

Communitary and Individualistic Gods in German and Roman Religion

Adolfo ZAVARONI

Reggio Emilia, Italy

RESUMEN

Según dos episodios contados por Saxo Grammaticus, *Othinus* fué reemplazado temporalmente por *Mythothyn* y, en una circunstancia diferente, por *Ollerus*. El análisis textual enseña que *Mythothyn* aspiró a la posesión y a la gloria personal, prohibiendo las ofertas dedicadas en común a los dioses. *Ollerus-Ullr* “Gloria, Esplendor” evidencia una semejante inclinación en el nombre mismo. Puesto que *Iovis* hijo de *Fortuna* fué venerado por los patricios romanos, mientras la tríada *Ceres-Liber-Libera*, el antiguo Mercurio y Saturno fueron adorados por los plebeyos como divinidades comunitarias, podemos deducir que los dioses de la luz diurna fueron creídos partidarios de poder individual desde muchos siglos.

Palabras clave: epulum Iovis, Fortuna, Gullveig, Iovis, Latinus, Mercurius, Mithothyn, Ollerus-Ullr, Odin-Othinus-Óðinn, Summanus, Vulcanus.

ABSTRACT

According to two episodes told by Saxo Grammaticus, *Othinus* was temporarily replaced by *Mythothyn* and, in a different circumstance, by *Ollerus*. Analysis shows that the former aspired to personal ownership and glorification, prohibiting votes dedicated to all gods, while the latter shows such an inclination in the name itself (*Ullr* “Glory”).

Analogously *Iovis* son of *Fortuna* was the god worshipped by the Roman patricians, while the *Ceres-Liber-Libera* triad, the early Mercury and Saturn were worshipped by the plebeians as communitary divinities. We may infer that the gods of daily light had been considered promoters of individual power since many centuries.

Key Words: epulum Iovis, Fortuna, Gullveig, Iovis, Latinus, Mercurius, Mithothyn, Ollerus-Ullr, Odin-Othinus-Óðinn, Summanus, Vulcanus.

1. OTHINUS AND MITHOTHYN THE INDIVIDUALIST

Saxo (*Gesta Danorum* I, VII.1) relates that *Othinus* used to dwell in Upsala and sometimes in Byzantium. Once, when he was in Byzantium, the northern kings (*Septentrionis reges*) sent him a golden ring-bedecked image, which betokened their homage. But his queen *Frigga*, desiring the gold of the statue, at first called smiths who stripped the statue of its gold; and after *Othinus* had restored the statue she “*uni familiarium se stupro subiecit; cuius ingenio simulacrum demolita aurum publicae superstitioni consecratum ad privati luxus convertit*” (note the opposition *publicae*

~ *privati*). *Othinus*, wounded by the trespass of his wife, took to exile and a certain *Mithothyn*, who was famous for his juggling tricks, holding complete sway, feigned to be a god and led his subjects by the renown of his juggling “*ad caerimonias suo nomini persolvendas*”. Besides, “*hic deorum iram aut numinum violationem confusis permixtisque sacrificiis expiari negabat ideoque iis vota communiter nuncupari prohibebat, discreta superum cuique libamenta constituens*”.

When *Othinus* returned, *Mithothyn* hid himself into Pheonia (the Danish island of Fyn), but he was attacked there and slain by the inhabitants. As his barrow smote all who approached it with death, till the body was unearthed, beheaded, and impaled, a well-known procedure used for the corpses of sorcerers.

Dumézil (1970: 95-105) considered the episode of the golden statue sent to *Othinus* an oblique reference to *Gullveig* who, according to the *Völuspá*, appeared in the hall of *Hár (Óðinn)*, provoking the epic conflict between the *Æsir* and the *Vanir*, the first war in the cosmos. But reducing *Mithothyn* to a mere “sorcier”, Dumézil failed to consider the full significance of this character and to attach proper significance to an important suggestion first made by Ferdinand Detter (1894) who had noted that, in the *Ynglingasaga*, the mention of the war between the *Æsir* and the *Vanir* was preceded by the chapter relating the story of *Óðinn*’s brothers, *Vili* and *Vé*, who once shared both his estate and his wife, *Frigg*, during one of *Óðinn*’s absences¹. Detter, connecting the intercourse between *Óðinn*’s brothers and *Frigg* with *Frigg*’s unfaithfulness in the episode told by Saxo, went on to suggest —erroneously we believe— that the statue offered *Othinus* was a functional analogue of *Mimir*’s head, severed by the *Vanir* and sent to the *Æsir*².

Instead of trying to understand the reason of the antagonistic relationship between *Othinus* and *Mithothyn*, Dumézil (1970: 95-105) at first shifts his attention onto *Gullveig*, that he interprets as “Ivresse (ou: Puissance) de l’Or”³, and on the war between the *Æsir* and the *Vanir*. In our opinion (Zavaroni 2003: 80), *Gullveig* is the goddess of destiny and her name, because of the ambiguity of *-veig*, could have played on double meanings, namely “gold-honor” and “golden-thread”, where ‘thread’ recalls the destiny thread, a concept that probably gave rise to the name *Norn* (from **sneh₂-r-* ‘drehen, spin’), since “thread” recalled “destiny” in several I.-E. languages.

In a following work, Dumézil (1977: 201) writes the name as *Mithothyn*, omitting the first *h* of *Mithothyn*, in order to interpret him as a “Measurer”, as if this name

¹ In the *Ynglingasaga* one reads: “Odin had two brothers, the one named *Vé*, the other *Vili*, and they governed the kingdom when he was absent. It happened once, when Odin had gone to a great distance, and had been so long away, that the people of Asia doubted if he would ever return home, and his two brothers took it on themselves to divide his estate; but both of them took his wife *Frigg* to themselves. Odin soon after returned home and took his wife back.”

² According to the *Ynglingasaga*, the peace between the *Æsir* and the *Vanir* was ratified by an exchange: the rich *Njörðr* and his son *Freyr* passed to the *Æsir* in exchange for wise *Mimir* and beautiful *Hænir*. The *Vanir* at once appointed *Hænir* to be their leader. But *Hænir* was not able to decide anything without *Mimir*. Feeling deceived, the *Vanir* killed *Mimir* and sent his head back to the *Æsir*.

³ As I have expressed various objections to the interpretation of Dumézil in a precedent work (Zavaroni 2003), here I recall only the observations concerning the subject of the present article.

were equivalent to ON *mjötuðr*, and thence he erroneously compares *Mithothyn* with the Vedic *Bhaga*. But analysis of Saxo's text shows the real meaning of the name: it is segmentable as **mið-auðyn* and may be interpreted as follows: *mið-* corresponds to *með-* 'cum-' in compounds such as *með-gjöf* 'a fee paid for alimention', *með-hjálp* 'helpmate' and the like, while *auðyn* may be aligned with *Auðunn*, a personal name and *Óðinn*'s epithet. As de Vries (1977: 18) points out, *Auðunn* reflects a previous **Auða-winiz* in line with OE *Eadwine*, OHG *Audowin*, Langob. *Audoin*, etc. Since **Auðawiniz* means "fond of riches, possessions", we may extrapolate the sense "he who desires to possess goods held in common" for a **Mið-auða-winiz*. If so, then we gain a clearer understanding of Saxo's otherwise cryptic remark: "*Hic deorum iram aut numinum violationem confusis permixtisque sacrificiis expiari negabat ideoque iis vota communiter nuncupari prohibebat, discreta superum cuique libamenta constituens*⁴."

