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## Ritual against the brother

In: Cigán, Michal. *Priest-king of the warriors and witch-queen of the others : cargo cult and witch hunt in Indo-European myth and reality*. First published Brno: Masaryk University Press, 2019, pp. 39-81

ISBN 978-80-210-9341-6; ISBN 978-80-210-9342-3 (online : pdf)

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/141687>

Access Date: 30. 11. 2024

Version: 20220831

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# **Analysis and Interpretation**



# 1 RITUAL AGAINST THE BROTHER

In this chapter the well-known IE mythological theme, the concept of hierarchal society and its creation out of the body of primordial humanoid being, will be discussed. Its most famous interpretation was brought by G. Dumézil, who theorised it as a narrative model both mirroring and providing the social manifestation of three-functional IE ideology. Another influential view proposed B. Lincoln (1981:87, 1991:32), interpreting it as a narrative on world-creating sacrifice of a primordial king performed by a primordial priest, both mirroring and providing the dualistic priest-king power management of PIE society. Based on an analysis of its supposed mezzo- and most of all macro-contextual background I will try to propose an alternative interpretation. Though it diverges from both traditional approaches, it is not entirely inconsistent with them.

As for possible mezzo-contextual connections, in chapter's opening sections the socio-anthropological theory of the so-called Big Man System and Chiefdom and their relevance for PIE communities as well as later historical IE societies will be examined. Both are evaluated in relation to the idea of Gens, model of a pre-feudal social organisation developed by modern historians. I believe that these originally unrelated teachings of anthropology and historical science can be combined in order to propose sustainable reconstruction of basic structures of (P)IE society.

On the level of macro-context certain historical events unique for the area of supposed PIE homeland will be considered. Mainly it is the contact of two fundamentally different economic systems, which occurred on the western border of the Pontic-Caspian steppes during the 6th millennium BC. According to D. Anthony's (2007) interpretation based on archaeological evidence, semi-nomadic Pre-Proto-Indo-European (PPIE) groups of steppe hunter-gatherers faced the arrival of settled farmers of Afro-Asian (AA) origin. Inspired by the behaviour of the

newcomers, the hunters adapted over the next centuries the technique of stock-breeding. However, through many generations they kept the livestock especially for sacral and ritual purposes.

My aim is to refer to the striking similarities between this prehistoric adaptive process and specific social movements documented among the native populations of South Pacific Ocean in the industrial era, the so-called Cargo Cults. Typically they emerged in rudimentary societies, which were abruptly forced to face the presence of advanced cultural systems. “Primitives” used to respond with special ritual and narrative activity, traditionally interpreted as semi-religious adoration of cultural traits of the superior system, especially its material culture (hence the name Cargo Cult). Finding similarities between the reality of Cargo Cults and prehistoric events connected with forming of the PIE cultural and linguistic area, I will try to interpret the aforementioned IE creation myth as a possible outcome of original PPIE narrative Cargo Cult patterns.

In order to demonstrate the supposed Cargo Cult aspects in Anthony’s archaeological interpretation of PIE homeland issue, in sections dedicated to macro-contextual analysis I will briefly introduce both Anthony’s interpretation and the phenomenon of modern Cargo Cults. In the end, outcomes of macro-contextual and mezzo-contextual considerations will be combined to sketch the hypothetical diachronic textual transformations of IE creation myth.

## 1.1 Mezzo-context: Big Man System and Chieftdom

Some anthropologists hinted that medieval European societies (Douglas 1996 /1970/), or historical IE groups in general (Budil 2001), were organised along the principles of the *Big Man System*.

The Big Men live in a world of noble pacts, hard bargains, dastardly betrayals and revenges. Apart from the exotic cases given, there are examples nearer home. Our ancient Anglo-Saxon vengeance and inheritance laws defined a set of responsible kin radiating from each particular individual. The Norse sagas expressed a corresponding world view. (Douglas 1996 /1970/:66)

Budil suggested (2001) that social organisation of ancient IE societies – with their elites hungering for socially shared glory and booty – had much in common with principles of the Big Man System.

The Big Man system was examined by Philip Gulliver in Tanzania, D. L. Oliver on the Solomon Islands, Kenelm Burridge and Mervyn J. Meggitt on New Guinea; further it was described in classical anthropological studies in Melanesia, Indonesia, in the

Philippines and among Indian tribes of southern California. According to research of historical linguistics, a similar character appeared also in the ancient and early medieval societies, like ancient Celts, Germans, Greeks, Italians, Aryans, Persians and many others, which descended as distinct branches from the hypothetical Indo-European cultural domain. (Budil 2001:30)

Alongside these insightful but brief remarks, few studies indicate the operation of the Big Man principles in historical IE societies explicitly and in a more detailed way. One of the most important seems to be the piece of Van Der Vliet (1986) focused on the case of ancient Greece.

Political leadership in ancient Greece was marked by a number of features which seem to be more characteristic for 'Big-man' systems than of rule in early states or even in chiefdoms. Leadership never went unchallenged and to a high degree it was dependent on the extent to which the leader was able to keep the support of his followers and fellow-citizens. His position as a leader rested on his achievement and his personality. It did not result automatically from birth or from an ascribed position as a lineage leader or something comparable. Although the nobility of his descent played a role as a starting-point of his career, it was not a decisive factor. (Van Der Vliet 1986:117)

The concept of the Big Man System itself was introduced to the twelfth century's socio-anthropological discourse by American anthropologist Marshall Sahlins (1963). He theorised it as a social system based on patron-client relations; distributing the resources in exchange for complex support, initiative individuals (Big Men) build a network of their followers (clients). There is a permanent competition among patrons for loyalty of all the potential clients; besides charm of personality, gift of speech, physical strength and martial skills the key attribute of a competent Big Man is his generosity – the ability to provide goods to his followers.

'Big Man' imposes himself as leader, ... it is a purely personal achievement. His power rests only in the consent of his followers. But the more numerous they are, the greater his prestige and power... Everyone else depends on the Big Man for their livelihood and security. He creates the political and ritual framework in which ordinary men can work out their cycles, patterns of reciprocal exchanges in grander and grander patterns. His glory enhances the lustre of theirs. He creates large-scale local alliances, controls violence, settles disputes. He does it all by generosity, hard work, skilful manipulation of the rules of feast-giving and compensation. (Douglas 1996 /1970/:129)

The principles of the Big Man System usually form a dynamic, individualistic and success-focused society, characterised by a narrow group of strain elites jealously competing for favour of broad mass of clients (Douglas 1996 /1970/). The

members of such a society adopt a *pragmatic world view*; *sin is less understood than shame for loss of personal honour, face or solvency*. (Douglas 1996 /1970/:67)

Observing the traditional southern pacific societies, Sahlins composed his concept of Melanesian Big Man System (1963) as an opposition to *Chiefdom*, putatively the different type of social organisation typical for Polynesia. According to Sahlins, the achieved power based on Big Man's personal activity is substituted there for an ascribed power of Chief, most often inherited along traditional dynastical lines.

However, it was proved by further research (Van Bakel & Hagestejin & Van Der Velde 1986) that instead of being two different modes of power management, they are rather symbiotic principles occurring simultaneously in the majority of traditional elementary organised societies.

The Big Man principles naturally create unequal, hierarchal social relations. For although all are theoretically equal in their opportunities to improve their social status, and thus emerged social stratification is temporal in its principle, limited to the productive age of the current Big Man, under certain conditions the probability of its trans-generational stability increases, tending to Chiefdom organisation.

One of the factors is the size of population in proportion to the availability of resources. According to Van Der Vliet (1986) the rarer are the resources or the fewer people are available, the more significant is the operation of Chiefdom principles. And vice versa, the more cumulative (theoretically unlimited) resources are available, the more likely is the emergence of the Big Man System principles producing their typical social dynamism. Thus, a balance between abundance and lack of resources may make the Big Man society moderate in its "success obsession" and so diachronically stable.

Another moment is the obvious advantage of individuals related to the actually ruling Big Man. Comparing to the rest of the population, his close clients and relatives, i.e. elite, have considerably better access to know-how as well as resources to establish their future social rise.

And not the least, close clients of current Big Man are advantaged due to essentialist thinking, common and innate for AMH. According to research of contemporary anthropologists (Gelman 2003, Kanovský 2007, Toosi & Ambady 2011 etc.), people innately believe that almost any entity, no matter if material or cultural (item, plant, animal, or social group), contains some kind of essence; a non-material substance, which encodes all its basic nature, determines and controls its features or behaviour and under certain conditions can be transmitted to another entity. A fair example of psychological essentialism is the belief in items charged with special power (the spear of Longinus, the bone of Buddha, etc) or belief that all the members of a certain social group inherently share common traits (French are romantic, priests are cunning, etc.). In this case the demonstration can be the common belief that an individual coming from an elite environment is naturally

suitable, “predestined”, due to his “high-born” inner essence, for a future elite career.

The stratified character of the Big Man System communities was an aspect emphasized also by Douglas (1996 /1970/). She even claimed to consider the patrons and their clients the distinct types of society with different worldviews. The members of elite adopt *the extremely pragmatic, unspeculative and materialist belief system* (Douglas 1996 /1970/:143) framed within the *grid* of strong non-personal principles. Commoners, on the other hand, are often pushed to the periphery of success-obsessed Big Man System society. As a consequence they are often dominated by the feelings of rootlessness, vulnerability as well as oppression by their distant rulers and non-human principles these rulers adore; they show *tendency, alternately repressed and breaking out, to millennialism* (Douglas 1996 /1970/:143).

The existence of this kind of disintegrated Big Man System’s commoners directly in ancient IE speaking world is documented in Firdausi’s Šāhnāme (3rd. class of King Džamšid’s social reform) or in Caesar’s *De Bello Gallico*, being depicted as considerably oppressed by ruling priests and warriors:

In omni Gallia eorum hominum, qui aliquo sunt numero atque honore, genera sunt duo. Nam plebes paene servorum habetur loco, quae nihil audet per se, nullo adhibetur consilio. Plerique cum aut aere alieno aut magnitudine tributorum aut iniuria potentiorum premuntur, sese in servitutem dicant. Nobilibus in hos eadem omnia sunt iura quae dominis in servos.

In all the Gaul there are two classes of men who are in any rank and honor at all, for the masses /*plebes*, the commoners/ are held almost in place of servants, dare nothing by themselves, and are not admitted into public deliberations. The majority of them, pressed down by debt, large taxes, or the injustice of those more powerful, give themselves up in servitude to the nobles, who exercise over them the same rights as lords over servants. (6.13; Lincoln 1981:137)

### 1.1.1 Historical manifestation: Gens

Studies of historians (Wenskus 1961, Wolfram 1995, Urbańczyk 2000, Homza 2002 etc.) suggest, that historical IE groups used to organise themselves in the hierarchal political units, so-called *Gentes*.

*Gens* is an entity of group identity; hierarchal and political rather than egalitarian and biological in its nature. It is assumed, that its core is formed by the military elite, a war band, i.e. the professional warriors assembled by a leader. This elite, relatively few in number, controls the mass of commoners, the people, military or politically unspecialised rest of the *Gens* population performing



everyday economical activities. The elite is supposed to protect the commoners militarily and legally, while commoners are obliged to support their elite materially.

A war band is that well-nourished, well dressed and well-armed part of the gens, which provides its protection from another well nourished, well dressed and well-armed elite of another gens, whilst never forgetting to charge its own people a fee for peace (tributum pacis, protection money) or to organise booty-raids on the neighbours. (Homza 2002:246)

While the group identity of commoners is rather conservative, based on biological and ethnic principles (dialect affiliation), identity of a war band is more “artificial”, multi-ethnic, based on professional gild principles, rituals and abstract symbols; above all the name of the group and the person of the leader. For this reason the mutual relationship between commoners and elite is rather loose in its nature and so can vary. The core of a war band can be as formed by the cream of local population as it can be represented by the group of alien invaders.

Original ethnicity or more precisely the language affiliation of such a small community [the war band] was not always the most important factor ... what mattered was the ability ... to transfer its identity – the name – to a broader population of certain geographic area. ... Military achievements (either in aggressions or in defensive wars) of the leader and his war band during the first generation are an important factor of integration. (Homza 2002:244)

In any case, integration [of gens] is a form of violence committed by professional warriors against the rest of the population. ... It is a way of redefinition of any older forms of social organisation. The population (or its part at least) usually identifies itself with the new elite, adopting its name. (Homza 2002:245)

In order to confirm the delicate political identity of the war band, not to mention of the whole Gens, with its two social ranks of rather opposed nature and attitudes, patronage of Gens hires narrative specialists, *poets with sword on their backs* (Homza 2002:245). Their mission is to verbalise and ideologize the military and political prestige of the leader and its war band and strengthen their role of the common symbols of the Gens’ unity.

