisis, and the 'Mamertine' and 'Gaulish' variants at least were, in effect, emergency substitutes for a normal direct transition from sodality to marriage and setting up house among one's own people as in the ancient Cretan system described in sections 3.2 and 3.4. This entailed younger boys serving

and eating in the *andreia* 'men's clubhouses', older boys being sent out in *agelai* 'herds' devoted to hunting and fighting, joint marriage of those leaving an *agelē* and presumably joining or forming an *andreion*, and finally there was a council of 'elders' (*gerontes*) made up of former chief magistrates and others deemed worthy (Strabo x, 4, 23). Although not conclusive *per se*, joint marriage would be a fitting way to inaugurate an age-set with its own *andreion* as a place for meeting and communal eating. On the already discussed scene on the Gundestrup cauldron (section 3.3), footsoldiers belonging to a sodality unmistakably labelled as such by a wolf are being jointly initiated as mounted knights of the tribe/kingdom. Whether followed by a shared marriage ceremony or a more protracted series of individual ones, any group transition of this type would be a viable basis for constituting an age-set.

5.3 *Homēlikiē* (literally 'same-age group') and *hēlikiai* 'age-sets' in Ancient Greece

The Ancient Greek adjectives *hēlix* and *homēlix* both basically mean 'coeval' and usually appear substantivised in the plural, while the collectives *hēlikiā* and *homēlikiē* derived from them likewise applied primarily to persons of the same age. The preferred Homeric term *homēlikiē* typically characterises younger men also liable to be called *hetairoi* or a *hetaireia*, Greek terms broadly corresponding to Latin *sodalis* and *sodalitas*: e.g., "and he gave (them) to Deipylus, the dear companion (*heta(i)ros*) whom he esteemed above all of his same-age group (Δηιπύλῳ, ἑτάρῳ φίλῳ, ὃν περὶ πάσης τῖεν ὁμηλικίης)" (*Iliad* v, 325–326). As they descended *en masse* to the underworld, Penelope's young suitors were deemed *homēlikes* (*Od.* xxiv, 107) by Agamemnon's ghost in the scene from the *Odyssey* mentioned above, and another passage (*Od.* iii, 363–364) refers to the twenty young *hetairoi* accompanying Telemachus on his voyage to Pylos as his *homēlikiē*, like the Irish *comaísi* 'coevals' voyaging with Bran above. However, *homēlikiē* can also apply higher up the scale which an age-set would be expected to ascend as newer ones were formed, as when Odysseus tells Mentor "you are (a member of) my same-age group (ὁμηλικίη δέ μοί ἐσσι)" (*Od.* xxii, 208–209) or it is said that the 'old man' (γέρων) Halitherses "alone surpassed his same-age group (ὁμηλικίην ἐκέκαστο)" in augury (*Od.* ii, 157–159).

A historical example is provided by Herodotus' (v, 71) account of how the Olympic victor Cylon attached to himself "a sodality of his coevals (ἑταιρηίη τῶν ἡλικιωτέων)" and seized the Acropolis in an unsuccessful attempt to become ty-

rant of Athens in the later 7th century BC. Justin (xx, 4, 14–16) records a similar failed conspiracy, not unlike Mucius Scaevola's already mentioned (section 5.1) effort, to take over the Greek city of Croton in southern Italy in Pythagoras' day, the later 6th century BC, by "three hundred of the youths (*ex iuvenibus*) when, bound by the law of fellowship/sodality (*iure sodalicii*) and a certain oath, they were leading a life separated from the other citizens". Livy (xxi, 31, 6–70) records the deposing of a king of the Allobroges in southern Gaul by his younger brother with the support of a band of youths (*coetu iuniorum*), although the elder brother was restored in 218 BC by Hannibal after the Allobroges' senate (*senatus*) and leaders (*principes*) had invited him to arbitrate. There are obvious parallels between this historical event and the legend of Numitor's recovery of the throne of Alba from his brother Amulius with the support of his grandsons, Romulus and Remus, and their band of *iuvenes*.