Although he interprets *Mithothyn* as a "Measurer", Dumézil (1977: 201-202), paying more attention to Saxo's words, writes:

"Ce mythe [de *Mithothyn*] définit, en la [=réforme des sacrifices] ramenant à la grande préoccupation des dieux, les sacrifices, deux types d'idéal, sinon de pratique économique: Mitothyn [*sic*] veut des propriétés privées, séparées, des patrimoines; Othinus patronne un communisme fondé sur la propriété collective. Le système de Mitothyn est celui que connaît la Scandinavie dès le haut Moyen-Age et dont Magnus Olsen a étudié les implications sacrées dans son livre de 1930, *Ättegård og Helligdom*, tandis que le système d'Othinus est celui que César avait décrit dans l'exkursus du *De bello Gallico* (VI, 22) consacré aux Germains continentaux: 'Nul n'a une quantité de terre fixe ni des emplacements lui appartenent en propre (*neque quisquam agri modum certum aut fines habet proprios*). Chaque année, les magistrats et les chefs distribuent des terres aux gentes et aux groupes d'hommes apparentés vivant en commun, en telle quantité et en tel lieu qu'ils le jugent convenable. L'année d'après, ils les obligent à se transporter ailleurs (*anno post alio transire cogunt*)'".

This socioeconomic interpretation may have some basis in archaeological reality, but it skirts effective discussion of the nature of gods who require two types of offerings, one communitarian (collective), the other individual. If we presume that such a distinction depends on a difference between the nature of *Othinus* and that of his antagonist, we may then identify an important aspect of the structure of certain Germanic myths and their connection with kindred Indo-European myths concerning the fundamental concept of a cyclical universe and its representative deities. We cannot understand this concept if we discount, as Dumézil does, Detter's suggestion of a relationship between the episode of *Mythothyn* and the narration of the *Ynglingasaga* concerning Vili and Vé who, during *Óðinn*'s absence, share both his power and his wife. This replacement implicates a principled alternation in the

⁴ "He denied that the anger of the gods or the violation of the divine wish was expiated by means of global and mixed sacrifices; he therefore forbade common votive offerings, setting up separate libations for each divinity".

Germanic religious *Weltanschauung*. Perhaps Dumézil could not notice this alternation because, in our opinion, it significantly weakens the foundation under a Dumézilian trifunctional scaffolding.

2. OTHINUS THE COMMUNITARIAN AND OLLERUS THE INDIVIDUALIST GOD OF SPLENDOR

In *Gesta Danorum* (III, 81-82), Saxo mentions another exile of *Othinus*. Having learned that only a son born him by *Rinda* could avenge the death of *Balderus*, *Othinus*, after various attempts, disguised as a woman in order to subduing *Rinda*. But by virtue of his disguise, *Othinus* humiliated both his divine rank and his name: he was therefore expelled and replaced by *Ollerus* (ON *Ullr*) who assumed leadership of the kingdom as well as the name *Othinus* (*Othini quoque ei nomen imponunt*) for ten years. Thereafter, the gods took pity on *Othinus* and welcomed him back once again. And thereupon, *Ollerus* ran away, but was captured in Denmark and killed⁵. It was said that he was a magician and that he used to cross the sea on an inscribed bone.

The Nordic name *Ullr* is, by itself, no less indicative than the scanty information we find in literature: commonly *Ullr* is interpreted as “Splendor, Glory, Herrlichkeit”⁶. If we assume that the replacement of *Othinus* by *Ollerus-Ullr* implicates their cyclic antagonism, we may then infer that *Ullr*, a god of solar light, is a summer deity. If, moreover, correspondences are hypothesized between comparable Celtic and Germanic divinities with analogous roles, then one must concede that, probably during the times of the Celtic *Samain* and the Germanic *Jól*, that is, at the beginning of the midwinter month, a return to power by the chthonic divinities was to be celebrated: they were involved in the cult of the dead and the fertility feasts after the harvest. Certainly *Óðinn* must have been a principal among deities so celebrated, as one of his bynames is *Jólnir*.

If we consider this principle of alternation we have now identified as valid, then we may posit the following network of correspondences:

Germ. *Jól*: OIr. *Samain* = Germ. *Jonsvaka*: OIr. *Beltene*

Here *Samain* and *Beltene* are the Irish feasts at the beginning of November and May respectively, while the northern feasts were moved, at least after the advent of Christianity, to the 25th of December and the 24th of June (*Jonsvaka* “John’s wake”) respectively. It is well known that divinities of light and the sun were wors-

⁵ *Othinus* does not kill *Mythothyn* nor *Ollerus*: both are killed by Danish people, the former in Pheonia island, the latter in Sweden. This particular could have a certain meaning on the mythical grounds, although it is difficult to evidence it. Of course, if *Mythothyn* and *Ollerus* were gods, their death was rather a “disappearing”.

⁶ Scholars generally suggest that the name *Ullr* has the same root as Goth. *wulpus* “Herrlichkeit”, OE *wuldor* “glory”, *wlite* “appearance, splendor”.

hipped during the celebration of *Beltene* and *Jonsvaka*. Therefore, if *Ullr* was a deity of light, he was not a winter god—as supposed by de Vries (1957: 447), Boyer (1981: 93-94) etc.—, but rather a divinity of spring and summer like the Celtic *Beleunos*. Further comparisons with members of the Celtic pantheon are instructive. In the Welsh story *Pwyll Prince of Dyvet*, *Gwawl* “Light, Fair” is the love rival of the protagonist *Pwyll* “Sense, Prudence”, prince of Dyvet and then king of Annwn (the netherworld): both love *Rhiannon*. It is remarkable that “narrator sympathy” is consistently in favor of *Pwyll* and that *Gwawl* appears to be an intruder who ends by receiving a sound cudgeling. Before becoming the king of Annwn, *Pwyll* himself has to defeat the adversary of Arawn, that is *Hafgan* < **semo-cano*- “summer light”. The conflict between *Pwyll* and *Gwawl* son of *Clut* recalls the rivalry between *Gwynn* “White, Clear” son of *Nudd* and *Gwythyr* “Interlacement” son of *Gri-dawl* “Twisted”, who are mentioned in the Welsh story *Culhwch and Olwyn*: the two rivals are to fight a duel every first of May until the Day of Judgment for the conquest of *Creiddylat*, daughter of *Ludd Argetlám* “Silver-Hand”. The first of May is the day of the Feast of Beltene which was devoted to a god of the summer light: from an astronomical viewpoint this is also antagonistically correlated with the *samain* of the first of November (they are separated by an interval of six months), during which the chthonic deities were celebrated, presumably for their return. Given the universality of this archaic astronomical notion, *Ullr*, “Shine, Splendor” in origin, was necessarily a cyclical god.

In conclusion, the following alternation may be hypothesized:

1. *Othinus* reigns from midwinter to midsummer on earth, but during the remaining months he reigns in the netherworld (according to the euhemerism, he may be traveling or in exile).