The concept of Gens emerged at the verge of postmodernity as an attempt to theorize the identity of historical “barbarian” groups in a new way. Its proponents assumed, that through many generations the identity of these “tribes” was transmitted via *Traditionskerne* (Wenskus 1961), the nuclei of tradition. By this term was meant the leading dynasty, often supported by a narrow group of military elite, which bore its name or the name of the dynasty itself. Again and again, at various

times and space locations, these elite groups were able to organise the different local population to the hierarchical body of Gens under their own identity markers.

Many ideas of this so-called *ethnogenesis theory* were the object of criticism (Goffart 2002, Murray 2002, Kulikowski 2002). In fact, reading historical records without prejudices, it is hard to argue for the existence of Traditionskerne. Migration myths and genealogical tales of barbarian elites were often written decades or centuries after the extinction of their supposed producers, and what is more, by classic scholars with naturally limited ability to assess the matters of barbarian anthropology. And even if these tales were really produced by the Gentes themselves, they could be well the ex post constructions of arbitrary leaders to secure their right to rule ideologically. As it has been mentioned earlier, it is a well-known fact (Ong 2002), that genealogical lines are more than any other folklore genre prone to be adjusted to the needs of currently ruling elite

I agree with the criticism. As rather romantic, I will omit the very idea of Traditionskerne, the overestimation of the importance of wandering, through the generations ruling families and their close retinues for the formation of the whole ethnic groups. For although no one can deny the connection between the identity of a certain group and the activity of its elite, or that every group's identity is to some extent artificially constructed, still, it would be naïve to assume that such a construction is only the matter of some king's claim or that it can be fully arbitrary enforced.

On the other hand, I believe that there is no need to refuse ethnogenesis theory as a whole. At least as far as its two basic assumptions are concerned: the situational and formal identity-forming principles of barbarian groups and their hierarchical division into military elite and commoners or generally the importance of armed *männerbund* structures for their operation. Given the information delivered via historical records and ancient folklore texts, all these moments seem to be typical for archaic IE communities, and so appropriate components to model their social organisation.

I believe that by means of socio-anthropological concepts of the Big Man System and Chieftdom a slightly romantic idea of Gens can be transformed into a more functional and sustainable model of social organisation. As the high military elite of the historians' Gens then can be recognised anthropologists' Big Man System's *representatives of ruling class*, who in *competition for prestige and influence try to build a complex network of lower class clients* (Budil 2001:30). Similarly, the small-folk of the Gens then can be compared to Big Man System's *broad mass of general 'people' ..., who are assured by the system about their 'right to generosity' from the patron* (Budil 2001:30). And finally, the person of barbarian king, whose power is secured by the loyalty of his followers, strength of their arms as well as eloquence of their songs on legitimacy of his claim, can be compared to the powerful local Big Man, to whom the support of his numerous and influential clients gives the opportunity

to manipulate the traditional patterns of social organisation in order to push the society closer to the Chieftdom.

Therefore, for the purposes of this work, instead of denoting IE (pre)historical “ethnic” groups like “tribe”, or “clan”, which are categories intuitively associated with ideas of egalitarianism and non-formal, biological principles of group coherence, I will prioritize the anthropologically reassessed term Gens.

I propose to interpret the social reality of historical IE societies as an outcome of the symbiosis of the Big Man System and Chieftdom principles operating within the männerbund-centred organisation of Gens. The leader of elite origin gathers the group of followers to enforce his political ambitions (Gens). Though his claim is potentially hereditary (Chieftdom), he is supposed to prove it by his actual military power, by the number and quality of war band mustered by means of his personal achievement, especially gift giving generosity (the Big Man System). A natural outcome of this power management strategy is the control of the local population in a broader area. A socially stratified community emerges (Gens, the Big Man System). Though the informal, traditional and local bounds still can be present, often they are superimposed, marginalised or even substituted by their formal counterparts (Gens) of patron-client networks, by pragmatic dehumanised principles in the rulers’ *cosmology of success* (the Big Man System).

Among historical sources to witness for this kind of social organisation in IE groups, well known passages from Tacitus’ *Germania* can be quoted.

Then, in the midst of the assembly, either one of the chiefs, or the father, or a relation, equips the youth with a shield and javelin. These are to them the manly gown; this is the first honor conferred on youth: before this they are considered as part of a household; afterwards, of the state. The dignity of chieftain is bestowed even on mere lads, whose descent is eminently illustrious, or whose fathers have performed signal services to the public; they are associated, however, with those of mature strength, who have already been declared capable of service; nor do they blush to be seen in the rank of companions. For the state of companionship itself has its several degrees, determined by the judgment of him whom they follow; and there is a great emulation among the companions, which shall possess the highest place in the favor of their chief; and among the chiefs, which shall excel in the number and valor of his companions. It is their dignity, their strength, to be always surrounded with a large body of select youth, an ornament in peace, a bulwark in war. And not in his own country alone, but among the neighboring states, the fame and glory of each chief consists in being distinguished for the number and bravery of his companions. Such chiefs are courted by embassies; distinguished by presents; and often by their reputation alone decide a war. ... The chiefs fight for victory; the companions for their chief. ... they (chiefs) are unable, without war and violence, to maintain a large train of

followers. The companion requires from the liberality of his chief, the warlike steed, the bloody and conquering spear: and in place of pay, he expects to be supplied with a table, homely indeed, but plentiful. The funds for this munificence must be found in war and rapine; nor are they so easily persuaded to cultivate the earth, and await the produce of the seasons, as to challenge the foe, and expose themselves to wounds; nay, they even think it base and spiritless to earn by sweat what they might purchase with blood. (The Germany...)

It shows that ancient Germanic chief acts like a Big Man; his power depends on the number and quality of his clients, especially those providing military affairs, i.e. the war band. This war band is attracted to him by means of his generosity, an ability to distribute war booty among its members. Emphasis is also put on an elite background and character of the war band as well as its hierarchal organisation and inter-personal competition, all within the frame of intense relation of warrior-clients to their Big Man.

However, this kind of direct descriptive evidence is rare. Far more common are hints provided by texts of narrative folklore. Given the aforementioned arguments, especially Boyd's interpretative approach (Boyd 2009) to myth, it can be assumed that principles of Big Man System and other important social structures will be mirrored in contemporary folklore texts – mostly in an educative manner, i.e. demonstrating potentially problematic situations. And truly, many a Homeric, Germanic, Avestan, Vedic and other examples can be mentioned. As they are often notoriously known, as a reminder only one but a relevant example of each tradition will be quoted.

Between Achilles and Agamemnon, the patron-client relationship is manifested as a potential source of quarrels and in a form typical for IE epos, as a conflict between ruler and his “first knight”.

τὸν δ' ἄρ' ὑπόδρα ἰδὼν προσέφη πόδας ὠκύς Ἀχιλλεύς:  
 ὦ μοι ἀναιδείην ἐπιειμένην κερδαλεόφρον  
 πῶς τίς τοι πρόφρων ἔπεσιν πείθηται Ἀχαιῶν  
 ἢ ὁδὸν ἐλθέμεναι ἢ ἀνδράσιν Ἴφι μάχεσθαι;  
 οὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ Τρώων ἔνεκ' ἤλυθον αἰχμητῶν  
 δεῦρο μαχησόμενος, ἐπεὶ οὐ τί μοι αἰτιοί εἰσιν:  
 οὐ γὰρ πῶποτ' ἐμὰς βοῦς ἤλασαν οὐδὲ μὲν ἵππους,  
 οὐδέ ποτ' ἐν Φθίῃ ἐριβώλακι βωτιανείρῃ  
 καρπὸν ἐδηλήσαντ', ἐπεὶ ἦ μάλα πολλὰ μεταξὺ  
 οὐρεά τε σκιόεντα θάλασσά τε ἠχήμεσσα:  
 ἀλλὰ σοὶ ὦ μέγ' ἀναιδὲς ἄμ' ἐσπόμεθ' ὄφρα σὺ χαιρήσῃς,  
 τιμὴν ἀρνύμενοι Μενελάω σοὶ τε κυνῶπα

πρὸς Τρώων: τῶν οὐ τι μετατρέπη οὐδ' ἀλεγί-ζεις:  
καὶ δὴ μοι γέρας αὐτὸς ἀφαιρήσεσθα ἀπειλείς,  
ὧ̄ ἔπι πολλὰ μόγησα, δόσαν δέ μοι υἷες Ἀχαιῶν.  
οὐ μὲν σοὶ ποτε ἴσον ἔχω γέρας ὀππότη' Ἀχαιοὶ  
Τρώων ἐκπέρσωσ' εὖ ναιόμενον πτολίεθρον:  
ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν πλεῖον πολυαῖκος πολέμοιο  
χεῖρες ἐμαὶ διέπουσ': ἀτὰρ ἦν ποτε δασμὸς ἴκη-ται,  
σοὶ τὸ γέρας πολὺ μείζον, ἐγὼ δ' ὀλίγον τε φίλον τε  
ἔρχομ' ἔχων ἐπὶ νῆας, ἐπεὶ κε κάμω πολεμίζων.  
νῦν δ' εἴμι Φθίην δ', ἐπεὶ ἦ πολὺ φέρτερόν ἐστιν  
οἴκαδ' ἴμεν σὺν νηυσὶ κορωνίσιν, οὐδέ σ' οἴω  
ἐνθάδ' ἄτιμος ἐὼν ἄφενος καὶ πλοῦτον ἀφύξειν.

(1.148-171; Homer: The Iliad I:14-15)

Then with an angry glance from beneath his brows  
spake to him Achilles, swift of foot: „Ah me, thou  
clothed in shamelessness, thou of crafty mind, how  
shall any man of the Achaeans hearken to thy bidding  
with a ready heart either to go on a journey or to  
fight amain with warriors? I came not hither to  
fight by reason of the spearmen of Troy, seeing they  
are no whit at fault toward me. Never harried they  
in any wise my kine or my horses, nor ever in deep-  
soiled Phthia, nurse of men, did they lay waste the  
grain, for full many things lie between us — shadowy  
mountains and sounding sea. But thee, thou shame-  
less one, did we follow hither, that thou mightest  
be glad, seeking to win recompense for Menelaus  
and for thee, thou dog-face, at the hands of the Tro-  
jans. This thou regardest not, nor takest thought  
thereof; and forsooth thou threatenest that thou  
wilt thyself take from me the prize wherefor I toiled  
much, and the sons of the Achaeans gave it me.  
Never have I prize like to thine, when the Achaeans  
sack a well-peopled citadel of the Trojans; nay,  
the brunt of tumultuous war do my hands bear, but  
if ever an apportionment cometh, thy prize is greater  
far, while I go to my ships with some small thing,  
yet mine own, when I am grown weary with fighting.  
Now will I go hence to Phthia, seeing it is better far

to return home with my beaked ships, nor am I  
minded here in dishonour to draw thee thy fill of  
goods and wealth.”

(Homer: The Iliad I:14-15)

Achilleus is offended by the lack of respect from his patron; especially by unfair distribution of resources. In the eyes of the hero (i.e. poet and an audience of the epos) the quarrel arises from Agamemnōn’s failure to maintain properly one of the core institutions of a Gens/Big Man System, the ritual distribution of war booty. The patron does not even hesitate to take back what was once given to his best and most important client, to the person who deserves most to be the object of the king’s favour and generosity. As this incident can be considered far the most serious denial of the established socio-economic patterns of Big Man System, there can be no wonder that it is a main story-shaping element, triggering such a fatal response of Achilleus with all the following dark events.

On the contrary, in a certain scene of the *Bēowulf* an author (and his audience/readers) seems to sympathise rather with the king than with his warriors. *Hrōðgār*, the ruler of *Scyldings*, is complaining about unsatisfactory client services.

Ful oft gebēotedon    bēore druncene  
ofer ealowæge    ðretmecgas  
þet hīe in bēorsele    bīdan woldon  
Grendles gūþe    mid gryrum ecga.  
Ðonne wæs þeos medoheal    on morgentīd,  
drihtsele drēorfāh    þonne dæg līxte,  
eal bencþelu    blōde bestymed,  
heal heorudrēore;    āhte ic holdra ty læs,  
dēorre duguðe,    þē þā dēað fornam.

