

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

II.
MEDIAEVAL MIGRATION SAGAS.

A. THE LEARNED SAGA IN REGARD TO
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THE SAGA IN *HEIMSKRINGLA* AND THE *PROSE EDDA*.

In the preceding pages, we have given the reasons which make it appear proper to assume that ancient Germania, within certain indefinable limits, included the coasts of the Baltic and the North Sea, that the Scandinavian countries constituted a part of this ancient Germania, and that they have been peopled by Teutons since the days of the stone age.

The subject that I am now about to discuss requires an investigation in reference to what the Teutons themselves believed, in regard to this question, in the earliest times of which we have knowledge. Did they look upon themselves as aborigines or as immigrants in Germania? For the mythology, the answer to this question is of great weight. For pragmatic history, on the other hand, the answer is of little importance, for whatever they believed gives no reliable basis for conclusions in regard to historical facts. If they regarded themselves as aborigines, this does not hinder their having immigrated in prehistoric times, though their traditions have ceased to speak of it. If they regarded themselves as immigrants, then it does not follow that the traditions, in regard to the immigration, contain any historical kernel. Of the former, we have an example in the case of the Brahmins and the higher castes in India: their orthodoxy requires them to regard themselves as aborigines of the country in which they live, although there is evidence that they are immigrants. Of the latter, the Swedes are an example: the people here have been taught to believe that a greater or less portion of the inhabitants of Sweden are descended from immigrants who, led by Odin, are supposed to have come here about one hundred years before the birth of Christ, and that this immigration, whether it brought many or few people, was of the most decisive influence on the culture of the country, so that Swedish history might properly begin with the moment when Odin planted his feet on Swedish soil.

The more accessible sources of the traditions in regard to Odin's immigration to Scandinavia are found in the Icelandic works, *Heimskringla* and the *Prose Edda*. Both sources are from the same time, that is, the thirteenth century, and are separated by more than two hundred years from the heathen age in Iceland.

We will first consider *Heimskringla's* story. A river, by name Tanakvisl, or Vanakvisl, empties into the Black Sea. This river separates Asia from Europe. East of Tanakvisl, that is to say, then in Asia, is a country formerly called Asaland or Asaheim,

and the chief citadel or town in that country was called Asgard. It was a great city of sacrifices, and there dwelt a chief who was known by the name Odin. Under him ruled twelve men who were high-priests and judges. Odin was a great chieftain and conqueror, and so victorious was he, that his men believed that victory was wholly inseparable from him. If he laid his blessing hand on anybody's head, success was sure to attend him. Even if he was absent, if called upon in distress or danger, his very name seemed to give comfort. He frequently went far away, and often remained absent half-a-year at a time. His kingdom was then ruled by his brothers Vili and Ve. Once he was absent so long that the Aesir believed that he would never return. Then his brothers married his wife Frigg. Finally he returned, however, and took Frigg back again.

The Aesir had a people as their neighbors called the Vanir. Odin made war on the Vanir, but they defended themselves bravely. When both parties had been victorious and suffered defeat, they grew weary of warring, made peace, and exchanged hostages. The Vanir sent their best son Njörd and his son Frey, and also Kvasir, as hostages to the Aesir; and the latter gave in exchange Hoenir and Mimir. Odin gave Njörd and Frey the dignity of priests. Frey's sister, too, Freyja, was made a priestess. The Vanir treated the hostages they had received with similar consideration, and created Hoenir a chief and judge. But they soon seemed to discover that Hoenir was a stupid fellow. They considered themselves cheated in the exchange, and, being angry on this account, they cut off the head, not of Hoenir, but of his wise brother Mimir, and sent it to Odin. He embalmed the head, sang magic songs over it, so that it could talk to him and tell him many strange things.

Asaland, where Odin ruled, is separated by a great mountain range from Tyrkland, by which Heimskringla means Asia Minor, of which the celebrated Troy was supposed to have been the capital. In Tyrkland, Odin also had great possessions. But at that time the Romans invaded and subjugated all lands, and many rulers fled on that account from their kingdoms. And Odin, being wise and versed in the magic art, and knowing, therefore, that his descendants were to people the northern part of the world, he left his kingdom to his brothers Vili and Ve, and migrated with many followers to Gardariki, Russia. Njörd, Frey, and Freyja, and the other priests who had ruled under him in Asgard, accompanied him, and sons of his were also with him. From Gardariki he proceeded to Saxland, conquered vast countries, and made his sons rulers over them. From Saxland, he went to Funen and settled there. Seeland did not exist then. Odin sent the maid Gefjun north across the water to investigate what country was situated there. At that time, a chief named Gylfi ruled in Svithiod. He gave Gefjun a ploughland¹ and, by the help of four giants changed into oxen, Gefjun cut out with the plough, and dragged into the sea near Funen that island which is now called Seeland. Where the land was ploughed away there is now a lake called Logrin. Skjold, Odin's son, got this land, and married Gefjun. And when Gefjun informed Odin that Gylfi possessed a good land, Odin went thither, and Gylfi, being unable to make resistance, though he too was a wise man skilled in witchcraft and sorcery, a peaceful compact was made, according to which Odin acquired a vast territory around Logrin; and in Sigtuna he established a great temple, where sacrifices henceforth were offered according to the custom of the Aesir. To his priests he gave dwellings - Noatun to Njörd, Upsala to Frey, Himinbjorg to Heimdall, Thrudvang to Thor, Breidablik to Balder, &c. Many new sports came to the North with

¹ As much land as can be ploughed in a day.

Odin, and he and the Aesir taught them to the people. Among other things, he taught them poetry and runes. Odin himself always talked in measured rhymes. Besides, he was a most excellent sorcerer. He could change shape, make his foes in a conflict blind and deaf; he was a wizard, and could wake the dead. He owned the ship *Skidbladnir*, which could be folded as a napkin. He had two ravens, which he had taught to speak, and they brought him tidings from all lands. He knew where all treasures were hid in the earth, and could call them forth with the aid of magic songs. Among the customs he introduced in the North were cremation of the dead, the raising of mounds in memory of great men, the erection of *bauta*-stones in commemoration of others; and he introduced the three great sacrificial feasts - for a good year, for good crops, and for victory. Odin died in Svithiod. When he perceived the approach of death, he suffered himself to be marked with the point of a spear, and declared that he was going to Godheim to visit his friends and receive all fallen in battle. This the Swedes believed. They have since worshipped him in the belief that he had an eternal life in the ancient Asgard, and they thought he revealed himself to them before great battles took place. On Svea's throne he was followed by Njörd, the progenitor of the race of Ynglings. Thus *Heimskringla*.

We now pass to the *Prose Edda*², which in its Foreword gives us in the style of that time a general survey of history and religion.

First, it gives from the *Bible* the story of creation and the deluge. Then a long story is told of the building of the tower of Babel. The descendants of Noah's son, Ham, warred against and conquered the sons of Shem, and tried in their arrogance to build a tower which should aspire to heaven itself. The chief manager in this enterprise was Zoroaster, and seventy-two master-masons and joiners served under him. But God confounded the tongues of these arrogant people so that each one of the seventy-two masters with those under him got their own language, which the others could not understand, and then each went his own way, and in this manner arose the seventy-two different languages in the world. Before that time, only one language was spoken, and that was Hebrew. Where they tried to build the tower a city was founded and called Babylon. There Zoroaster became a king and ruled over many Assyrian nations, among which he introduced idolatry, and which worshiped him as Baal. The tribes that departed with his master-workmen also fell into idolatry, excepting the one tribe which kept the Hebrew language. It preserved also the original and pure faith. Thus, while Babylon became one of the chief places of false teaching, the island Crete became another. There was born a man, by name Saturn, who became for the Cretans and Macedonians what Zoroaster was for the Assyrians. Saturn's knowledge and skill in magic, and his art of producing gold from red-hot iron, secured him the power of a prince on Crete; and as he, moreover, had control over all invisible forces, the Cretans and Macedonians believed that he was a god, and he encouraged them in this faith. He had three sons - Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto. Of these, Jupiter resembled his father in skill and magic, and he was a great warrior who conquered many peoples. When Saturn divided his kingdom among his sons, a feud arose. Pluto got as his share hell, and as this was the least desirable part he also received the dog named Cerberus. Jupiter, who received heaven, was not satisfied with this, but wanted the earth too. He made war against his father, who had to seek

² The version of the Prologue quoted by Rydberg comes from the *Codex Wormianus* (W), which contains a longer version than the other basic mss. (R, T, U).

refuge in Italy, where he, out of fear of Jupiter, changed his name and called himself Njörd, and where he became a useful king, teaching the inhabitants, who lived on nuts and roots, to plough and plant vineyards.

Jupiter had many sons. From one of them, Dardanus, descended in the fifth generation Priam of Troy. Priam's son was Hector, who in stature and strength was the foremost man in the world. From the Trojans, the Romans are descended; and when Rome had grown to be a great power, it adopted many laws and customs which had prevailed among the Trojans before them. Troy was situated in Tyrkland, near the center of the earth. Under Priam, the chief ruler, there were twelve tributary kings, and they spoke twelve languages. These twelve tributary kings were exceedingly wise men; they received the honor of gods, and from them all European chiefs are descended. One of these twelve was called Munon or Mennon. He was married to a daughter of Priam, and had with her the son Tror, "whom we call Thor." He was a very handsome man, his hair shone fairer than gold, and at the age of twelve he was full-grown, and so strong that he could lift twelve bear-skins at the same time. He slew his foster-father and foster-mother, took possession of his foster-father's kingdom Thracia, "which we call Thrudheim," and afterward he roamed about the world, conquering berserks, giants, the greatest dragon, and other monsters. In the North, he met a prophetess by name Sibil (Sibylla), "whom we call Sif," and married her. In the twentieth generation from this Thor, Vodin descended, "whom we call Odin," a very wise and well-informed man, who married Frigida, "whom we call Frigg."

At that time, the Roman general Pompey was making wars in the East and also threatened the empire of Odin. Meanwhile, Odin and his wife had learned through prophetic inspiration that a glorious future awaited them in the northern part of the world. Therefore, he emigrated from Tyrkland and took with him many people, old and young, men and women, and costly treasures. Wherever they came, they appeared to the inhabitants more like gods than men. And they did not stop before they came as far north as Saxland. Odin remained there a long time. He appointed one of his sons, Veggdegg, king of Saxland. He made another son, Beldegg, "whom we call Balder," king in Westphalia. A third son, Siggi, became king in Frankland. Then Odin proceeded farther to the north and came to Reidgothaland, which is now called Jutland, and there took possession of as much as he wanted. There he appointed his son Skjold as king. Then he came to Svithiod.