2. *Ollerus* reigns from midwinter to midsummer on earth, but during the coldest months, he dwells in the netherworld, just as Apollo stays among the Hyperboreans. As the netherworld is beyond the frozen North, *Ullr-Ollerus* has to use his skis to go “by land”, as he is the *önduráss* “ski-Ås”. *Ullr* is also an archer deity like the Greek Apollo.

According to Snorri, *Ullr* is the son of *Sif* and the stepson of *þórr*. But who, then, is his father? It might be supposed that *Ullr* primordially shared some functions with his stepfather *þórr*. Both, for instance, preside over oaths. As the god of thunder, *þórr* is certainly a sky god, an aspect that is further evidenced by assimilation with Jupiter in an *interpretatio Romanorum*. According to Adam of Bremen (fl. ca. 1080), *þórr* presided over the sky and “*tonitrus et fulmina, uentos imbresque, serena et fruges gubernat*” (quoted by Dumézil 1959: 131). If *þórr* is seen as a god of the sky and thunder, then it is only reasonable to assume that he would have been a god of light as his stepson. Cicero (*Nat. D.*, III, 21), for instance, speaks of a Jupiter who in Arcadia was considered the son of ‘Sky’ and the father of Minerva and of a sun god who was Jupiter’s son, Aether’s nephew. If *Ullr* means ‘splendor’, then it is a synonym of *Glenr*, the name of the husband of *Sól* ‘Sun’ (female). By the *Skaldskaparmál* we know that *Sif* was not mentioned among the Asyniur (she descended, therefore, from the stock of the Vanir) and her name could be used for denoting the earth, as well as *Fjörgyn*, the name of *Thórr*’s mother. On the other hand

the Earth could be named “daughter of Ónarr”, “wife of Óðinn” and “sister of Auðr and Dagr”. Besides, we are told that *Dagr* “Day” was son of *Dellingr* “Light” (*Gylf.* 10). In conclusion, *Ullr*, whose mother *Sif* is assimilable to Earth, might have *Dagr*, the brother of *Sif*, as father, given that marriages between brothers and sisters were usual among the Vanir. Then, the male descent should perpetuate the character of light: *Dellingr* “Light” is father of *Dagr* “(light of) Day” who is father of *Ullr* “Splendor”, whom we may consider an Apollonian god.

Odin-Mercurius should thus be the cyclical contender of *Ullr-Apollo*, while the precise relationship between these two is unclear. As a matter of fact this interpretation takes its lead from an examination of Gaulish and Germano-Roman monuments, clues from Italic sources, and pertinent archaeological residue, whose discussion would command more space than is allotted here. Such an argumentation should also concern Vulcan. It is common knowledge that Caesar (*B. G.* 6, 21) records only *Volcanus*, Sun and Moon as endemic deities for the Germanic tribes⁷. But no deity cited by Snorri seems to correspond to *Volcanus*. Nevertheless, Snorri mentions a supernatural being we might assimilate to the divine *Faber*: he is the *smíðr* “smith”, defined *hrímþurs* “frost-ogre”, who builds the *Valhöll* of the *Æsir*; but then *þórr* cracks his skull and sinks him into the hell (*Niflhel*), since the smith wants *Freyja*, the Sun and the Moon, as a remuneration for his work.

In reality, the “smith” is the gruff and malfasant *alter ego* of the divine craftsman, a descendant of the Bronze Age ambivalent god, creator and destroyer. If our Blacksmith alias Divine Craftsman desired *Freyja*, the Sun and the Moon, then it is safe to presume that, at some archaic remove, he must also have had an intimate relationship with them. Sun (*Sól*, fem.) and Moon (*Máni*, masc.) are names of the children of *Mundilfæri* “Tempestatum-ductor” (from ON *mund* “momentum, tempestas”: cf. *Iovis bonarum tempestatum*), who gives his daughter in marriage to *Glenr* “Shine” (a possible definitional epithet of *Ullr*). If we suppose that *Mundilfæri* is an *alter ego* of the divine Craftsman, of the “smith” who builds the *Valhöll*, then we may also infer that the smith here wants his children back, as well as what was perhaps once his bride, that is, the goddess of fertility. The triad Smith-Sun-Moon corresponds exactly to the triad *Volcanus-Sol-Luna* mentioned by Caesar.

It is difficult, moreover, to support a contention that the early Germanic peoples worshipped the Sun and Moon in some “naturalistic” fashion. Both were reliably simplifications of more complex divinities, no less so than were the Latin assimilative pairings Diana-Moon and Apollo-Sun. Cicero (*Nat. D.* III, 23), in fact, mentions a *Minerva* who bears a son to *Volcanus*: such a son is the very Apollo, “who, according to the ancients, was the tutelary god of Athens”. Cicero, or his sources, had probably assimilated an ancient Apollonian deity to Erichthonius, fourth king of Athens sprung from the seed of Vulcan, since this was also a salutary deity much like Apollo. Although the myths centered around Erichthonius certainly go back to an archaic period, it is the triad *Athēna-Hēphaistos-Apollón* (= *Minerva-Vulcan-*

⁷ “*Deorum numero eos solos ducunt quos cernunt et quorum aperte iuvantur, Solem et Vulcanum et Lunam...*”

Apollo) that is remarkable for the comparisons it allows with divinities of other Indo-European peoples whose gods later underwent very different developments.

Contemporary commentators have not pointed out how *Othinus*, according to Saxo's narration, reconquered his powers after the reign of *Ollerus*: "*Sunt qui asserant eum quosdam deorum adulando, quosdam praemiis permulcendo amissae maiestatis fortunam pecunia emeratum fuisse et ad honores, quibus iam pridem defunctus fuerat, ingentis summae pretio reditum comparasse*".

Perhaps commentators have either presumed that the hypothesis of "power regained by money" is an excessive euhemerism or neglected this aspect of the wealth of *Othinus* entirely since it would vitiate the Dumézilian trifunctional scheme of things. But this economic prospect is no less important than the "communitarian regime" that *Othinus* restores after having expelled *Mithothyn*. Thanks to his inferentially semi-infernal nature (his mother *Bestla* is the daughter of the giant *Böllporn* "Bad-thorn"), *Othinus* is a rich god. Saying that he reconquers the power "*ingentis summae pretio*" could mean that *Othinus* places his wealth at the disposal of the other divinities, while *Ollerus* and *Mithothyn*, if they are not one and the same deity, aspire to personal ownership and glorification. That *Mithothyn* nourishes such an aspiration may be inferred from the fact that: 1) he favours Frigga in converting the gold of the statue, destined to the public cult, into private luxury (*cuius ingenio simulacrum demolita aurum publicae superstitioni consecratum ad privati luxuriam convertit*); 2) he prohibits votes dedicated to all gods and orders individual offers.

