

LUNAR MYTHOLOGY
A CASE STUDY OF NATKO NODILO'S
MYTHOLOGY OF NATURE

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Abstract: While the reconstructions of Old Slavic religion are mostly based on solarism and lunarism (solar and lunar mythology), whereby solarism is represented by Alexander Brückner, Vittore Pisani and Raffaele Pettazzoni, and lunarism by Evel Gasparini, Lubor Niederle, Mircea Eliade and Veselin Čajkanović, Nodilo initiated his own mythological re/construction with the epicentral mytheme (or, in his attribution – mythologem) of Svantevit (Svantevid/Vid), considering that Helmold's Chronicle of the Slavs determines Arkona's Svantevit as deus deorum of the Baltic-Polish Slavs (Svantevit's Temple in Arkona on Rujana – the present-day Baltic island of Rügen/Rugia). In the last chapter of his study *The Old Faith of Serbs and Croats* (1885–1890), it is evident that Nodilo did not apply the absolute conclusion of pansolarism in his re/construction of the old faith of Serbs and Croats.

Keywords: Natko Nodilo, *The Old Faith of Serbs and Croats*, old faith, solarism, lunar mythology, *naturism*, *zoo-symbolism*

“It is even probable that the religious valorisation of the lunar rhythms made possible the first great anthropo-cosmic syntheses of the primitives.”
(Eliade, 1986, p. 138)

Compared to contemporary reconstructions of the Croatian pantheon of the “old faith” (cf. Vitomir Belaj and Radoslav Katičić), the starting point of which is Nestor's *Kiev Chronicles* (*The Tale of Bygone Years*, around 1113), and based on the semiotic-philological research of Vyacheslav Vs. Ivanov and Vladimir N. Toporov, Natko Nodilo, Croatia's first mythologist, proceeded – in the sense of reconstruction of the “old faith” of Serbs and Croats – from

Helmold's *Chronicle* (*Chronica Slavorum*, around 1170), on the track of the *solar mythology* theory (by Friedrich Max Müller) and the *meteorological mythology* theory (by Adalbert Kuhn and Wilhelm Schwartz).¹

As historian and mythologist, Nodilo opted for the aforementioned source as the starting point of the reconstruction of the “old faith” of Serbs and Croats. The study had initially been titled *Religion of Serbs and Croats on the Basis of Folk Songs, Narratives, and Oral Tradition* (*Religija Srbâ i Hrvatâ, na glavnoj osnovi pjesama, priča i govora narodnog*, published between 1885 and 1890), which is considered the first reconstruction of ancient Croatian mythology. Indeed, some were “confused and even impressed by Nodilo’s expositions, yet slighted him by stating that his work was science fantasy” (Antoljak, 1992, p. 367).

Contrary to Nodilo’s “allegorical”² interpretation (allegorism) of *women’s* lyric poems, heroic songs and mythical narratives, which he considers the first source of studying the myth, and which he explores within the framework of Müller’s mythology of nature (*naturism*) – the theory of the myth as the “disease of the language” – Belaj and Katičić base their reconstruction of the mythical background of Croatian folk customs and beliefs on New Year’s Eve

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² On Nodilo's reconstruction of South Slavic mythology (old faith, religion), which he based on folklore records, while pointing out that “the people’s foremost religious treasure” consists of epic songs or, more precisely, pure epic songs (“where miracles are found at every step”) and mythical narratives (*folk tales*), in which he interprets a mythical matrix, combined with the chronicles of Christian missionaries, within the framework of which he particularly proceeds from Helmold’s book *Chronica Slavorum*, which refers to Baltic Slavs, cf. Marjanić, 2002a; 2003; 2015; 2018. Nodilo accentuates true/pure epic songs which, compared to pure historical songs, he determines by using the category of miracles. Nodilo believes that true/pure epic songs – collected in Vuk Karadžić’s second collection *Serbian Folk Songs, Vol. 2* (*Srpske narodne pjesme II*) – contain the matrix of an ancient religion. Therefore, in his research on the *old* faith of Serbs and Croats, Nodilo uses this collection of songs as the basis for his research (Nodilo, 1981, p. 14). Alongside these songs, which Karadžić terms *the oldest heroic [songs] (junačke najstarije)*, Nodilo states that one should also begin with *bugarštica* songs, collected in Baltazar Bogišić’s *Folk Songs from Older, Primarily Littoral Inscriptions (Narodne pjesme iz starijih, najviše primorskih zapisa, 1878)*(cf. Marjanić, 2018). On Natko Nodilo in more detail contextually-wise, cf. Marjanić, 2018, and on the nineteenth-century mythological school known as the “mythology of nature” – the *solar mythology* theory (by Friedrich Max Müller) and the *meteorological mythology* theory (by Adalbert Kuhn and Wilhelm Schwartz) – applied by Nodilo in his reconstruction of the “old faith” (mythology, religion) of Serbs and Croats, cf. Vries, 1984. Briefly put, this nineteenth-century “mythology of nature” considers that the primordial, elementary religion turned to the phenomena of nature. And while Müller represented solarism as the *theory of spring and dawn*, the *meteorological mythology theory* by Adalbert Kuhn and Wilhelm Schwartz nevertheless considered that the primordial form of religion referred to the celestial phenomena. Or, as Verlyn Flieger states: “Kuhn expanded Müller’s theory to include a variety of weather phenomena – clouds, lighting-bolts, thunder – but did not substantially change its direction” (Flieger, 2003, p. 30).

