

Quelle

Mythological Data for the Conference on

MUNDUS ARCHETYPUS:
BEHOLDING WORLD MYTHOLOGIES
(September 19th to September 21st, 2025)

Organized By
Indian Fellowship for Analytical Psychology (IFAP)
Department of Psychology
University of Delhi
Delhi

Day Two
Saturday, September 20th, 2025

Session II
MYTH OF THE SOUL

Lecture I [8:00 a.m. (CEST); 11:30 a.m. (IST)]

THE MYTHOPOETIC FUNCTION OF THE MIND

MS. CATERINA VEZZOLI

Quelle:

Liber Secundus, Chapter IV “The Anachorite”
Red Book

Paper Presentation I [10:00 a.m. (CET); 1:30 p.m. (IST)]

OISÍN:
IRISH MYTH ON SOUL’S PASSAGE

MR. MASANBOU ABONMAI

Quelle:

OISIN, THE SON of Finn mac Cool, was out hunting one day with his father and their elite band of warriors, the Fianna. They were joined by a beautiful, fairy-like woman on a white horse. Her name was Naim of the Golden Hair and she had come, she said, to take Oisín home with her to Tir na nOg, the Land of Forever Young.

Naim told them that she had loved Oisín since she and her father had ridden through Ireland some years before. She had watched him then, running like a young deer through the meadows, looking every inch a huntsman and a warrior. For seven years and seven days she had returned, invisible, to watch him grow up and, at last, her father had given her permission to declare her love.

She cast a spell over Oisín so that he loved her too, and they rode away on Naim's white steed across lakes, rivers and the misty sea to Tir na nOg. There they married and lived happily for 300 years, a period that seemed like only three weeks to Oisín.

Eventually Oisín became homesick. He longed to see his father and his friends again. Naim did all she could to dissuade him from returning to Ireland. She could not change his mind, however, so she gave him her white horse to make the journey and she warned him not to dismount or he would never return.

When Oisín got back to Ireland he found that everything was different. The countryside had changed, his father and the Fianna were long dead and a new faith was being practised.

Deeply saddened, Oisín turned and began his journey back to his fairy wife. He had not gone far, however, when a group of peasants struggling to lift a heavy stone into a wagon asked him for help. He agreed willingly but, as he stooped, his reins broke and Oisín fell to the ground. Immediately, the horse vanished and Oisín was transformed dramatically into a very old man, blind and near to death.

He was carried to St. Patrick, who was walking the land and preaching of the new god. The saint received him into the new faith. He also managed to take down some of Oisín's stories of the old days when the Fianna ruled the land. But soon the warrior-poet, and the world he had known, passed away for ever.

Reference:

Cotterell, A. (Ed.) (2002). *Encyclopaedia of World Mythology*, pp. 88-89. UK: Parragon Book.

Paper Presentation II [10:30 a.m. (CET); 2:00 p.m. (IST)]

**TRANSMUTING THE STONE:
A JUNGIAN EXPLORATION INTO THE MYTH OF SISYPHUS**

DR. SUWANEE GOSWAMI

Quelle:

Sisyphus, son of Aeolus, married Atlas's daughter Merope, the Pleiad, who bore him Glaucus, Ornytion, and Sinon, and owned a fine herd of cattle on the Isthmus of Corinth.

Near him lived Autolycus, son of Chione, whose twin-brother Philammon was begotten by Apollo, though Autolycus himself claimed Hermes as his father.

Now, Autolycus was a past master in theft, Hermes having given him the power of metamorphosing whatever beasts he stole, from horned to unhorned, or from black to white, and contrariwise. Thus although Sisyphus noticed that his own herds grew steadily smaller while those of Autolycus increased, he was unable at first to accuse him of theft; and therefore, one day, engraved the inside of all his cattle's hooves with the monogram SS or, some say, with the words 'Stolen by Autolycus'. That night Autolycus helped himself as usual and at dawn hoof-prints along the road provided Sisyphus with sufficient evidence to summon neighbours in witness of the theft. He visited Autolycus's stable, recognized his stolen beasts by their marked hooves and, leaving his witnesses to remonstrate with the thief, hurried around the house, entered by the portal, and while the argument was in progress outside seduced Autolycus's daughter Anticleia, wife to Laertes the Argive. She bore him Odysseus, the manner of whose conception is enough to account for the cunning he habitually showed, and for his nickname 'Hypsipylon'.