Here ruled king Gylfi. When he heard of the expedition of Odin and his Asiatics, he went to meet them and offered Odin as much land and as much power in his kingdom as he might desire. One reason why people everywhere gave Odin so hearty a welcome and offered him land and power was that wherever Odin and his men tarried on their journey, the land produced good harvests and abundant crops, and therefore they believed that Odin and his men controlled the weather amid the growing grain. Odin went with Gylfi up to the lake "Logrin" and saw that the land was good; and there he chose as his citadel the place which is called Sigtuna, founding there the same institutions as had existed in Troy, and to which the Turks were accustomed. Then he organized a council of twelve men, who were to make laws and settle disputes. From Svithiod, Odin went to

Norway, and there made his son *Sæming* king. But the ruling of Svithiod, he had left to his son Yngvi, from whom the race of Ynglings are descended. The Aesir and their sons married the women of the land of which they had taken possession, and their descendants, who preserved the language spoken in Troy, multiplied so fast that the Trojan language displaced the old tongue and became the speech of Svithiod, Norway, Denmark, and Saxland, and thereafter also of England.

The first part of *Prose Edda*, *Gylfaginning*, consists of a collection of mythological tales told to the reader in the form of a conversation between the above-named king of Sweden, Gylfi, and the Aesir. Before the Aesir had started on their journey to the North, it says here, Gylfi had learned that they were a wise and knowing people who had success in all their undertakings. And believing that this was a result either of the nature of these people, or of the peculiar kind of worship, that they practiced, he resolved to investigate the matter secretly, and therefore betook himself in the guise of an old man to Asgard. But the foreknowing Aesir knew in advance that he was coming, and resolved to receive him with every manner of illusion, which might give him a high opinion of them. He finally came to a citadel, the roof of which was thatched with golden shields, and the hall of which was so large that he scarcely could see the whole of it. At the entrance stood a man playing with sharp tools, which he threw up in the air and caught again with his hands, and seven axes were in the air at the same time. This man asked the traveler his name. The latter answered that he was named Gangleri, that he had made a long journey over rough roads, and asked for lodgings for the night. He also asked whose the citadel was. The juggler answered that it belonged to their king, and conducted Gylfi into the hall, where many people were assembled. Some sat drinking, others amused themselves at games, and still others were practicing with weapons. There were three high-seats in the hall, one above the other, and in each high-seat sat a man. In the lowest sat the king; and the juggler informed Gylfi that the king's name was Har; that the one who sat next above him was named Jafnhar; and that the one who sat on the highest throne was named Thridi. Har asked the stranger what his errand was, and invited him to eat and drink. Gylfi answered that he first wished to know whether there was any wise man in the hall. Har replied that the stranger should not leave the hall whole unless he was victorious in a contest in wisdom. Gylfi now begins his questions, which all concern the worship of the Aesir, and the three men in the high-seats give him answers. Already in the first answer one finds that the Asgard to which Gylfi thinks he has come is, in the opinion of the author, a younger Asgard, and presumably the same as the author of *Heimskringla*³ places beyond the river Tanakvisl, but there had existed an older Asgard identical with Troy in Tyrkland, where, according to *Heimskringla*, Odin had extensive possessions at the time when the Romans began their invasions in the East. When Gylfi with his questions had learned the most important facts in regard to the religion of Asgard, and had at length been instructed concerning the destruction and regeneration of the world, he perceived a mighty rumbling and quaking, and when he looked about him the citadel and hall had disappeared, and he stood beneath the open sky. He returned to Svithiod and related all that he had seen and heard among the Aesir; but when he had gone, they counseled together, and they agreed to call themselves by those names which they used in relating their stories to Gylfi. These sagas, remarks

³ Bear in mind that the author of the *Prose Edda* and *Heimskringla* are the same man, Snorri Sturluson.

Gylfaginning, were in reality none but historical events transformed into divine mythology. They described events which had occurred in the older Asgard - that is to say, Troy. The basis of the stories told to Gylfi about Thor were the achievements of Hector in Troy, and the Loki of whom Gylfi had heard was, in fact, none other than Ulixes (Ulysses), who was the foe of the Trojans, and consequently was represented as the foe of the gods.

Gylfaginning is followed by another part of the *Prose Edda* called *Skáldskaparmál* (The Language of the Skalds),⁴ which is presented in a similar form. On Lessö, so it is said, formerly lived a man by the name Aegir. He, like Gylfi, had heard reports concerning the wisdom of the Aesir, and resolved to visit them. He, like Gylfi, comes to a place where the Aesir receive him with every manner of illusion, and conduct him into a hall which is lighted up in the evening with shining swords. There he is invited to take his seat by the side of Bragi, and there were twelve high-seats in which sat men who were called Thor, Njörd, Frey, etc., and women who were called Frigg, Freyja, Nanna, etc. The hall was splendidly decorated with shields. The mead passed round was exquisite, and the talkative Bragi instructed the guest in the traditions concerning the Aesir's art of poetry. A postscript to the treatise warns young skalds not to place confidence in the stories told to Gylfi and Aegir. The author of the postscript says they have value only as a key to the many metaphors which occur in the poems of the great skalds, but upon the whole they are deceptions invented by the Aesir or Asiamen to make people believe that they were gods. Still, the author thinks these falsifications have a historical kernel. They are, he thinks, based on what happened in the ancient Asgard, that is, Troy. Thus, for instance, Ragnarok is originally nothing else than the siege of Troy; Thor is, as stated, Hector; the Midgard-serpent is one of the heroes slain by Hector; the Fenris-wolf is Pyrrhus, son of Achilles, who slew Priam (Odin); and Vidar, who survives Ragnarok, is Aeneas.

8.

THE TROY SAGA IN *HEIMSKRINGLA* AND THE *PROSE EDDA* (continued).

The sources of the traditions concerning the Asiatic immigration to the North belong to the Icelandic literature, and to it alone. Saxo's *Historia Danica*, the first books of which were written toward the close of the twelfth century, presents on this topic its own peculiar view, which will be discussed later. The Icelandic accounts disagree only in unimportant details; the fundamental view is the same, and they have flowed from the same source. Compiled, they provide us with a mytho-historic whole of the following appearance:

Among the tribes who emigrated to various countries after the Babylonian confusion of tongues, there was a body of people who settled and introduced their language in Asia Minor, which is called Tyrkland in the sagas; in Greece, which is called Macedonia in the sagas; and in Crete. In Tyrkland, they founded the great city which was called Troy. This city was attacked by the Greeks during the reign of the Trojan king

⁴ Rydberg uses the alternate name *Bragaroeður* (Bragi's Talk).

Priam. Priam descended from Jupiter and the latter's father Saturn, and accordingly belonged to a race which the idolaters looked upon as divine. Troy was a very large city; twelve languages were spoken there, and Priam had twelve tributary kings under him. But however powerful the Trojans were, and however bravely they defended themselves under the leadership of that valiant hero Thor, the son of Priam's daughter, they were still defeated. Troy was captured and burned by the Greeks, and Priam himself was slain. Of the surviving Trojans, two parties emigrated in different directions. In advance, they seem to have been well informed in regard to the quality of foreign lands; for Thor, the son of Priam's daughter, had made extensive expeditions in which he had fought giants and beasts. On his journeys, he had even visited the North, and there he had met Sibil, the celebrated prophetess, and married her. One of the parties of Trojan emigrants embarked under the leadership of Aeneas for Italy and founded Rome. The other party, accompanied by Thor's son, Loridi, went to Asialand, which is separated from Tyrkland by a mountain ridge, and from Europe by the river Tanais or Tanakvisl. There they founded a new city called Asgard, and there preserved the old customs and practices brought from Troy. Thus was established in Asgard, as in Troy, a council of twelve men, who were high priests and judges. Many centuries passed without any political contact between the new Trojan settlements in Rome and Asgard, though both well remembered their Trojan origin, and the Romans built many of their institutions after the model of the old fatherland. Meanwhile, Rome had grown to be one of the mightiest empires in the world, and began at length to send armies into Tyrkland. At that time, there ruled in Asgard an exceedingly wise, prophetic king, Odin, who was skilled in the magic arts, and who was descended in the twentieth generation from the above-mentioned Thor. Odin had waged many successful wars. The severest of these wars was the one with a neighboring people in Asia, whom were called the Vanir; but this had been ended with compromise and peace. In Tyrkland, the old mother country, Odin had great possessions, which fell into the hands of the Romans. This circumstance strengthened his resolve to emigrate to northern Europe. The prophetic vision with which he was endowed had told him that his descendants would long flourish there. So he set out with his many sons, and was accompanied by the twelve priests and by a great crowd of people, but not by all the inhabitants of the kingdom of Asia and of Asgard. A part of the people remained at home; and among them Odin's brothers Vili and Ve. The expedition proceeded through Gardariki to Saxland; then across the Danish islands to Svithiod and Norway. Everywhere this great multitude of migrators was well received by the inhabitants. Odin's superior wisdom and his marvelous skill with magic, together with the fact that his progress was everywhere attended by abundant harvests, caused the peoples to look upon him as a god, and to place their thrones at his disposal. Therefore, he appointed his sons as kings in Saxland, Denmark, Svithiod, and Norway. Gylfi, the king of Svithiod, submitted to his superiority and gave him a splendid country around Lake Mäler to rule over. There Odin built Sigtuna, the institutions of which were an imitation of those in Asgard and Troy. Poetry and many other arts came with Odin to the Germanic lands, and so, too, the Trojan tongue. Like his ancestors, Saturn and Jupiter, he was able to secure divine worship, which was extended even to his twelve priests. The religious traditions which he scattered among the people, and which were believed until the introduction of Christianity, were misrepresentations spun around the memories of Troy's historical fate and its destruction, and around the events of Asgard.

SAXO'S RELATION OF THE STORY OF TROY.

Such is, in its main features, the story which was current in Iceland in the thirteenth century, and which found its way to Scandinavia through the *Prose Edda* and *Heimskringla*, concerning the immigration of Odin and the Aesir. Somewhat older than these works is *Historia Danica*, by the Danish chronicler Saxo. Sturluson, the author of *Heimskringla*, was an eight year old lad when Saxo began to write his history, and he (Sturluson) had certainly not begun to write history when Saxo had completed the first nine books of his work, which are based on the still-existing songs and traditions found in Denmark, and of heathen origin. Saxo writes as if he were unacquainted with Icelandic theories concerning an Asiatic immigration to the North, and he has not a word to say about Odin's reigning as king or chief anywhere in Scandinavia. This is the more remarkable, since he holds the same view as the Icelanders and the chroniclers of the Middle Ages in general in regard to the belief that the heathen myths were records of historical events, and that the heathen gods were historical persons, men changed into divinities; and our astonishment increases when we consider that he, in the heathen songs and traditions on which he based the first part of his work, frequently finds Odin's name, and consequently could not avoid presenting him in Danish history as an important character. In Saxo, as in the Icelandic works, Odin is a mortal king, and at the same time a sorcerer of the greatest power. Saxo and the Icelanders also agree that Odin came from the East. The only difference is that while the Icelandic hypothesis makes him rule in Asgard, Saxo locates his residence in Byzantium, on the Bosphorus; but this is not far from the ancient Troy, where the *Prose Edda* locates his ancestors. From Byzantium, according to Saxo, the fame of his magic arts and of the miracles he performed reached even to the north of Europe. On account of these miracles, he came to be worshipped as a god by the peoples, and to pay him honor, the kings of the North once sent to Byzantium a golden image, to which Odin, by magic arts, imparted the power of speech. It is the myth about Mimir's head which Saxo relates in this manner. But the kings of the North did not know him only by report; they were also personally acquainted with him. He visited Upsala, a place which "pleased him much." Saxo, like the *Heimskringla*, relates that Odin was absent from his capital for a long time; and when we examine his statements on this point, we find that this is the myth of the Vanir's successful war against the Aesir, and Odin's expulsion from the mythic Asgard, situated in heaven, that Saxo in his fashion, relates here (*Hist. Dan.*, Book 3; also No. 36). Saxo also tells that Odin's son, Baldur, was chosen king by the Danes "on account of his personal merits and his venerable qualities." But Odin himself has never, according to Saxo, had land or authority in the North, though he was there worshipped as a god, and, as already stated, Saxo is entirely silent in regard to immigration of an Asiatic people to Scandinavia under the leadership of Odin.