A classic age-set cycle of *hēlikiai* 'age-sets' (aka 'age-classes/-groups') was still operational in Athens in the fourth-century on the good evidence of the Aristotelian *Athēnaiōn Politeia*. An already noted (section 3.2) reference there to two years spent by ephebes on patrol after public presentation of a spear and shield matches a statement by Pollux (viii, 105–106) that enrolment as a full Athenian citizen took place after two years on patrol in the country as an ephebe over the age of sixteen. The obvious implication is that those youths who had just completed service in a quasi-sodality were admitted to citizenship at the age of eighteen (*Ath. Pol.* §42, 1) on an annual basis. The subsequent arrangement is described as follows:

> (4) The *diaitetai* are those in their sixtieth year. This is clear from the [names of the] archons and the eponymous heroes (ἐκ τῶν ἀρχόντων καὶ τῶν ἐπωνύμων): for there are ten eponymous heroes (ἐπώνυμοι) of the tribes (τῶν φυλῶν) and forty-two of the age-classes (τῶν ἡλικιῶν). The *epheboi* … used to be entered on whitened boards [bearing] the names … of the archon under whom they were entered and the eponymous hero (ἐπώνυμος) of the previous year's *diaitetai* … (5) The Forty take the last of the eponymous heroes and distribute the arbitrations among the men … (7) They use the eponymous heroes also for military campaigns and when they send out an age range (ἡλικίαν) they prescribe from which archon and hero to which [ones] the men must go out on the campaign. (*Ath. Pol.* §53, 4–7; ed. and trans. Rhodes 2017)

As Vidal-Naquet (1986: 86–87) explains,

> each of the forty-two ranks had its own eponymous hero, and these heroes … served not only to summon the conscription classes but also to designate the public arbitrators (*diaitētai*). This magistracy appeared in 403–402, and its members were recruited from among those Athenians who were sixty years old. At the end of their sixtieth year, they passed into the class of elders, and the cycle of the forty-two years was over for them. Their eponymous hero therefore became available to the ephebes entering their nineteenth year.

Enrolment as an Athenian citizen, then, entailed inclusion in a coeval group named after a specific legendary figure and destined to move year by year up a 42-point scale between the ages of 18 and 60, when its surviving members left the cycle and its eponym was transferred to the next batch of new citizens. Unlike the particular judicial duties enjoined upon those leaving the 42nd *hēlikiā*, the military role of the *hēlikiai* does not look like a recent development: not only does the sequence of forty-two eponymous heroes point to the antiquity of a system still bearing the recognisable imprint of age-sets but a similar method of military call-up seems to have operated at Sparta, where "the ephors announce in advance the years (τὰ ἔτη) up to which one has to go on a campaign (στρατεύεσθαι), firstly to both cavalry and hoplites and then also to the artisans" (Xenophon *Resp. Lac.* 11, 2).

5.4 Criteria for constituting an age-set

In ancient Athens, the annual constitution of an age-set clearly coincided with admission as a full member of society after a period spent away patrolling the countryside. Since this normally entailed enrolment of those qualified by birth and age as citizens, the first condition was met from the outset and it was only a matter of time until the second was fulfilled. The evidence presented earlier (section 3.4) indicates that appropriate ancestry and attainment of a minimum age were almost inevitable as criteria for progress from adolescent sodality to adult society. Early Irish law tracts not only specify a minimum age of twenty but also detail the amount of livestock and other possessions deemed necessary for the occupancy of a given social grade as a married man (section 3.4). Since a property qualification of some sort would be a logical adjunct of transition from vagrancy to setting up one's own household, it may well have been present from PIE times. Early Irish law recognised inheritance as the regular means to this end, and Falk argues that options for acquiring the wherewithal to become a head

of household became increasingly limited as Indian society evolved during the interval between the Rig- and the Yajur-Veda:

> In the period of the RV youths were organised in bands, in which they were familiarised with the literary inheritance of their forebears as well as with the use of weapons … After the end of the apprenticeship an individual youth had four options. Firstly, the young man could marry and in due course take over the headship of the household from his father. He became an Āhitāgni … and thereby stood at the head of an extended family. This ideal was generally only attainable by the firstborn (*jeṣṭha*). All those born subsequently had a choice between, secondly, living as dependents in their brother's house or, thirdly, organising themselves into a band with others who were likewise disadvantaged with a view to acquiring by various means the wherewithal for an independent settlement. Failure to achieve this left, fourthly, only death or perpetual wandering as options … After the settlement of North India had reached a certain density, the raids of those left short must have become a great nuisance. Only the end result can be seen: larger political structures capable of protecting themselves against the bands and, above all, the [caste- or] *varṇa*-system, in which rule no longer depends upon the order of birth but upon membership of a social class. Needless to say, the privileges of the firstborn are retained within that class. The YV appears as a generally successful effort to adapt the ritual effect of the bands to the fire cult of the Āhitāgnis and transform it into a means of legitimating rule over a settled, civilised population. (Falk 1986: 13–14)

Even where primogeniture did not apply and each of a deceased man's sons could claim a share in his inheritance,[29] as inferred for PIE from various attested IE systems (section 1.2 and n. 2 above), a problem would still be posed by an inheritance that did not suffice for two or more heirs to maintain their father's position. In early medieval Ireland this seems to have been dealt with by the heirs either accepting a lower status or agreeing to award the whole inheritance to one claimant only by casting lots, competing in a game or even fighting to the death (McCone 1990: 207–208). The last three options would inevitably consign at least one excluded heir to death or prolonged membership of a sodality (cf. the Old Irish charm in section 2.1). Although similar expedients may also have been available

29 Note the PIE root *$*h_1erb^h$- from which words for both 'orphan' and 'heir' are derived in some IE languages (Benveniste 1969: 83–84, McCone 1999).

at earlier stages, there was presumably less need for them as long as sodalities remained in full vigour as an avenue for plundering sufficient stock and other valuables to top up or take the place of an inheritance. The accumulation of wealth figures in Diodorus' description of Iberian sodalities:

> There is a peculiar practice among the inhabitants of Iberia, especially the [IE] Lusitanians. Those in the prime of life who are the most short of resources but outstanding in physical strength and courage furnish themselves with might and arms and gather together in mountainous fastnesses. Having constituted units of note, they overrun Iberia and gather riches by plundering. They continue to do this with complete arrogance, employing light arms and being utterly mobile, swift and difficult for others to catch. Generally regarding the trackless and rough places in the mountains as their homelands, they take refuge in these because they are hard for large heavy armies to traverse. (Diodorus v, 34)

Transition from youth in a vagrant sodality to full adult status in the society of one's birth would seem to have depended, from the PIE period onwards, upon acquisition of the wealth necessary to maintain that status by inheritance, plunder, or a combination of both. If so, and even if the bulk of a sodality's members did normally manage to leave it together as claimed by Strabo for ancient Crete or depicted on a panel of the Gundestrup cauldron, the transition of indigent individuals from that phase might be delayed for some time or even permanently, as in the case of some Irish *oénchiniud*s or Germanic Chatti (section 2.6). One possible remedy (section 5.2) was emigration leading, if successful, to settlement abroad by dint of conquest or as a reward for military service. While emigration or death before departure from a sodality would hardly affect the system, a problem would be posed by stragglers who only managed to return home and become married householders some time after the majority of their peers. One possibility would be to attach them to the younger set admitted to adult society in the year when they too finally made it, but that would breach the 'distinct mean age' rule for an age-set formulated by Stewart (section 1.3). A better solution is suggested by the rather uniform age for the constitution of a sodality which is indicated by the evidence presented above for the joint initiation of youths into them and ascription of the same age to their members in myth or legend at least: the late incorporation of any straggler into the age-set formed some time before by most of his coevals upon leaving the sodality into which he and they had once been initiated.