Sisyphus founded Ephyra, afterwards known as Corinth, and peopled it with men sprung from mushrooms, unless it be true that Medea gave him the kingdom as a present. His contemporaries knew him as the worst knave on earth, granting only that he promoted Corinthian commerce and navigation.

When, on the death of Aeolus, Salmoneus usurped the Thessalian throne, Sisyphus, who was the rightful heir, consulted the Delphic Oracle and was told: 'Sire children on your niece; they will avenge you!' He therefore seduced Tyro, Salmoneus's daughter, who, happening to discover that his motive was not love for her, but hatred of her father, killed the two sons she had borne him. Sisyphus then entered the market place of Larissa and produced the dead bodies, falsely accused Salmoneus of incest and murder; and had him expelled from Thessaly.

After Zeus's abduction of Aegina, her father the River-god Asopus came to Corinth in search of her. Sisyphus knew well what had happened to Aegina but would not reveal anything unless Asopus undertook to supply the citadel of Corinth with a perennial spring. Asopus accordingly made the spring Peirene rise behind Aphrodite's temple, where there are now images of the goddess, armed; of the Sun; and of Eros the Archer. Then Sisyphus told him all he knew.

Zeus, who had narrowly escaped Asopus's vengeance, ordered his brother Hades to fetch Sisyphus down to Tartarus and punish him everlastingly for his betrayal of divine secrets. Yet Sisyphus would not be daunted: he cunningly put Hades himself in handcuffs by persuading him to demonstrate their use, and then quickly locking them. Thus Hades was kept a prisoner in Sisyphus's house for some days—an impossible situation, because nobody could die, even men who had been beheaded or cut in pieces; until at last Ares, whose interests were threatened, came hurrying up, set him free, and delivered Sisyphus into his clutches.

Sisyphus, however, kept another trick in reserve. Before descending to Tartarus, he instructed his wife Merope not to bury him; and, on reaching the Palace of Hades went straight to Persephone, and told her that, as an unburied person, he had no right to be there but should have been left on the far side of the river Styx. 'Let me return to the upper world,' he pleaded, 'arrange for my burial, and avenge neglect shown me. My presence here is most irregular. I will be back within three days.' Persephone was deceived and granted his request, but as soon as Sisyphus found himself once again under the light of sun, he repudiated his promise to Persephone. Finally, Hermes called upon to fetch him back by force.

It may have been because he had injured Salmoneus, or because he had betrayed Zeus's secret, or because he had always lived by robbery and often murdered unsuspecting travellers—some say that it Theseus who put an end to Sisyphus's career, though this is not generally mentioned among Theseus's Feats—at any rate, Sisyphus was given an exemplary punishment. The Judges of the Dead showed him a tall block of stone—identical in size with that into which Zeus had turned himself when fleeing from Asopus—and ordered him to roll it until brow of a hill and topple it down the farther slope. He has never succeeded in doing so.

As soon as he has almost reached the summit, he is forced back by the weight of the shameless stone, which bounce the very bottom once more; where he wearily retrieves it and rolling begins all over again, though sweat bathes his limbs, and a cloud of rises above his head.

Merope, ashamed to find herself the only Pleiad with a husband in the Underworld— and a criminal too—deserted her six starry sisters from the night sky and has never been seen since. And as the whereabouts of Neleus's tomb on the Corinthian Isthmus was a secret which

Sisyphus refused to divulge even to Nestor, so the Corinthians are now equally reticent when asked for the whereabouts of Sisyphus's own.

Reference:

Graves, R. (2011). *The Greek Myths*, Vol. I, pp. 216-218. London: Penguin Books.