3. THE *LUDI PLEBEI*, THE *CERES-LIBER-LIBERA* TRIAD AND THE *EPULUM IOVI(S)*

The correspondence between the Irish feast of *Samain* and the Germanic *Jól* may be extended to the Roman *ludi Plebei* celebrated in November (from the 4th to the 17th in a suitably later historical period). This connection paves the way for a better understanding of these *ludi*. Dumézil (1974: 489) restricts his observations to the suggestion that the *ludi Plebei* were established—we have no idea precisely when—to counterbalance the *ludi Capitolini*, as well as the *Ceres-Liber-Libera* triad had been the plebeian answer to the *capitolina* triad of *Iuppiter-Iuno-Minerva*. But this suggestion, also advanced by Sabbatucci, explains nothing with respect to an archaic belief system. According to Sabbatucci (1988: 334-335), "while the *ludi* of September answered the exigency of making Rome the capital of Latium (and then, proceeding to the limits of the Latin League, the "capital" in an absolute sense), the *ludi* of November became plebeian, and as such were so denominated, in clear and conscious opposition to the *ludi* of September that were called *ludi Romani*". It is, however, impossible to know when such a transformation might have occurred.

According to Livy (XXV, 2, 10), in 213 BC the "*Ludi Plebei per biduum instaurati et Iovis epulum fuit ludorum causa*". Since *instaurare*, particularly when referring to a religious ceremony, also means "to renew, repeat, restore", one may readily suggest that the duration of the *Ludi Plebei* was increased by adding two days in order to celebrate a second *epulum Iovis* in addition to that of September. The propitiatory

function of such a reconstitution is obvious. The persistence of the serious threat brought by Hannibal induced both the authorities and the Roman people at large to establish harmony between patricians and plebeians, which necessarily reflected a period of pacification between the “king” of the gods and the divinities of fertility.

According to the sources, the *epulones* (initially three) were instituted in 196 BC, before which it was the *pontifices* who presided over the rite. Gellius (12, 8) recounts the friendship cemented by *P. Scipio* and *T. Graccus* during a “banquet of Jupiter”, thereby alluding to the belief that the *epulum* could level differences and strengthen harmonies. One may suppose that pacification was at least one purpose of the *epulum*, but a mythological rationale for such abundant banqueting remains unclear. Although supporting clues are seemingly weak, we believe that the *epulum* must have benefited some archaic cyclical deity’s survival, almost as if the deity were a dormant bear awaiting the next awakening of the “natural” powers implicit in his cyclical being. Some such inference would be plausible for the banquet of November when the strength of the god of light, connected as was with the power of the sun, would have been severely reduced; it was necessary that a “bright” god survive the constraints of the winter solstice. Within the framework of prehistoric religion, it was in November that the *Ceres-Liber-Libera* triad regained its power and *Iovis* had to “disappear”. The problem is that the verb *instaurare* as used by Livy does not permit us to ascertain whether the *epulum* of November was an ancient institution or an innovation motivated by the war against the Carthaginians, which is to say that the king of the Roman gods had to be “revitalized”, not for fear of astral dangers (e.g. the distresses of the incumbant winter solstice), but because Jupiter himself was in danger, as well as all who venerated him. Since Livy is not exempt from self-interested euhemerisms, we may suggest that both the *ludi Plebei* and the *epulum Iovi(s)* of November were restored after a lengthy period of negligence. On one hand the restoration of the *epulum* in honor of the “aristocratic” god of light was certainly countenanced by the senate who hoped to preserve both *res publica* and own power thanks to the *Iovis*’ favour; on the other hand, if it recalled the ancient aim of supporting the god of light, the *epulum* of November was the admission that *Ceres*, *Liber* and *Libera*, particularly worshipped by the *plebs*, regained the pre-eminent place that once belonged to them in the pantheon during the winter.

As for the *epulum* at the Ides of September, it should go back at least to the foundation of the Capitoline temple, that is, to some indefinable epoch, since the “history” of those early centuries is in reality little more than an *ad hoc* and highly mythologized historicity. This banquet was offered in honor of the triad *Iovis-Iuno-Minerva*. Given the reputedly early date and the company, one may doubt whether the *epulum* served sympathetically to revitalize Jupiter. Nevertheless, one may observe that the Ides of September involve *Iovis Optimus Maximus* and *Iuno* (*Lucina*, the moonlight goddess), while *Minerva* was involved with the proximal autumnal equinox. In fact *Minerva* is assimilable to *Anna Perenna*⁸, as we may infer from

⁸ Perhaps the invocation recorded in a satire by Varro (Gellius, 13, 23, 16): *te Anna ac Perenna, Panda Cela, te Pales, / Nerienes et Minerva, Fortuna ac Ceres* concerns the various hypostases of a single early goddess (see Sabbatucci 1988: 98-101).

the myth concerning *Anna*, *Minerva* and *Mars* told by Ovid (*fast.* III, 675-696) and by the fact that *Anna Perenna* is celebrated at the Ides of March and the feast of the *Quinquatrus* that preceded the spring equinox was dedicated to *Minerva*. Hence, *Minerva* is particularly worshipped during the days preceding both the equinoxes.

As the daily light begins to lessen after autumnal equinox, we may not exclude the possibility that the *epulum Iovis* of September had the function of revitalizing a deity until the advent of the chthonic antagonists at the beginning of November. Anyway, it opens the last period of sovereignty of the god of light.

I would not exclude that earlier the *feriae Latinae* in honor of *Iovis Latiar* were celebrated in September and later replaced by the *Ludi Magni* (or *Maximi* or *Romani*). A study of names supports this thesis. Etr. *Latini* and *Latiθe*, whether used as *cognomina* or as members of compound *gentilicia*⁹, mean “tired, slow”: they may therefore possibly derive from IE **leH₂d-* “lassen, träge, müde sein“ (**lē[i]d-*: *l_ed-*; Pokorny 1959: 666) and be compared with Lat. *lassus*, ON *láta*, OHG *lāzan*, OS *lātan*, OE *lætan* ‘lassen, verlassen’, Goth. *lats*, ON *latr* ‘träge’, OHG *laz* ‘laß, träge, matt, spät’ etc.

In Hesiod’s *Theogony*, we read that Κίρκη, the daughter of Ἥλιος, gave birth to Ἄγριος and Λατῖνος (their father was Ὀδυσσεύς), who reigned over the Tyrrhenoi. Therefore, Λατῖνος was not originally considered Latin (the date of the *Theogony* alone would prohibit this), but Etruscan. The name Κίρκη alludes to a goddess of circles and cycles (in fact she changes men into pigs, for eons supposedly involved in the cycle of life-death-rebirth, and pigs back into men again): thus Ἄγριος and Λατῖνος could denote contrastive qualities attributable to cyclical heroes. Both echo Etrusco-Italic names. *Akraθe* is the name of a character depicted as ‘the wild, brutal one’ in three drawings on Etruscan mirrors (Zavaroni 1996: 366). He is defeated by *Menrva*, who represents the ethics of civility. Obviously, the name Ἄγριος = Etr. *Acrie* ≈ *Akraθe* can also allude to an agrestal deity. That Λατῖνος denoted “the tired one” would be in perfect accordance with a cyclical god who represented the autumnal stage of daily light. This is clearly exemplified by the following orphic verses quoted by Macrobius, after a “brilliant lesson” in comparative religion (*Sat.*, I, 18, 1-20):

- A) Ἥλιος, ὃν Διόνυσον ἐπίκλησιν καλέουσιν.
 B) εἷς Ζεὺς, εἷς Ἄϊδης, εἷς Ἥλιος, εἷς Διόνυσος.
 C) ὄργια μὲν δεδαῶτας ἐχρῆν, νηπευθέα κεύθειν,
 εἰ δ’ ἄρα τοι παύρη σύνεσις καὶ νοῦς ἀλαπαδνός,
 φράζεο τὸν πάντων ὕπατον θεὸν ἔμμεν Ἰαώ,
 χεῖματι μὲν Ἄϊδην, Δία δ’ εἴταρος ἀρχομένοιοι,
 Ἥλιον δὲ θέρευσ, μετοπῶρου δ’ ἄβρον Ἰαώ¹⁰.