(pre-Christian *koledas*) and St. George procession songs announcing the holy wedding that takes place on Midsummer's Day. Compared to Nodilo, who reconstructs the incestuous hierogamy of the supreme divine twin binomial (Svantevit/Vid – Vida/Živa), Katičić and Belaj's reconstruction focuses on the incestuous hierogamy (incest out of ignorance) of the twin descendants (Juraj – Mara) of the supreme divine duality. All of this highlights the fundamental difference between Nodilo's and Katičić and Belaj's reconstructions, depending on the primary source used in the reconstruction of the South Slavic pantheon (cf. Marjanić, 2002a; 2003; 2018). Furthermore, compared to Indo-European comparative mythology in Nodilo's *The Old Faith of Serbs and Croats*, which (partially) disregards the South Slavic-Russian-Baltic links (in the aforementioned term, under 'Baltic links' I mean the Baltic people),³ Katičić and Belaj achieve the reconstruction of the Croatian pantheon (with the supreme/ masculine deity of Perun/the Thunderer) within the framework of Slavic and Baltic folklore forms, the reconstruction of ancient Slavic religious system and its integration into Indo-European comparative mythology (cf. Belaj, 1998a, pp. 29-31). And while Katičić and Belaj begin their reconstruction with Perun (with regard to *Kiev Chronicles*), Nodilo starts his from Svantevit, considering that Helmold's *Chronicle of the Slavs* determines Arkona's Svantevit as *deus deorum* of the Baltic-Polish Slavs (Svantevit's Temple in Arkona on Rujana – the present-day Baltic island of Rügen/Rugia).

Proceeding from Helmold's report, which defines the Arkonian Svantevit as the supreme deity of the Rugians and as *deus deorum* of the Baltic-Polabian Slavs, Nodilo *extends* the aforementioned theonym to the concept of the supreme (*global*, in the *Slavic* sense) deity of Old Slavic Olympus, and thereby of the *South Slavic* pantheon (which figures as Vid in Nodilo's reconstruction). This deity, as indicated by Vitomir Belaj (1998, pp. 60-61), can be compared to Perun, considering the fact that Svantevit – the supreme god of Baltic Slavs – had a dominant military function, and scientists have since long ago compared him to Perun. Furthermore, V. Belaj notes that there are often chapels of St. Vid on mountain peaks in our territory as substitutes to the Thunderer, and that Svantevit acted as Perun's alternation as early as the Pagan period (cf. Belaj, 1998, p. 73). According to Nodilo's concept of anthropology of religion, natural religion (naturism) is defined by geography. *Aryan* (Indo-Iranian) religion is meteorologically contextualised by *cold* climate, *that is*, by three (natural) epiphenomena: house/domestic hearth, from which religion of ancestors stems, to whom "the secret spark of life was ignited"; celestial daylight ("tremendous fire") that "conquers both winter and night, and sprouts fruits from the ground" – Nodilo thereby accentuates that *celestial daylight* (figuring as Svantevit – the "all-seeing god") "was considered the primary and supreme god by the Aryans,

³ I use the term *Baltic Slavic* for the Baltic Slavs, and *Baltic-Slavic* (or, as noted by Vitomir Belaj (2000) – Balto-Slavic) for religious matrices of the Baltic people and the Slavs.

as well as by the nations derived from them (Nodilo, 1981, p. 26); and atmospheric phenomena, which figure as meteorological aides to celestial *daylight*. From the aforementioned epiphenomena, particularly from celestial *daylight*, Nodilo induces Svantevit/Svantevid/Vid as the supreme Slavic Olympian, with whom he seeks to restore the lost Slavic god of celestial light. The lexeme meaning *sky* (i.e. *deiws*), preserved in the roots of West Indo European lexemes (save for Slavic and Iranian ones), when meaning deity, uses the evidential matrix that the *idea* on God is related to sacral celestial *light* (or, as Nodilo termed it, *vidilo/daylight*) and transcendental heights (cf. Marjanić, 2018).⁴

This is merely a brief contextualisation of Nodilo's study (cf. Marjanić, 2018) compared to contemporary research of Croatian mythology/pantheon, which – as regards Croatian philology and ethnology – is conducted by philologist Radoslav Katičić (1930 – 2017) and ethnologist Vitomir Belaj.