A comparison between him and the Icelanders will show at once that, although both parties are Euhemerists, and make Odin a man changed into a god, Saxo confines

himself more faithfully to the popular myths, and seeks as far as possible to turn them into history; while the Icelanders, on the other hand, begin with the learned theory in regard to the original kinship of the northern races with the Trojans and Romans, and, with this theory as a nucleus, they weave around it about the same myths turned into history as Saxo tells.

10.

THE OLDER PERIODS OF THE TROY SAGA.

How did the belief that Troy was the original home of the Teutons arise? Does it rest on native traditions? Has it been inspired by sagas and traditions current among the Teutons themselves, and containing as kernel "a faint reminiscence of an immigration from Asia" or is it a thought entirely foreign to the heathen Germanic world, introduced in Christian times by Latin scholars? These questions shall now be considered.

Already in the seventh century - that is to say, more than five hundred years before *Heimskringla* and the *Prose Edda* were written - a Germanic people were told by a chronicler that they were of the same blood as the Romans, that they had like the Romans emigrated from Troy, and that they had the same share as the Romans in the glorious deeds of the Trojan heroes. This people were the Franks. Their oldest chronicler, Gregorius, bishop of Tours (Gregory of Tours), who, about one hundred years before that time - that is to say, in the sixth century - wrote their history in ten books, does not say a word about it. He, too, desires to give an account of the original home of the Franks (*Hist. Franc.*, II. 9), and locates it quite a distance from the regions around the lower Rhine, where they first appear in the light of history; but still not farther away than to Pannonia.⁵ Of the coming of the Franks from Troy, neither Gregorius nor the older authors, Sulpicius Alexander and others, whose works he studied to find information, know anything in regard to the early history of the Franks. But in the middle of the following century, about 650, an unknown author, who for reasons unknown is called Fredegar, wrote a chronicle, which is in part a reproduction of Gregorius' historical work, but in addition, tells us considerably more regarding the early history of the Franks, including the statement that they emigrated from Troy. He even gives us the sources from which he got this information. His sources are, according to his own statement, not Frankish, not popular songs or sagas, but two Latin authors - the Church father Hieronymus and the poet Virgil. If we, then, go to these sources in order to compare Fredegar's statement with his authority, we find that Hieronymus once names the Franks in passing, but never refers to their origin from Troy, and that Virgil does not even mention Franks. Nevertheless, the reference to Virgil is the key to the riddle, as we shall show below. What Fredegar tells about the emigration of the Franks is this: A Frankish king, by name Priam, ruled in Troy at the time when this city was conquered by the cunning of Ulysses. Then the Franks emigrated, and were afterwards ruled by a king named Friga. Under his reign, a dispute arose between them, and they divided themselves into two parties, one of which settled in Macedonia, while the other, called after Friga's name Frigians (Phrygians), migrated through Asia and settled there. There they were

⁵ A Roman province in Southeast Europe including territory west of the Danube, now in Hungary and the former Yugoslavia.

again divided, and one part of them migrated under king Francio into Europe, traveled across this continent, and settled with their women and children near the Rhine, where they began building a city which they called Troy. They intended to organize it in the manner of the old Troy, but the city was not completed. The other group chose a king by name Turchot, and were called Turks after him. But those who settled on the Rhine called themselves Franks after their king Francio, and later chose a king named Theudemir, who was descended from Priam, Friga, and Francio. Thus Fredegar's chronicle.

About seventy years later, another Frankish chronicle saw the light of day, *Gesta regum Francorum*. In it, we learn more of the emigration of the Franks from Troy. *Gesta regum Francorum I* tells the following story: In Asia lies the city of the Trojans called Ilium (Troy), where king Aeneas formerly ruled. The Trojans were a strong and brave people, who waged war against all their neighbors. But then the kings of the Greeks united and brought a large army against Aeneas, king of the Trojans. There were great battles and much bloodshed, and the greater part of the Trojans fell. Aeneas fled with those surviving into the city of Ilium, which the Greeks besieged and conquered after ten years. The Trojans who escaped divided themselves into two parties. The one under king Aeneas went to Italy, where he hoped to receive auxiliary troops. Other distinguished Trojans became the leaders of the other party, which numbered 12,000 men. They embarked in ships and came to the banks of the river Tanais. They sailed farther and came within the borders of Pannonia, near the Moeotian marshes (*navigantes pervenerunt intra terminos Pannoniarum juxta Moeotidas paludes*), where they founded a city, which they called Sicambria, and here they remained many years and became a mighty people. Then came a time when the Roman emperor Valentinianus got into war with that wicked people called Alamanni (also Alani). He led a great army against them. The Alamanni were defeated, and fled to the Moeotian marshes. Then said the emperor, "If anyone dares to enter those marshes and drive away this wicked people, I shall make him free from all burdens for ten years." When the Trojans heard this, they went into the marshes, accompanied by a Roman army, attacked the Alamanni, and hewed them down with swords. Then, from the emperor Valentinianus, the Trojans received the name Franks, which, the chronicle adds, means the savage (*feri*) in the Attic tongue, "for the Trojans had a defiant and indomitable character."

For ten years afterwards, the Trojans or Franks lived undisturbed by Roman tax-collectors; but after that the Roman emperor demanded that they should pay tribute. This they refused, and slew the tax-collectors sent to them. Then the emperor collected a large army under the command of Aristarcus, and strengthened it with auxiliary forces from many lands, and attacked the Franks, who were defeated by the superior force, lost their leader Priam, and had to take flight. They now proceeded under their leaders Markomir, Priam's son, and Sunno, son of Antenor, away from Sicambria through Germany to the Rhine, and settled there. Thus this chronicle.

About fifty years after its appearance - that is, in the time of Charlemagne, and, to be more accurate, about the year 787 - the well-known Longobardian historian Paulus Diaconus (Paul the Deacon) wrote a history of the bishops of Metz. Among these bishops was the Frank Arnulf, from whom Charlemagne was descended in the fifth generation. Arnulf had two sons, one of whom was named Ansgisel, in a contracted form Ansgis. When Paulus speaks of this, he remarks that it is thought that the name Ansgis comes from the father of Aeneas, Anchises, who went from Troy to Italy; and he adds that,

according to evidence of older date, the Franks were believed to be descendants of the Trojans. These evidences of older date we have considered above - Fredegar's Chronicle and *Gesta regum Francorum*. Meanwhile, this shows that the belief that the Franks were of Trojan descent kept spreading with the lapse of time. It hardly needs to be added that there is no good foundation for the derivation of Ansgisel or Ansgis from Anchises. Ansgisel is a genuine Germanic name. (See No. 123 concerning Ansgisel, the emigration chief of the Germanic myth.)

We now pass to the second half of the tenth century, and there we find the Saxon chronicler Widukind. When he is to tell the story of the origin of the Saxon people, he presents two conflicting accounts. The one is from a Saxon source, from old native traditions, which we shall discuss later; the other is from a scholastic source, and claims that the Saxons are of Macedonian descent. According to this latter account, they were a remnant of the Macedonian army of Alexander the Great, which, as Widukind had learned, after Alexander's early death, had spread over the whole earth. The Macedonians were at that time regarded as Hellenicized Trojans. In this connection, I call the reader's attention to Fredegar's Chronicle referred to above, which tells that the Trojans, in the time of king Friga, disagreed among themselves, and that a part of them emigrated and settled in Macedonia. In this manner the Saxons, like the Franks, could claim a Trojan descent; and as England to a great extent was peopled by Saxon conquerors, the same honor was of course claimed by her people. In evidence of this, and to show that it was believed in England during the centuries immediately following Widukind's time, that the Saxons and Angles were of Trojan blood, I will simply refer here to a pseudo-Sibylline manuscript found in Oxford and written in very poor Latin. It was examined by the French scholar Alexandre (*Excursus ad Sibyllina*, p. 298), and in it, Britain is said to be an island inhabited by the survivors of the Trojans (*insulam reliquiis Trojanorum inhabitatam*). In another British pseudo-Sibylline document, it is stated that the Sibylla was a daughter of king Priam of Troy; and an effort has been made to add weight and dignity to this document by incorporating it with the works of the well-known Church historian Bede, and thus date it at the beginning of the eighth century, but the manuscript itself is a compilation from the time of Frederick Barbarossa (*Excurs. ad Sib.*, p. 289). Other pseudo-Sibylline documents in Latin give accounts of a Sibylla who lived and prophesied in Troy. I make special mention of this fact, for the reason that, in the Foreword of the *Prose Edda*, it is similarly stated that Thor, the son of Priam's daughter, was married to Sibil (Sibylla).

Thus when Franks and Saxons had been made into Trojans - the former into full-blooded Trojans and the latter into Hellenicized Trojans - it could not take long before their northern kinsmen received the same descent as a heritage. In the very nature of things, the beginning must be made by those Northmen who became the conquerors and settlers of Normandy in the midst of "Trojan" Franks. About a hundred years after their settlement there, they produced a chronicler, Dudo, deacon of St. Quentin. I have already shown that the Macedonians were regarded as Hellenicized Trojans. Together with the Hellenicizing they had obtained the name Danai, a term applied to all Greeks. In his Norman Chronicle, which goes down to the year 996, Dudo relates that the Norman men regarded themselves as Danai, for Danes (the Scandinavians in general) and Danai was regarded as the same race name (*De moribus et gestis*, etc., Book I.). Together with the Normans the Scandinavians also, from whom they were descended, accordingly had to be

made into Trojans. And thus the matter was understood by Dudo's readers; and when Robert Wace wrote his rhymed chronicle, *Roman de Rou*, about the northern conquerors of Normandy, and wanted to give an account of their origin, he could say, on the basis of a common tradition:

"When the walls of Troy in ashes were laid,
And the Greeks exceedingly glad were made,
Then fled from flames on the Trojan strand
The race that settled old Denmark's land
And in honor of the old Trojan reigns,
The People called themselves the Danes."

