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Anthropology

The first use of the word 'anthropology' in English was recorded in 1593, but its modern use to indicate the study and science of humanity became current in the late nineteenth century. At that time a separate discipline had begun to evolve from many component strands (including history, archaeology, linguistics, biology and anatomy), and the study of so-called 'primitive' peoples was given impetus not only by the reports of individual explorers but also by the need of colonial powers to define and classify the unfamiliar populations which they governed. From the ethnographic writings of early explorers to the 1898 Cambridge expedition to the Torres Straits, often regarded as the first truly 'anthropological' field research, these books provide eye-witness information on often vanished peoples and ways of life, as well as evidence for the development of a new scientific discipline.

Teutonic Mythology

The linguist and philologist Jacob Grimm (1785–1863) is best remembered as co-editor, with his brother Wilhelm, of *Grimm's Fairy Tales*, though their great *Deutsches Wörterbuch* remains an influential reference work. Grimm's exhaustive study in comparative mythology and religion, *Deutsche Mythologie*, was first published in German in 1835: this English translation, published between 1880 and 1888, is of the posthumous fourth German edition of 1875. Drawing on his knowledge of language and world mythology, Grimm outlines a wide variety of themes in Germanic folklore (such as time, creation, destiny and the soul), comparing them to classical and oriental tales as well as charting the influence of Christianity on legends and on Pagan religion. Volume 1 focuses on religion, worship and the portrayal of gods and their powers. Erudite and full of insight, this is an invaluable resource for scholars of mythology and religion as well as of German cultural history.

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Jacob Grimm
Frontmatter
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VOLUME 1

JACOB GRIMM
TRANSLATED BY
JAMES STEVEN STALLYBRASS



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TEUTONIC MYTHOLOGY

BY

JACOB GRIMM

TRANSLATED FROM THE FOURTH EDITION

WITH

NOTES AND APPENDIX

BY

JAMES STEVEN STALLYBRASS.

VOL. I.



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TO

Professor MAX MÜLLER, M.A., &c., &c.,

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.



"I THINK Scandinavian Paganism, to us here, is more interesting than any other. It is, for one thing, the latest; it continued in these regions of Europe till the eleventh century; 800 years ago the Norwegians were still worshippers of Odin. It is interesting also as the creed of our fathers; the men whose blood still runs in our veins, whom doubtless we still resemble in so many ways. . . . There is another point of interest in these Scandinavian mythologies, that they have been preserved so well."—CARLYLE'S "HERO-WORSHIP".

What Mr. Carlyle says of the Scandinavian will of course apply to all Teutonic tradition, so far as it can be recovered; and it was the task of Grimm in his *Deutsche Mythologie* to supplement the Scandinavian mythology (of which, thanks to the Icelanders, we happen to know most) with all that can be gleaned from other sources, High-Dutch and Low-Dutch, and build it up into a whole. And indeed to prove that it *was* one connected whole; for, strange as it seems to us, forty years ago it was still considered necessary to prove it.

Jacob Grimm was perhaps the first man who commanded a wide enough view of the whole field of Teutonic languages and literature to be able to bring into a focus the scattered facts which show the prevalence of one system of thought among all the Teutonic nations from Iceland to the Danube. In this he was materially aided by his mastery of the true principles of Philology, which he was the first to establish on a firm scientific basis, and which enabled him to trace a word with certitude through the strangest disguises.

The Comparative Mythology of all nations has made great strides since Grimm first wrote his book; but as a storehouse of facts within his special province of *Teutonic Mythology*, and as a clue to the derivation and significance of the *Names* of persons and things

in the various versions of a myth, it has never been superseded and perhaps it never can be. Not that he confines himself to the Teutonic field; he compares it at every point with the classical mythus and the wide circle of Slavic, Lettic and occasionally of Ugric, Celtic, and Oriental tradition. Still, among his *Deutsch* kindred he is most at home; and Etymology is his forte. But then etymology in his hands is transfigured from random guessing into scientific fact.

There is no one to whom Folk-lore is more indebted than to Grimm. Not to mention the loving care with which he hunted up his *Kinder und Haus-märchen* from all over Germany, he delights to detect in many a nursery-tale and popular custom of to-day the beliefs and habits of our forefathers thousands of years ago. It is impossible at times to forbear a smile at the patriotic zeal with which he hunts the trail of his German gods and heroes; the glee with which he bags a new goddess, elf, or swan-maid; and his indignation at any poaching Celt or Slav who has spirited away a mythic being that was German born and bred: "Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?"