Introduction: Lunar mythology

– planetary parental pantheon and the concept of calendar

And while Nodilo relates the “*Vid*” mythology (Svantevit – Svantevid/Vid) and solarism/solar mythology to annual customs, he determines the Moon/lunarism as the concept of calendar measurement. In the chapter “The Moon and the Morning Star, Including Miloš's Legend,” which is the final chapter of Nodilo's study *The Old Faith of Serbs and Croats* and is dedicated to lunar mythology and the *metaphysics* of the Moon (or, as defined by Durand, the *Mother of Plurality*); it builds upon the chapter “Religion of the Tomb”, whereby Nodilo places the Moon in connection with the *cult of ancestors* – he seeks to re/construct the calendar concept of time on the example of oral literature *holdings*. Therefore he interprets the data from the oral literature worlds, according to which the knightly brother from epic songs is *overcast* in the fourth year, with the context in which he *disappears* in the fourth *čest* (part) of the day; if he is *led* through *twelve chambers* (the mytheme of spatial-cosmic transition) in oral literature verses, the aforementioned dodecalogic chronotope is determined by the temporal category of twelve *nocturnal* hours (Nodilo, 1981, p. 96). Lidija D. Delić demonstrates that the whole epic world orients itself towards the rising and setting of the Sun and the movements of the Moon, and that epic literature produced a constant formula, with which the symbolic (ritual) death of epic hero(in)es is indicated by the absence of the Sun and the Moon – “[...] the heroic katabasis was linked to the subject of slavery and liberation

⁴ On Nodilo's reconstruction of Svantevit – Svantevid/Vid (“*Vid*” mythology) as the supreme Slavic deity, cf. Marjanić, 2002a; 2003.

from the community, which figures as the symbolic space of death” (Delić, 2017, pp. 85-101).

According to Nodilo’s study, the ‘*Vid*’ concept (Svantevit – Svantevid/Vid), the Sun and the Moon, reconstruct cyclic time (*circulus vitiosus*); the ‘*Vid*’ concept and the Sun reconstruct the daily and yearly cycle, and the Moon – the weekly and monthly one. And while the Moon (in the night sky) *outlines* time, the ‘*Vid*’ concept (the supreme deity of Svantevit – Svantevid/Vid in Nodilo’s reconstruction of the “old faith” of Serbs and Croats) and the Sun pro-creatively affect growth and germination, the vegetation rhythms.⁵ Compared to the Sun, which manifests itself in an invariable category, the lunar rhythms/phases (the birth, death and resurrection of the Moon) manifest *rhythm*, a cosmic rhythmic movement, or, as observed by Eliade: “For we must not forget that what the moon reveals to religious man is not only that death is indissolubly linked with life but also, and above all, that death is not final, that it is always followed by a new birth” (Eliade, 1986, p. 138).

Since celestial bodies were regarded as *masters of time*, the concept of *sacred* time and its measurement is close to astrology and astronomy. When considering astral mythology, Nodilo proceeds from the grammatical category of gender (and sex), indicating that the lexeme *Sun-ce* (the Sun) is a diminutive in *all* Slavic languages and *dialects*, while the initial Old Slavic form of *slъno* was assigned *masculine gender* (Nodilo, 1981, p. 148).⁶ The language is characterised by the initial division of grammatical gender into masculine and feminine, while the notion of neuter gender/sex was introduced later (cf. Müller, 1997, pp. 194-196). According to Michel Bréal, neuter gender in Indo-European languages correspond to the archaic division into *inanimate* and *animate* entities: “The division of genders by sex came later” (Durand, 1991, p. 66). And while Sūryā has been determined in Vedas as *female*, or, more precisely – Sūrya (the Sun as a celestial body) and Sūryā/Sunny (cf. Nodilo, 1981, p. 168), the Germans, Lithuanians and Russians assign to the Sun feminine gender, whereby the Sun figures as the wife of the Moon in Lithuanian and Russian folklore imaginarium (cf. Nodilo, 1981, p. 149).⁷ Furthermore, Nodilo points

⁵ And while the night is etymologically and cosmically close to *nothing* (e.g. German: *Nacht* – *nichts*; Russian: *ночь* – *ничто*; English: *night* – Late Old English: *niht*, “the dark part of a day; the night as a unit of time”), the day is an endowment, an endower, *deus, devas* (Pavlović, 1986, p. 98).

⁶ The nouns ‘Moon’ and ‘Sun’ both contain a diminutive suffix (cf. Gluhak, 1993, p. 415).

⁷ In his work *Il matriarcato slavo: antropologia culturale dei Protoslavi (Slavic Matriarchy: Cultural Anthropology of the Proto-Slavs, 1973)*, Evel Gasparini notes that the Sun is of neuter gender in Slavic languages and of feminine gender in Baltic ones, whereas the Moon is a noun of masculine gender in both language groups, and concludes that Eurasia did not have a separate worship of the Sun (cf. Kulišić, 1979, p. 114). Špiro Kulišić (ibid.) indicates that, in South Slavic oral poetry, the Sun and the Moon have only a mother and no father, and in some songs,

out that the aforementioned grammatical-*sexual* determinant was probably initiated under Germanic influence.