(480-489; *Beowulf* 1994: 56-57)

Often they swore,    as beer they drank,  
over the ale-cup,    the warriors,  
that in the beer-hall,    they will await  
Grendel’s attack,    with terror of blades.  
Then was this mead-hall,    in the morning,  
noble hall was blood-stained,    when the day shone forth,  
all the benches,    blood-drenched,  
hall of the battle-blood;    the less of the loyal I had,  
of the dear tried warriors,    that death had carried them off.

To put it the way of suggested anthropological terminology, Hrōðgār represents a Big Man leader complaining on the impotence of his clients to live up to their reciprocal obligations. They are unable to deal with the Grendel-problem which means they do not deserve to be the objects of king's generosity.

For Avestan evidence, a short but fairly relevant passage of Jasna can be quoted. Here Zaraθuštra himself is said to complain to Ahura Mazda about the lack of his social influence and power. The prophet identifies the reasons of his situation as following.

vaēdā taṭ yā ahmī      mazdā anaēšō  
mā kamnaḥṣuuā      hiiatcā kamnānā ahmī  
(J46.2.a-b; Avesta)

I know why I am powerless, O wise one:  
Few livestock are mine, and also I am one whose nars are few.  
(Lincoln 1991:151-152)

As Lincoln pointed out, *nar-* is an Avestan term for warrior, member of a socially distinct Iranian männerbünde, *yascā vāstrā vīvāpat / yascā vadarā vōiždat* 'who ravages the pastures / who raises a club' (Jasna 32.10a; Lincoln 1991:151). Hence again to put these verses another way, the prophet realises his vicious-circled failure to be a proper Big Man leader; being unable to gain and share resources, first of all cattle, he is unable to gather his own band of clients-warriors for cattle-raid to gain those resources. He is unable to assert his influence. As the core of the Avestan traditional texts probably emerged as result of a social change, perhaps some kind of rebellion of certain priestly group(s) against the traditional military elite (Lincoln 1981:162), such a plain mirroring of certain social facts, especially of this kind, seems to be only natural.

As for Vedic tradition, the situation is slightly different. Instead of being the element of social dynamism, here the narrative and religious specialists are responsible rather for stabilization of traditional social order organised by military elites – at least at the earlier stage of Vedic society. Thus, in such a highly formalised and ritualised discourse, instead of contemplating the problems, rather the demonstration of ideal patterns is to be expected. And truly, Indra, one of the central characters of Vedic pantheon, is constantly depicted as a guarantee of social unity, successful military activity and fluent income of resources, mainly in the form of war booty from the cattle raids.

ukt<sup>h</sup>ām indrāya śāṃsyaṃ vārd<sup>h</sup>anam puruniṣṣīd<sup>h</sup>e/  
śakrō yāt<sup>h</sup>ā sutēṣu ṇo rārāṇat sak<sup>h</sup>yēṣu ca//

tam ít sak<sup>h</sup>itvá imahe táṃ rāyé táṃ suvīrye/  
 sá śakra utá naḥ śakad índro vásu dáyamānaḥ//  
 suvivṛtaṃ sunirájam índra tvádātam íd yásaḥ /  
 gāvāṃ ápa vrajám vṛd<sup>h</sup>i kṛṇuśvá rád<sup>h</sup>o adrivaḥ//  
 nahí tvā ródasī ub<sup>h</sup>é rg<sup>h</sup>āyámāṇam ínvataḥ/  
 jéśaḥ svàrvatīr apáḥ sám gā asmáb<sup>h</sup>yaṃ dh<sup>h</sup>ūnuhi//  
 áśrutkarṇa śrud<sup>h</sup>ī hávaṃ nú cid dad<sup>h</sup>iśva me gíraḥ/  
 índra stómam imám máma kṛśvá yujás cid ántaram//  
 vidmā hí tvā vṛśantamaṃ vājeṣu havanaśrútam/  
 vṛśantamasya hūmaha ūtīṃ sahasrasátamām//  
 á tú na indra kauśika mandasānáḥ sutám piba/  
 návyam áyuh prá sū tira kṛd<sup>h</sup>ī sahasrasām ṛśim//  
 (1.10.5-11; Rg-Veda)

To Indra must a laud be said, to strengthen him who freely gives,  
 That Śakra may take pleasure in our friendship and drink-offerings.  
 Him, him we seek for friendship, him for riches and heroic might.  
 For Indra, he is Śakra, he shall aid us while he gives us wealth.  
 Easy to turn and drive away, Indra, is spoil bestowed by thee.  
 Unclose the stable of the kine, and give us wealth O Thunder-armed  
 The heaven and earth contain thee not, together, in thy wrathful mood.  
 Win us the waters of the sky, and send us kine abundantly.  
 Hear, thou whose ear is quick, my call; take to thee readily my songs  
 O Indra, let this laud of mine come nearer even than thy friend.  
 We know thee mightiest of all, in battles hearer of our cry.  
 Of thee most mighty we invoke the aid that giveth thousandfold.  
 O Indra, Son of Kuśika, drink our libation with delight.  
 Prolong our life anew, and cause the seer to win a thousand gifts.  
 (1.10.5-11; The Hymns of the R̥gveda:6)

As Whitaker demonstrated (2011), manly, brave, strong, generous and martially well-disposed Indra represents an ideal of Vedic ruler. What is more, it is likely that early Vedic lords directly participated in religious rituals of the military elite as the personal representatives of Indra himself (Whitaker 2011). It can be then assumed that the institution of Vedic chief – and hence the Vedic society as a whole – was organised along the principles of Big Man System operating within the frame of männerbund-centered structures. Thus Indra followed by Maruts can be considered a folklore expression of ruling Big Man and his elite war band.

Among the more poetic and symbolic representations of Big Man leader and his noble warrior-clients the typical theme of chief and his wolf pack hungering



for pray can be classified. Well known is the Homeric example (Lincoln 1981:127), where Achilles, the most famous client of Agamemnon is assembling his own clients to the battle.

Μυρμιδόνας δ' ἄρ' ἐποιχόμενος θώρηξεν Ἀχιλλεὺς  
πάντας ἀνά κλισίας σὺν τεύχεσιν: οἱ δὲ λύκοι ὦς  
ὠμοφάγοι, τοῖσιν τε περὶ φρεσὶν ἄσπετος ἀλκή,  
οἷ τ' ἔλαφον κεραὸν μέγαν οὖρεσι δηώσαντες  
δάπτουσιν: πᾶσιν δὲ παρήϊον αἵματι φοινόν:  
καὶ τ' ἀγεληδὸν ἴασιν ἀπὸ κρήνης μελανύδρου  
λάψοντες γλώσσησιν ἀραιῆσιν μέλαν ὕδωρ  
ἄκρον ἐρευγόμενοι φόνον αἵματος: ἐν δέ τε θυμὸς  
στήθεσιν ἄτρομός ἐστι, περιστένεται δέ τε γαστήρ:  
τοῖσι Μυρμιδόνων ἠγήτορες ἠδὲ μέδοντες  
ἄμφ' ἀγαθὸν θεράποντα ποδώκεος Αἰακίδαο  
ῥώντ': ἐν δ' ἄρα τοῖσιν ἀρήϊος ἴστατ' Ἀχιλλεὺς,  
ὀτρύνων ἵππους τε καὶ ἀνέρας ἀσπιδιώτας.

(16.155-167; Homer: The Iliad II:174-175)

But Achilles went to and fro throughout the huts and armed all the Myrmidons in their armor, and they rushed out like ravening wolves in whose hearts is fury unspeakable – wolves that have slain in the hills a great horned stag, and rend him, and the jewels of all are red with gore; and in a pack they go to lap with their slender tongues the surface of the black water from a dusky spring, belching forth blood and gore, the heart in their breasts unflinching, and their bellies gorged full; so did the leaders and rulers of the Myrmidons speed out around the noble attendant of the swift-footed grandson of Aecus. And among them all stood warlike Achilles, urging on both horses and men who carry the shield.

(Homer: The Iliad II:174-175)

Among others the Slavic variation in the Song on the Warhost of Igor can be mentioned. This time the wolf-pack metaphor is put into the mouth of Vsevolod, as this younger brother and the main client of Igor depicts his followers ready for the coming battle with advancing nomads.

Игорь ждетъ мила брата Всеволода.  
 И рече ему буй-туръ Всеволодъ:  
 «Одинъ братъ, одинъ свѣтъ  
 свѣтлый ты, Игорю!  
 Оба есвѣ Святъславличя!  
 Съдлай, брате, свои бръзьи комони.  
 А мои ти готови, осѣдлани  
 у Курьска напереди.  
 А мои ти Куряни свѣдоми кѣмети;  
 подѣ трубами повити,  
 подѣ шеломи възлѣлѣяни,  
 Конецъ копія въскърмлени.  
 Пути имъ вѣдоми,  
 яругы имъ знаеми;  
 луци у нихъ напряжени,  
 тули отворени,  
 сабли изъострени.  
 Сами скачють, акы  
 сѣрьи влѣци въ поле;  
 ищучи себѣ чти,  
 а князю славъ.»  
 (79-99; The Tale of the Armament of Igor:4)

Igor awaits his dear brother Vsevolod.  
 And Vsevolod said to him:  
 „My one brother, my one bright light,  
 thou Igor!  
 We are both sons of Svyatoslav!  
 Brother, saddle thy swift horses;  
 mine are ready for thee, saddled  
 at Kursk beforehand:  
 and my men of Kursk are experienced fighters,  
 nursed amid trumpets,  
 rocked in helmets,  
 fed at the spear-blades,  
 well-known to them are the paths;  
 familiar to them are the ravines;  
 their saddle-bows are strung;  
 their quivers are open;

and their sabres are whetted.  
They themselves gallop like  
grey wolves in the field,  
seeking honour for themselves,  
and for their prince glory.”

(The Tale of the Armament of Igor:4)

In the first case the desired war booty remains metaphorically expressed as a hunting game. In the latter it takes a form of social capital, i.e. honour and glory, the commodities of key importance for the life of any fair member of the Big Man System.

### 1.1.2 Theoretical Generalization

Even in the case of PIE social organization, the presence and importance of the männerbund institutions seems to be commonly accepted (Mallory 1989:125, Fortson 2004:19). The patron-client relations used to be stressed as well, though mainly in connection with the existence of IE poets and their relationship to their elite employers (Watkins 1995:70, Fortson 2004:29). However, given the reasons suggested above, I believe the patron-client relations operating within the frame of Gens structures can be postulated as the very basic organizational principle of IE groups in general.

Indeed, on the basis of multidisciplinary research this type of socio-political organisation can be assumed to already exist in the early PIE period. According to Anthony (2007) the emergence of stratified communities with a distinct elite is archaeologically documented in the Pontic-Caspian steppes from the beginning of 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC. Just like Sahlin’s typical Chiefs, their men of power controlled long-distance trade and inherited their social status. However, their social power was based on their ability and willingness to use their own resources, especially the livestock products, to sponsor the organisation of religious feastings, like typical Big Men.

This interpretation of Anthony’s archaeological conclusions also seems to be supported by the research of historical comparative linguistics. Examination of archaic IE poetical figures, most probably originating in the PIE period, suggests that the power was based on leader’s ability to control cattle (pie. *\*pekú-*) and subordinate men or warriors (pie. *\*uīHro-*, *\*h<sub>2</sub>nēr-*) (Benveniste 1973:40-43, Lincoln 1991:147-166, Watkins 1995:197-214, Watkins 2000:101).

It can then be assumed, that especially in the case of archaic IE groups variations on elite männerbund-like structures formed the backbone of social organisation.

And even though war band ruled communities later perished in favour of more complex models of social organisation based on hereditary feudal relations, some of its mechanisms still survived.

Therefore I dare to conclude that an hierarchal social system, reigned by potentially hereditary *männerbund* elite organised along the Big Man System principles, was typical for IE societies, whether at the period of their common prehistoric origin or later during their separate existence in archaic (pre)historical IE linguistic branches. Considering all the aforementioned facts I suggest the reconstruction of archaic (P)IE social system schematically depicted in Figure 2.