I have now traced the scholastic tradition about the descent of the Germanic races from Troy all the way from the chronicle where we first find this tradition recorded, down to the time when Ari, Iceland's first historian, lived, and when the Icelander Saemund is said to have studied in Paris, the same century in which Sturluson, *Heimskringla's* author, developed into manhood. Saxo rejected the theory current among the scholars of his time, that the northern races were Danai-Trojans. He knew that Dudo in St. Quentin was the authority upon which this belief was chiefly based, and he gives his Danes an entirely different origin, *quanquam Dudo, rerum Aquitanicarum scriptor, Danos a Danais ortos nuncupatosque recenseat*.⁶ The Icelanders, on the other hand, accepted and continued to develop the belief, resting on the authority of five hundred years, concerning Troy as the starting-point for the Germanic race; and in Iceland the theory was worked out and systematized as we have already seen, and was made to fit in a frame of the history of the world. The accounts given in *Heimskringla* and the *Prose Edda* in regard to the emigration from Asgard form the natural denouement of an era which had existed for centuries, and in which the events of antiquity were grouped around a common center in which all peoples and noble families were placed around the Mediterranean Sea, in connection with the events and heroes of the Trojan epic cycle.

In fact, already in ancient times, in one way or another, a great part of the lands subject to the Roman scepter were drawn into the stories about the Trojan war and its consequences: Macedonia and Epirus through the Trojan emigrant Helenus; Illyria and Venetia through the Trojan emigrant Antenor; Rhetia and Vindelicia through the Amazons, allies of the Trojans, from whom the inhabitants of these provinces were said to be descended (*Servius ad Virg.*, I. 248); Etruria through Dardanus, who was said to have emigrated from there to Troy; Latium and Campania through the Aeneids; Sicily, the very home of the Aenean traditions, through the relation between the royal families of Troy and Sicily; Sardinia (see Sallust); Gaul (see *Lucanus arid Ammianus Marcellinus*); Carthage through the visit of Aeneas to Dido; and of course all of Asia Minor. This was not all. According to the lost Argive History by Anaxikrates, Scamandrius, son of Hector and Andromache, came with emigrants to Scythia and settled on the banks of the Tanais; and scarcely had Germany become known to the Romans, before it, too, became drawn into the cycle of Trojan stories, at least so far as to make this country visited by Ulysses on his many journeys and adventures (*Tacitus, Germania* 3). Every educated Greek and

⁶ "yet Dudo, the historian of Normandy, considers that the Danes are sprung and named from the Danai," Saxo, *Hist.* Book 1, Oliver Elton translation.

Roman person's fancy was filled from his earliest school-days with Troy, and traces of Dardanians and Danaians were found everywhere, just as the English in our time think they have found traces of the ten lost tribes of Israel both in the old and in the new world.

In the same degree as Christianity, Church learning, and Latin manuscripts were spread among the Germanic tribes, knowledge of and an interest in the great Trojan stories were disseminated among them. The native stories telling of Germanic gods and heroes received terrible shocks from Christianity, but were rescued in another form on the lips of the people, and continued in their new guise to command their attention and devotion. In the class of Latin scholars which developed among the Christianized Teutons, the new stories learned from Latin literature, telling of Ilium, of the conflicts between Trojans and Greeks, of migrations, of the founding of colonies on foreign shores and the creating of new empires, were the things which especially stimulated their curiosity and captivated their fancy. The Latin literature which was to a greater or lesser extent accessible to the Germanic priests, or to priests laboring among the Teutons, furnished abundant materials in regard to Troy both in classical and pseudo-classical authors. We need only call attention to Virgil and his commentator Servius, which became a mine of learning for the whole Middle Age, and among pseudo-classical works to Dares Phrygius' *Historia de Excidio Trojæ* (which was believed to have been written by a Trojan and translated by Cornelius Nepos!), to Dictys Cretensis' *Ephemeris belli Trojani* (the original of which was said to have been Phoenician, and found in Dictys' alleged grave after an earthquake in the time of Nero!), and to "Pindari Thebani," *Epitome Iliados Homeri*.

Before the story of the Trojan descent of the Franks had been created, the Teuton Jordanes, active as a writer in the middle of the sixth century, had already found a place for his Gothic fellow-countrymen in the events of the great Trojan epic, although he did not allow the Goths to stem from either the Greeks or Trojans. On the contrary, he maintained the Goths' own traditions in regard to their descent and their original home, a matter which I shall discuss later. But according to Orosius, who is Jordanes' authority, the Goths were the same as the *Getae*, and when the identity of these was accepted, it was easy for Jordanes to connect the history of the Goths with the Homeric stories. A Gothic chief marries Priam's sister and fights with Achilles and Ulysses (*Jord.*, c. 9), and Ilium, having scarcely recovered from the war with Agamemnon, is destroyed a second time by Goths (c. 20).

11.

THE ORIGIN OF THE STORY IN REGARD TO THE TROJAN DESCENT OF THE FRANKS.

We must now return to the Frankish chronicles, to Fredegar's and *Gesta regum Francorum*, where the theory of the descent from Troy of a Germanic tribe is presented for the first time, and thus renews the agitation handed down from antiquity, which attempted to make all ancient history a system of events radiating from Troy as their center. I believe I am able to point out the sources of all the statements made in these

chronicles in reference to this subject, and also to find the very kernel out of which the illusion regarding the Trojan birth of the Franks grew.

As above stated, Fredegar admits that Virgil is the earliest authority for the claim that the Franks are descended from Troy. Fredegar's predecessor, Gregorius of Tours, was ignorant of it, and, as already shown, the word Franks does not occur anywhere in Virgil. The discovery that he nevertheless gave information about the Franks and their origin must therefore have been made or known in the time intervening between Gregorius' chronicle and Fredegar's. Which, then, can be the passage in Virgil's poems in which the discoverer succeeded in finding the proof that the Franks were Trojans? A careful examination of all the circumstances connected with the subject leads to the conclusion that the passage is in *Aeneid*, Book I., 246 ff.:

*"Antenor potuit, mediis elapsus Achivis,
Illyricos penetrare sinus atque intima tutus
Regna Liburnorum, et fontem superare Timavi;
Unde per ora novem vasto eum murmure montis
It mare proruptum, et pelago premit arva sonanti.
Hic tamen ille urbem Patavi sedesque locavit
Teucrorum."*

"Antenor having escaped from amidst the Greeks, could with safety penetrate the Illyrian Gulf and the inmost realms of Liburnia, and overpass the springs of Timavus, whence, through nine mouths, with loud echoing from the mountain, it bursts away, a sea impetuous, and sweeps the fields with a roaring deluge. Yet there he built the city of Patavi (Padua) and established a Trojan settlement."

The nearest proof at hand, that this is really the passage which was interpreted as referring to the ancient history of the Franks, is based on the following circumstances:

Gregorius of Tours had found in the history of Sulpicius Alexander accounts of violent conflicts, on the west bank of the Rhine, between the Romans and Franks, the latter led by the chiefs Markomir and Sunno (*Greg., Hist., II. 9*).

From Gregorius, *Gesta regum Francorum* has taken both these names. According to *Gesta*, the Franks, under the command of Markomir and Sunno, emigrate from Pannonia, near the Moeotian marshes, and settle on the Rhine. The supposition that they had lived in Pannonia before their coming to the Rhine, the author of *Gesta* had learned from Gregorius. In *Gesta*, Markomir is made a son of the Trojan Priam, and Sunno a son of the Trojan Antenor.

From this point of view, Virgil's account of Antenor's and his Trojans' journey to Europe from fallen Troy refers to the emigration of the father of the Frankish chief Sunno at the head of a tribe of Franks. And as *Gesta*'s predecessor, the so-called Fredegar, appeals to Virgil as his authority for this Frankish emigration, and as the wanderings of Antenor are nowhere else mentioned by the Roman poet, there can be no doubt that the lines above quoted were the very ones which were regarded as the Virgilian evidence in regard to a Frankish emigration from Troy.

But how did it come to be regarded as an evidence?

Virgil says that Antenor, when he had escaped the Achivians, succeeded in penetrating *Illyricos sinus*, the very heart of Illyria. The name Illyricum served to designate all the regions inhabited by kindred tribes extending from the Alps to the mouth of the Danube and from the Danube to the Adriatic Sea and Haemus (cp. *Marquardt Röm. Staatsverwaltung*, 295). To Illyricum belonged the Roman provinces Dalmatia, Pannonia, and Moesia, and the Pannonians were an Illyrian tribe. In Pannonia, Gregorius of Tours had located the Franks in early times. Thus Antenor, with his Trojans on their westward journey, traverses the same regions from which, according to Gregorius, the Franks had set out for the Rhine.

Virgil also says that Antenor extended his journeys to the Liburnian kingdoms (*regna Liburnorum*). From Servius' commentary on this passage, the Middle Ages knew that the Liburnian kingdoms were Rhetia and Vindelicia (*Rhetia Vindelici ipsi sunt Liburni*). Rhetia and Vindelicia separate Pannonia from the Rhine. Antenor, accordingly, takes the same route toward the West as the Franks must have taken if they came from Pannonia to the Rhine.

Virgil then brings Antenor to a river, which, it is true, is called Timavus, but which is described as a mighty stream, coming thundering out of a mountainous region, where it has its source, carrying with it a mass of water which the poet compares with a sea, forming before it reaches the sea a delta, the plains of which are deluged by the billows, and finally emptying itself by many outlets into the ocean. Virgil says nine; but Servius interprets this as meaning many: "*finitus est numerus pro infinito.*"

We must pardon the Frankish scribes for taking this river to be the Rhine; for if a water-course is to be looked for in Europe west of the land of the Liburnians, which answers to the Virgilian description, then this must be the Rhine, on whose banks the ancestors of the Franks for the first time appear in history.

Again, Virgil tells us that Antenor settled near this river and founded a colony - Patavium - on the low plains of the delta. The Salian Franks acquired possession of the low and flat regions around the outlets of the Rhine (*Insula Batavorum*) about the year 287, and also of the land to the south as far as to the Scheldt; and after protracted wars, the Romans had to leave them the control of this region. By the very occupation of this low country, its conquerors might properly be called Batavian Franks. It is only necessary to call attention to the similarity of the words Patavi and Batavi, in order to show at the same time that the conclusion could scarcely be avoided that Virgil had reference to the immigration of the Franks when he spoke of the wanderings of Antenor, the more so, since from time out of date the pronunciation of the initials B and P have been interchanged by the Germans. In the conquered territory, the Franks founded a city (*Amminan. Marc.*, XVII. 2, 5).

Thus it appears that the Franks were supposed to have migrated to the Rhine under the leadership of Antenor. The first Frankish chiefs recorded, after their appearance there, are Markomir and Sunno. From this, the conclusion was drawn that Sunno was Antenor's son; and as Markomir ought to be the son of some celebrated Trojan chief, he was made the son of Priam. Thus we have explained Fredegar's statement that Virgil is

his authority for the Trojan descent of these Franks. This seemed to be established for all time.

The wars fought around the Moeotian marshes between the emperor Valentinianus, the Alamanni, and the Franks, of which *Gesta* speaks, are not wholly inventions of the fancy. The historical kernel in this confused semi-mythical narrative is that Valentinianus really did fight with the Alamanni, and that the Franks for some time were allies of the Romans, and came into conflict with those same Alamanni (*Ammian. Marc., Books 30 and 31*). But the scene of these battles was not the Moeotian marshes and Pannonia, as *Gesta* supposes, but the regions on the Rhine.