When quoting the song with the verses “he walks across the bright sky – and marks the days and years” from Stojanović’s collection, Nodilo (1918, p. 592) does not explicate that the aforementioned verses indicate the Moon as the concept of time *measurement*. Nenad Đ. Janković considers the very aforementioned verses to be the evidential matrix of the Moon serving as the *measurer* of time (Janković, 1951, p. 166; Belaj, 1998, p. 107). Nodilo notes that, in the beginning, the Moon measured time for the *Aryans* (the Indo- Iranian),⁸ indicating that the lexeme *Moon* is derived from the root **mē* (cf. Belaj, 1998, p. 107), meaning *measurer*. Compared to *standard* interpretations, according to which the Moon figures as a feminine deity related to lunar phases/female cycles, in Nodilo’s system it figures as a masculine deity whose attributes were appropriated in oral literature verses e.g. by Miloš Obilić – “The most significant features of Miloš’s expressive face were captured from the divine Moon” (Nodilo, 1981, p. 612).

Briefly put, it is evident that the cosmic rectangle – made up of Heaven/Svantevit – Svantevid/Vid (father of all gods), the Sun, the Moon, and Earth – is filled with masculine deities in Nodilo’s re/construction, naturally, with the exception of Earth/goddess Vida – Živa.⁹ Specifically, Helmold’s *Chronicle* also mentions the Polabian goddess Siwa, who is defined by Nodilo as the supreme Slavic goddess, and the aforementioned theomorphic binomial of Svantevit/Svantevid (whose theonym is interpreted by Nodilo in the sense of celestial daylight) and Siwa at the South Slavic level, in his interpretation, figures as Vid – Vida/Živa. Furthermore, according to this theomorphic pair of Vid – Vida/Živa, Nodilo’s reconstruction of South Slavic mythology (old faith) differs from the more recent re/constructions by Vitomir Belaj and Radoslav Katičić, which are based on the theomorphic binomial from the East Slavic pantheon, Perun – Mokosh. Therefore, two re/constructions of the Slavic goddess are possible; while Helmold’s *Chronica Slavorum* quotes Siwa (Živa) as the Polabian Goddess, in *Kiev Chronicles*, naturally, we have Mokosh as the Russian goddess (Marjanić, 2002b).

the Sun appears in the role of uncle, which corresponds to the numerous traces of avunculate in South Slavic folk customs.

⁸ Nodilo (1981, p. 39) establishes a difference between Aryans (the Indo-Iranian; “Aryan and Slavic tree of light”) and Indo-Europeans (Slavs as western Indo-Europeans). However, he nevertheless occasionally introduces synonymy between Aryans and Indo-Europeans in the course of the study.

⁹ On Nodilo’s reconstruction, with which he *initiates* the dyadic (celestial Vida – terrestrial Živa) goddess, whom he establishes by comparing goddess Vida to Greco-*Latin* (supreme) goddesses – “marital and native goddesses” Hera and Juno (Nodilo, 1981, p. 66) – cf. Marjanić, 2003.

Theoretical framework: Nodilo's *mythology of nature* and Indo-European comparative mythology

It is only within the framework of deliberating the Moon, considering the fact that he assigns to it the concept of time measurement, that Nodilo proceeds to examine in more detail the Old Slavic calendar (irrespective of yearly/calendar customs), and concludes that *our forefathers* imagined the Moon in *three phases* (first quarter, full moon, last quarter), while the year, day and night were imagined in three or four *main parts*, which is a more recent concept of temporal measurement. As the final concept of division and calculation of time, (naturally,) hours emerge: "And yet, in present stories of Indo-European nations, night time is also mythically counted in hours, as in three or four nightly intervals, *vigiliae*" (Nodilo, 1981, p. 96). He detects that Indo-European narratives thematise the Moon as occasionally lasting 30 or 27 days,¹⁰ and the year as lasting 12 or 13 months, whereby the thirteen-month year is older than the twelve-month solar one. Nenad Đ. Janković explicates that we cannot determine the character of the Slavic year – i.e. whether it was solar/lunar, which is "slightly fewer than 11 days shy of the solar year," or lunisolar. The difference between the solar and the lunar year can *increase* up to a month in fewer than three years, "so that after three lunar years lasting 12 months each, one should add a single 13th month in order to harmonise it with the solar year" (Janković, 1951, p. 165). Svetlana M. Tolstaya points out that all Slavs in the past adhered to lunar time – the traditional system of calculating time according to Moon phases (new moon, full moon, eclipse) (Tolstaya, 2001, p. 355).¹¹

Nodilo begins his study on lunar mythology "The Moon and the Morning Star, Including Miloš's Legend" with the apodictic statement that the Serbs and Croats considered/personified the Moon (lunar anthropomorphism) as a *divine being*: "Of that there is no doubt" (Nodilo, 1981, p. 589).¹² For example, the following *Quadriga* from the island of Krk can testify to the fact that *lunolatry* was also practiced in *our* territory:

¹⁰ Cf. Nodilo's examination of *nundines* (Latin *nundinae* – from *novem* meaning "nine," and *dies* meaning "day") – a 27-day month made up of three parts lasting nine days each. The Latins (Romans) were the ones who termed *nundines/nundinae/novemdinae* (Nodilo, 1981, p. 625; Marjanić, 2002a; cf. Attali, 1992, p. 59). Vitomir Belaj (1998, p. 119) believes that the relevant indirect evidence for the vernal beginning of the Slavic year is the intercalary/leap month that served to harmonise the lunar and the solar year and was added at the end of each third year.