Session III

THE ARCHETYPE OF LOVE

Paper Presentation III [4:00 p.m. (CET); 7:30 p.m. (IST)]

NARCISSUS AND ECHO: THE ARCHETYPAL MISMATCH

MS. MAYANGLAMBAM TWINKLE DEVI

Quelle:

NARCISSUS was a Thespian, the son of the blue Nymph Leiriope, whom the River-god Cephissus had once encircled with the windings of his streams, and ravished. The seer Teiresias told Leiriope, the first person ever to consult him: 'Narcissus will live to a ripe old age, provided that he never knows himself.' Anyone might excusably have fallen in love with Narcissus, even as a child, and when he reached the age of sixteen, his path was strewn with heartlessly rejected lovers of both sexes; for he had a stubborn pride in his own beauty.

Among these lovers was the nymph Echo, who could no longer use her voice, except in foolish repetition of another's shout: a punishment for having kept Hera entertained with long stories while Zeus's concubines, the mountain nymphs, evaded her jealous eye and made good their escape. One day when Narcissus went out to net stags, Echo stealthily followed him through the pathless forest, longing to address him, but unable to speak first. At last Narcissus, finding that he had stayed from his companions, shouted: 'Is anyone here?'

'Here!' Echo answered, which surprised Narcissus, since no one was in sight

'Come!'

'Come!'

Why do you avoid me?'

"Why do you avoid me?'

'Let us come together here!'

'Let us come together here!' repeated Echo, and joyfully rushed from her hiding place to embrace Narcissus. Yet he shook her off roughly, and ran away. 'I will die before you ever lie with me!' he cried.

"Lie with me!' Echo pleaded.

But Narcissus had gone, and she spent the rest of her life in lonely glens, pining away for love and mortification, until only her voice remained.

One day, Narcissus sent a sword to Ameinius, his most insistent suitor, after whom the river Ameinius is named; it is a tributary of the river Helisson, which flows into the Alpheius. Ameinius killed himself on Narcissus's threshold, calling on the gods to avenge his death.

Artemis heard the plea, and made Narcissus fall in love, though denying him love's consummation. At Donacon in Thespia he came upon a spring, clear as silver, and never yet disturbed by cattle, birds, wild beasts, or even by branches dropping off the trees that shaded it; and as he cast himself down, exhausted, on the grassy verge to slake his thirst, he fell in love with his reflection. At first he tried to embrace and kiss the beautiful boy who confronted him, but presently recognized himself, and lay gazing enraptured into the pool, hour after hour.

How could he endure both to possess and yet not to possess? Grief was destroying him, yet he rejoiced in his torments; knowing at least that his other self would remain true to him, whatever happened.

Echo, although she had not forgiven Narcissus, grieved with him; she sympathetically echoed 'Alas! Alas' as he plunged a dagger in his breast, and also the final 'Ah, youth, beloved in vain, farewell!' as he expired. His blood soaked the earth, and up sprang the white narcissus flower with its red corollary, from which an unguent balm is now distilled at Chaeronea. This is recommended for affections of the ears (though apt to give headaches), and as a vulnerary, and for the cure of frost-bite.

Reference:

Graves, R. (2011). *The Greek Myths*, Vol. I, pp. 286-288. London: Penguin Books.

Day Three
Sunday, September 21st, 2025

Session IV **MYTHOLOGY AND HEALING**

Lecture III [8:30 a.m. (CET); 12:00 noon (IST)]

SHAMANISM:
CALL, CRISIS AND CURE

PROF. ERIC SORENG

Quelle:

Myth of Zunug Khairkhan

Near Tengis River (Sea River), there are nine graves called Nine Blocks of the Sea. These graves are worshipped as shrine of a spirit. In graves, shamans bury the most difficult and strangest things and hold them down with help of locals.

Zunug Khairkhan, a shaman, was curious to know what was inside the graves. So he dug open the nine graves and there he found some mysterious objects like an antelope without

neck, a drop of the blood lake, dead human body, the earth spirits such as evil spirits and water-nymph. Zunug Khairkhan, worshipped the spirit of the nine graves. He kept some of those things and sanctified them.

Zunug Khairkhan had a flying horse which could reach wherever he wanted to travel. No one knew where he used to travel riding that horse. Eventually, his wife became suspicious and worried about his escapades.