The unhistorical statement of Gregorius that the Franks came from Pannonia is based only on the fact that Frankish warriors for some time formed a *Sicambra cohort*, which about the year 26 was incorporated with the Roman troops stationed in Pannonia and Thracia. The cohort is believed to have remained in Hungary and formed a colony, where Buda now is situated. *Gesta* makes Pannonia extend from the Moeotian marshes to Tanais, since, according to Gregorius and earlier chroniclers, these waters were the boundary between Europe and Asia, and since Asia was regarded as a synonym of the Trojan empire. Virgil had called the Trojan kingdom Asia: *Postquam res Asiae Priamique evertere gentem, etc., (Aeneid, III. 1)*.

Thus we have exhibited the seed out of which the fable about the Trojan descent of the Franks grew into a tree spreading its branches over all Germanic Europe, in the same manner as the earlier fable, which was at least developed if not born in Sicily, in regard to the Trojan descent of the Romans had grown into a tree overshadowing all the lands around the Mediterranean, and extending one of its branches across Gaul to Britain and Ireland. (The first son of the Britons, "Brutus," was, according to Galfred, great-grandson of Aeneas, and migrated from Alba Longa to Ireland!)

So far as the Gauls are concerned, the incorporation of Cis-Alpine Gaul with the Roman Empire, and the Romanizing of the Gauls dwelling there, had at an early day made way for the belief that they had the same origin and were of the same blood as the Romans. Consequently, they too were Trojans. This view, encouraged by Roman politics, gradually found its way to the Gauls on the other side of the Rhine; and even before Caesar's time the Roman senate had in its letters to the Aeduans, often called them the "brothers and kinsmen" of the Romans (*fratres consanguineique - Caesar, De Bello Gallico, I. 33, 2*). Of the Avernians, Lucanus⁷ sings (I. 427): *Averni ... ausi Latio se fingere fratres, sanguine ab Iliaco populi*.

Thus we see that when the Franks, having made themselves masters of the Romanized Gaul, claimed a Trojan descent, then this was the repetition of a history of which Gaul for many centuries previously had been the scene. After the Frankish conquest, the population of Gaul consisted for the second time of two nationalities unlike in language and customs, and now as before, it was a political measure of no slight importance to bring these two nationalities as closely together as possible by the belief in a common descent. The Roman Gauls and the Franks were represented as having been one people in the time of the Trojan war. After the fall of the common fatherland, they were divided into two separate tribes, with separate destinies, until they refound each other in the west of Europe, to dwell together again in Gaul. This explains how it came to

⁷ Marcus Annaeus Lucanus, 39-65 AD;

pass that, when they thought they had found evidence of this view in Virgil, this was at once accepted, and was so eagerly adopted that the older traditions in regard to the origin and migrations of the Franks were thrust aside and consigned to oblivion. History repeats itself a third time when the Normans conquered and became masters of that part of Gaul which after them is called Normandy. Dudo, their chronicler, says that they regarded themselves as being *ex Antenore progenitos*, descendants of Antenor. This is sufficient proof that they had borrowed the tradition in regard to their Trojan descent from the Franks.

12.

WHY ODIN WAS GIVEN ANTENOR'S PLACE AS LEADER OF THE TROJAN EMIGRATION.

So long as the Franks were the only ones of the Teutons who claimed Trojan descent, it was sufficient that the Germanic-Trojan immigration had the father of a Frankish chief as its leader. But in the same degree as the belief in a Trojan descent spread among the other Germanic tribes and assumed the character of a statement equally important to all the Germanic tribes, the idea would naturally present itself that the leader of the great immigration was a person of general Germanic importance. There was no lack of names to choose from. Most conspicuous was the mythical Germanic patriarch, whom Tacitus speaks of and calls *Mannus* (*Germania*, 2), the grandson of the goddess Jord (Earth). There can be no doubt that he still was remembered by this (*Mann*) or some other name (for nearly all Germanic mythic persons have several names), since he reappears in the beginning of the fourteenth century in Heinrich Frauenlob as Mennor, the patriarch of the German people and German tongue:⁸

*"Mennor der erste was genant
dem diutische rede got tet bekant.*

But Mannus had to yield to another universal Germanic mythic character, Odin, and for reasons which we shall now present.

As Christianity was gradually introduced among the Germanic peoples, the question confronted them, what manner of beings those gods had been in whom they and their ancestors so long had believed. Their Christian teachers had two answers, and both were easily reconcilable. The common answer, and that usually given to the converted masses, was that the gods of their ancestors were demons, evil spirits, who ensnared men in superstition in order to become worshipped as divine beings. The other answer, which was better calculated to please the noble-born Germanic families, who thought themselves descended from the gods, was that these divinities were originally human persons - kings, chiefs, legislators, who, endowed with higher wisdom and secret knowledge, made use of these to make people believe that they were gods, and worship them as such. Both answers could, as stated, easily be reconciled with each other, for it was evident that when these proud and deceitful rulers died, their unhappy spirits joined

⁸ Later on in this work, we shall discuss the surviving traditions of the Mannus saga found in Scandinavia and Germany.

the ranks of evil demons, and as demons they continued to deceive the people, in order to maintain a worship hostile to the true religion through all ages. Both sides of this view we find current among the Germanic races through the whole Middle Age. The one which particularly presents the old gods as evil demons is found in popular traditions from this epoch. The other, which presents the old gods as mortals, as chiefs and lawmakers with magic power, is more commonly reflected in the Germanic chronicles, and was regarded among the scholars as the scientific view.

Thus it followed of necessity that Odin, the chief of the Germanic gods, and from whom their royal houses were fond of tracing their descent, also must have been a wise king of antiquity and skilled in the magic arts, and information was of course sought with the greatest interest in regard to the place where he had reigned, and in regard to his origin. There were two sources of investigation in reference to this matter. One source was the treasure of mythic songs and traditions of their own race. But what might be history in these seemed to the students so involved in superstition and fancy, that not much information seemed obtainable from them. But there was another source, which in regard to historical trustworthiness seemed incomparably better, and that was the Latin literature to be found in the libraries of the convents. During centuries when the Teutons had employed no other art than poetry for preserving the memory of the life and deeds of their ancestors, the Romans, as we know, had had parchment and papyrus to write on, and had kept systematic annals extending centuries back. Consequently, this source must be more reliable. But what had this source - what had the Roman annals or the Roman literature in general to tell about Odin? Absolutely nothing it would seem, inasmuch as the name Odin or Wodan does not occur in any of the authors of the ancient literature. But this was only an apparent obstacle. The ancient king of our race, Odin, they said, has had many names - one name among one people, and another among another, and there can be no doubt that he is the same person as the Romans called Mercury and the Greeks Hermes.

The scholars might have found evidence of the correctness of identifying Odin with Mercury and Hermes in Tacitus' work *Germania*, where it is stated in the ninth chapter that the chief god of the Germans is the same as Mercury among the Romans. But Tacitus was almost unknown in the convents and schools of this period of the Middle Age. They could not use this proof, but they had another and completely compensating evidence of the assertion.

Originally the Romans did not divide time into weeks of seven days. Instead, they had weeks of eight days, and the farmer worked the seven days and went on the eighth to the market. But the week of seven days had been in existence for a very long time among certain Semitic peoples, and, already in the time of the Roman republic, many Jews lived in Rome and in Italy. Through them, the week of seven days became generally known. The Jewish custom of observing the sacredness of the Sabbath, the first day of the week, by abstaining from all labor, could not fail to be noticed by the strangers among whom they dwelt. The Jews had, however, no special name for each day of the week. But the Oriental, Egyptian, and Greek astrologers and astronomers, who in large numbers sought their fortunes in Rome, did more than the Jews to introduce the seven day week among all classes of the metropolis, and the astrologers had special names for each of the seven days of the week. Saturday was the planet's and the planet-god Saturn's day; Sunday, the Sun's; Monday, the Moon's; Tuesday, Mars'; Wednesday, Mercury's; Thursday, Jupiter's;

Friday, Venus' day. Already in the beginning of the empire, these names of the days were quite common in Italy. The astrological almanacs, which were circulated in the name of the Egyptian Petosiris among all families who had the means to buy them, contributed much to bring this about. From Italy, both the taste for astrology and the adoption of the week of seven days, with the above-mentioned names, spread not only into Spain and Gaul, but also into those parts of Germania that were incorporated with the Roman Empire, Germania superior and inferior, where the Romanizing of the people, with Cologne (*Civitas Ubiorum*) as the center, made great progress. Teutons who had served as officers and soldiers in the Roman armies, and were familiar with the everyday customs of the Romans, were to be found in various parts of the independent Germanic territory, and it is therefore not strange if the week of seven days, with a separate name given to each day, was known and in use more or less extensively throughout Germania even before Christianity had taken root east of the Rhine, and long before Rome itself was converted to Christianity. But from this introduction of the seven-day week did not follow the adoption of the Roman names of the days. The Teutons translated the names into their own language, and in so doing chose among their own divinities those which most nearly corresponded to the Roman. The translation of the names is made with a discrimination which seems to show that it was made in the Germanic border country, governed by the Romans, by people who were as familiar with the Roman gods as with their own. In that border land, there must have been persons of Germanic birth who officiated as priests before Roman altars. The days of the Sun and Moon were permitted to retain their names. They were called Sunday and Monday. The day of the war-god Mars became the day of the war-god Tyr, Tuesday. The day of Mercury became Odin's day, Wednesday. The day of the lightning-armed Jupiter became the day of the thundering Thor, Thursday. The day of the goddess of love Venus became that of the goddess of love Freyja, Friday. Saturn, who in astrology is a watery star, and has his house in the sign of Aquarius, was among the Romans, and before them among the Greeks and Chaldaeans, the lord of the seventh day. Among the North Teutons, or, at least, among a part of them, his day got its name from *laug*,⁹ which means a bath, and it is worthy of notice in this connection that the author of the *Prose Edda's* Foreword identifies Saturn with the sea-god Njörd.

Here the Latin scholars had what seemed to them a complete proof that the Odin of which their stories of the past had so much to tell was - and was so recognized by their heathen ancestors - the same historical person as the Romans worshipped by the name Mercury.