¹¹ Scientific examinations of the Moon's movements and the alternation of the Moon/lunar phases establish the following four phases: new moon, first quarter, full moon, and last quarter.

¹² By proceeding, for example, from Nodilo's study and the dissertation *Croatian Folk Beliefs on the Moon (Narodna vjеровanja o Mjesecu kod Hrvata*, submitted at the Faculty of Theology in Zagreb on 20 December 1945) by Marin Šemudvarac, Ivan Mužić stresses "that to this day, since pre-Antique times, the cult of the Moon has continually dominated the territory of the Roman province of Dalmatia" (Mužić, 2001, p. 246).

...in the olden days... some worshipped Mars, some Mercury, some Venus, some the Moon, and some the Sun, and nothing else; there are some heathens and lunatics (deuces, fools) who do the same now, they see a new moon, bow to it and say: 'Hail be, holy Moon!' Some of them recite, some sing, and say: 'Hail be, holy *bazg*', or 'holy *berbana*', albeit to another senseless creature (*qtd. in* Bratulić, 1987, p. 39).

Nodilo finds evidential matrix in pagan *metania* (Greek *metanoia*, deep, pious, servile bowing), which is verbalised (the ritual's verbal symbol) in Serbia (i.e. among the Vlach population in eastern Serbia) at celebrating baptismal name day (Serbian Orthodox patron saint celebration): "This *metania* is for the moon and for all the stars giving us light!" (which Nodilo finds in Miličević's study *Život Srba seljaka – Baptismal Name / Krsno ime*, cf. Kulišić, Petrović, Pantelić, 1970, p. 201). Furthermore, he carefully studies the Moon's personifications (lunar anthropomorphism) in folk narratives. For example, in the story of the *snake groom* (*Zmija mladoženja*) (Karadžić, 1988, pp. 80-82), the bride in search of the *snake groom* reaches the Moon and the Moon's mother, who gives her a *golden hen* with chicks. Certain stories thematise the Little Moon who, according to Nodilo's (1981, p. 589) interpretation, figures as the Moon's son (cf. Karadžić, 1852, p. 353). Nodilo explicates that Helmold (*Chronica Slavorum*), as well as other *northern* chroniclers (i.e. who authored chronicles referring to Baltic Slavs) (cf. Marjanić, 2003), do not testify of the Moon in the Slavic religious system; however, "this silence does not critically provide a solution" (Nodilo, 1981, p. 589). As the counterpoint to the aforementioned, he refers to historical data on Russians, who made offerings to Lightning, Thunder, Sun, and *Luna* (Moon) as early as 14th century: "Apart from the male name of 'Moon', which is used by all Slavs, there is also the female name of 'Luna', used by Russians and old and new Slovenes" (*ibid.*). Dušan Bandić notes that, even today, the word *Luna* stands for death in some Russian dialects, while the verb derived from the aforementioned root covers the meaning of *to fail, to perish* (Bandić, 1991, p. 81).

Nodilo thereby detects that the Moon in mythical songs of South Slavs primarily manifests itself through hierogamy; the latter concept is confirmed by the Vedic Sūryā/Sun, who (as a feminine deity) marries the male Soma/Moon, and by *Lietuva*/Lithuanian *mythology* "in which the wife Saule (Sun) is in equal *intercourse* with her husband Menu (Moon)" (N590).¹³ The song *The Wedding of the Shining Moon, Again* (*Opet ženidba Mjesečeva*, Karadžić, 1841, pp. 156-157) thematises hierogamy¹⁴ by which the sister, Morning Star,

¹³ In Latvian folklore, Sola/Saule is the wife of Menes/Mēness (the Moon, god of the Moon), who seems to be given the function of the warrior god (Eliade, 1991a, p. 29).

¹⁴ Stipe Botica determines that Nodilo sought to prove with a series of evidence that "marriage is a typicality which is left in epic poetry in bygone times as a kind of divine covenant; hence, we do not have to consider historical remembrance" (Nodilo, 1981, p. 459; cf. Botica, 2013, p. 366), and he also interprets in the same allegorism the "historical" mytheme of marriage,

gives away *the Moon* to be married to his *fiery sweetheart*/ Lightning of Clouds (Munja od oblaka) (cf. Marjanić, 2008). Within the framework of the mytheme of the Moon's hierogamy, Nodilo chooses several songs – *Fiery Sweetheart* (*Ljuba ognjevitica*, Karadžić, 1841, pp. 162-163) and (Karadžić, 1841, pp. 154-157, songs 231, 230, 229) (*The Sun and the Moon Woo a Maiden / Sunce i Mjesec prose djevojku*), of which Songs 230 (*The Wedding of the Shining Moon / Ženidba sjajnoga Mjeseca*) and 231 (*The Wedding of the Shining Moon, Again / Opet ženidba Mjesečeva*) are even nowadays still taken as confirmation that the Moon figures as a deity of masculine *gender/sex* (cf. Nodilo, 1981, p. 591).¹⁵ Briefly put, the hierogamy of the Moon and the Fiery Lightning, assisted by the Moon's sister Morning Star, is considered by Nodilo a general belief of Old Slavs, whereby all gods, including the Moon, Morning Star, and the Sun, are Svantevit's (Vid's/Svantevid's) children (Nodilo, 1981, pp. 591-593).