One day he came back home with a three year old naked child. He found the child alive beneath the Nine Blocks of the Sea. He instructed his wife to feed the child on antelope's blood and never give cattle's milk. The wife obeyed him and fed the child antelope's blood for over a month but again one day Khairkhan rode away to some place. This made her angry and jealous; and she suspected him of marital infidelity. So, out of revenge, she fed the child with cattle's milk that killed it. If the child would have survived and was allowed to grow up, then it would have become a water-nymph. When Khairkhan came back home, his wife heard the sound of the saddle cloth blowing. She stepped out from home and at the very sight of the wings of the flying horse she cut them off. Since that time, Zunug Khairkhan could not go anywhere, near or far.

One time, some cannibals caught him and tried to cut off his head but their sword became blunt. Even after many attempts they failed. Then, they tried to shoot him with a flint gun. But the bullets could not take him down and instead got stuck in his belt and spilled on the ground. Khairkhan mocked them by saying, "Take away your bullets".

In their final attempt, they piled woods up to the sky and tied Khairkhan with it in order to burn him down. After midnight, when the cannibals came back to put out the fire, to their amazement, Khairkhan was still alive, his moustache was frozen, he put his hands inside the sleeves because they were stiff and numb with cold and was found sitting surrounded by embers. Again, he teased them to set him ablaze one more time.

Then he told man-eaters, "You cannot defeat me, now it is my turn". Khairkhan was clever; he asked all of them to ride on a log of wood to float on Tengis River while waving their hands and assured them that they will find Paradise. He had the man-eaters drown in the waterfall of Tengis River.

Zunug Khairkhan desperately tried to fly for two days but he could not and said, "My pelvic bone became bronze, I drank ocean water, and ate meat and now I cannot fly. So kill me now. Wrap my head by yellow dog's omentum, strike me with pants of a woman who gave birth three times." As soon as the rituals were performed, he died.

[The myth was gathered by my research scholar Ms. Munkhtuul Norjvanchig from Mongolia]

**SHUTEN-DŌJI, THE *ONI* WITHIN:
A MYTH OF ADDICTION AND RECOVERY**

DR. PRIYANKA GUPTA

Quelle:

A long time ago, in the Heian court years, Kyoto trembled beneath the shadow of a demon unlike any other— Shuten Dōji: “the Sake-Drinking Boy.” Referred to as a boy, he was no child. A giant with burning red skin, sickle like horns, ferocious fangs, and eyes that gleamed like molten gold. In some versions or tellings he was once human, a mortal gifted child from Echigo or Mount Ibuki, whose appetite for forbidden drink and meat condemned him as cursed, on the demonic path. Banished by men and gods alike, he moved away into the mountains, gathering others alike until he reigned as king of the oni.

As the oni reign of Shuten Dōji expanded, his palace was said to rise atop Mount Ōe where he and his lieutenants feasted on stolen sake and human flesh. They abducted the fairest maidens of Kyoto, imprisoning them in golden chambers, forcing them to serve wine until they too were consumed into the darkness. At night, smoke rose from the mountains like a fiery mouth, and people feared that the capital’s disappearances were not the work of men but of an oni-king whose strength no sword could defeat.

As a desperate measure, the Emperor Ichijō turned to his diviner, Abe no Seimei, who revealed that the source of Kyoto’s grief was Shuten Dōji himself. Thus the emperor called forth his greatest champion, Minamoto no Raikō (Yorimitsu), and his four loyal retainers—the “Four Heavenly Kings.” —to come to Kyoto’s rescue. With Fujiwara no Hōshō at his side, Raikō accepted the challenge: to go up the Mt. Ōe, ploy a strategy to defeat and slay the demon lord.

The gods, pitying human weakness and the capital’s situation, disguised themselves as mountain hermits and gave Raikō the enchanted sake as a magical gift—sacred wine brewed to bring the oni to his knees. Disguised as wandering priests, the heroes reached Shuten Dōji’s fortress. Drunk already, the oni welcomed them, boasting of his power, his raids, and the maidens he had chained. In his pride, he accepted and drank their divine sake, laughing as the liquid burned his throat. The enchanted sake took hold and slowly his body grew heavy, his limbs numb—the enchantment claimed him completely.