At first sight, it may seem strange that Mercury and Odin were regarded as identical. We are wont to conceive Hermes (Mercury) as the Greek sculptors represented him, the ideal of beauty and elastic youth, while we imagine Odin as having a contemplative, mysterious look. And while Odin in the Germanic mythology is the father and ruler of the gods, Mercury in the Roman has, of course, as the son of Zeus, a high rank, but his dignity does not exempt him from being the very busy messenger of the gods of Olympus. But neither Greeks nor Romans nor Teutons attached much importance to such circumstances in the specimens we have of their comparative mythology. The Romans knew that the same god among the same people might be represented differently, and that the local traditions also sometimes differed in regard to the kinship and rank of a

⁹ In the North, Saturday is called *Löverdag*, *Lördag* - that is, *Laugardag*, bath day.

divinity. They therefore paid more attention to what Tacitus calls *vis numinis* - that is, the significance of the divinity as a symbol of nature, or its relation to the affairs of the community and to human culture. Mercury was the symbol of wisdom and intelligence; so was Odin. Mercury was the god of eloquence; Odin likewise. Mercury had introduced poetry and song among men; Odin also. Mercury had taught men the art of writing; Odin had given them the runes. Mercury did not hesitate to apply cunning when it was needed to secure him possession of something that he desired; nor was Odin particularly scrupulous in regard to the means. Mercury, with wings on his hat and on his heels, flew over the world, and often appeared as a traveler among men; Odin, the ruler of the wind, did the same. Mercury was the god of martial games, and still he was not really the war-god; Odin also was the chief of martial games and combats, but the war-god's occupation he had left to Tyr. Therefore in all important respects, Mercury and Odin resembled each other.

To the scholars, this must have been an additional proof that this, in their eyes, historical chief, whom the Romans called Mercury and the Teutons Odin, had been one and the same human person, who had lived in a distant past, and had alike induced Greeks, Romans, and Goths to worship him as a god. To get additional and more reliable information in regard to this Odin-Mercury than what the Germanic heathen traditions could impart, it was only necessary to study and interpret correctly what Roman history had to say about Mercury.

As is known, some mysterious documents called the Sibylline books were preserved in Jupiter's temple on the Capitoline Hill in Rome. The Roman State was the possessor and kept the strictest watch over them, so that their contents remained a secret to all excepting those whose position entitled them to read them. A college of priests, men in high standing, were appointed to guard them and to consult them when circumstances demanded it. The common opinion that the Roman State consulted them for information in regard to the future is incorrect. They were consulted only to find out by what ceremonies of penance and propitiation the wrath of the higher powers might be averted at times when Rome was in trouble, or when portents of one kind or another had excited the people and caused fears of impending misfortune. Then the Sibylline books were produced by the properly-appointed persons, and in some line or passage they found which divinity was angry and ought to be propitiated. This done, they published their interpretation of the passage, but did not make known the words or phrases of the passage, for the text of the Sibylline books must not be known to the public. The books were written in the Greek tongue.

The story telling how these books came into the possession of the Roman State through a woman who sold them to Tarquin - according to one version Tarquin the Elder, according to another Tarquin the Younger - is found in Roman authors who were well known and read throughout the whole Middle Age. The woman was a Sibylla, according to Varro the Erythreian, so called from a Greek city in Asia Minor; according to Virgil the Cumaean, a prophetess from Cumae in southern Italy. Both versions could easily be harmonized, for Cumae was a Greek colony from Asia Minor; and we read in Servius' commentaries on Virgil's poems that the Erythreian Sibylla was regarded by many as identical with the Cumaean. From Asia Minor, she was supposed to have come to Cumae.

In western Europe, the people of the Middle Ages claimed that there were twelve Sibyllas: the Persian, the Libyan, the Delphian, the Cimmerinean, the Erythreian, the Samian, the Cumaean, the Hellespontian or Trojan, the Phrygian and Tiburtinian, and also the Sibylla Europa and the Sibylla Agrippa. Authorities for the first ten of these were the Church father Lactantius and the West Gothic historian Isidorus of Sevilla. The last two, Europa and Agrippa, were simply added in order to make the number of Sibyllas equal to that of the prophets and the apostles.

But the scholars of the Middle Ages also knew from Servius that the Cumaean Sibylla was, in fact, the same as the Erythreian; and from the Church father Lactantius, who was extensively read in the Middle Ages, they also learned that the Erythreian was identical with the Trojan. Thanks to Lactantius, they also thought they could determine precisely where the Trojan Sibylla was born. Her birthplace was the town Marpeesus, near the Trojan Mount Ida. From the same Church father, they learned that the real contents of the Sibylline books had consisted of narrations concerning Trojan events, of lives of the Trojan kings, etc., and also of prophecies concerning the fall of Troy and other coming events, and that the poet Homer in his works was a mere plagiarizer, who had found a copy of the books of the Sibylla, had recast and falsified it, and published it in his own name in the form of heroic poems concerning Troy.

This seemed to establish the fact that those books, which the woman from Cumae had sold to the Roman king Tarquin, were written by a Sibylla who was born in the Trojan country, and that the books which Tarquin bought of her contained accounts and prophecies - accounts especially in regard to the Trojan chiefs and heroes afterwards glorified in Homer's poems. As the Romans came from Troy, these chiefs and heroes were their ancestors, and in this capacity they were entitled to the worship which the Romans considered due to the souls of their forefathers. From a Christian standpoint, this was of course idolatry; and as the Sibyllas were believed to have made predictions even in regard to Christ, it might seem improper for them to promote the cause of idolatry in this manner. But Lactantius gave a satisfactory explanation of this matter. The Sibylla, he said, had certainly prophesied truthfully in regard to Christ; but this she did by divine compulsion and in moments of divine inspiration. By birth and in her sympathies, she was a heathen, and when under the spell of her genuine inspirations, she proclaimed heathen and idolatrous doctrines.

In our critical century, all this may seem like mere fancies. But careful examinations have shown that a historical kernel is not wanting in these representations. And the historical fact which lies behind all this is that the Sibylline books which were preserved in Rome actually were written in Asia Minor in the ancient Trojan territory; or, in other words, that the oldest known collection of so-called Sibylline oracles was made in Marpeesus, near the Trojan mountain Ida, in the time of Solon. From Marpeesus, the collection came to the neighboring city Gergis, and was preserved in the Apollo temple there; from Gergis it came to Cumae, and from Cumae to Rome in the time of the kings. How it came there is not known. The story about the Cumaean woman and Tarquin is an invention and occurs in various forms. It is also demonstrably an invention that the Sibylline books in Rome contained accounts of the heroes in the Trojan war. On the other hand, it is absolutely certain that they referred to gods and to a worship which were unknown for the most part to the Romans before the Sibylline books were introduced there, and that to these books must chiefly be attributed the remarkable change which

took place in Roman mythology during the republican centuries. The Roman mythology, which from the beginning had but few gods of clear identity with the Greek, was especially during this epoch enlarged, and received gods and goddesses who were worshipped in Greece and in the Greek and Hellenized part of Asia Minor where the Sibylline books originated. The way this happened was that whenever the Romans in trouble or distress consulted the Sibylline books, they received the answer that this or that Greek-Asiatic god or goddess was angry and must be propitiated. In connection with the propitiation ceremonies, the god or goddess was received in the Roman pantheon, and sooner or later a temple was built to him; and thus it did not take long before the Romans appropriated the myths that were current in Greece concerning these borrowed divinities. This explains why the Roman mythology, which in its oldest sources is so original and so unlike the Greek, in the golden period of Roman literature comes to us in an almost wholly Greek attire; this explains why Roman and Greek mythology at that time might be regarded as almost identical. Nevertheless, the Romans were able even in the later period of antiquity to discriminate between their native gods and those introduced by the Sibylline books. The former were worshipped according to a Roman ritual, the latter according to a Greek. To the latter belonged Apollo, Artemis, Latona, Ceres, Hermes-Mercury, Proserpina, Cybele, Venus, and Esculapius; and that the Sibylline books were a Greek-Trojan work, whose original home was Asia Minor and the Trojan territory, was well known to the Romans. When the temple of the Capitoline Jupiter was burned down eighty-four years before Christ, the Sibylline books were lost. But the State could not spare them. A new collection had to be made, and this was mainly done by gathering the oracles which could be found one by one in those places which the Trojan or Erythreian Sibylla had visited, that is to say, in Asia Minor, especially in Erythrae, and in Ilium, the ancient Troy.

So far as Hermes-Mercury is concerned, the Roman annals inform us that he got his first *lectisternium* in the year 399 before Christ by order from the Sibylline books. *Lectisternium* was a sacrifice: the image of the god was laid on a bed with a pillow under the left arm, and beside the image was placed a table and a meal, which as a sacrifice was offered to the god. About one hundred years before that time, Hermes-Mercury had received his first temple in Rome.

Hermes-Mercury seemed, therefore, like Apollo, Venus, Esculapius, and others, to have been a god originally unknown to the Romans, the worship of whom the Trojan Sibylla had recommended to the Romans.

This was known to the scholars of the Middle Ages. Now, we must bear in mind that it was as certain to them as an undoubted scientific fact that the gods were originally men, chiefs, and heroes, and that the deified chief whom the Romans worshipped as Mercury, and the Greeks as Hermes, was the same as the Teutons called Odin, and from whom distinguished Germanic families traced their descent. We must also remember that the Sibylla who was supposed to have recommended the Romans to worship the old king Odin-Mercury was believed to have been a Trojan woman, and that her books were thought to have contained stories about Troy's heroes, in addition to various prophecies, and so this manner of reasoning led to the conclusion that the gods who were introduced in Rome through the Sibylline books were celebrated Trojans who had lived and fought at a time preceding the fall of Troy. Another inevitable and logical conclusion was that

Odin had been a Trojan chief, and when he appears in Germanic mythology as the chief of gods, it seemed most probable that he was identical with the Trojan king Priam, and that Priam was identical with Hermes-Mercury.

Now, as the ancestors of the Romans were supposed to have emigrated from Troy to Italy under the leadership of Aeneas, it was necessary to assume that the Romans were not the only Trojan emigrants, for, since the Teutons worshipped Odin-Priam-Hermes as their chief god, and since a number of Germanic families traced their descent from this Odin, the Teutons, too, must have emigrated from Troy. But, inasmuch as the Germanic dialects differed greatly from the Roman language, the Trojan Romans and the Trojan Teutons must have been separated a very long time.

They must have parted company immediately after the fall of Troy and gone in different directions, and as the Romans had taken a southern course on their way to Europe, the Teutons must have taken a northern. It was also apparent to the scholars that the Romans had landed in Europe many centuries earlier than the Teutons, for Rome had been founded already in 754 or 753 before Christ, but of the Teutons not a word is to be found in the annals before the period immediately preceding the birth of Christ. Consequently, the Teutons must have made a halt somewhere on their journey to the North. This halt must have been of several centuries' duration, and, of course, like the Romans, they must have founded a city, and from it ruled a territory in commemoration of their fallen city Troy. In that age, very little was known of Asia, where this Germanic-Trojan colony was supposed to have been situated, but, both from Orosius and, later, from Gregorius of Tours, it was known that our world is divided into three large divisions - Asia, Europe, and Africa - and that Asia and Europe are divided by a river called Tanais. And having learned from Gregorius of Tours that the Germanic Franks were said to have lived in Pannonia in ancient times, and having likewise learned that the Moeotian marshes lie east of Pannonia, and that the Tanais empties into these marshes, they had the course marked out by which the Teutons had come to Europe - that is, by way of Tanais and the Moeotian marshes. Not knowing anything at all of importance in regard to Asia beyond Tanais, it was natural that they should locate the colony of the Germanic Trojans on the banks of this river.