With lunar mythology, Nodilo introduces the discourse on the cosmic alteration of Vid and the Moon, which manifests itself in three hypostases – first quarter, full moon, and last quarter (Nodilo, 1981, p. 625). Furthermore, he places the Moon in context of the cult of the Great Mother (*Mater Magna*), considering the fact that it manifests itself as numerous goddesses (e.g. Isis, Ishtar, Artemis, Diana, Hekate). He explicates that the *Latin* (Roman) and Greek goddess of the Moon appears trimorphically – Diana is called Trivia, as e.g. in Seneca's *Medea* (Trivia, Latin *trivium* – crossroads; “she who walks on three paths,” or “she who has three paths” – woman, mother, and child) (Nodilo, 1981, p. 625), while some Roman poets attribute her with the determinants *triplex* and *triformis*. For example, the *Indus* worshipped the Moon in its three hypostases: in *Vedas*, new and *full Moon* differ by their feminine names from the *depleted*, masculine Moon *in waning* (cosmological *descensus*). From masculine names, the *Vedic* Moon was given the theonyms Chandra, Indu and Soma (Nodilo, 1981, p. 615), whereby Soma denotes *ambrosia*

since poetic “account does not adhere to the historical one” (Nodilo, 1981, p. 629). As regards the historical subjects of marriages, Stipe Botica also adds the following: “However, we should also count on the significant elements of fictionalisation of epic poetry, when all of this is possible and justified for literary reasons” (2013, p. 366).

¹⁵ Miodrag Pavlović (1986, p. 95) notes that, in the song *The Wedding of the Shining Moon* (*Ženidba sjajnoga Mjeseca*, Karadžić, 1841, pp. 155-156), lightning gives gifts – “arranges saints according to calendar, or calendar according to saints.” The aforementioned song unifies two orders of deities – planetary (pagan) saints with Christian ones, which is an example of *duodoxy*, or, according to Eliade's definition – *Cosmic Christianity*. Furthermore, he interprets that the aforementioned song thematises wedding as an eponym of the night and day sky.

and *drinks*. The *Indus* assigned Moon Milk to the celestial cow, while the Indian lexeme *go* possesses a double meaning – *cow* and *moon* (*ibid.*).¹⁶

Our forefathers viewed the celestial measurer in masculine anthropomorphisation – nictomorphic traveller and hero, *old soldier*, celestial nictomorphic warrior (cf. Nodilo, 1981, pp. 596, 589). It was *feminised* in certain languages (or, using Nodilo's term – “maidened”); however, the aforementioned transgression into feminine grammatical gender (sex) did not occur in *our language*, since only a *nocturnal hero* could rule the ancestral homeland characterised by brisk cold nights, which he confirms on the example of epic material on the heroes of epic poetry – Miloš Obilić and Novak Debeljak. For instance, in the Greco-Latin belief system, the deity is feminine and *lunar* – Artemis/Diana, while the aforementioned lunar *feminising*, *maidenising* (grammatical gender and sex) was influenced by the *lukewarm* and *pure* nights in Hellas and Italy, so Nodilo strictly relates the concept of belief with the geographical area, all of which confirms his mythology of nature. Specifically, Nodilo's interpretation of the mythical matrix in folklore notions was formed, as I have pointed out in the introduction, within the framework of *naturism*, mythology of nature – the solar mythology theory and the theory of spring and dawn by Friedrich Max Müller, and the meteorological mythology theory by Adalbert Kuhn and Wilhelm Schwartz.

However, in Latins (Romans), the deity of the Moon initially figured as Deus Lunus. The hypothesis of Ludwig Preller from his book *Römische Mythologie*, according to which Deus Lunus was formed by subsequent influences of Semitic worship, is considered by Nodilo to be unreliable, since it proceeds from the proposition that the Moon was worshipped the most in Phrygia and Mesopotamia, “and Phrygia, I daresay, is the main station of the Greco-Italic people on their way to Europe” (Nodilo, 1981, p. 596). In southern regions, defined by *ardent* nights, the Moon – according to Nodilo's climato-gendered interpretation of the deity – becomes a feminine being, as was the case e.g. in Semites – “hence, alongside Asherah's sharp features, there appears another, salacious face of Astarte” (Nodilo, 1981, p. 596). In India, the Moon is personified as a girl when new and full; in Vedas, however, it is primarily a masculine deity (Chandra, Indu, Soma): “The sunny Savitr̥ gives his daughter Surya's (Sun's) hand in marriage to Soma” (Nodilo, 1981, p. 596). Macdonell points out that “[i]n the post-Vedic literature, Soma is a regular name of the moon, which is regarded as being drunk up by the gods and so waning, till it is filled up again by the sun” (Macdonell, 1974, p. 112). Nodilo detects that, in South Slavic folklore *material*, only one song of the *heroic* Moon has been preserved in its entirety, structured as a *jig*, sung in Makarska Littoral, “in the old Pagan