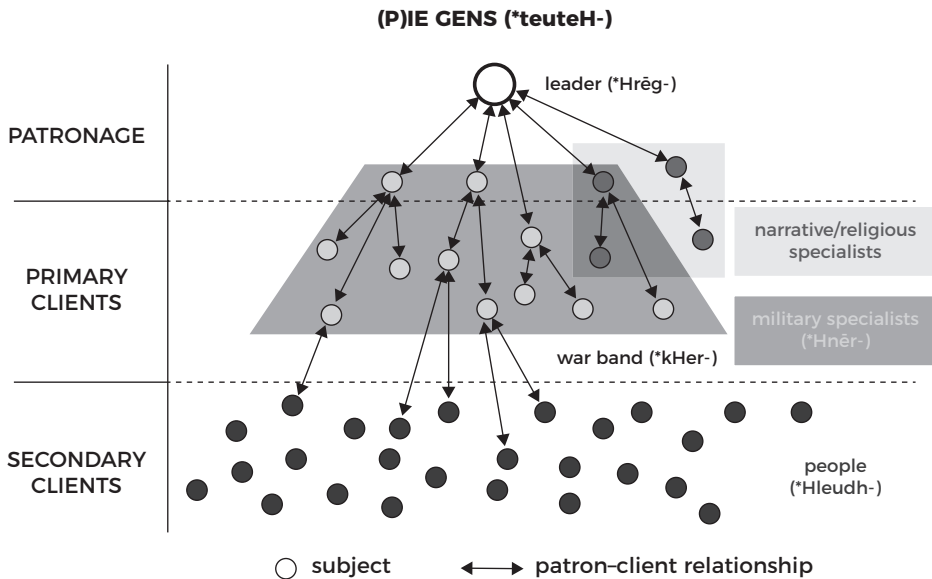


Figure 2

I use traditionally reconstructed terms of supposed PIE social reality, as their assumed semantic is often in considerable accordance with the presented model. I am aware of a certain level of uncertainty concerning their common PIE existence as well as their phonological structure. I see them as appropriate approximations, technical terms to label the elements of proposed reconstruction.

The leader, pie. *\*h<sub>1</sub>rēg-*, is in a position of the main patron who organises vast and stratified network of clients, forming the unit of political identity, Gens, pie. *\*teuteh<sub>2</sub>-*. However, within the body of Gens the real patron-client relations he establishes are only with the most needed followers, so-called *primary clients*. These form the true elite; as the specialists mustered to provide the leader's military

affairs, pie. *\*h<sub>2</sub>nēr-*, they are manifested as a war band, pie. *\*kh<sub>3</sub>er-*. Specialists of narrative/religious tradition, poets, providing the ideological needs, public relations as well as relations to supernatural reality are *\*h<sub>2</sub>nēr-* as well. Structurally they are considered members of a military elite (De Vries 1963, Whitaker 2011) though with additional professional specialisation.

The leader's bonds with the rest of the Gens, with its unspecialised members, mass of commoners, practising necessarily only basic economic activities for their survival, pie. *\*h<sub>1</sub>leudh-*, are rather abstract in their nature. Whereas primary clients are rewarded for their services materially, with elite feasting, share of the raid-booty or share of the benefits paid by commoners, the masses themselves, the *secondary clients*, are rewarded for collected economic products "only" with the ruler's promise of military and legal protection.

Thus, even though the ruler is the central patron of the whole Gens *de jure*, in fact the significant bonds he maintains mainly (though exceptions to the rule are possible) with upper elite members, influential warriors, poets, priests etc. These men in turn act (or at least they are supposed to act) as patrons of their own clients, enforcing their own interests. Therefore Gens is a hierarchal and pyramidal network of patrons and clients under a general patronage of the ruler as a supreme entrepreneur.

As for the opportunity to improve and confirm the social position, due to several aforementioned factors, the leader's close clients (and persons from their close environment; prominent clients, relatives etc.) are more advantageous compared to the rest of the population. This helps to make established hierarchal social structure intergenerationally stable. On the other hand, there are several sources of potential instability. The success-focused character of the Big Man System makes the boundaries of established social ranks floating and penetrable in their nature. Any man can go for the favour of any patron and any man, who is able to gain and then share the resources, can gain the appropriate number of followers to improve his social status. Depending on personal abilities and achievement, any patron can raise his position to challenge even the position of contemporary supreme leader.

I believe that the classical IE mythological theme of the three-functional hierarchal society, so much loved by Dumézil, is a narrative response just to this type of social organization. As the group of primary clients directly and materially profit from the leader's generosity, in real life its distinction from the rest of the Gens, the secondary clients, is more or less obvious. Therefore they represent that *well-nourished, well-dressed and well-armed part of the gens* (Homza 2002:245); they are distinguished from the rest of the community by physical constitution, appearance as well as acculturated and enculturated patterns of thought and behavior. Out of this reality emerges the tendency to depict the society as a hierarchy of distinct social ranks or the frequent presence of a gap between refined nobles and ragged

commons, dull, sturdy and ever deaf to mocking and slander, as it is known from the aforementioned Iranian or Gaul tradition.

In mythological narratives the highest social position belongs to the main patronage of Gens; to the leader and prominent, the most important member of his primary clients – best warriors, poets or priests. On this level the task of leadership and ideological management of society is emphasized. Another important rank belongs to regular primary clients, the war band. In appropriate narratives it is associated with military affairs. Finally, the base of the social pyramid is formed by secondary clients, performers of everyday economical activities.

It is only natural, that narratives depict the vertical structure of Gens society as a more or less rigid system of social ranks. In myths the social reality is typically hyperbolized, idealized and stereotyped. Their textual structures operate as both *models of reality* and *models for reality* (Geertz 1973). They answer to the need of individuals as well as the whole society to see those social structures as essential and innate. The more so they express the view point of elite, the part of society which is naturally content with established social order. Logically the outcome then is the idea of social hierarchy, whose existence and function are as “natural” and “primordial” as physical and functional hierarchy of the first humanoid body sacrificed in the world.

As once was suggested (unable to find the reference again, my apologies), the actual order of ranks probably depends on the affiliation of composers of myth to a particular elite group. If military specialists form the poet’s social background, his predominant audience, then noble white-skinned and warlike Jarls are depicted on the top of the society. On the other hand, myth which emerged in the priestly circles will tell the story of white-dressed priestly Brahmans being the noblest social group.

As for the symbiotic coexistence of socially rigid narratives and rather socially benevolent reality of the Big Man System, the situation is not so rare. A fair example is our own postmodern democratic society. Though we openly adore and even successfully apply the ideals of egalitarianism and equality of opportunities in organization of our economic and social life, on some occasions and for some reasons we still compose narratives on class-stratification of our society. Not the least among them are the stories concerning its “three-functional” division to upper, middle and working class. In societies where the tendencies to their hierarchal organization were openly present and liberal ideals of French revolution were unknown, like aforementioned (P)IE communities with patronage and two sorts of clients, production of politically incorrect narratives of this sort are only the more natural.

I believe, therefore, that the hierarchal social system organized by war bands along the principles of the Big Man System and Chiefdom represents a sustainable model for the existence of stratified society even in conditions of PIE Mesolithic

Pontic-Caspian steppes, not to mention the advanced societies of archaic historical IE groups. It helps us to understand, how the mythological narratives of three-functional “caste” society could arise in primitive conditions of early PIE world.

## **1.2 Macro-Context: Neolithic Cargo Cult in the Pontic-Caspian Steppes**

Anthony (2007) offered a promising vision of forming the IE Urheimat. He theorized that the process was triggered by the specific cultural interaction between two essentially different civilizations.

At the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> millennium BC on the western border of the Pontic-Caspian steppes ragged semi-nomadic steppe hunters of the PPIE dialectic area came into contact with an arriving civilization of settled herders, farmers, house-builders and copper smiths of AA linguistic origin.

Generally, the hunters ignored their new neighbours and their technologies. Perhaps, despite all the splendour of their civilisation, hunters were discouraged by the workaholic nature of the farmers’ lifestyle. Nevertheless, later on the situation changed and at least in certain steppe areas specific adaptive behaviour among the hunters occurred. As Anthony demonstrated by archaeological data (2007), their turn towards the new technologies had triggered a unique, sudden and essential transformation of their society, leading to the formation of a new cattle-herding culture in the entire region of fore-Uralic Pontic-Caspian steppes.

According to Anthony’s findings (2007), the first region of such an adaptive response can be documented in the area of direct contact of both economies, on the western steppe border, in so called Bug-Dniester archaeological culture (5800 – 5200 BC). Local hunters imitated economic practices of farmers; starting to grow cereals and to keep cattle. However, their motivation remains quite unclear. The examination of their garbage pits indicates that over several generations they did not use the fruits of their imitation as their daily diet. And to make the adaptive process even more confusing, for some reason they were also imitating the feasting pottery of the farmers.

But, as Anthony pointed out (2007), at the end of sixth millennium BC Bug-Dniester Culture was swallowed up by a further civilization boom and the expansion of farmers. They even crossed the river of Bug and increased their towns to thousands of inhabitants, moving many a mile deep in the steppes.

As a response to this process, the second wave of imitation occurred, this time in the heart of the hunter’s steppes, in the area of the Dnieper Rapids. Specifically, since the last Ice Age culturally unique groups of hunters were localized there. Highly effective fishing in the rapids allowed them to build densely populated permanent settlements. They showed an increased level of military activity

and tendencies to differentiation of social status. And also, and this is perhaps the most significant and unique feature of their culture, they used to build permanent intergenerational graveyards (Anthony 2007).

About 5200 BC these hunters started to practice stockbreeding. However, nitrogen level in their bones, the specific result of fish consumption, remained traditionally high. Despite the adaption of the new food technology the main part of their daily diet was still secured by fishing. Again, just like in Bug-Dniester culture, through many generations the hunters of rapids did not use new acquired technology for a source of daily food (Anthony 2007).

Archaeological research of their graveyards suggests that they used cattle mainly for sacrificial communal feasting associated with burial ceremonies of the new elite, whose appearance corresponds only with the emergence of stockbreeding. As Anthony further emphasized (2007), this innovative culture of richly equipped elite, of sacral stockbreeding and of permanent graveyards started to spread into all the other areas of fore-Uralic steppes as a more or less closed and rigid cultural complex.

### 1.2.1 Neighbourly Envy Theory

It seems that through many generations steppe hunters practiced adapted technologies for non-pragmatic purpose, mostly as a source of feasting food in their religious ceremonies. What motivated them to adapt the new technologies, as their food security was most likely not the reason?

Anthony suggested a solution (2007) which can be denoted as *Neighbourly envy theory*. He hypothesized, that the hunters' motivation for their non-pragmatic imitation of farmers' technologies (feasting pottery, stock-breeding) was their astonishment, which they felt observing pompous agriculture rituals of farmers with abundance and diversity of feasting on food. They wanted to organize similar happenings, with the same richness of consumed food. To be able to manage it successfully, Bug-Dniester hunters started to practice appropriate technologies.

Socially ambitious foragers might have begun to cultivate gardens and raise cattle to sponsor feasts among their own people, even making serving bowls and cups like those used in Criş [farmers'] villages ... (Anthony 2007:153)

Also, in the case of innovative stock-breeding culture in the Dnieper Rapids area Anthony accentuated status, symbolical and non-pragmatic context of its emergence as well as gradual expansion to the other steppe areas.

What seems at first to be a spread of a new food economy on a second look appears to be deeply intertwined in new rituals, new values associated with them, and new



institutions of social power. People who did not accept the new animal currency, who remained foragers, did not even use formal cemeteries, much less sponsor such aggrandizing public funeral feast. (Anthony 2007:161)

This kind of interpretation seems to be correct in its general direction. Nonetheless, my aim is to support and extend it by reasoning based on knowledge of social processes documented by observance of living societies. The direct stimuli to upgrade Anthony's Neighbourly envy theory can be found in the reality of native social movements on the world's periphery during the industrial era (especially the World War II), in so called *Cargo Cults*. It seems that the Cargo Cult movements share remarkable similarities with the process of shaping of IE *Urheimat* reconstructed by Anthony.

Of course, stressing certain analogies of social behaviour between prehistoric hunters and modern Southern Pacific populations is not based on the assumption, that native Melanesian societies of modern era were some kind of Stone Age "social fossils". It is rather based on the reasonable expectation that certain processes enacted in the background of modern Cargo Cult activities are the general (if not universal) response of AMH exposed to certain conditions. It is then appropriate to expect their operation also in prehistoric human groups exposed to a similar situation.