6 Men's messes, Sabine wives and Rome's *curiae*, including the *curia* 'senate house'

> The sources tell us that the population of early Rome was divided into three tribes, called Tities, Ramnes and Luceres, which were themselves divided into thirty smaller units called curiae, ten to each tribe … But, unlike the tribes, the curiae retained certain residual functions in the public life of the Roman Republic. They formed the constituent units of an assembly, the *comitia curiata*, which met to pass the law conferring *imperium* (the right of command) on the senior magistrates (the *lex curiata de imperio*), and for other formal purposes … The curiae also played a part in the religious life of the state, in particular the Fornicalia … The last day of the Fornicalia, the 17 February … was popularly known as the 'feast of fools', because all the curiae met together on that day, and those who did not know which curia they belonged to were able to take part (Ovid, *Fasti* 2.531–2) … The word curia is also used to signify a building where meetings took place. The Curia Hostilia, for instance, was the earliest senate house … There is some evidence, moreover, that each of the thirty curiae had its own meeting hall, and was associated with a particular locality in the city … The names of the curiae, of which eight are known …: some appear to be associated with particular places (Veliensis, Foriensis), others to be clan names (cf. Dion. Hal. 2.47.3; Plutarch, *Rom*. 20.3), though if so the clans in question are very obscure (Titia, Faucia, Velitia, Acculeia), while others are frankly mysterious (Tifata, Rapta). (Cornell 1995: 114–117)

The gist of these remarks is that, notwithstanding residual ritual, social and legal functions, the *curiae* had become sufficiently irrelevant in the later Roman Republic for many citizens not to know which *curia* they belonged to. Tradition had it that Romulus created three tribes with ten *curiae* in each to give thirty overall, each apparently with a meeting place also called a *curia*, which was also the name for Rome's oldest senate house.

Cretan *andreia* (ἀνδρεῖα) or 'men's clubhouses' have already been mentioned in relation to age-grades and age-sets. Spartan *sys-sitia* (συσ-σίτια) 'messes' were deemed sufficiently similar for Herodotus (i, 65, 4–5) to claim that they had been introduced by Lycurgus from Crete. Strabo (x, 4, 18) claims that 'Cretan' institutions at Sparta included *syssitia*, which were called *andreia* still in Crete and formerly also in Sparta, citing in evidence Alcman's late 7th-century verse "at feasts (φοίναις) and festivities (θιάσοισιν) it is proper to begin a paean among

the diners of *andreia* (ἀνδρείων παρὰ δαιτυμόνεσσι)". Contemporary testimony to the survival of *syssitia* in parts of Italy as late as the 4th century BC is provided by a statement in Aristotle's *Politics* (1329b5, 14–18) that Minos established Cretan *syssitia* but "those in Italy are far more ancient than these … Italus … first established the *syssitia*. Consequently, even now some of his descendants still make use of *syssitia*". The straightforward etymology of *cūria* as **co-viria* 'men's association' led Alföldi (1974: 67) to remark that "the house of the men's association, which every *curia* had, was likewise called *curia* and … assigned to the men's *syssitia*" and "these dining societies were characteristic of the whole of Italy".

That raises the question of whether they were originally age-sets formed by those leaving a sodality, marrying and becoming adult citizens in a given year. After stating (ii, 7) that Romulus divided the people (πληθύν) into three parts and each of these into a further ten, calling the larger units tribes (τρίβους, equated with Greek φυλή and τριττύς) and the smaller ones curiae (κουρίας, equated with Greek φράτρα 'phratry' and λόχος 'squadron'), Dionysius of Halicarnassus points out that each Roman *curia* had its own unique eponym:

> Some [Roman authors] write that the leaders (ἡγεμόνας) bestowed many other great benefits upon the [Sabine] women and even had the thirty *curiae* (φράτρας) named after the women (ἐπωνύμους τῶν γυναικῶν), since that had been the number of women on the embassy [for peace with the Sabines]. But Terentius Varro does not agree … saying that the names had been imposed upon the *curiae* (κουρίαις) earlier by Romulus in relation to the initial division of the people, some taken from leading men (ἀνδρῶν … ἡγεμόνων) and others from places (τόπων) (Dion. Hal. ii, 47; cf. Livy i, 13, 6–7)

According to Plutarch (*Romulus* 20, 3), "each tribe had ten *curiae* (φρατρίας), which some say are named after (ἐπωνύμους) those women, but this seems to be false, as many of them have their appellations from places/districts (χωρίων)". The characterisation of each *curia* by a distinctive eponym is a striking parallel with the cyclical Athenian age-sets termed *hēlikiai* (section 5.4), particularly if at least some of them were, as apparently maintained by most Roman authorities, the names of legendary Sabine maidens abducted and wed by Romulus and his men. Varro's objection, which Plutarch seems to have been inclined to accept, that some *curiae* were named from places is borne out by two of their eight known titles, namely Veliensis and Foriensis. Since Cornell admits that a link with *gentes* favoured by him is no real help with the other six attestations, these could presumably have been viewed as the names of Sabine wives by abduction, *Rapta*

being particularly suggestive in this regard. Whether brides supposedly seized by Romulus' bachelor band supplied the eponyms of various *curiae* at an early stage or *curia* names that had become obscure were ascribed to abducted Sabine women somewhat later, the fact remains that the *curiae* were thereby connected with the wives seized by Rome's recently settled but previously vagrant bachelor founders according to the standard legend of the city's origins. An erstwhile function of the Roman *curiae* similar to that of the *hēlikiai* as the basic constituents of an Athenian military call-up is indicated by the second Greek equivalent of the Latin term proposed by Dionysius above: *lokhos*, a military unit roughly translatable as 'squadron'.

The ancient sources' unanimity about Romulus' division of Rome's first citizens into thirty *curiae*, ten per tribe, has generally led to modern acceptance that the *curiae* did indeed number thirty and originated as subdivisions of three otherwise obscure tribes. However, Festus (42 L) indicates quite clearly that their actual number was thirty-five:

> *Curiae* … into which Romulus distributed the people, thirty in number, to which five were added afterwards, so that everyone might perform public rites (*sacra publica*) and observe festivals (*ferias*) in his own *curia*, and the names of the *Curiae* maidens (*Curiarum virginum*) are said to have been imposed upon these individual *curiae*, the maidens (*virgines*) whom the Romans once seized (*rapuerunt*) from the Sabines.

This entry resolves the discrepancy between the thirty 'Romulan' *curiae* of tradition and the thirty-five in existence by simply invoking the later creation of an extra five *curiae*. Nevertheless, in the absence of any indication of when this alleged innovation occurred, this explanation looks distinctly facile. Suspicion that it puts the cart before the horse is heightened by a broader numerological context: as a result of the fighting with Remus and his followers, "small was the number of those participating in the settlement/colony (ἀποικίας) with him [Romulus] that was left from the large one originally sent out, [namely] three thousand footsoldiers and three hundred knights (τρισχίλιοι πεζοὶ καὶ ἱππεῖς τριακόσιοι)" (Dion. Hal. ii, 2). The reason for this incredibly neat number was surely that it provided an aetiology of the size of a Roman legion, which was originally formed by 1,000 infantry and 100 cavalry from each of the three tribes according to Varro (*Ling. Lat.* v, 89). There was, then, a tradition that Rome's original citizen body was, in effect, a legion consisting of 3,000 *pedites* and 300 *equites* organised into 30 *curiae* and 3 *tribus*. The evidently artificial symmetry ($3 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10$) of this antiquar-

ian scheme could easily have been achieved by shaving five off the actual number of by then largely defunct *curiae* to give an original thirty, the corollary being that they were only later increased to thirty-five. Consequently, there is no good reason to suppose that the number of *curiae* was ever other than thirty-five in reality.