¹⁶ Špiro Kulišić points out that riddles in Serbian ethno-culture, in which the Moon is imagined as a horse or a cow, also indicate the theriomorphic perceptions of the Moon (Kulišić, 1979, p. 201).

territory” (Nodilo, 1981, p. 597), and taken from the manuscript of Miroslav Alačević. Furthermore, he detects that the iconogram of Littoral she-warrior from the aforementioned song resembles the *deadly* sister of the Sun from the songs *The Sun’s Sister and Pasha the Tyrant* (*Sunčeva sestra i paša tiranin*, Karadžić, 1841, song 232) and *The Sun’s Sister and the Tsar* (*Sunčeva sestra i car*, Karadžić, 1841, song 233).¹⁷

Old/Slavic mythology	Moon, Luna (Nodilo, 1981, pp. 589 – 590)
Rigveda	Chandra, Indu, Soma (Nodilo, 1981, p. 596)
Avesta	the growth, flourishing of vegetation is increased in the period of the moon’s <i>growth</i> : “during new moon, full moon, and the time between the two,” as noted by <i>Khorda-Avesta</i> , XXIII, 4 (Nodilo, 1981, p. 599)
Lithuanian mythology	Menu – Menulis (Nodilo, 1981, p. 590; cf. Biezais, 1987, p. 53)
Greek mythology	Artemis (Nodilo, 1981, p. 596), Hekate (Nodilo, 1981, p. 625); does not mention Selene ¹⁸
Roman mythology	Diana (<i>Trivia – she who walks on three paths</i> or <i>she who has three paths</i>) (Nodilo, 1981, p. 625), Deus Lunus (Nodilo, 1981, p. 596) ¹⁹
Semitic belief system	Asherah, Astarte: “alongside Asherah’s sharp features, there appears another, salacious face of Astarte” (Nodilo, 1981, p. 596) ²⁰
Egyptian mythology	Isis (Nodilo, 1981, p. 625) ²¹
Babylonian mythology	Ishtar (Nodilo, 1981, p. 625)

¹⁷ On Nodilo’s interpretation of the aforementioned song, cf. the chapter “Twin (Embryo) Mythology: The Dyad and Triad of Astral Mythology” (“Blizanačka (embriološka) mitologija: dijada i trijada astralne mitologije” – Marjanić, 2002a).

¹⁸ Greek and Roman goddesses of the moon were archetypally formed in a triadic manner: goddess of the full moon Selene (Luna), goddess of the halfmoon Artemis (Diana), and goddess of the dark moon Hekate – a triple goddess of the underworld with Selene, goddess of the Moon, as the central figure (Šikić, 2001, pp. 12, 112).

¹⁹ The cult of Luna, the Roman goddess of the Moon, was transferred to Rome by Titus Tatius. In literature and fine arts, Luna was identified with Diana and Selene. In the period of the late Empire, when Sol (Solus) was related with Mitra, Luna was worshipped together with this oriental deity (Srejić & Cermanović, 1979, pp. 239–240).

²⁰ In the Semitic religious system, Asherah figures as a mother goddess. Astarte is the Hellenised form of Ishtar, goddess of the Middle East (Mesopotamia); she was worshipped in the Levant by the people of Canaan and Phoenicia, and later in Egypt, as the Levant culture permeated Egypt. Cf. nominal etymology <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astarte>

²¹ Isis as a syncretic goddess with a multitude of theonyms, none of which being the Mother of Gods; the aforementioned attribute belongs to Goddess of the Sky and Goddess-Cow – Hathor; cf. James, 1961, p. 42.

Nodilo's parallelisms of the Moon within (Indo-European) comparative mythology can be presented – naturally, in a more concise and clear manner – by a table.²²

Lunar conclusion

Since Nodilo concludes that, due to *Moon the Measurer*, the Indo-Europeans divided the year on *nocturnal basis* – “instead of counting the days and years, they counted the nights, months, and winters” (Nodilo, 1981, p. 595); according to his deliberations, all of the above confirms that nightly dusk was the first symbol of time. In almost all archaic cultures, time was calculated according to the dynamizations of the night's dark mouth. The primordial calendar was a nocturnal one (Durand, 1991, p. 81). According to certain phrase-mic clusters, Nodilo detects that *our people* might also have traces of the aforementioned *counting* – for example, *to overwinter* is a poetic expression that *sometimes* covers the meaning “to stay at one's house throughout a year” (Nodilo, 1981, pp. 595-596).