At a signal, Raikō and his men cast aside their pilgrim robes in which they were disguised, revealing armor and steel, ready to take down Shuten. They captured and defeated the great oni with divine chains and struck. Raikō wielded Dōjigiri, a blade destined for demon-slaying, and with a single swing severed Shuten Dōji’s head. Even headless, the demon’s jaws snapped, aiming for Raikō’s throat, fighting till his last breath. Only the warrior’s helmet, reinforced by layers, saved him from being torn apart by oni’s attack. Shuten Dōji’s head, furious and living, was carried back to the capital as proof of victory and the downfall of an era of the oni.

Legends also state that Shuten Dōji was not a mere beast but a fallen child of men, ruined by alcohol and exile marking his downfall. In him, the oni embodied excess: lust, violence,

addiction, defying order. While Raikō, is symbolic of the other side, supported by the gods and loyal men, reinstating the divine order.

Thus the legend prevails as a mirror of human frailty and weaknesses: the dangers of addiction, the allure of power, and the eternal battle to master the demon within on the journey to Self.

Paper Presentation V [11:00 a.m. (CET); 2:30 p.m. (IST)]

**DEITY AND DEMON OF HEALING:
REFLECTIONS ON CHINESE AND JAPANESE MYTHS**

MR. ANURAG THOUNAOJAM

Quelle:

1—The God of Agriculture and Medicine

Yan Di (Lord Radiant) was the god of the South. He had a human body and the head of an ox. Nine Wellsprings appeared in his birth place at the moment when he was born and these nine springs were connected so that if water were drawn from one spring, the waters in the other eight would ripple.

He was a most benevolent god. During his time, the earth was already so widely populated by human beings that the food provided by nature was no longer sufficient to feed everyone. This benevolent god taught human beings how to cultivate the five grains in order to feed themselves.

As Yan Di was teaching the world how to cultivate the fields, grain seeds began to shower profusely like rain from heaven. He gathered these seeds and sowed them in the ploughed fields, and in this way the five cereals were first produced through cultivation. Once, a red bird flew by, holding a stalk with nine ears of grain on it. As the seeds fell to earth grain by grain, Yan Di gathered them and planted them in the fields. This was the *Jia* (Fine) Grain, which not only satisfied hunger but could also bestow immortality. Because Yan Di taught the world how to grow food, he was thereafter named Shen Nong, God of Agriculture.

But Yan Di was not only God of Agriculture, he was also God of Medicine.

He had a magic whip, reddish in colour, which he used to thrash all the herbs. Whenever he whipped a herb, it would reveal whether or not it was poisonous, and would also reveal whether its intrinsic nature was hot or cold. Once the intrinsic nature of an herb had been determined, he could prescribe it for treating various illnesses.

But in order to determine accurately the nature and effects of the various herbs, he also had to taste them himself. They say that his body was transparent and when tasting the herbs, he might be poisoned as many as seventy times in a single day. With a transparent body, however, he could easily determine which part was afflicted so that other herbs could be used to neutralize the poison.

Some say that while he was tasting herbs, he tried one “Bowel Breaking Weed” which was so

noxious that even he could do nothing to counteract it. His life was thus sacrificed for the good of Humankind.

Still other say it was when he tasted the “Hundred Legged Vermin” that he was killed. Each of the hundred legs, they say, grew into another vermin which in turn multiplied into more and more vermin until finally they killed the God of Medicine.

Reference:

Walls, J. & Walls, Y. (1984). *Classical Chinese Myths*, pp. 26-28. San Francisco: China Books & Periodicals, Inc.

2—The Kappa who played “Pull-Finger”

There is a pond called Akanuma-ike at the foot of Mt. Tateshina, and near the pond there is a big stone called Kagihiki-ishi (Pull-Finger Stone). Once a child used to stand on that stone and called to the passers-by: “Let’s play Pull-Finger.” The passers-by would stop and play Pull-Finger for fun. Then the child would pull them into the pond and eat them up. Many people were killed in that way. At last the people decided that the child must be a *kappa* who lived in the pond.