In that case, the *curiae* cannot have been subdivisions of three tribes. Their number would, however, make good sense if they originated as age-sets recruited annually from those leaving sodalities around the age of twenty. They would then have proceeded up a 35-point scale until the exemption of a *curia*'s surviving members from military service at the age of fifty-five or so freed its eponym and premises for recycling to the next annual intake of new citizens, as in the cycle of 42 Athenian *hēlikiai*. The fact that 35 and 42 are successive multiples of seven may be significant in view of the arguably old or even PIE division of a man's life into a sequence of ten seven-year phases underlying Solon's already discussed poem (sections 3.4 and 5.1). Whereas significant transitions in a young male's development were seen to mark the ends of the first three of these, the boundaries between the next five or six of full manhood seem to have been a good deal less clear-cut until the final major transition to status as an elder around the age of 55. Solon characterises them as a man's physical prime (21–28 years; μέγ' ἄριστος ἰσχύν, 4th couplet), time for marriage and children (28–35), increased mental acuity (35–42), peak of intellect and eloquence (42–56; νοῦν καὶ γλῶσσαν … μέγ' ἄριστος, 7th couplet), continued ability but some weakening of faculties (56–70; ἔτι μὲν δύναται, μαλακώτερα δ(ἐ), 8th couplet), and finally the prospect of death after reaching the end (μέτρον) of the tenth hebdomad (9th and final couplet). Solon's watershed of 56 before decline sets in is virtually the same as a Roman's age at the end of the cycle of 35 *curiae*, if these are taken as annually constituted age-sets. This suggests that the number of Athenian *hēlikiai* was increased by a conventional further seven at some time between Solon's day (early 6th century) and the late 5th century BC by lowering the ages of entry into and departure from the cycle somewhat.

Osborne (2009: 30) argues from the high rates of mortality likely to have prevailed in archaic Greece that "the elders of the community were chosen by the lottery of survival" since "only some 5 per cent were over the age of 60" on average. That is when an Athenian left the final *hēlikiā* of the annually progressing cycle for a final undifferentiated phase as an elder terminated by death. This conforms to a further attested feature of age-sets (aka age-groups): "It is quite often felt that age-groups should have a certain minimum size, and the oldest in the system may drop below that size. The practice exists, therefore, of joining some of the oldest age-groups together to form a single, enlarged group" (Stewart 1977: 123). If a *cu-*

ria of Roman citizens who had reached the age of fifty-five was dissolved annually after completing a 35-year cycle and its remaining members incorporated into a single combined age-set of *senes* 'elders' charged with deliberative functions, it would be only natural for the place where this *senatus* met to be called a *curia* like the meeting places of the younger cyclical age-sets. In a republic especially, a council of 'elders' could come to consist mostly or entirely of ex-magistrates, as in the case of the Cretan *gerousia* (section 5.2) or the Roman senate.

Cornell (1995: 144; cf. 428 n. 74, and Bremmer 1987: 41–42) points out that:

> one of the most important features of the society of central Italy in the archaic period is the presence of … aristocratic warlords whose power rested on the support of armed personal dependants, who are variously styled 'clients' (*clientes*) or 'companions' (*sodales*) … Well-known examples include the Sabine leader Attus Clausus (Appius Claudius), who in 504 bc migrated to Rome with a private retinue of 5,000 armed clients; and Cn. Marcius Coriolanus, noted for his "large following of companions, and many clients banded together for warlike gain", who joined the Volscians and became their leader in a war against Rome … The so-called Lapis Satricanus, which can be dated with some confidence to around 500 bc, records a dedication to Mars by the companions (*sodales*) of a certain Poplios Valesios (i.e. Publius Valerius) … it provides contemporary evidence of a group who define themselves not as citizens of a state or members of an ethnic group, but as companions of an individual leader.

The subsequent disappearance of Roman sodalities, apart from ritualised relics such as the colleges of *Luperci* and *Salii*, was almost bound to lead to significant changes in the recruitment and functions of *curiae*, if they were originally age-sets formed on departure from a sodality. Unfortunately, the details are obscure.