### 1.2.2 The Cargo Cult

Alliterative collocation *cargo cult* appeared for the first time in everyday communication of journalists, missionaries and colonial clerks in the southwest Pacific Ocean during the forties of the last century. Through the following decades the phrase was borrowed and definitely popularized by anthropologists. The label Cargo Cult became a technical term referring to a specific kind of aboriginal social movement characterized by quasi-religious adoration of material prosperity, most often of western goods.

Truly, the attention of western scientists as well as the general public was grabbed especially by religiously disposed Cargo Cult movements. The idea that technological products of our western oil-based economy cause religious awe in the "savage minds" was probably too self-satisfactory to avoid its overestimating. Thus, in the post war era Cargo Cult became mainly a designation for millennialistic and prophetic cultic behaviour of confused aborigines, who in their ignorance performed western profane activities – dining, reading of papers, military drilling, operating dummy bamboo airports etc. – as religious or magical rituals to bring miraculously western cargo into their society. According to an early anthropological observation and interpretation, they believed that after the perfor-

mance of proper cultic ritual the ancestors will send them a ship or an airplane with western goods.

Yet in fact Cargo Cult activities took many different forms; besides religious-like practices also pragmatic socio-economic reform movements or open military rebellions appeared. Moreover, further research showed, that cultic movements, whose participants awaited the ultimate millennialistic advent of material prosperity occurred also in traditional societies with no contact with western civilization (Christiansen 1969). Also, the very religious response of aborigines to the presence of westerners could be triggered directly by western society itself. Missionary administration and education were often the only window of natives to the western world and so it would be only natural for them to figure out that to be technologically advanced means to be religious as well (Christiansen 1969). And not the least, aborigines could be inspired by colonists themselves, who in their deprivation of civilization often demonstrated their own overestimation of goods supplies, the “Cargo Cult longing” for their arrival (Lindstrom 1993). Thus, the idea of Cargo Cult as a direct result of savages’ awe of foreign superior technology soon had to be abandoned.

Douglas (1996/1970/) pointed out, that Cargo Cults emerged especially in communities organized along the principles of the Big Man System. Since the power of the elite is based on the ability to gain and share wealth, society is then naturally disintegrated by the appearance of superior civilisation’s prestigious but inaccessible commodities. The elite collapses and abruptly the needs of its clients are left unsatisfied, which opens the way for the rise of alternative leaders. However, in Big Man System economies social collapse can also be triggered by internal factors, especially due to the mutual and potentially self-destructive competition of Big Men. In this way the emergence of millennial Cargo Cult also in societies without any contact with foreign superior system can be explained.

Anyway, in the native Big Man System all the circulating goods are usually believed to be sent to the human world from a supernatural reality, most often from the world of ancestors. This could explain why the new leaders often act as religious prophets; they promise the return of goods distribution in accordance with traditional logic, i.e. in connection with religious practices.

Margaret Mead (1964) proposed an even more universalistic interpretation. In any disintegrated society there is formed an evolutionary cluster; a charismatic leader gathers the group of innovators in an attempt to find a solution to the social crisis. In the case of favourable historical circumstances as well as appropriately chosen solution the cluster can initiate complex cultural change.

Nativistic cults vary in their dimensions from brief episodes in which a prophet or a new ritual activity temporarily seizes the imagination of a people to situations in which an entire culture, under the direction of the cult ideology, is consciously re-

modelled along new lines. As a response to change, they are not limited to contact between a primitive and civilised people. They may, in fact, occur in any set of circumstances in which a group is faced with a major cultural breakdown and is under extreme pressure to copy foreign models to invent new ones, as a result of which the group focuses its efforts on redefining the whole cultural situation, including man's relationship to the universe, to his fellow men and to himself. (Mead 1964:193-194)

Thus, Cargo Cults can be perceived as only a special kind of revitalization movement, one of the universal means of human cultural evolution.

Of course, completely different interpretative conclusions are produced by postmodern approaches to Cargo Cults (Lindstrom 1993). They depict the phenomenon as a western construct, a self-satisfying projection of our own irrational and quasi-religious fetishization of goods and technology to "irrational savages".

Regardless of various interpretations, some basic Cargo Cult features can be taken as proved by direct observation and subsequent consensual interpretation.

Cargo Cult seems to be triggered especially by the contact of unequal cultural systems, where mutual interaction is limited by a communication (linguistic, cultural) barrier. The phenomenon itself is about adoration of material prosperity; it emerges especially in societies focused on sharing and circulation of goods. The leaders of Cargo Cults are innovative outsiders, who more or less consciously try to compose an ideology of change in order to bring an alternative to declining traditional elites and their collapsing system. Especially in the case of religious movements important is central ideological narrative – *cargo myth* (Worsley 1968); it is based on traditional mythological patterns, though innovated in order to explain the reasons of inferiority of natives to their more advanced neighbours as well as to communicate possible solutions to their delicate position. Typical for Cargo Cults is imitation of behaviour of superior group with shifted (symbolical, sacral) meaning. Cargo Cult activities impact considerably on traditional social organization (Worsley 1968); old modes of collective identity are rejected in favour of a new ideas and larger scaled and more integrating social structures. Participants of Cargo Cult often collectively identified themselves through antagonistic (xenophobic) attitudes towards the superior system and its representatives.

### 1.2.2.1 Explanation of Cargo Cult

Postmodern interpretations of Cargo Cult activities are partially correct. Our society with its own cult of consumption, fetishization of technological progress and connection of technology with social status could be classified alternatively as Cargo Cult.

Indeed, patterns of Cargo Cult thinking and behaviour seem to be present in any community of AMH, regardless of its time-space location or level of civilization complexity. And also, in explicit Cargo Cult movements, despite their obvious ethnographical (textual, textural, contextual) heterogeneity, some common features are present. It is then appropriate to search for a generalizing explanation.

In Cargo Cults, which emerged due to the contact of unequal cultural systems, a typical feature is the meaning-shifted imitation of practices and behaviour of the members of superior system. In the search for an explanation of this moment a combination of several evolutionary psychological concepts is at hand.

According to Dunbar (2004) one of the essential human abilities is to acquire new skills and knowledge, either through direct teaching or by means of imitation. This ability developed as both a tool and product of human evolution. It is a well-established fact, that the evolutionary process is a matter of culture as well as biology (Boyd & Richerson 1987). In the process of cultural and biological co-evolution (dual inheritance theory) effective and hence repeated behavioural strategies slowly became part of genetically encoded cognitive biases of AMH (Boyd & Richerson 2008).

Imitation is one of such genetically internalized behaviour. During the gradual development of genus homo, the most successful evolutionary were individuals ever eager to adapt to optimal cultural strategy for their current environment. In this case the result is the mental tendency of humans to imitate involuntarily and promptly cultural strategies, which seem to be successful.

If one set of beliefs or values has easily observable advantages relative to the others, then there is an easy answer: individuals should adopt the beliefs and values that maximize reproductive success. It seems likely, however, that people commonly must choose among variant beliefs where it is quite difficult to determine which belief is most advantageous, even though the beliefs in fact differ in utility. Behavioural decision theorists ... and students of social learning argue from empirical evidence that the complexity and number of decisions force people to use simple rules of thumb. Chief among these is a heavy reliance on imitation to acquire most of their behaviour. (Boyd & Richerson 1987:69)

The more obvious the success of a superior system the higher the chance the inferior neighbour will start to imitate its strategies and features.

To avoid errors, individuals adopt a particular behavior only if it appears *sufficiently* better than its alternative. The larger is the observed difference in payoffs between two behaviors, the more likely it is that the behavior with the higher payoff actually is the best. By insisting on a large difference in observed payoffs, individuals can reduce the chance that they will mistakenly adopt the inferior behaviour. (Boyd & Richerson 1995:130)

Besides success, similarity seems to be another criterion to trigger the imitative reaction. It allows the imitator to choose the appropriate strategy despite the complexness of the assessed situation. *If a model is very different than one's self, the model's success might not indicate that the innovation would be useful in one's own circumstances.* (Boyd & Richerson 1987:69) Conversely, similarities between model and imitator indicate that observed strategy would be potentially functional also in conditions of the imitator's environment.

It depends on the cultural background of the imitator, what is considered the indicator of success and similarity. However, success is generally evaluated in relation to various manifestation of genetic fitness, i.e. to an ability to raise offspring capable of reproduction. Of course, in practice this characteristic is more often assessed through its secondary manifestation; abundance of resources, efficiency of military technology etc. The second criterion, similarity, is usually evaluated by economic and social strategies as well as by various markers of group identity, arbitrary ones (dialect, ritual habits) or functional ones (social norms, standards of quality) (Boyd & Richerson 1987, Boyd & Richerson 2008).

As for the very motivation to adapt to foreign cultural patterns, besides the mentioned tendency of AMH to imitate the successful ones, there can be added an explanation based on Festinger's theory of *cognitive dissonance* (1957). Crisis in society caused by contact with another, more successful cultural system, challenges the mental integrity of individuals in the inferior culture. The clash of contradictory representations of reality, where those of inferior culture are naturally and seriously questioned by patterns in the superior one, induces a state of cognitive dissonance in the minds of the losing side. Therefore, its members need to reshape their individual as well as common worldview to make it consistent with new relevant information (Festinger 1957). Forming of Mead's innovative evolutionary cluster is one of the potentially effective ways to manage all the necessary changes in both individual and communal thinking.

As for the ritualistic character of many revivalist activities, from the anthropological point of view this kind of solution is only natural. In general, ritual is a tool of condensed communication of key communal matters, where the basic economical products and institutions are displayed (Douglas 1996 /1970/). The most efficient way to introduce brand-new economical patterns is then to make them a part of new religious rituals.

Given all the aforementioned arguments I suggest the following conclusion. Cargo Cult is a revitalising social movement which emerges in societies affected by a crisis caused by internal or external factors. Contact with a superior cultural system seems to be one of the typical external factors. Provided there is a sufficient measure of mutual similarity between both interacting systems (social mechanisms, economic commodities etc.), despite all the cultural barriers certain degree of mutual information exchange may occur. Due to the ontological con-

frontation with obviously superior system a cognitive dissonance arise among the members of the inferior culture, resulting in the collapse of their society. There is formed a cluster of innovators, who try to find a solution to the crisis. They search for measures to be taken to become equal to their superior neighbours. Since imitation of successful behaviour is a basic adaptive strategy of AMH, imitation of practices of a superior cultural system is often among the proposed solutions. Because of communication (language, cultural) barriers between both systems, and especially because of association of a crisis with the questions of inferiority and superiority, imitated behaviour acquires shifted semantics, often with status-marking aspects. Even arbitrary identity markers of the superior system (dining habits), or practices never meant to be such markers (reading of papers), are collectively imitated by the inferior culture as generally accepted signs of mutual status equality. New symbolical, ritual, even religious meaning of imitated elements also occurs. Religious context of imitation is probably connected with the natural need for supernatural legitimization of social action in elementary societies in general. Ritualistic character seems also to be fairly natural; ritual is a powerful way to communicate concisely and imperatively innovated cultural norms as well as to demonstrate the status of its provider.

### 1.2.3 Behold, the Lords of the Animals Come

The outcomes of Cargo Cult analysis presented above can be used to smarten up the aforementioned Neighbourly Envy Theory, particularly the question of the hunters' motivation to perform a non-pragmatic adaptation of farmers' technologies.

Bearing in mind the anthropologically attested nature of inferior culture's response to the presence of superior one, it is likely that PPIE hunters reacted to the arrival of the splendid AA farming civilization in a similar way, i.e. with serious social crisis. At least in some specific steppe areas; on the western borders as it was the place of long-term and direct contact and especially in the Dnieper Rapids.

It seems that the key significance of the Rapids in the process of interaction between both cultural systems was not arbitrary. According to Douglas (1996/1970/), sedentary human groups inhabiting densely populated regions tend to develop cultural norms of higher complexity and show higher level of ritualization. This assumption is in agreement with Anthony's findings (2007); the existence of social hierarchy as well as unusual ritualization and institutionalisation of funeral practices among sedentary hunters of the Dnieper Rapids. And, on the contrary, for the sparsely populated territories of nomadic or semi-nomadic groups, i.e. the rest of the steppe's hunting population, rather less ritualistic and loosely organised cultural system was typical.