I think I have now pointed out the chief threads of the web of that scholastic romance woven out of Latin convent learning concerning a Germanic emigration from Troy and Asia, a web which extends from Fredegar's Frankish chronicle, through the following chronicles of the Middle Ages, down into Heimskringla and the Foreword of the *Prose Edda*. According to the Frankish chronicle, *Gesta regum Francorum*, the emigration of the Franks from the Trojan colony near the Tanais was thought to have occurred very late; that is, in the time of Valentinianus I, or, in other words, between 364 and 375 after Christ. The Icelandic authors very well knew that Germanic tribes had been far into Europe long before that time, and the reigns they had constructed in regard to the North indicated that they must have emigrated from the Tanais colony long before the Franks. As the Roman attack was the cause of the Frankish emigration, it seemed probable that these world-conquerors had also caused the earlier emigration from Tanais; and as Pompey's expedition to Asia was the most celebrated of all the expeditions made by the Romans in the East - Pompey even entered Jerusalem and visited its Temple - it was found most convenient to let the Aesir emigrate in the time of Pompey, but they left a remnant of Teutons near the Tanais, under the rule of Odin's younger brothers Vili and

Ve, in order that this colony might continue to exist until the emigration of the Franks took place.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the Trojan migration saga, as born and developed in antiquity, does not indicate by a single word that Europe was peopled later than Asia, or that it received its population from Asia. The immigration of the Trojans to Europe was looked upon as a return to their original homes. Dardanus, the founder of Troy, was regarded as the leader of an emigration from Etruria to Asia (*Aeneid*, III. 165 ff., *Serv. Comm.*). As a rule, the European peoples regarded themselves in antiquity as *autochthones*, if they did not look upon themselves as immigrants from regions within Europe to the territories they inhabited in historic times.

13.

THE MATERIALS OF THE ICELANDIC TROY SAGA.

We trust the facts presented above have convinced the reader that the saga concerning the immigration of Odin and the Aesir to Europe is throughout a product of the convent learning of the Middle Ages. That it was born and developed independently of the traditions of Germanic heathendom shall be made still more apparent by the additional proofs that are accessible in regard to this subject. It may, however, be of some interest to first dwell on some of the details in the *Heimskringla* and in the *Prose Edda* and point out their source.

It should be borne in mind that, according to the *Prose Edda*, it was Zoroaster who first thought of building the Tower of Babel, and that in this undertaking he was assisted by seventy-two master-masons. Zoroaster is, as is well known, another form for the Bactrian or Iranian name Zarathustra, the name of the prophet and religious reformer who is praised on every page of Avesta's holy scripture, and who in a prehistoric age founded the religion which far down in our own era has been confessed by the Persians, and is still confessed by their descendants in India, and is marked by a most serious and moral view of the world. In the Persian and in the classical literatures, this Zoroaster has nothing to do with Babel, still less with the Tower of Babel. But already in the first century of Christianity, if not earlier, traditions became current which made Zoroaster the founder of all sorcery, magic, and astrology (Pliny the Elder, *Historia Naturalis* 30, 2); and as astrology particularly was supposed to have had its center and base in Babylon, it was natural to assume that Babel had been the scene of Zoroaster's activity. The Greek-Roman chronicler Ammianus Marcellinus, who lived in the fourth century after Christ, still knows that Zoroaster was a man from Bactria, not from Babylon, but he already has formed the opinion that Zoroaster had gotten much of his wisdom from the writings of the Babylonians. In the Church fathers, the saga is developed in this direction, and from the Church fathers it got into the Latin chronicles. The Christian historian Orosius also knows that Zoroaster was from Bactria, but he already connects Zoroaster with the history of Nineveh and Babylon, and makes Ninus make war against him and conquer him. Orosius speaks of him as the inventor of sorcery and the magic arts. Gregorius of Tours told in his time that Zoroaster was identical with Noah's grandson, with Cush, the son of Ham, that this Cush went to the Persians, and that the Persians called him Zoroaster, a name supposed to mean "the living star." Gregorius also relates that this

Zoroaster was the first person who taught men the arts of sorcery and led them astray into idolatry, and as he knew the art of making stars and fire fall from heaven, men paid him divine worship. At that time, Gregorius continues, men desired to build a tower which should reach to heaven. But God confused their tongues and destroyed their plan. Nimrod, who was supposed to have built Babel, was a son of Zoroaster, according to Gregorius.

If we compare this with what the Foreword of the *Prose Edda* tells, then we find that there, too, Zoroaster is a descendant of Noah's son Ham and the founder of all idolatry, and that he himself was worshipped as a god. It is evident that the author of the Foreword gathered these statements from some source related to Gregorius' history. Of the 72 master-masons who were said to have helped Zoroaster in building the tower, and from whom the 72 languages of the world originated, Gregorius has nothing to say, but the saga about these builders was current everywhere during the Middle Ages. In the earlier Anglo-Saxon literature, there is a very naïve little work, very characteristic of its age, called "*A Dialogue between Saturn and Solomon*," in which Saturn tests Solomon's knowledge and puts to him all sorts of biblical questions, which Solomon answers partly from the Bible and partly from sagas connected with the Bible. Among other things, Saturn informs Solomon that Adam was created out of various elements, weighing altogether eight pounds, and that when created he was just 116 inches long. Solomon tells that Shem, Noah's son, had thirty sons, Ham thirty, and Japhet twelve - making 72 grandsons of Noah; and as there can be no doubt that it was the author's opinion that all the languages of the world, thought to be 72, originated at the Tower of Babel, and were spread into the world by these 72 grandsons of Noah, we here find the key to who those 72 master-masons were who, according to the *Edda*, assisted Zoroaster in building the tower. They were accordingly his brothers. Luther's contemporary, Henricus Cornelius Agrippa, who, in his work *De occulta Philosophia*, gathered numerous data in regard to the superstition of all ages, has a chapter on the power and sacred meaning of various numbers, and says in speaking of the number 72: "The number 72 corresponds to the 72 languages, the 72 elders in the synagogue, the 72 commentators of the Old Testament, Christ's 72 disciples, God's 72 names, the 72 angels who govern the 72 divisions of the Zodiac, each division of which corresponds to one of the 72 languages." This illustrates sufficiently how widespread the tradition was in regard to the 72 master-masons during the centuries of the Middle Ages. Even Nestor's Russian chronicle knows the tradition. It continued to enjoy a certain authority in the seventeenth century. An edition of Sulpicius Severus' *Opera Omnia*, printed in 1647, still considers it necessary to point out that a certain commentator had doubted whether the number 72 was entirely exact. Among the doubters we find Rudbeck in his *Atlantica*.

What the *Edda* tells about king Saturn and his son, king Jupiter, is found in a general way, partly in the Church-father Lactantius, partly in Virgil's commentator Servius, who was known and read during the Middle Ages. As the *Edda* claims that Saturn knew the art of producing gold from the molten iron, and that no other than gold coins existed in his time, this must be considered an interpretation of the statement made in Latin sources that Saturn's was the golden age - *aurea secula*, *aurea regna*. Among the Romans, Saturn was the guardian of treasures, and the treasury of the Romans was in the temple of Saturn in the Forum.

The genealogy found in the *Edda*, according to which the Trojan king Priam, supposed to be the oldest and the proper Odin, was descended in the sixth generation from Jupiter, is taken from Latin chronicles. Herikon of the *Edda*, grandson of Jupiter, is the Roman-Greek Erichthonius; the *Edda*'s Lamedon is Laomedon. Then the *Edda* has the difficult task of continuing the genealogy through the dark centuries between the burning of Troy and the younger Odin's immigration to Europe. Here the Latin sources naturally fail it entirely, and it is obliged to seek other aid. It first considers the native sources. There it finds that Thor is also called Lorridi, Indridi, and Vingthor, and that he had two sons, Modi and Magni; but it also finds a genealogy made about the twelfth century, in which these different names of Thor are applied to different persons, so that Lorridi is the son of Thor, Indridi the son of Lorridi, Vingthor the son of Indridi, etc. This mode of making genealogies was current in Iceland in the twelfth century, and before that time among the Christian Anglo-Saxons. From there, the *Edda* continues its genealogy with the names Bedvig, Atra, Itrman, Heremod, Skjaldun or Skold, Bjaef, Jat, Gudolf, Fjarlaf or Fridleif, and finally Odin, that is to say, the younger Odin, who had adopted this name after his deified progenitor Hermes-Priam. This whole genealogy is taken from a Saxon source, and can be found in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle name for name. From Odin the genealogy divides itself into two branches, one from Odin's son, Veggdegg, and another from Odin's son, Beldegg or Baldur. The one branch has the names Veggdegg, Vitrgils, Ritta, Heingest. These names are found arranged into a genealogy by the English Church historian Bede, by the English chronicler Nennius, and in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle. From one of these three sources the *Edda* has taken them, and the only difference is that the *Edda* must have made a slip in one place and changed the name Vitta to Ritta. The other branch, which begins with Baldur or Beldegg, embraces eight names, which are found in precisely the same order in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle.

In regard to Baldur, the *Edda* says that Odin appointed him king in Westphalia. This statement is based on the tradition that Baldur was known among the heathen Germans and Scandinavians by the name Fal (*Falur*, see No. 92), with its variation Fol. In an age when it was believed that Sweden got its name from a king Sven, Götaland from a king Göt, Denmark from a king Dan, Angeln from a king Angul, the Franks from a duke Francio, it might be expected that Falen (East- and West-Phalia) had been named after a king Fal. That this name was recognized as belonging to Baldur not only in Germany, but also in Scandinavia, I shall give further proof of in No. 92.

As already stated, Thor was, according to the *Edda*, married to Sibil, that is to say, the Sibylla, and the *Edda* adds that this Sibil is called Sif in the North. In the Germanic mythology, Thor's wife is the goddess Sif. It has already been mentioned that it was believed in the Middle Ages that the Cumaean or Erythreian Sibylla originally came from Troy, and it is not, therefore, strange that the author of the Prose *Edda*, who speaks of the Trojan descent of Odin and his people, should wed Thor to the most famous of Trojan women. Still, this marriage is not invented by the author. The statement has an older foundation, and taking all circumstances into consideration, may be traced to Germany, where Sif, in the days of heathendom, was as well known as Thor. To the northern form Sif corresponds the Gothic form Sibba, the Old English Sib, the Old Saxon Sibbia, and the Old High German Sibba, and Sibil, Sibilla, was thought to be still another form of the same name. The belief, based on the assumed fact that Thor's wife Sif was identical with the Sibylla, explains a phenomenon not previously understood in the saga-world and

church sculpture of the Middle Ages, and on this point I now have a few remarks to make.

In the Norse mythology, several goddesses or dises have, as we know, feather-guises, with which they fly through space. Freyja has a falcon-guise; several dises have swan-guises (*Völundarkviða*, *Helreið Brynhildar* 6). Among these swan-maids was Sif (see No. 123). Sif could therefore present herself now in human form, and again in the guise of the most beautiful swimming bird, the swan.