⁹ Analysis of the Etruscan onomastic formulae evidences that *cognomina* et *gentilicia* are often semantically convergent. This is very useful in the etymological research of Etruscan lexicon borrowed from Indo-European languages (Zavaroni 1996: 57-107).

¹⁰ “Who know the secret rites has to preserve them in silence. / But if you have scarce intellect and weak mind / reveals that *Iaó* is the supreme of all the gods: / Ades in winter, Zeus at the beginning of spring, / Helios in summer and in autumn the delicate *Iaó*”.

Iaó is the autumnal aspect of the cyclical god: *habrós* “tender, weak, delicate” refers to the decline of the sun’s strength after the heat and light of the two preceding months. Ἰαώ < *Ἰαφώ, deriving from the root of ἰαῶω ‘I sleep, rest, desist from’ functions as a synonym of Διό-νῦσος “Declining-Light, Ill-Light” (from **neu-* “lean down, decline”). He corresponds to *Adonis* (‘DN ‘lord’), the delicate and effeminate Syriac god of autumn, the young hunter of great beauty born of incest who had so much play in Etruscan orientalizing iconography. One may hereby hypothesize that the *feriae Latinae* (which did not include *ludi*) were originally devoted to Jupiter¹¹ in his *Latian* aspect, that is as a “mild, languid, autumnal” prospect. This mildness had to have been reflected in human behavior: war and quarrels interrupt (Macr. *Sat.* I, 16, 16); whence pacification, harmony, and civil deliberations. In the annalists’ rhetoric, the *Ludi Ceriales* and the *Ludi Magni* were connected with pacification between patricians and plebeians¹². On an astrophysical, cosmological plane, this pacification would have been seen as preparatory for the passage of powers. If the name *Latinus* alludes to the autumnal weakness of a cyclical god, then the associated *epulum* is an action that, by sympathetic magic, was designed to reinvigorate the god himself so that his powers did not decrease more than usual during the period he was to continue to govern and, above all, during the hibernal period of his “disappearance.” That “strengthening” is a primary sense of *epulum* is highly likely (Ernout - Meillet, 1985: 199). Six months after the Ides of March in which *Anna Perenna*, the goddess of the annual cycle¹³ who at some archaic remove was also assimilated to Minerva, was celebrated, there came the banquet at the Ides of September in honor of *Iovis Optimus Maximus*, *Iuno* and *Minerva*: it was both a good-bye and a wish that the god of light would be strong when he returned in the spring. Some days later, the equinox would mark the inexorable decline of diurnal light and the ensuing ascendancy of the chthonic gods.

According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the temple of *Ceres-Liber-Libera* was promised by the *dictator* Aulus Postumius before the battle against the Latins. According to the traditional annalistic euhemerism, its date would be placed at 496 BC. Since provisions were scarce and the earth infertile, Postumius consulted the custodians of the *libri sibillini*. Having learned that the oracles counseled propitiation of *Ceres*, *Liber* and *Libera*, Postumius promised to erect temples and celebrate annual sacrifices in honor of these divinities. His vow produced an abundance of wheat and fruits. The temple of *Ceres*, *Liber* and *Libera* was finished and consecrated in 493 BC (Dionysius 6, 94, 3), entirely financed by the spoils of war. It is remarkable that this note follows an account of the victories of G. Marcius Corio-

¹¹ The name of the *Mons Albanus*, where the *feriae Latinae* were celebrated, could be due to celebration of a god of light or deity of the dawn (*albus* ‘white, clear, dawn’).

¹² Contending that, in September, the “*Feriae Latinae*, *Ludi Ceriales* and *Ludi Magni* were ‘ideally’ by the same right feasts of latinity”, Sabbatucci (1988: 308) ascribes a political-geographical sense to “Latin” that is not original: the *Feriae Latinae* originated as a feast dedicated to *Latinus*, that is, to an autumnal hero deity.

¹³ In March “*et publice et privatim ad Annam Perennam sacrificatum itur, ut annare perennareque commode liceat*” (Macr. *Sat.* I. 12. 6).

lanus, the conqueror of Corioli and Antium, an account that praises this Roman hero for shunning personal wealth and remuneration.

Construction of the temple of *Ceres*, *Liber* and *Libera*, erected near the base line of the Circus Maximus, whose “circus” represents the universal cycle of death and rebirth, was not an isolated event. A year before the dedication promised by Postumius, the consuls Aulus Sempronius Atratinus and M. Minucius had consecrated a temple to Saturn, instituting feasts and annual sacrifices at public expense in honor of that god. Macrobius (*Sat.* I, 8) mentions other versions, two of which attribute consecration or the decision to build such temples to the kings Tullus Hostilius and Lucius Tarquinius respectively. But the important point here is the mythical dating of this temple to a distant, semi-mythologized time. As Saturn is another infernal and “winter” god, his association with the “plebeian” triad is obvious. Livy (II, 21, 2), too, speaks of the dedication of Saturn’s temple and of Saturnales’ institution (497 BC). Moreover, he mentions the dedication of a temple that is no less important for our present inquiry: in 495 BC, the year of Tarquinius’ death, a temple was devoted to Mercury on the Ides of May with Appius Claudius and Publius Servilius serving as consuls. In contrast to the Mercury of the time of both Julius and Augustus Caesar, the more traditional, more archaic Mercury was probably rather similar to the Germanic and Gaulish Mercuries. He was clearly implicated in ensuring provisions as was the fertility triad of *Ceres*, *Liber* and *Libera*. But from numerous and various depictions on Etruscan mirrors, it becomes clear that the functions of *Turms-Mercurius* —and probably of the archaic Italic Mercury— were not limited to the protection of merchants and the regulation of provisions alone. Livy relates what is surely an invented, albeit instructive, episode: a conflict arose between the two consuls as to who should dedicate the temple of Mercury. The Senate submitted the matter to the people, thereby establishing that the dedication be assigned to whomever would be chosen by the people as head of the *annona* and founder of the *collegium mercatorum*. The plebeians entrusted the dedication to a certain *M. Laetorius*, *primus pilus centurio*, effecting such choice *ad consulum ignominiam*. Obviously, this is the most logical explanation within the framework of a Livian euhemerism, where the conflict between patricians and plebeians was becoming ever more acute. But the question then arises: why had the plebeians chosen a *primus pilus*, that is, one armed with a lance, whose very name, *Laetorius*, denotes joy and prosperity? We believe that this character embodied some of the various aspects of an archaic *Mercurius* who could be depicted with a lance, as was Odin, and who was a donor of joy and wealth, again much like Odin.