It is then likely, that only hunters of the Dnieper Rapids shared with farming strangers, also settled in densely populated villages and towns, their sense of ritual as well as a tendency to maintain sophisticated, even hierarchal, social structures. Not to mention that as hunters, i.e. the people for whom sharing the resources and especially hunted game is a common norm cross-culturally, they were naturally sensitive to the appearance of people, who possessed unprecedented and far more efficiently managed animal commodity. Therefore, among all the population of the steppes the hunters of the Dnieper Rapids seem to be best suited to find a common course with farmers. The aforementioned condition of cultural similarity was satisfied. Mutual analogies in social organisation (hierarchy, ritual) and circulating economic commodity (animals) supported the mutual communication resulting in cognitive dissonance, social crisis and finally hunters' imitative response to farmers' lifestyle.

I believe the key factor to the socioeconomic integrity of the hunting-gathering groups of the Rapids was the appearance of new stock-breeding technology, the arrival of *the lords of the animals*. On the western borders of the steppes strangers appeared controlling animals to an even higher efficiency than hunters' shamans or supernatural agents. They needed no rituals, no magic, no help of specialist and supernatural beings, no dangerous and time-consuming hunting expeditions to get game meat. Just the contrary, whole herds of animals were under their control, peacefully waiting for slaughter whenever their masters decided so. No wonder then that in the heads of the hunters of those culturally advanced status-sensitive population of the Dnieper Rapids, cognitive dissonance emerged. The more so the civilization's superiority of newcomers was obvious in general; they had a number of previously unknown and impressive technologies (house building, stockbreeding, orcharding, copper metallurgy etc.) and relative abundance of food. They exhibit all the signs of a cultural system, which provides significantly higher genetic fitness for its participants.

It is likely that hunters of the Dnieper Rapids considered farmers successful people, worthy of imitation. And so, clusters of innovators emerged, imitating the farmers' technologies and behaviour with shifted, status marking and sacral meaning. It comes to imitation of the farmers' feasting pottery and also their feasting practices themselves; just like in the Melanesian Cargo Cults European dining habits were imitated. Also, the strange practice of sacral and status related stockbreeding started to be performed, similar to Melanesian imitation of western economic practices and activities in "rational" (plantation management) as well as "irrational" (operation of dummy airports and warehouses) way.

Probably the sacral stockbreeding was the key solution to the social crisis and cognitive dissonance of hunters. By means of this practice hunters successfully demonstrated that they were equal to the strangers; they also would be able to become the lords of the animals.

It is only natural that the hunters' innovators raised their social position in accordance with the principles of the Big Man System, i.e. the form of power typical for less complexly organised societies, based on personal initiative and generosity and associated with accumulation and sharing of commodities. Hardly a more fertile environment for emergence of this cross-culturally occurring form of power could be found, than in an elementary hunting-gathering economy focused on the sharing of irregular and non-cumulative resources (hunted game), which is in a period of social crisis caused by the appearance of new regular and cumulative resources (bred cattle).

Thus, it can be hypothesized, that in Bug-Dniester culture or Dnieper-Donets II culture in the Dnieper Rapids complex social processes occurred, which were by circumstance, as well as results, similar to the response of traditional societies in the Southern Pacific abruptly confronted with a presence of the western industrial cultural system. The specific imitative response of PPIE hunters to the presence of superior AA farming technologies shows features of the Cargo Cult. Anthony's concept of Neighbourly Envy Theory can then be seen as a part of this complex set of Cargo Cult ideas and activities.

#### 1.2.4 From Cargo Cult to Proto-Indo-Europeans

Due to favourable ecological conditions within the steppes new Pontic-Caspian "cowboys" performed stockbreeding to an even higher efficiency than in their original models. Because of the economic success, associated Cargo Cult practice with its innovative cultural patterns were preserved, spread and finally gained the position of the dominant culture throughout the entire steppe region. Indeed, as Anthony pointed out (2007), there is clear archaeological evidence of the spread of the specific culture of Dnieper Rapids as a closed and stable cultural complex.

It is likely that this process intensified the possible linguistic homogeneity of fore-Uralic steppes. Perhaps the dialect of Dnieper Rapids (or maybe sociolect of its new formed elite) became a prestigious language norm to which neighbouring groups strived to converge. It is a well-known sociolinguistic fact (Wardhaugh 1998) that language changes, both synchronic and diachronic, are related mostly to social processes. Speech patterns of socioeconomically dominant communities often become the language standard for the wider population or at least induce systematic language changes in their surroundings.

The impact of supposed Cargo Cult development, however, was probably not limited to the field of language. It can help to explain the formation of the PIE cultural area, the formation of relatively homogeneous culture of the PIE homeland. To all the already known significant factors supporting the *Urheimat* hypothesis (arid areas forcing the existence of broader cooperative networks; Mallory 1989,



invention of horseback and chariot riding increasing mobility and communication range; Anthony 2007, etc.) the presence of Cargo Cult reality can also be added.

As mentioned above, Cargo Cult movements often caused unification and integration of society, overcoming traditional dialect or group identity. It is possible, that the process of cultural unification in the area of Dnieper Rapids as well as further expansion of its new cultural patterns was significantly strengthened by the integration pressure induced by cultic zeal typical for areas infected by the Cargo Cult. It is even possible, that cattle adoring steppe hunters, just like cargo adoring aborigines of the Southern Pacific, realised their common identity just through their common feelings of inferiority to superior strangers. Their commonly shared “nationalistic” attitudes towards ambivalently (if not negatively) perceived farmers could then fasten the expansion of new Cargo Cult cattle culture of Dnieper Rapids into the rest of the steppes and further the measure of their cultural integration.

### 1.2.5 *\*Sth<sub>2</sub>euros*, *\*pekū*, *\*g<sup>u</sup>ōusk<sup>u</sup>e* *\*h<sub>2</sub>eṽsos*: bull, cattle property and the cows of dawn

Taking into account possible Cargo Cult origin of PIE society, several cultural traits observed in historical groups of IE dialect area can be interpreted as a relic of the original cattle Cargo Cult.

It is a well-known fact, that many of the key terms of PIE stockbreeding terminology are probably borrowed from AA languages. Root pie. *\*(s)th<sub>2</sub>eur-* ‘bull’, ‘large domestic animal’ is probably linked to Semitic branch of AA dialects, to psem. *\*ʔ-w-r* ‘bull’, ‘cattle’ < paa. *\*č-w-r* ‘(a bull of) a big kind of antelope’ (Dolgopolsky 2008:433-434, Blažek 1992:162-163, Blažek 2003). Note that from the point of view of Nostratic theory initial cluster pie. *\*st-* corresponds directly to paa. *\*č-* or psem. *\*ʔ-* (Blažek 1992:162-163).

Similar is the situation of well-attested root pie. *\*g<sup>u</sup>ou-*, ‘cow’. Its origin can be probably found in root paa. *\*gaws-* ‘bull’, known through its descendants in several AA languages (Blažek 1992:154-155).

There may be mentioned also root pie. *\*pekū-* ‘cattle’, ‘(movable) wealth’, as possible (though as for phonological correspondences not entirely correct) borrowing from the root aa. *\*b-k-r*, ‘cattle’ (Dolgopolsky 2008: 258, 1593). However, again from the point of view of Nostratic theory, correct equivalent of given AA root could be western ie. *\*bouk-* ‘bull’, attested mainly via Slavic and Celtic dialects. (Dolgopolsky 2008: 258).

This kind of etymological evidence proves the existence of contact between both language groups directly in PIE homeland’s period and location. The takeover of the whole set of stockbreeding terminology also indicates the cultural

dominance of AA element. However, it does not necessarily prove that it means anything more (like Cargo Cult zeal for example) than logical openness towards the original terms associated with newly adopted technology. The only possible exception here is root *\*pek̥u-*, referring to connection of cattle and wealth, i.e. the connection of goods and social status, which is typical also for Cargo Cult reality.

More sustainable support for PPIE Cargo Cult hypothesis can be found, however, in mythological data. Many motives and themes common for archaic IE traditions can be alternatively interpreted as reminiscences of original adoration of cattle cargo.

McDonald (2004) demonstrates the high symbolical and emotional importance of cattle in the archaic IE world; motif of *cow* of dawn or lactating cow and her calf. It could be rooted in the unusually high importance of cattle keeping, possibly of Cargo Cult nature, at the dawn of PIE society.

But the hottest candidate for the mythological relic of the original Cargo Cult cattle-breeding ideology is the archaic IE concept of *sacredness of cattle*; the taboo imposed on threatening, killing and consumption of cattle, especially cows, except for ritual purposes. As Lincoln pointed out (1981, 1991), it is well attested in the Indo-Iranian area, manifested via stories of bovine magical power (cow Śabalā of Rāmāyana 1.50-55), its inviolability (myth of the pregnant bovine lament, Avesta J. 29) or profane consumption ban (R̥g Veda 7.104.2, 10; Avesta J. 9.30, J. 11.1 etc.). However, also in other parts of the ancient IE world traces of this concept can be noticed; for instance, the key anthropogonic role of the primordial milk cow Auðumla in Gylfagynning, the incident with sacred herds of Helios in Odyssey or generally the common PIE concept of otherworld as a (cattle) pasture *\*uel-*, as Gamkrelidze & Ivanov (1995:723) outlined.

### 1.3 Recomposing the Indo-European Cosmogonic Myth

Considering the supposed presence of the Cargo Cult activities at the beginning of IE culture, it also leads to possible reconsideration of the semantics of well-known and comparatively well-attested cosmogonic myth; the story of the world's creation out of the body of primordial human and cow. If the generally accepted assumption that this myth was one of the central texts of PIE mythological tradition is correct – which I believe it is – then it should bear the traits of the above mentioned innovative cultural system of the Dnieper Rapids, perhaps even the original Cargo Cult ideology.

Reconstructed proto-myth tells the story of three cultural heroes; twin brothers with names *\*Manu-* 'Human', *\*Iemo-* 'Twin' and *\*(S)Th<sub>2</sub>eyr-* 'bull'. *\*Manu-* sacrifices both of them; from his brother's body is created the world and society and

from the bull's body is created domesticated fauna and flora. The most famous proponent of this interpretative approach is Lincoln (1981, 1991).

Several authors accepted Lincoln's view (Mallory 1989, Anthony 2007, etc.), though they seem to avoid judging about the original social roles this couple of cultural heroes should represent. Not so Lincoln, who interpreted this binary opposition as a mythological response to personal division of power in PIE society between priest and king; \*Manu- represents the first mythical priest whereas \*ǵemo- is the primordial king (Lincoln 1981:87).

I believe, however, that certain objections can be raised against this interpretation. First of all, the very assumption about the dual division of power in PIE society seems to be rather unlikely in its early period, not to mention the process of its very formation. As the archaeological data indicate, leaders of early PIE groups were Big Men; their status and social influence was based on their ability to organise and sponsor offerings of cattle associated with communal feasting on its meat. It seems that both religious and worldly aspects of supreme power were provided by only one leading person, probably with a slightly dominating religious component.

This view is supported by knowledge of social anthropology. Anthropologists (Lawrence 1964, Christiansen 1969, Douglas 1996/1970/, etc.) suggested that for the Big Man the accumulation of worldly as well as otherworldly (religiously, magically) legitimised power is rather typical.

Indeed, to postulate so complex an organisation of power, i.e. mythologically reflected and hence culturally stabilised dual division of elite, in elementary cultural system is problematic. The situation of advanced historical IE societies, where this kind of duality seems to be present at least to some degree, should not be anachronistically projected to early PIE times in the Neolithic steppe wilderness.

Given the way archaic societies used to legitimise power of their elites it is rather inappropriate to assume the personal separation of religious and worldly power at the dawn of IE culture. According to one of the theories, religion is an evolutionarily developed tool to regulate human society and stimulate cooperative behaviour. Supernatural agents are seen as the patrons of social norms cross-culturally (Dunbar 2004). Therefore, it is natural for a supreme leader of archaic times to participate in religious affairs or to use the supernatural reality as a source of his status legitimacy.

The research of comparative historical linguistics also supports the proposed all-embracing authority of rather religiously disposed early PIE Big Man leader. As Benveniste demonstrated (1973:312), the power of a PIE supreme ruler \*h<sub>1</sub>rēg- was based on his cultic and judicial function.

A final and none less significant set of reasons to question Lincoln's traditional interpretation is rooted in the reality of mythological texts themselves. Reading them consistently, supposed mythological successors of \*ǵemo- the King are not the

typical or ideal kings at all; they are rather monsters, giants or unworthy wicked rulers.