A legend, the origin of which can be traced to Italy, tells that when the queen of Saba visited king Solomon, she was in one place to cross a brook. A tree or beam was thrown across as a bridge. The wise queen stopped, and would not let her foot touch the beam. She preferred to wade across the brook, and when she was asked the reason for this, she answered that in a prophetic vision she had seen that the time would come when this tree would be made into a cross on which the Savior of the world was to suffer.

The legend came also to Germany, but here it appears with the addition that the queen of Saba was rewarded for this piety, and was freed while wading across the brook from a bad blemish. One of her feet, so says the German addition, was of human form, but the other like the foot of a water-bird up to the moment when she took it out of the brook. Church sculpture of the Middle Ages sometimes represented the queen of Saba as a woman well formed, except that she had one foot like that of a water-bird. How the Germans came to represent her with this blemish, foreign to the Italian legend, has not heretofore been explained, although the influence of the Greek-Roman mythology on the legends of the Roman peoples, and that of the Germanic mythology on the Germanic legends, has been traced in numerous instances.

During the Middle Ages, the queen of Saba was called queen Seba, on account of the Latin translation of the Bible, where she is styled Regina Seba, and Seba was thought to be her name. The name suggested her identity, on the one hand, with Sibba, Sif, whose swan-guise lived in the traditions; on the other hand, with Sibilla, and the latter particularly, since queen Seba had proved herself to be in possession of prophetic inspiration, the chief characteristic of the Sibylla. Seba, Sibba, and Sibilla were in the popular fancy blended into one. This explains how queen Seba among the Germans, but not among the Italians, got the blemish which reminds us of the swan-guise of Thor's wife Sibba. And having come to the conclusion that Thor was a Trojan, his wife Sif also ought to be a Trojan woman. And as it was known that the Sibylla was Trojan, and that queen Seba was a Sibylla, this blending was almost inevitable. The Latin scholars found further evidence of the correctness of this identity in a statement drawn originally from Greek sources to the effect that Jupiter had had a Sibylla, by name Lamia, as mistress, and had begotten a daughter with her by name Herophile, who was endowed with her mother's gift of prophecy. As we know, Mercury corresponds to Odin, and Jupiter to Thor, in the names of the days of the week. It thus follows that it was Thor who stood in this relation to the Sibylla.

The character of the anthropomorphized Odin, who is lawgiver and king, as represented in *Heimskringla* and the *Prose Edda*, is only based in part on native northern traditions concerning the heathen god Odin, the ruler of heaven. This younger Odin, constructed by Christian authors, has received his chief features from documents found in the convent libraries. When the *Prose Edda* tells that the chief who proceeded from

Asgard to Saxland and Scandinavia did not really bear the name Odin, but had assumed this name after the elder and deified Odin-Priam of Troy, to make people believe that he was a god, then this was no new idea. Virgil's commentator, Servius, remarks that ancient kings very frequently assumed names which by right belonged only to the gods, and he blames Virgil for making Saturn come from the heavenly Olympus to found a golden age in Italy. This Saturn, says Servius, was not a god from above, but a mortal king from Crete who had taken the god Saturn's name. The manner in which Saturn, on his arrival in Italy and the vicinity of Rome, was received by Janus, the king ruling there, reminds us of the manner in which Odin, on his arrival in Svithiod, was received by king Gylfi. Janus is unpretentious enough to leave a portion of his territory and his royal power to Saturn, and Gylfi makes the same concessions to Odin. Saturn then introduces a higher culture among the people of Latium, and Odin brings a higher culture to the inhabitants of Scandinavia. The Church father Lactantius, like Servius, speaks of kings who tried to appropriate the name and worship of the gods, and condemns them as foes of truth and violators of the doctrines of the true God.

In regard to one of them, the Persian Mithra, who, in the Middle Ages, was confounded with Zoroaster, Tertulianus relates that he, Mithra, who knew in advance that Christianity would come, resolved to anticipate the true faith by introducing some of its customs. Thus, for example, Mithra, according to Tertulianus, introduced the custom of blessing by laying the hands on the head or the brow of those to whom he wished to insure prosperity, and he also adopted among his mysteries a practice resembling the breaking of the bread in the Eucharist. So far as the blessing by the laying on of hands is concerned, Mithra especially used it in giving courage to the men whom he sent out as soldiers to war. With these words of Tertulianus, it is interesting to compare the following passage in regard to Odin in the *Heimskringla*: "It was his custom when he sent his men to war, or on some errand, to lay his hands on their head and give them *bjannak*." *Bjannak* is not a Norse word, not even Germanic, and there has been uncertainty in regard to its significance. The well-known Icelandic philologist, Gudbrand Vigfusson, has, as I believe, given the correct definition of the word, having referred it to the Scottish word *bannock* and the Gaelic *bangh*, which means bread. Presumably the author of *Heimskringla* has chosen this foreign word in order not to wound the religious feelings of readers with a native term, for if *bjannak* really means bread, and if the author of *Heimskringla* desired in this way to indicate that Odin, by the aid of sacred usages, practiced in the Christian cult - that is, by the laying on of hands and the breaking of bread - had given his warriors the assurance of victory, then it lay near at hand to modify, by the aid of a foreign word for bread, the impression of the disagreeable similarity between the heathen and Christian usages. But at the same time, the complete harmony between what Tertulianus tells about Mithra and *Heimskringla* about Odin is manifest.

What *Heimskringla* tells about Odin, that his spirit could leave the body and go to far-off regions, and that his body lay in the meantime as if asleep or dead, is told, in the Middle Ages, of Zoroaster and of Hermes-Mercury.

New Platonian works had told much about an originally Egyptian god, whom they associated with the Greek Hermes and called Hermes-Trismegistus - that is, the thrice greatest and highest. The name Hermes-Trismegistus became known through Latin authors even to the scholars in the Middle Age convents, amid, as a matter of course, those who believed that Odin was identical with Hermes also regarded him as identical

with Hermes-Trismegistus. When Gylfi sought Odin and his men he came to a citadel which, according to the statement of the gatekeeper, belonged to king Odin, but when he had entered the hall he there saw not one throne, but three thrones, the one above the other, and upon each of the thrones a chief. When Gylfi asked the names of these chiefs, he received an answer that indicates that none of the three alone was Odin, but that Odin the sorcerer, who was able to turn men's vision, was present in them all. One of the three, says the door-keeper, is named Har, the second Jafnhar, and the one on the highest throne is Thridi. It seems to me probable that what gave rise to this story was the surname "the thrice-highest," which was ascribed to Mercury in the Middle Ages and, consequently, was regarded as one of the epithets which Odin assumed. The names Third and High seem to point to the phrase "the thrice-highest." It was accordingly taken for granted that Odin had appropriated this name in order to anticipate Christianity with a sort of idea of trinity, just as Zoroaster, his progenitor, had, under the name Mithra, imitated the Christian usages in advance.

The rest that *Heimskringla* and the *Prose Edda* tell about the king Odin who immigrated to Europe is mainly taken from the stories embodied in the mythological songs and traditions in regard to the god Odin who ruled in the celestial Valhall. What is told about the war of Odin and the Asiatics with the Vans belongs here. In the myth, this war was waged around the walls built by a giant around the heavenly Asgard (*Völuspá*, 24). The citadel in which Gylfi finds the triple Odin is decorated in harmony with the Valhall described by the heathen skalds. The men who drink and present exercises in arms are the einherjes of the myth. Gylfi himself is taken from the mythology, but, to all appearances, he did not play the part of a king, but of a giant, dwelling in Jotunheim. The *Fornaldarsagas* (*Hversu Noregur byggðist* 1) make him a descendant of Fornjotr, who, with his sons, Hler, Logi, and Kari, and his descendants, Jökull, Snær, Geitir, etc., doubtless belong to Jotunheim. When Odin and the Aesir had been made immigrants to the North, it was quite natural that the giants were made a historical people, and as such were regarded as the aborigines of the North - an hypothesis which, in connection with the fable about the Asiatic emigration, was accepted for centuries, and still has its defenders. The story that Odin, when he perceived death drawing near, marked himself with the point of a spear, has its origin in the words which a heathen song lays on Odin's lips: "I know that I hung on the wind-tossed tree nine nights, by my spear wounded, given to Odin, myself given to myself" (*Hávamál*, 138).

14.

THE RESULT OF THE FOREGOING INVESTIGATIONS.

With this, I close the examination of the sagas in regard to the Trojan descent of the Teutons, and in regard to the immigration of Odin and his Asia-men to Saxland, Denmark, and the Scandinavian peninsula. I have pointed out the seed from which the sagas grew, the soil in which the seed could be developed, and how it gradually grew to be what we find these sagas to be in *Heimskringla* and the *Prose Edda*. I have shown that they do not belong to the Germanic heathendom, but that they were born, as it were of necessity, in a Christian time, among Teutons converted to Christianity, and that throughout they are the work of the Latin scholars in the Middle Age. The assumption that they concealed within themselves a tradition preserved for centuries among the

Teutons themselves of an ancient emigration from Asia is altogether improbable, and is completely refuted by the genuine migration sagas of Germanic origin which were rescued from oblivion, and of which I shall give an account below. In my opinion, these old and genuine Germanic migration sagas have, from a purely historical standpoint, no greater claim to be looked upon as containing a kernel of truth than the fables of the Christian age in regard to Odin's emigration from Asia. This must be carefully considered in each case. But what they do furnish evidence for is, how entirely foreign to the Germanic heathens the idea of an immigration from Troy or Asia was, and besides, they are of great interest on account of their connection with what the myths have to say in regard to the oldest dwelling-places, history, and diffusion of the human race, or at least of the Germanic part of it.

As a rule, all the old migration sagas, no matter from what race they spring, should be treated with the utmost caution. Large portions of the earth's surface may have been appropriated by various races, not by the sudden influx of large masses, but by a gradual increase of the population and consequent moving of their boundaries, and there need not have been any very remarkable or memorable events in connection with them. Such an expansion of the territory may take place, and be so little remarked by the people living around the center, that they actually do not need to be aware of it, nor need much less to remember it in sagas and songs. That a few new settlers year by year extend the boundaries of a race has no influence on the imagination, and it can continue generation after generation, and produce as its final result an immense expansion, and yet the separate generations may scarcely have been conscious of the change in progress. A people's spreading over new territory may be compared with the movement of the hour-hand on a clock. It is not perceptible to the eye, and is only realized by continued observation.

In many instances, however, immigrations have taken place in large masses, who have left their old abodes to seek new homes. Such undertakings are of themselves worthy of being remembered, and they are attended by results that easily cling to the memory. But, even in such cases, it is surprising how soon the real historical events either are utterly forgotten or blended with fables, which gradually, since they appeal more to the fancy, monopolize the interest. The conquest and settlement of England by Saxon and Scandinavian tribes - and that, too, in a time when the art of writing was known - is a most remarkable instance of this. Hengist, under whose command the Saxons, according to their own immigration saga, are said to have planted their feet on British soil, is a saga-figure taken from mythology, and there we shall find him later on (see No. 123). No wonder, then, if we discover those heroes, under whose leadership the Longobardians and Goths believed they had emigrated from their original Germanic homes, in the mythology.