7 Conclusion

There is a good deal of evidence from a range of peoples speaking IE languages for 'wolfish' sodalities of youths consigned to a period of hunting and raiding in the wilds between the ages of (give or take a year) fifteen and (at least) twenty, and a PIE institution along these basic lines may be posited with some confidence. Ideally, this phase of virtual 'limbo' was a transitional one between boyhood as a minor in the home of parents or foster-parents and manhood as the married

head of one's own household in the community of one's birth. In practice, however, progress to the latter status around the age of twenty could be impeded, either temporarily or indefinitely, by a lack of the means for setting up a household. One obvious response to a long-term obstacle was emigration and, in the event of a serious general reduction in prospects at home by overpopulation or drought or disease, a large number of suitably trained and hardened youths aged twenty or so was liable to be dedicated in a 'sacred spring' and sent forth in the hope of winning property and wives elsewhere. Sodalities, then, seem to have played a key role not only in PIE and early IE social organisation but also in (P)IE migrations at various stages.

Life in a typical Indo-European band of wandering bachelors hunting and raiding in the wilds like a pack of wolves must have entailed a high degree of interdependence conducive to 'male bonding' and efficient cooperation. Once that phase had been left behind and the next one as married householders embarked upon, a desire to continue the *esprit de corps* and ties formed in a sodality would be understandable in view of their potential military and social usefulness. An obvious way of implementing this was to incorporate those comrades of about the same age leaving a sodality in a given year into a lifelong association, thereby fulfilling Radcliffe-Brown's two basic criteria for an age-set as cited in section 1.3. If so, one might expect recognition of what would, in effect, be the 'graduating class' of a particular year to be marked by a ritual such as the joint marriage recorded in ancient Crete and/or the group baptism depicted on the Gundestrup cauldron.

The attestation of coeval groups and joint marriage in the myths, legends, rituals and societies of a number of early Indo-European peoples combines with the direct attestation of age-sets in ancient Athens and their inference in ancient Rome to make it likely that a system of age-sets played a role in Proto-Indo-European social organisation. The evidence indicates that, as might be expected, a new age-set was constituted by those aged twenty or so who graduated together from their sodality in the same year, although the basic qualification for joining it had been established by admission to that sodality some five years earlier. In the probable event that sodalities were exclusively or at least primarily the preserve of upper-class youths in PIE, as was the case in various early IE societies, age-sets ultimately based upon them will likewise have been primarily aristocratic associations convened at intervals for ritual and social purposes. The result was a set of relationships that was essentially independent of, and supplementary to, those established by kinship or marriage, and was calculated to enhance the power of an age-set's members by preserving and promoting among them a shared identity

conducive to increased military impact and social influence. The potential for mutual support and advantageous networking will have been still greater if the supplementary division of a man's career into seven-year stages really was old and led to larger groupings of seven age-sets within a specific range (e.g., memberships of 21–28 or 42–49 years) for certain ritual, social and/or military purposes.

Whatever the precise details, it seems that the period spent in a sodality not only prepared a young man for adult life but also provided the platform for his integration into a power-structure centred upon age-sets or groups of approximately coeval married men, which remained in existence until surviving members moved on to the final age-grade and a new sphere of influence and activity as elders.

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This book is situated at the intersection of diverse but complementary approaches to the investigation of prehistoric culture and society: combining perspectives from linguistics, archaeology, anthropology, and history of religion, it seeks to explore the dynamics of power, gender, and mobility – three concepts that are essential for a profound understanding of the historically attested Indo-European–speaking societies and of the prehistoric society reflected by Proto-Indo-European.

The book offers a comprehensive analysis of topics ranging from gender roles and female onomastics to power structures and the role of poets as social brokers, from Indo-European legal language and initiation rites to matrimonial practices and age-based social hierarchies. It provides fresh interpretations and new approaches to known material as well as novel explorations and unprecedented analyses of new data.

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