In Eddaic tradition Ymir is a primordial hermaphroditic giant, father to a demonic race of giants who are hostile to both men and gods. In eastern Slavic Byliny tradition \*ǵemo-'s most likely successor is gigantic bogatyr Jegor Svjatogor ('George the Holy Mountain'), giant of old times who is too strong to inhabit the world of men and after his death he is transformed into a mountain. Titan Atlas of ancient Greek tradition is related to \*ǵemo- theme in almost the same way; he is a primordial giant punished for his participation in war against the gods to be the pillar of heaven and finally is turned into a mountain. Also, their well-known Indo-Iranian counterparts Puruṣa and Gajōmart are rather undifferentiated world giants, non-social and non-human in their nature. Only the act of sacrifice itself humanises them, or their remnants to be more specific, making human friendly reality out of their dead bodies. And definitely they are not kings at all.

Even when \*ǵemo-'s supposed mythological successors tend to be portrayed as kings, they are still only would-be kings, or kings of primordial fore-social times who often manifest themselves to be the sinners, deposed losers and grotesques of a true kingship. This is the case of Roman Remus (<\*ǵemo(*no*)s; \*ǵ /alliterative rotacism to Romulus/ > r; Puhvel 1989:288), greedy for power, or of sinful Avestan Jima. Similarly, in eastern Slavic syncretic аросуфал tradition, namely in the Verse on the Dove/Deep Book (rus. Стих о Голубиной книге), the three social classes are created out of the body of Adam, a primordial fore-social being and losing sinner par excellence, yet no king, of Judeo-Christian tradition. More or less positive characters as Indic Yama or Irish Donn, son of Mill still perform their king offices outside the human world.

On the other hand, and completely different, is the position of \*Manu-'s mythological successors. Eddaic Oðin, Germanic Mannus of Tacitus, Vedic Manu, Manuščir of pre-Zoroastrian Iran, Romulus of Rome, Amaisgen of Irish and others, they are all the positive and central characters; founder fathers, supreme rulers and high priests. This position of \*Manu- as a "good guy" of IE cosmogony seems to be systematically consistent. In Indo-Iranian tradition, where the original concept of sacredness of cattle was hyperbolized to problematize the killing of cows even for religious purposes, \*Manu- was substituted in his role of primordial sacrificer by demonic principle (Ahriman of Avesta, Asurāḥ of Śatapatha Brāhmana), as if to preserve his traditionally positive image.

The third set of reinterpretation supporting arguments is based on both general anthropology of twin myth as well as on the examination of its specific function in modern Cargo Cult movements.

A dualistic myth dealing with the story of twin brothers is culturally universal. The reasons for its popularity are probably cognitive as well as social. From the cognitive point of view, binary thought patterns form a significant part of

AMH's cognition (Dunbar 2004). Due to the structure of their minds, in many cases people have simply no other choice than to perceive and contemplate the world in binary oppositions. As for the social stimuli, according to Douglas (1996/1970/), a dualistic worldview (us; good ones; witch hunters vs. them; evil ones; witches), with the twin myth as one of its common manifestations, typically emerges in elementary organised sedentary societies of small local groups with rather strongly defined boundaries. It means that the emergence of twin myth in certain types of social environments is only natural. Multiply stimulated, it can be invented easily and intuitively, without any theological speculations provided by more complicated social institutions.

Thus the archaic sedentary groups, as well as many modern "primitives", form an ideal environment for the invention and maintenance of twin myth. Particularly as they organise themselves into millennial revivalist movements where the group boundaries and black-and-white worldview is typically amplified.

No wonder then, that in documented Cargo Cult movements the traditional twin myths are often present. They are innovated in order to explain the causes of inequality between aboriginal and western societies; because of a primordial mistake by one of the brothers, ancestor of aborigines, they are today inferior to westerners, whose ancestor, latter of the twin brothers, did not make the mistake (Worsley 1968).

Reconsidering attention in the structure of IE creation myth deserves also the very motif of sacrifice. Examining the texts consequently, it is even not clear, whether it truly is a common PIE theme. In Roman and Vedic variants, the murderous act is more or less (Roman rather less) directly connected with the ritual activity. On the other hand, Eddaic, Avestan, Irish and eastern Slavic apocryphal and epic evidence do not support this kind of interpretation. In fact, the texts seem to rather bear witness against the existence of widespread narrative concept of primordial sacrifice within the PIE cultural area.

However, this is not to say that the sacrifice motif was completely unknown in original PIE narrative tradition. Particular historical realisations of IE creation theme are most likely the descendants of different local variants of PIE narrative folklore. Especially in regard to its macro-contextual background, with its frenetic ritual activity, it is possible that it was a genuine part of PIE tradition, even though it represented only one of several local variants. It is likely that the motives of the twin brother's undesirable or accidental death, but also murder, assassination or even ritual sacrifice coexisted simultaneously and could be combined arbitrarily, some of them allowed, others omitted in current PIE storytelling, all depending on the local audience's preferences.

Similarly questionable is the general significance of the primordial bovine slaughter theme for PIE narrative environment. Its presence is evident only in the case of Indo-Iranian tradition (Avesta, Śatapatha Brāhmana, perhaps Puru asūkta

/pu-vjśa, ‘man-bull’; Lincoln 1981:75/). Here in the IE east, however, the attitude towards cattle is problematized in general and therefore there can be assumed some measure of divergence from the original PIE pattern. Other examples do not contain this motif. Again, statistics seem to witness for its rather less frequent occurrence within the varied narrative portfolio of PIE cosmogony. The assumed *sacredness of cattle* concept discussed above is of little use here as it neither confirms nor disproves the common existence of a cattle-killing theme in PIE narratives; taboo imposed on profane killing of cattle could be narratively reflected as either 1) respectful treatment or 2) killing, though due to the taboo exception only in the case of sacred ritual.

So, it seems that the single common theme across the different historical records of PIE creation myth, and hence the only common PIE matter, is the act of brother-slaying.

Given all the anthropological, linguistic and archaeological arguments presented above, it is appropriate to reconsider the traditional interpretative approach to PIE cosmogony. And this reconsideration can be seen as an opportunity to reinterpret some of its themes and motives as relics of PPIE cattle Cargo Cult ideology. But I believe that it is possible to go even further and identify relics of three different diachronic layers in myth’s text; the most archaic postglacial stage, then the Cargo Cult stage and the latest one, the PIE stage.

### 1.3.1 Song of the First Murderer

It was argued that twin myth typically emerges in elementary sedentary societies of small local groups with rather strongly defined boundaries. It was also demonstrated that the postglacial population of the Dnieper Rapids showed exactly this nature. Ergo it can be assumed, that it represented a fair example of a culture producing a mythology of twin brothers. The twin myth probably formed an important part of its narrative tradition, even in the time before the arrival of AA farmers. In order to identify the innovative Cargo Cult semantics, its possible content before Cargo Cult period should first be reflected.

It is typical for traditional, pre-technical, less complexly organised societies, that their supernatural agents do not take a form of gods, the noble omnipotent powers, beings of nature vastly different from humans’, as they are known from classical literary mythologies of ancient states. These deities are supernatural not by their non-human nature, but mostly by performing their actions in ancient, primordial days, in the *dream time* or in the world and life beyond. They are cultural heroes, originators of important social institutions, habits, geographical locations and/or simply the spirits of the dead, more or less distant ancestors of living people.

As Anthony (2007) pointed out, one of the significant and unique feature of the Dnieper Rapids' cultural system was the operation of permanent intergenerational graveyards with remarkable elaboration of funeral rites. It can then be reasonably expected, that affairs of death, afterlife and underworld played an important role in this cultural environment and so its traditional cultural heroes were somehow associated with death.

And just the content of this kind is present in PIE twin myth, as Lincoln (1991:32-48) demonstrated. The name of Gajōmart, the most famous \*Jemo-like victim of murder in Avestan tradition, means 'mortal life'; Indic Yama rules the Underworld just as the accidentally killed Mill of Irish tradition; Avestan Yima is the king of the Golden Age and vast underground vault. Let there by again mentioned an example of giant bogatyr Svjatogor, who, performing his last adventure, finds a coffin on the top of the Holy Mountain, willingly lies in it and dies. A similar situation is depicted by Russian apocryphal tradition; the skull of Adam, first sinner and originator of three social classes is buried under Christ's cross atop the mountain of Golgotha.

On the basis of these facts it can be assumed that the theme of death eventually represents the most ancient layer in the semantics of IE creation myth. Probably it is associated with the advanced "funeral" culture of steppe hunter-gatherers, which persisted in the area of the Dnieper Rapids since the glacial retreat after the last Ice Age until the arrival of AA farmers. It is likely that this death-focused society produced narrative explaining the very origin of death, probably as a result of some cultural hero's improper, perhaps accidental, act. It is possible that this motif was woven into the twin theme in order to mirror the binary opposition of life and death. People living their everyday lives with cemeteries in their sight and forebears in their minds were well confronted with the distinction between both modes of existence. It can be then assumed that even in the earliest stage their central traditional narrative told the story of twin brothers, where one of them, perhaps due to some mortal accident or even murderous quarrel between the twins, was killed and became the *Lord of the Dead*, i.e. the first dead being in the world and hence the originator and master of the death itself.

Yet one more aspect of the post-glacial Dnieper Rapids' hypothetical narrative folklore is worth consideration. In the cultural systems, where the dead ancestors are chosen for the role of supernatural agents, naturally they are supposed to also be the guarantees of economic prosperity. It is believed, that by means of proper religious practice worldly men can win the favour of ancestors, who will then be helpful in successful management of the worldly economic activities (Worsley 1968, Christiansen 1969, Douglas 1996/1970/).

In the case of hunting-gathering culture it can be expected, that supernatural agents are responsible for the affairs of hunt; abundance of animals, hunting success etc. This also includes the operation of religious specialists of hunters, most

probably shamans, who were supposed to communicate with the otherworld and its inhabitants, the ancestors or the Lord of the Dead himself, just in order to manage the game affairs.

Therefore, it is possible, that a cultural hero associated with death, afterlife and the otherworld was also supposed to operate the game. Perhaps the death-bringing twin himself also played the role of the *Lord of the Animals*; from the world beyond he protected and controlled animals and had even the power to drive them into the hunting territories of worldly men.

### 1.3.2 Song of the Cattle Prophet

It was argued that the arrival of the Lords of the Animals plunged the hunters' cultural system into crisis. Traditional norms, values and authorities were questioned. In this situation, especially on the social periphery, alternative leaders arose. Gathering people, they preached the solutions to their problems. It is likely, that just like in modern Cargo Cults, cultic and ritualistic adaptation to the superior culture with adoption of its significant cultural traits, and mainly economical practice and technology, was identified as the most promising solution.

The changed social situation necessarily required the appropriate narratives to mirror as well as manage the ongoing social transformation. For many reasons (cognitive load, authority of tradition), instead of inventing a brand-new story, it is optimal rather to modify an old one, well and commonly known. As it was argued above, often the participants of certain narrative traditions even stay unaware of textual changes in repeated texts, if only the modifications are managed skilfully enough and/or stories are formally performed in a more or less traditional way. And although, in the case of revitalisation movements, people are often consciously refusing the old principles and establishing the new ones (Mead 1964), still the creative use of the traditional narrative patterns is much more efficient. The more so in the case of the Dnieper Rapids where the twin myth, with its dualism suitable to embrace the new reality of bilateral cultural confrontation, was probably in common use.

In the case of modern Cargo Cults, Melanesian natives believed that technically advanced pale strangers are the dead ancestors who, equipped with miraculous gear, are returning from the overseas otherworld to their living dark-skinned relatives (Worsley 1968). It was told by the South Pacific cargo myths, that Europeans are the descendants of the native cultural hero, who in the beginning did not descend to the earth to originate the native population, like his twin brother, but persisted in lower heavens instead, where he obtained the miraculous cargo and later bestowed it on his European offspring (Worsley 1968).



It is possible that in the collapsing cultural system of Dnieper Rapids the similar sematic shift in mythological texts occurred. The traditional mythical hero of hunters, who ruled the mysterious realm of the otherworld and supernaturally controlled the animals, began to be associated with the arriving farmers. Just like him, they also approached the reality of hunters from the world beyond (the known landscape) and possessed the “supernatural” power to control the animals. Even the biological anthropological distinctions to emphasize the dualistic interpretation was present, though this time it was the strangers who possibly showed the darker skin colour and the more subtle physiognomy, as Anthony (2007) suggested. Thus, the figure of Proto-*\*Ĭemo-*, traditional cultural hero, the lord of the dead and animals, was innovatively transformed into the representative of ambivalent farmers.