A man named Tachiki from Suwa said: “I will destroy the *kappa*.” He asked his lord if he could borrow a good horse. Then he rode by this stone, and as he expected, the child asked him to play Pull-Finger. He answered the child: “All right.” And they locked fingers. No sooner had they locked fingers then he whipped the horse and rode as fast as he could. The child could not bear to be dragged by the horse. He said: “Please excuse me, I am really the *kappa* of Akanuma Pond. Please don’t kill me. Then I will teach you the secret of bonesetting.” And the man said: “Then teach me that secret.”

The *kappa* taught him in detail. “Because you’ve taught me the secret of bonesetting, I will set you free. But oif you continue to live in this place, you might have the desire to eat people again. So go somewhere else tonight,” said the man. So the *kappa* went away to the pond of Wada-mura and he has been living there quietly.

And this Tachiki is said to be the founder of the family line of famous surgeon Tachiki.

Reference:

Dorson, R. M. (1979). *Folk Legends of Japan*, pp. 62-63. Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Company, Inc.

Session V
UNUS MUNDUS:
ONENESS OF MYTHOLOGICAL AND MUNDANE REALITIES

Lecture IV [2:00 p.m. (CET); 5:30 p.m. (IST)]

**THE MYTH OF RAGNAROK:
REFLECTIONS ON POLARIZATION AND DESTRUCTIVE FORCES**

MS. MISSER BERG, IAAP/DSAP

Quelle:

Myth of Ragnarok

Paper Presentation VI [4:00 p.m. (CET); 7:30 p.m. (IST)]

MUNDUS MENTALIS:
AZTEC MYTH OF CREATION OF EARTH

DR. HARSHA SUSAN KURIAKOSE

Quelle:

Quetzalcoatl, the light one, and Tezcatlipoca, the dark one, looked down from the sky and saw only water below. A monstrous goddess floated upon the water, eating whatever she could find with her many mouths, for every joint in her body contained eyes sharp enough to spot any source of food and mouths that bit like wild animals.

“We must find some way to stop that goddess from devouring whatever we create,” they said to one another.

So it came to pass that the two great gods transformed themselves into two huge serpents. One of them quickly grabbed the goddess by her arms, while the other quickly grabbed her by the feet. Then, before she could resist, they pulled until she broke apart in the middle. Her head and shoulders became the earth, while the lower part of her body rose into the sky and became the heavens.

The other gods were angry at what Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca had done to the goddess. They came down to earth and decided to give her gifts that would compensate for her mutilation. They decreed that whatever human beings needed for survival, she would provide. They created trees, tall grass, and flowers from her hair, fine grasses and tiny flowers from her skin, small caves, fountains and wells from her eyes, large caves and rivers from her mouth, hills and valleys from her nose, and mountains from her shoulders.

The goddess is often unhappy. Sometimes in the night people can hear her crying. Then they know what she is filled with a ravenous thirst for human blood. Whenever this thirst comes upon her, the goddess will not provide the fruits of the soil and will not stop crying until the blood from human hearts has quenched her thirst. She who provides sustenance for human

lives demands human lives in return for her own sustenance. So it has always been; so it will ever be.

Reference:

Rosenberg, D. (1986). *World Mythology*, p. 478. London: Harrap.

Paper Presentation VII [4:30 p.m. (CET); 8p.m. (IST)]

UNUS MUNDUS:
UNITY OF *YIN* AND *YANG*

DR. GEETI BHATTACHARYA

Quelle:

1—The Great Beginning

In the beginning, if it could be called a beginning, was the primordial womb. Within the womb was the primal and undifferentiated energy tumbling and swirling in the great chaos. Sky and earth were not separate and yin and yang had not emerged. This state of timeless time and spaceless space is called Wuji, the Limitless.

Out of the Limitless emerged a being named Peng Gu. For millions of years Peng Gu lived alone, wandering in the undifferentiated chaos of the primordial womb. Then yin and yang separated. The clear and weightless vapor rose and became heaven and the muddy and heavy vapor sank and became earth. Although there were now structure and form in the cosmos, all things were still intertwined and locked in eternal embrace. This state of interconnectedness is called Taiji, the Great Limit.