The temple of *Ceres*, *Liber* and *Libera* was built during an intense chapter in the struggle between patricians and plebeians that the annalists date to the same year (493 BC) as the plebs’ secession on the *Aventinus* (or on the *Mons Sacer*). From our point of view, this struggle appears to be just as mythical as the *gesta* of Mutius Scaevola, Horatius Cocles or Coriolanus himself, even if Livy presents it as a primary energizer in early Roman factual “history”¹⁴. On mythopoeic grounds alone,

¹⁴ The patricians’ paladin *Appius Claudius* merits analysis in a mythological vein.

one might affirm that the relationships “*Roman patricians*” / “*Iovis*” and “*plebeians*” / “*Ceres-Liber-Libera-Mercurius*” confirm Dumézil’s trifunctional interpretation. However, one would then have to concede that the corresponding pairing “*Othin*” / “*communion of goods*” contradicts this thesis. With regard to the Roman gods, one of the bases of trifunctionalism is the presumed institution of cults by *Romulus* and the Sabine king, *Titus Tatius* (supposedly slain in 742, Livy I.13), after the peace that concluded the war between the Romans and the Sabines. According to Dumézil (1974: 160), *Romulus* and *Titus Tatius* “embody and illustrate the first and third functions respectively on the epic scene”. Dumézil further contends that, “while *Romulus* founds only a cult, that of Jupiter, *Titus Tatius* introduces a set of cults into Rome, of which Varro (*L.L.* V, 74) gives the list: “*uouit Opi, Florae, Vediovi Saturnoque, Soli, Lunae, Volcano et Summano, itemque Larundae, Termino, Quirino, Vortumno, Laribus, Dianae Lucinaeque*”.

4. IOVIS AND SUMMANUS

The *Iovis* to whom *Romulus* would have raised a temple is the *Stator* that, according to Livy (I, 12, 5), would have arrested the escape of the Roman soldiers during the war against the Sabines. Before the peace with *Titus Tatius*, *Romulus* devoted a temple to *Iovis Feretrius* on the Capitol in order to offer him the *spoliae opimae* taken from the opposing king or commander (in this case the *rex Caeninensium*). Of *Iovis Feretrius* we know only that the *spoliae opimae* were devoted to him and that from his temple the *Fetiales* “*sumebant sceptrum per quod iurarent et lapidem sili-cem quo foedus ferirent*” (Paul. Fest. 81 L.). Perhaps *Feretrius* and *Stator* were equivalent attributes: *Feretrius*, *ferē* and the superlative *fermē* < **ferimē* could share the root of *firmus*, that is **dher-* ‘firm; hold, preserve’. *Iuppiter Stator* was celebrated in the Ides of January, which would have corresponded to the first moon after the winter solstice in the archaic lunar calendar. As the first of January was the festive day of *Vēdiovis* (associated with the beneficent *Aesculapius* in order to overcome a lengthy period of pestilence in 291 BC), it is possible that the feast of *Iuppiter Stator* (and *Feretrius*) ratified preservation of the god of light after the debilitating constraints of the winter solstice. Although the tale that *Iuppiter Stator* arrested the escape of the Romans defeated by the Latins has no bearing in historical reality, it is of course open to a mythical interpretation, particularly so if we suppose that the Latins represent the weakened phase of a god of light, while the Romans embody his amplification. Perhaps *Vēdiovis* or *Vēiovis* or *Vēdius*, to which the kalends of January were dedicated, referenced personification of a still weakened, gaunt or otherwise debilitated hibernal *Iovis*, indeed a chthonic god, that is a god of light compelled to dwell in the Otherworld during the cold season, characterized by *Vē-* < IE **weH₂i-* / **wH₂i-* ‘weak, ill’ > ON *vīl* ‘misery, wretchedness’: OE *wīl*, cf. Skt. (*RV*⁺) *vāyati* ‘grows weary, is exhausted, languishes, is sick’ (Pokorny 1959: 1111).

Obviously Jupiter was not the only deity worshipped by *Romulus*’ partisans. Following the annalists, Dumézil emphasized the privileged relationship between

Romulus and Jupiter, because Dumézil seemingly had the same objective as the annalists; namely, to show that *Romulus* embodied the sovereign function of the first estate that devolved from Jupiter. In line with this observation, we suggest that the annalists, when assigning a solitary deity to *Romulus* while enlisting a host of divinities for *Titus Tatius*, had a further objective; namely, to demonstrate that *Romulus* launched *particular sacrifices* to a particular divinity, while *Titus Tatius* launched *common cults* for a variety of divinities, two competing strategies designed to bolster numinous authority. The situation recalls that seen in the tale of *Mithothyn*: *Mithothyn* promoted individual offerings, while *Othinus* advocated collective, communal sacrifices.

In any event, *Romulus* worships other gods as well: as soon as he becomes king, *sacra dis aliis Albano ritu, Graeco Herculi, ut ab Euandro instituta erant, facit* (Livy I, 7, 3). Moreover, on the occasion of the rape of the Sabines, although *ex industria* “on purpose”, *Romulus* prepares solemn *ludi* in honor of Neptune and calls them *Consualia*. As shown by his assimilation to *Consus*, the functions of Neptune were partially chthonic. Neptune is not, however, listed among the gods of *Titus Tatius*, but in our opinion he could be assimilable to *Summanus*, one of the deities of *Titus Tatius*. Like *Consus*, *Summanus* also had a temple near the Circus Maximus. The day dedicated to him was June 20th, virtually that of the summer solstice marking the apogee of the annual cycle of diurnal light. This association would amply justify assimilation of *Summanus* with Jupiter as a god of light. Indeed, two inscriptions known so far from *Gallia Cisalpina* are clearly dedicated to Jupiter *Summanus*: a small altar found near Verona (*CIL V 3256: Iovi Summano...*) and an epigraph from Lombardian Barzanò, south southwest of Lecco at the eastern leg of Lake Como (Brianza, *CIL V 5660: Iovi Atto Summano...*, where *Atto* is probably a local term corresponding to Lat. *atta*, Goth. *atta*, OHG *atto*, etc. ‘dad, father’). As we must assume early and well entrenched Celtic influence in both Verona and Barzanò, at least from the early fifth century BC, if not even earlier in the case of the latter site, then a regional *Iovis Summanus* may well have been aligned with local versions of the Gaulish “wheel-god”, an inference that is seemingly supported by the fact that the Sabino-Roman *Summanus*, as a lord of the universal cycle of seasons, was reputedly offered wheel-shaped cakes in the *Summanalia* (Fest. 474 LS). More problems, that cannot be discussed here, are raised by the mid third century BC *Schnabelkanne* handle inscription *POPLICA · EX · AIDI · SVMANI* found in Foligno (Umbria), where probably *Sumani* corresponds to *Summani* (Tibiletti Bruno 1968). Anyway further evidence of the persistence of *Summanus* in Celtic substrate settings is supplied by traditions surrounding the annual festive pilgrimage to the sanctuary (altar site) of Sant’Orso on Monte Summano (Vicenza), now on September 15th, but formerly on the autumnal equinox¹⁵. Ovid recalls that the Romans had devoted a temple to *Summanus* “when they feared Pyrrhus”, but can say nothing further about him. According to St. Augustine (*Civ. Dei* 4.23),

¹⁵ This information was given to me by Th. Markey (Tucson, Arizona) to whom I am very grateful for his precious suggestions and corrections when I wrote this paper.