In some variants even the traditional association of Proto-*\*Ĭemo* with shamanic profession could be preserved, probably as a manifestation of the population’s negative attitudes, and especially from the viewpoint of alternative Cargo Cult leaders and their followers, towards the traditional elites and their collapsing cultural system. Or, in some variants, both themes could be mingled together. Proto-*\*Ĭemo*’s negative semantics of socially ambitious but defeated monstrosity is well in the line with hunters’ Cargo Cult rebellion, no matter whether against the superiority of foreign farmers or obsolete shamanic leadership in their own ranks.

This kind of syncretism, the transformation of the formerly alien entities to genuine parts of native tradition, in this case the penetration of farmers and their representatives into the symbolic world of steppe hunters, is only natural, cross-culturally observed outcome of inter-cultural communication (Douglas 1996/1970/). Just like in modern Cargo Cults, to avoid cognitive dissonance, any new and socially significant event or fact has to be integrated into the traditional ontology.

Anyway, with this reality seems to be connected perhaps the most significant semantic relic of supposed PPIE Pontic-Caspian Cargo Cult crisis preserved in later IE myths. Hereby I mean the recurrently appearing semantic structure within the IE creation myth, the theme of the destruction of the body, whereas this body more or less explicitly symbolises the society. In IE myths, the killed being is often the representative of the potentially supreme element; primordial human, giant, coming or unworthy king. It represents the society, especially in regard to its slaughter and dismemberment. Through the act of its killing the social cosmos is created.

According to Mary Douglas (1996/1970/), in every cultural system there is close relation between the social and biological body, between the character of society and the attitudes of its members towards their physical bodies. Societies, or at least those of their segments, which are content with the existing

social order have a tendency to produce a cultural system adoring possibilities and needs of the human body or generally materiality, gain etc. The typical examples are historical military elites with their focus on physical strength, pleasure and material gain. Conversely, communities revolting against the social mainstream, like monastic or revitalisation movements, used to deny the positive character of the human body and its physical needs. They preach refusal of material existence in exchange of future rewards, the well-known promise of “pie in the sky”.

This observation could be crucial for Cargo Cult interpretation of the destruction of the body theme. In IE cosmogonic myths the symbolic relationship between social and physical body is perhaps one of the strongest and closest ever, and at the same time, accompanied with quite clear semantics of refusal – its killing and fragmentation. It might then indicate that the core of this theme emerged during the period of social revolt, when traditional social institutions were refused, denied or seriously revised. The society was utterly killed and fragmented.

But myth, in which the alien supremacy is butcherly humiliated, could also have a less symbolic and more direct relationship to its Cargo Cult macro-context. Maybe it should be understood as a narrative compensation of hunters’ frustration, caused by the civilisation superiority of the farming strangers. Therefore, just like in modern Cargo Cults, ancestors of both rival cultural systems are twin brothers, all to demonstrate that both cultures *are equal* and so are their successors. Moreover, the representative of the hunters is a final physical victor over the representative of the previously dominating element. As a loyal follower of his culture, as the true hunter, he simply hunts down, i.e. kills and butchers his human competitor and perhaps also his animal. As for the mentioned similarities between PPIE development and modern Cargo Cults, also note that in certain Melanesian cargo movement the ritual was recorded, where the white pig symbolising the hostile pale-skinned Europeans was exemplarily slaughtered during the sacrifice (Worsley 1968:23). Perhaps this is one of the reasons, why the representative of hunters is labelled during the later PIE period in the most noble ethnocentric way, \*Manu-, ‘human’, while his opponent becomes \*Iemo-, ‘a twin’, only an appendix, something of secondary importance without even a proper name.

It is then possible, that during the crisis the concept of Proto-\*Manu- emerged, a positive hero representing the hunters’ yearning for a social change and their struggle against all the forms of current organisation and domination, and especially against the supremacy of foreign farmers.

### 1.3.3 Song of the Big Man

Of course, myth is not the record of history. Narrative patterns reflecting macro-contextual events are constantly adjusted to mirror the everyday mezzo-contextual reality. Orally transmitted texts constantly change, ever to respond to the actual needs and moods of its audience. More than three generations are long enough to erase or at least deform significantly most of the memories concerning the different social situation in the past, even the most serious of the crisis.

Nevertheless, during the diachronic transmission of any orally transmitted narrative, despite all the obligatory pressures of universal cognitive patterns and general patterns of human social life, certain traits of the original historical context can be preserved. If they are not in direct contradiction with all the pressing mezzo-contextual biases, they can survive in a form of subtle but structurally coherent semantic details (Cigán 2010). In this way historical events can stamp the seal of uniqueness to any narrative; especially in the case of socially significant events which occurred during the period of its first composition.

PIE creation myth, brother-slaying sociogonic story of \*Manu-, \*ǵemo- and \*(S)Th<sub>2</sub>eǵr, could be no exception to this assumption. Frequent occurrence of a more or less identical cosmogonic theme in different historical IE traditions suggests that at least its basic pattern was commonly shared in the PIE cultural area. Being so popular, it had to be current above all. As such, it mirrored the context of a stabilised society, scarcely aware of past crisis, solemnly ancient, being convinced of its unchanged existence since the mythical beginnings of time. To put it in other words, bearers of this myth did not realise, that their society emerged during the crisis as a result of its successful Cargo Cult solution.

Therefore, it would be naïve to assume, that the story about slaughtering the old and establishing the new is something like a documentary narrative reflection of the positive historical development from the depression of crisis towards the brighter tomorrows of a new society. It should be rather seen as a condensed ideological legitimisation of a current social order. It is simply an aetiological narrative on a non-egalitarian, vertically stratified Big Man System society.

On the other hand, this narrative was naturally built of older motifs and themes. Ideological reminiscences on the past crisis could in some cases unconsciously infiltrate into its body. This is the case of the butchering theme. Even though deprived of original Cargo Cult semantics (a revitalising attack against the social body), still this textual structure was useful as an introduction to the theme of stratified society.

Thus, the story of creating the new society through the killing of the old humanoid being is probably a combination of two semantically, as well as historically, independent elements. The first of them, the theme of slaughter and fragmentation,

is a semantically emptied heritage of the forgotten Cargo Cult past, a narrative fossil deprived of its original meaning. The latter one, the emergence of stratified society theme, is the etiologic legitimisation of current social differences. Both are woven into one story only mechanically, due to their natural mutual affiliation concerning the needs of *suĵet* and its internal logic; when old (primordial body in this case) comes to its end, something new (social hierarchy in this case) necessarily begins. And no wonder that they are woven into the twin theme. This kind of narrative is cognitively available and probably it had been associated with the slaughter theme in the area of PIE Homeland since the time immemorial.

\*Manu-, the ruler and sacrificer, the priest-king, is the mythological reflection of the elite member of stabilised PIE stockbreeding Big Man System society. Probably he started his historical career as Anthony's richly equipped and decorated leader with the stone mace of Dnieper-Donets II culture, famous for sponsoring and organization of religious rituals, to be known eventually as *h<sub>1</sub>rēg*, PIE supreme entrepreneur of religiously based authority.

In PIE period \*ǵemo-, on the other hand, was finally stabilised as simply a binary counterpart of \*Manu-. As an opposition to \*Manu-'s central and positive character, he is depicted as someone who is less important, even negative. Thus, he lacks \*Manu-'s designation of anthropocentrism par excellence and is named only as a Twin, i.e. 'a copy', 'a secondary one'. He is only a subject of \*Manu-'s actions and acquires further negative characteristics, most likely along the older – Cargo Cult or even earlier postglacial – motivic lines; lord of the dead, twin-brother representing equality, deposed an unworthy ruler, monster, sinner, stranger, butchered a social body, etc. The old motif of Proto-\*ǵemo- the Lord of the Animals, however, was forgotten. PIE cattle herders were no more interested in game affairs and the domestic animals were under the control of \*Manu- after all.

	contextual background	narrative manifestation
PIE narrative themes culturally exclusive for PIE homeland	successfully completed transformation of innovative Cargo Cult to the central culture of revitalized hierarchal Big Man System stockbreeding society	in some variants older motives preserved: ritual/sacrifice, killing of animal/cow, Proto-*ǵemo-'s monstrosity, otherworldliness (his game-keeping function forgotten)
		negative character of *ǵemo- stabilised: represents the binary counterpart of *Manu-, the matter of creation
		positive character of *Manu- stabilised: represents stockbreeding Big Man elite (accompanied by cattle) managing (creating) the stratified Big Man System society
		legitimization of current social system: aetiology of social hierarchy expressed by means of cognitive optimal twin myth using older semantics

	contextual background	narrative manifestation
PPIE Cargo Cult narrative themes culturally exclusive for Dnieper Rapids	collapse of death-focused hunter-gatherers' society caused by the arrival of farmers as The Lords of the Animals: emergence of hunters' evolutionary clusters with innovative Cargo Cult practise and ideas compensating for hunters' cultural inferiority to farmers	reflection of Cargo Cult reality: ritual aspect of activities emphasized (achieving goal by means of ritual)
		denial of foreign superior social system: Proto-*Manu- destructs its bodily representation Proto-* emo- as superior farmer (and cow as a symbol of his cargo possession)
		denial of traditional social system: Proto-*Manu- destructs its bodily representation Proto-* emo- as obsolete shamanic leader (and animal as a symbol of his power over the game)
		negative character of Proto-* emo- stabilised: represents superior farmers and/or hunters' shamanic elites identified with Lord of the Dead and Animals, depicted as an alien monster and/or unworthy ruler
		positive character of Proto-*Manu- stabilised: represents hunters and/or hunters' innovators as a "true humans" and winners over the alien monster and unworthy ruler
		emergence of Cargo Cult twin myth
Postglacial narrative themes culturally exclusive for Dnieper Rapids	society of death-focused hunter-gatherers, sedentary and of higher settlement density	shamanic elite identified with Lord of the Dead and Animals
		Lord of the Dead and Animals motif emerge: supernatural connection of otherworld and game keeping cause accumulation of both functions in one supernatural agent
		Lord of the Animals myth: cultural hero as a keeper of the game
		Lord of the Dead myth: cultural hero as an originator of death and ruler of underworld, the part of a twin myth
Postglacial narrative themes culturally universal	elementary hunter-gatherers' society	myths concerning the primordial aetiological acts of cultural heroes
		supernatural agents as ancestral cultural heroes
		twin myth

Figure 3

A proposed diachronic development of this Pontic-Caspian prehistory's central ontological narrative is summarised via the pair of figures. While Figure 3 is focused on contextual changes and their influence on emergence and transformation of corresponding textual structures, the Figure 4 rather demonstrates supposed textual transformation of myth as a whole, concentrating on the basic structure of its sujet.

TIME PERIOD	GENERAL MESSAGE OF THE MYTH	GENERAL SUJET STRUCTURE OF THE MYTH
<p>PIE PERIOD</p>	<p>TWIN MYTH Origin of the stratified society</p>	<p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #cccccc;">Twin Brother „The Big Man“</div> <div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">KILLS</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #cccccc;">Twin Brother „The Twin“</div> </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">Relics of the Slaughter of Social Body / Supreme Enemy Theme and Lord of the Dead Theme</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 40%;"></div> <div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">AND</div> <div style="width: 40%; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #cccccc;">Twin Brother „The Big Man“ creates stratified society</div> </div> </p>
<p>PPIE PERIOD Cargo Cult Crisis</p>	<p>TWIN (CARGO) MYTH Compensation for inferiority: Slaughter of the Social Body / Supreme Enemy</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #cccccc;">Twin Brother „The Human“</div> <div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">KILLS</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #cccccc;">                     Twin Brother „Farmer the Monster“ (and his cattle cargo) or Twin Brother „Shaman the Monster“ (and his game)                 </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 40%;"></div> <div style="width: 60%; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #cccccc;">Relics of the Lord of the Dead / Animals Theme</div> </div>
<p>POSTGLACIAL PERIOD</p>	<p>TWIN MYTH Origin of Death</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #cccccc;">Twin Brother (who becomes) „The Hunter“</div> <div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">KILLS</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #cccccc;">Twin Brother (who becomes) „The Lord of the Dead/ Animals“</div> </div>

Figure 4