Solar eclipse is described by the folk expression “the Sun ate itself away”; defending the Sun by shooting from shotguns is also practiced. Nodilo notes that, according to mythic oral tradition, the Sun and the Moon then *grab onto one another*. The Scandinavians formed a mythic depiction of wolves – raiders of the holiest of celestial bodies. *Edda* thematises two colossal wolves that prey on the Sun and the Moon: Sköll – a *predator* that *stalks* the Sun, and Mânagarmr (Mânagarm), “Moon Dog” – an eerier predator (wolf, *vargr*) that chases the Moon (Nodilo, 1981, p. 605). Archetypal dogs and wolves figure in folklore depictions as the Moon's attackers. In order to help the darkened Moon, people would make noise (magic expulsion by noise) with weapons (Nodilo, 1981, p. 606). The oldest belief on the Moon eclipse was reflected in the depiction of the *monster* that devours it. The Vedic belief thus emphasises a sea behemoth/serpent that *devours* the Moon and the Sun.²³ Vatroslav Jagić notes the belief in werewolves as the Moon's *devourers*: “Peasants call the itinerant clouds werewolves, so when the moon or the sun is in eclipse, they say: werewolves ate the moon or the sun away” (qtd. in Nodilo, 1981, p. 607). According to the most widespread belief among South Slavs, eclipse of the

²² Nodilo's conceptualisations of the South Slavic supreme god – Vid (the deity of the *old faith* of Serbs and Croats) and his parallelisms within the framework of Indo-European comparative mythology, summarised and (more clearly) illustrated by a table, cf. Marjanić, 2018.

²³ Cf. the legend from Sinj borderland, according to which there once existed three Suns; a snake drank up two of them on one occasion, while the third Sun was preserved by a swallow under its wings: “Had there be no swallow, there would have been no Sun to warm us, as it would have been drunk up by the snake (qtd. in Bošković-Stulli, 1967–1968, p. 374).

Moon is interpreted as an attack – the devouring by lupine monsters, celestial wolves, which Nodilo puts in parallel with Scandinavian beliefs, stressing on-ceagain that “this is not the first time that we have observed the interflow of Scandinavian and Slavic mythology” (Nodilo, 1981, p. 608). In the aforementioned context, Nodilo points out that the Romanian lexeme *verkolači* covers the meaning of the *eclipse of the Moon* (Nodilo, 1981, p. 258). Furthermore, he interprets the Vedic wolf (Vrika) as the personification of the pitch-black night (Nodilo, 1981, p. 630). Claude Lévi-Strauss (1980, I, p. 271) explicates that the eclipse is a consequence of a dangerous conjunction, the combination of a voracious monster and a celestial body. It is a cosmological and sociological monster, within the framework of which the most widespread belief is that the eclipse is provoked by the wolf that is about to attack the Sun and the Moon. Nodilo also notes the Czech belief, according to which the Moon is *changing* when it is eaten away by witches who spin hemp in darkness.

Briefly put, in the final chapter of his study, Nodilo rounds off astral interpretation and astro-mythology, within the framework of which he did not apply the absolute conclusion of pansolarism as is the case with certain historians of religion, who proclaimed the *nocturnal Sun* as chthonic (cf. Ackerman, 1960, p. 96), which Nodilo demonstrates with interpretations on selected epic heroes (e.g. Miloš Kobilić, Novak Debeljak) who, according to his conclusions, personify the Moon deity. Also, the aforementioned was also confirmed by phenomenologist of religion Mircea Eliade – that the Moon (of masculine gender) has a far more significant role in the beliefs and customs of Slavic peoples than the Sun (of neuter gender, probably derived from a noun of feminine gender), and that prayers for prosperity and health are directed at the Moon, which is called Father and Grandfather, while its eclipses are bewailed, whereby Eliade (1991b, p. 34) quotes the lunarism of Slavic philologist and ethnologist Evel Gasparini as the only source (cf. Tolstaya, 2001, p. 355).

Nodilo’s mythologic method of interpreting the mythic matrix in oral literature forms has been summarised with his programmatic statement – “It seems that the sparks of Aryan religion are the sun, lightning, daylight, fire, and our late grandfathers, all of them together” (Nodilo, 1981, p. 146) – which means that he does not determine the beginning of religion monotheistically, by joining (Müller’s) cult/mythology of nature with animism (Edward Burnett Tylor). Since he opted for a polytheistic re/construction of the religious source, he confirms that his mythology theory IS NOT (ONLY) solar, as some scientists attributed it and thus negated his re/constructions of the Old Slavic/South Slavic religion (*old faith*) on the track of the aforementioned (exclusive) solarism.²⁴

²⁴ This paper was originally published in Croatian language as a commemorative text in honour of the folklorist research of academician Stipe Botica in the proceedings *Traces of Tradition, Signs of Culture: Proceedings in Honour of Stipe Botica (Tragovi tradicije, znakovi kulture:*

Translated by Mirta Jurilj

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