“*Romani ueteres nescio quem Summanum, cui nocturna fulmina tribuebant, coluerunt magis quam Iouem, ad quem diurna fulmina pertinerent. Sed postquam Iovi templum insigne ac sublime constructum est, propter aedis dignitatem sic ad eum multitudo confluit, ut vix inueniatur qui Summani nomen, quod audire iam non potest, se saltem legisse meminerit*”¹⁶.

Cicero (*Div. I*, 16) reports a tradition according to which the head of *Summanus*' statue was broken off during a storm by lightning that was said to have been cast by Jupiter. The head rolled into the Tiber, but the *haruspices* knew how to predict the place where it could be found. Since nocturnal lightning was attributed to *Summanus*, various ancient and modern authors have tried to etymologize this god's name by appealing to *sub mane* “toward the morning”; so, most recently, Sabbatucci (1988: 217). But this ability to cast nocturnal lightning may merely depend on the partially infernal nature ascribed to him. This nature is presumably further indicated by the fact that the *Arvali* used to sacrifice a “black” victim to *Summanus*; see Sabbatucci (1988: 226).

Basing themselves on Lucretius' *per caeli volvunt summania templa* (V.521), Ernout - Meillet (1985: 666) seem to prefer the more traditional hypothesis that *Summanus* derives from *summus*; but the passage they cite permits one to suppose that the formulaic *caeli summania templa* were in fact ‘spaces that extend (or: spread their influences) below’, (cf. *summānō* < **sub+mānō* ‘I spread under, I flow under’). Hence, *Summānus* < *Submānus* could be construed as ‘he who strains, spreads, extends (himself) down’. This is, of course, the very etymology proposed by Plautus (*Curc.* 413 ff.) in a jokingly blasphemous manner when his character *Curculio* asks to be called *Summanus*: *Quia vestimenta, ubi obdormivi ebrius, summano, ob eam rem me omnes Summanum vocant*. Such a folksy etymology cannot, of course, be considered unquestionable; but it certainly entails fitting semantics for a water deity and matches the etymology that, however hesitantly, is commonly attributed to *Neptunus* as the god of springs (Pokorny 1959: 316; Ernout - A. Meillet 1985: 438; Olmsted 1994: 399).

Diffusion of the swastika and the radiate wheel in pre-Etruscan Villanovan plastic art perhaps reveals the degrees of veneration accorded to gods who presided over universal cycles. Zeus-Jupiter is one of these gods, but what we know of Celtic, Germanic, Etruscan and Thracian religion shows that the canonical sovereignty of Zeus-Jupiter over the gods of Greece and then, as an immediate consequence of this, over those in Italy, was necessarily a special development. For instance, in Gaul the Thunderer, that is the Wheel-god, continued to be both infernal and celestial, exactly as did *Diana Lucina*. It is evident that in Etruscan *Volsinii* there must have been a cult of a chthonic *Tinia* ‘Iovis’ (see e.g. Roncalli 1985) and that a chthonic cult was practiced in Pyrgi also, where *Tin* was associated with the goddess *Θesān*

¹⁶ “The ancient Romans paid greater honors to a certain Summanus, to whom they attributed nocturnal thunderbolts, than to Jupiter, to whom diurnal thunderbolts were held to pertain. But, after a famous and sublime temple had been built to Jupiter, thanks to the dignity of the building the multitude resorted to him in such great numbers that it is only with difficulty that anyone can be found who even remembers having read the name Summanus, which he cannot now hear proclaimed even once”.

“bright” (> ‘*Diana, Aurora*’, assimilated to the Greek *Leukothea*). The Phoenician version of the golden plates of Pyrgi informs us of the ‘burial of the divinity (or magnate)’ (*QBR ‘LM*), which in the Etruscan version corresponds to *atranes zilacal seleitala* ‘burial of the splendid ruler’ (Agostini-Zavaroni 2000: 35-36). In our opinion, *Θesan* and *Tin* were cyclical divinities in honor of whom a rite celebrating the end of winter was performed. Some epithets of *Iovis* (*Anxur, Liber, Indiges, Arcanus*) are indeed suitable for a cyclical god. When considered together, all of these bits and pieces induce us to presume that Jupiter began his dominance of Italic pantheons after the advent (ca. 730-720 BC) of orientalizing culture on the Italian peninsula and that at an earlier antecedent period Italic deities were both formally and functionally closer to those of the peoples of prehistoric central and northern Europe. It is entirely possible, then, that the nocturnal lightning attributed to *Summanus* poses an opposition to the diurnal lightning attributed to Jupiter, but only after the latter, who was initially a cyclical god of light, had prevailed as the king of the gods at Rome to the detriment of another cyclical god.

5. THE GOD OF LIGHT AND THE GODDESS OF DESTINY

According to Macrobius (*Sat.* I, 8, 3), “the Romans wanted Saturn’s temple to contain the Treasury, because it was said that no theft had been committed in the region governed by him during his stay in Italy, or because nothing private existed (*nihil erat cuiusquam privatum*)”. Macrobius cites Virgil (*nec signare solum aut partiri limite campum fas erat: in medium quaerebant...*: Virg. *Georg.* I, 195-196) and affirms that *ideo apud eum locaretur populi pecunia communis, sub quo fuissent cunctis universa communia*. While the kingdom of Saturn-Cronos belonged to some remote and irretrievable past for the Greeks and Romans, for the Germanic peoples, Odin, the promoter of a communitarian regime, persisted as a reigning deity. The different evolution of Germanic social structures in comparison with those of Greece and Rome most probably had significant consequences for their respective religious theologies. If, let us presume, the struggle between Roman patricians and plebeians had actually been framed within a specific mythology (transformed into euhemerisms), then it might be worthwhile seeking less “sociopolitical” and more “cosmological” motifs of these institutional differences. Such “cosmological” motifs might well be manifested by the relationship between Jupiter and Fortune, who —it seems appropriate to recall here—, were a “god of the light” and a “goddess of cycles and eternal motion” respectively in an archaic age.

Brelich (1955: 9-47) has observed that *Fortuna* was no less revered in Rome than in Praeneste, but the Roman state religion, or so it appears from the annals, never recognized the *Iovis Puer* engendered by the *Fortuna* who was so revered in Praeneste (and probably in Etruria as well)¹⁷. As for Cicero’s (*Div.* 2, 41) description of

¹⁷ For the transformation of *Fortuna* from *Primigenia* ‘Primordial’ into *Iovis puer* see Brelich (1955: 22-47) and Dumézil 1956 (3^d chapter).

the statue of *Fortuna Primigenia* nursing the children, *Iovis* and *Iuno*, Brelich astutely observes:

Nulla attesta in modo più inequivocabile le funzioni cosmiche della coppia *Iupiter-Iuno* nella arcaica religione romana del calendario “umano”, dove in tutti i dodici mesi le *idus* luminose sono sacre a Giove, mentre *Iuno* domina le oscure kalendae: contrapponendosi ed integrandosi in questo modo, *Iuppiter* e *Iuno* danno l’ossatura essenziale di quel calendario festivo che scolpisce nella materia del tempo ciclico l’immagine dell’ordine cosmico.