The present translation of the *Deutsche Mythologie* will, like the last (fourth) edition of the original, be published in three volumes; the first two of which, and part of the third, will contain the translation of Grimm's text, and the remainder of the third volume will consist of his own Appendix and a Supplement.

The author's second and third editions (1844 and 1854) were each published in 2 vols., accompanied by an APPENDIX consisting, first, of a short treatise on the *Anglo-Saxon Genealogies*, and secondly, of a large collection of the *Superstitions* of various Teutonic nations. This Appendix will form a part of our Vol. III. After Grimm's death his heirs entrusted to Prof. E. H. Meyer, of Berlin, the task of bringing out a fourth edition, and including in it such additional matter as the author had collected in his note-books for future use. If Grimm had lived to finish his great Dictionary, which engrossed the latter years of his life,¹ he would, no doubt, have incorporated

¹ He used to say, he had a book ready to run out of each of his ten fingers, but he was no longer free.

Translator's Preface.

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the pith of these later jottings in the text of his book, rejecting much that was irrelevant or pleonastic. The German editor, not feeling himself at liberty to select and reject, threw the whole of this posthumous matter into his third volume (where it occupies 370 pages), merely arranging the items according to the order of subjects in the book, and numbering each by the page which it illustrates. This is the SUPPLEMENT so frequently referred to in the book, under the form ("see Suppl."). I have already introduced a few extracts from it in the Foot-notes, especially where it appeared to contradict, or materially to confirm, the author's opinion expressed in the text. But in the present English edition it is intended to *digest* this Supplement, selecting the most valuable parts, and adding original articles by the editor himself and by other gentlemen who have devoted special attention to individual branches of the science of Folk-knowledge. A full classified Bibliography and an accurate and detailed Index to the whole work will accompany the book. It is hoped by this means to render the English Edition as complete and serviceable as possible.

Grimm's *Preface* to the edition of 1844, giving a vigorous resumé of the book, and of the whole subject, will, as in the German accompany Vol. II. There is so much in it, which implies the reader's acquaintance with every part of the book, that I have felt bound to keep it where I find it in the original.

The only additions or alterations I have ventured to make in the text are the following:—

1. The book bristles with quotations in various languages, for the most part untranslated. An ordinary German reader might find the Old and the Middle High German about as intelligible as an ordinary Englishman does Anglo-Saxon and Chaucer respectively. But when it comes to making out a word or passage in Old Norse, Greek, and even Slavic, I must suppose the author to have written for a much more limited and learned public than that which, I hope, will find this English edition sufficiently readable. I have therefore *translated* a great many words and sentences,

where the interest, and even the argument, of the paragraph depended on the reader's understanding the quotations. To have translated *all* that is not English would have swelled the size of the book too much. Apart from such translation, any additions of my own are always placed in square brackets [], except a few notes which bear the signature "TRANS."

2. For the sake of clearness, I have divided some of the chapters (XII. to XVI.) into smaller sections with headings of their own.

3. I have consulted the English reader's convenience by substituting the *w* and *œ*, which he is accustomed to see in Anglo-Saxon words, for Grimm's *v* and *ā*, as 'wæg' instead of 'væg'. I have also used the words 'Dutch, Mid. Dutch' in a wider sense comprehending all the Teutonic dialects of the Netherlands, instead of coining the awkward adjective 'Netherlandish'.

One word on the title of the book. Ought not "*Deutsche Mythologie*" to be translated *German*, rather than *Teutonic Mythology*? I am bound to admit that the author aimed at building up a *Deutsch* mythology, as distinct from the Scandinavian, and that he expressly disclaims the intention of giving a complete account of the latter, because its fulness would have thrown the more meagre remains of the *Deutsch* into the shade. At the same time he necessarily draws so much upon the richer remains of the Norse mythology, that it forms quite a substantive portion of his book, though not exhaustive as regards the Norse system itself. But what does Grimm mean by *Deutsch*? To translate it by *German* would be at least as misleading in the other direction. It would not amongst us be generally understood to include—what he expressly intends it to include—the Netherlands and England; for the English are simply a branch of the Low German race which happened to cross the sea. I have therefore thought, that for the English ear the more comprehensive title was truer to the facts on the whole than the more limited one would have been.