In this cosmic order, indelibly codified in a calendar of communally celebrated sacral events, it cannot have been by mere chance that, on the Ides of November when the *epulum Iovis* was celebrated, *Fortuna Primigenia* was also revered, nor that this was the very same *Fortuna* of Preneste who, on political grounds, contrasts with the *Jupiter Optimus Maximus* of Rome. The fact is that, on an “astronomical” level, *Fortuna* was fated to enact the seasonal supremacy of *Liber*, *Libera* and their mother *Ceres*. Since *Fortuna* is, however, the goddess associated with the universal wheel, while Jupiter is etymologically ‘the bright one’ who is overwhelmed by chthonic divinities in winter, we may construct the following definitional matrix:

cyclic deities	light, splendor honor	individualism patricians	goods in common plebeians
<i>Fortuna</i>	<i>Iovis</i> , Etr. <i>Tin</i>	<i>Jupiter</i>	<i>Ceres-Liber-Libera Saturnus</i>
<i>Gullveig</i> Norns	<i>Ullr</i> , <i>Glenr</i>	<i>Ollerus</i> <i>Mithothyn</i>	<i>Njördr-Freyr-Frejya</i> <i>Othin</i>

On the basis of this scheme one may suppose that *Gullveig* was assimilable to the mother of *Ullr*, who, according to Snorri, was *þórr*’s wife, namely *Sif*. This inference is, however, not demonstrable due to the very sketchy delineation of *Sif*. As the name *Sif* means ‘Kinship, Stock’, she might well be considered a goddess of birth and growth corresponding to the Latin *Natio* worshipped in Ardea and mentioned by Cicero (*Nat. D.*, III, 18). In an earlier time, this *Natio* was probably one of the hypostasis of a more famous deity. Although the meaning of her name is ambiguous (it could mean both “golden-thread” and “gold-honor”), *Gullveig* is, in our opinion, a goddess of destiny (Zavaroni 2003: 90). While we have not direct data from sources to equate *Sif* with *Gullveig*, other relational hypotheses along these lines might be proposed, such as, for instance, linking these two divinities as *Mater Matuta* and *Fortuna* were linked in Rome. The day of the *Matralia* (11th of June), dedicated to *Mater Matuta*, is also the feast of *Fortuna Virgo* or *Virginalis*, one of the various aspects of Fortune. The association of the two goddesses also results from the closeness of their temples whose construction was attributed to Servius Tullius. Ovid too (*Fast.* VI, 505-562) mentions both the goddesses in relation to the same festive day. Nevertheless it is impossible to ascertain that they are two aspects of a precedent unique divinity.

The relationship between a god of light and a goddess of destiny is also attested by Etruscan data. We will mention quickly only some inscriptions from Capua and Pyrgi.

In the 5th paragraph of the *Tabula Capuana* the rites of the month of *Alse* “July” are prescribed. They are devoted to *Tinun* and *Seθums* (line 28) and *Natinusnai* (line 30). *Tinun* is generally considered a variant of *Tinia* ‘Iovis’; we interpret *Seθums* as “(the deity of) Thread, Rope”¹⁸ (< **seith-um-* from **seito-m-*, I.-E. root **seh₂(y)-* “bend; rope, string”: cf. the first member of the Romano-German names (*Matronae*) *Saithamiae* and *Saitchamimae* in CIL 13, 7915-7916, Hoven; Pokorny 1959: 892). *Natinusnai*¹⁹, that very probably is feminine, is a synonym of *Seθums*: its root is **ned-* “zusammendrehen, knüpfen”: cf. Goth. *nati*, OE. ON. *net*, OIr. *nascim* < **nedskō* “I bend” etc.; Pokorny 1959: 758-759). Therefore *Seθums* and *Natinusnai*, if they are not one and the same deity, are anyway divinities of destiny, as all the deities whose name means “thread, string” *vel similia*. If *Tinun-Iovis* is mentioned with a goddess of destiny, we may hypothesize that at this date (520-480 BC) their relationship was close.

In Pyrgi *Tin* “Iovis” was associated to the goddess *Θesan* “bright” (> “*Diana, Aurora*”) assimilated to the Greek *Leukothea*. As we have seen above, the golden plates of Pyrgi (and the archaeological data too) tell us that a god of light was buried (Agostini-Zavaroni 2000: 35-36). Of course one deals with a periodical rite. In fact, the bronze plate (6th century BC; CIE 6313) found with the golden ones contains some epithets of *Tina* “Iovis”: he is called *teraş spuriazes*, *tina atalena*, *tina şea* and *tina θvariēna*. While *şea* < **stea* < **steya* (*ş-* [s’s] from I.-E. *st-*) may be compared with *Stator*, *θvariēna* recalls the Camunian god *Θuirau* represented near a turning building symbolizing the cyclic cosmos²⁰. Therefore *Tina θvariēna* might be interpreted as a *Iovis rotans* that certainly was connected to the goddess of wheel and probably to a Wheel-god senior.

In conclusion, what we can suggest is that *Ullr-Ollerus* “Splendor, Glory” may correspond to some archaic non- or pre-Hellenic “young” *Zeus-Iovis* as a god of light and that such a deity was a cyclical god. As both power and individual glory depend on *Fortuna*, owner of the universal wheel, we may hypothesize a relationship between *Ullr*’s mother and a goddess of destiny on the basis of the parallelism with Celtic²¹ and Roman religion. As the “bright” one, *Iovis* son of Fortune becomes the distributor of honors and the patron deity of the *praeclari viri* (patricians).

¹⁸ This etymon is confirmed by the sequence *seθumati simlχa* in the *Liber linteus Zagrabienensis*, given that *simlχa* probably has the same root as Camunic *simia* “series > alphabet” (same root **seh₂(y)-* as *seθum-*: cf. gr. *himás*, OIr. *sim* “chain”, OE. *sīma* “string, band”, ON. *seimr* “thread” etc. Camunic and Rhaetic may be considered as Etruscan dialects (Zavaroni 2003b). In the sentence *seθumati simlχa θui turve acil*, where *acil* certainly means “do, make, agere”, the plural subject *seθumati* and the object *simlχa* express convergent meanings.

¹⁹ In borrowings from I.-E. Etruscan applies the *Lautverschiebung* *d > t, t > θ, d^h > θ* (Zavaroni 2003b).

²⁰ Zavaroni 2006. Another Camunian Wheel god is *Hohlú* < I.-E. **k^wek^wlo-*.

²¹ We cannot develop here an analysis of the filial relationship between the Welsh goddess *Arianrhod* ‘Silver-Wheel’ and her creature *Llew llaw Gyffes* ‘Llew Skilled-Hand’. Commonly W. *Llew* = OIr. *Lug* is interpreted as a god of light (**lug-* from **leuk-*).

Although, at a later period, Roman politics would require that Fortune becomes the daughter of Jupiter rather than his mother, the fact remains that the close relationship between Jupiter and Fortune justifies our assuming that the former is the patron deity of those patricians who obtained power, distinction and honors, thanks to *Fortuna*. Just so, a correspondence between *Ullr* as “splendor; glory” and the archaic *Iovis* as “bright, splendid” permits an understanding as to why *Ullr-Ollerus-Mithothyn* abolished a regimen of common offerings and instead instituted individual veneration: *Ullr* “shine, beauty, honor” became “glory, class”, thereby ennobling individual power and self-aggrandizing private ownership.

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