Peng Gu built a home on a mountain in the center of the celestial realm. He called the mountain Seven Treasures Peak and named his abode Jade Terrace of the Mysterious City. When Peng Gu grew tired of wandering, he would return to his home on the mountain, where he would meditate in stillness and ingest the vapors of yin and yang.

Millions of years passed. Peng Gu was content to live in the celestial realm, believing that he was the only living being in the universe. But Peng Gu was not alone. Far from Peng Gu's mountain, in a remote region of the celestial realm, lived a woman named the Jade Maiden. The Jade Maiden had emerged from a spring flowing out of a cave at the same time Peng Gu was born. She too wandered in the realm of the Limitless, absorbing the essences of heaven and earth and swallowing the light of the sun and the moon.

One day in his travels, Peng Gu caught a glimpse of the Jade Maiden as she floated among the azure clouds. Taken by her beauty, he immediately invited her to live with him on Seven Treasures Mountain. There in his golden bedchamber, he entered her and she received him, he absorbing her generative blood and she accepting his life force. Out of their union emerged the Emperor of the East and the Empress of the West. The Emperor of the East is the manifestation of the energy and essence of the Great Yang, and the Empress of the West is the manifestation of the energy and essence of the Great Yin. They are also known respectively as Father Wood and Mother Metal.

Peng Gu and the Jade Maiden also gave birth to the Celestial Lord. The Celestial Lord gave birth to the Terrestrial Lord, and the Terrestrial Lord in turn gave birth to the Lord of Humanity. From these lords were born the myriad deities, the immortals, and the teachers of humanity.

2—Fu Xi and the Pre-celestial Bagua

After Heaven and earth separated, yin and yang copulated. From this copulation countless myriad things emerged. Because these entities differed in the manner they partook of the essences of yin and yang, they became different in kind and nature. Those that contained more of the essence of stillness became trees, grasses, and roots; those that contained more of the essence of movement became birds, mammals, fishes, and insects; and those that contained more of the essence of spirit became humans. It is also said that of all sentient beings, humans alone embrace equally the essence of heaven and the splendors of earth; therefore they have the gift to understand the subtle mysteries of creation.

In ancient times people lived simply. They drank sweet dew from the leaves and inhaled mist from the mountains and lakes. They knew nothing about happiness and sorrow and gain and loss. Their lives revolved around the cycle of the seasons and the paths of the sun, moon, and stars. Following the natural way, they lived long and contented lives.

Thousands of years passed. The Early Ancient Era passed into the Middle Ancient Era, which in turn passed into the Later Ancient Era. In the Later Ancient Era there lived a sage named Fu Xi. Legends say that Fu Xi had a man's head and a snake's body. He taught the people hunting, fishing, animal husbandry, and writing.

When Fu Xi saw that the people could provide for themselves, he turned his attention to understanding the nature of the universe. First he studied the paths of the sun, moon, and stars. Then he examined the patterns of the mountains, lakes, and rivers. Finally he pondered the nature of the wind, rain, and thunder. From these observations, Fu Xi concluded that there are eight fundamental building blocks of the natural world—sky, earth, water, fire, thunder, wind, mountain, and lake. Furthermore, these eight can be characterized by the way they embody and manifest the principles of yin and yang. He named them the bagua, or the eight trigrams.

Sky embodies the pure essence of the clear brightness of yang; therefore its trigram is depicted as three solid, or yang, lines. Earth embodies the pure essence of the dark mysteries of earth; therefore its trigram is depicted as three broken, or yin, lines. Water is externally soft and yielding, but within its softness is a strength that can break down mountains; thus its trigram is depicted as two yin lines flanking a yang line. Fire is strong externally, but within its strength is the softness of warmth; thus its trigram is depicted as two yang lines flanking a yin line. Thunder is associated with spring rain and the first stirring of life after winter; therefore its trigram is depicted as a yang line at the bottom, symbolizing the return of life, with two yin lines on top, symbolizing the nourishing nature of spring showers. Just as thunder is associated with the renewal of life, wind is associated with the coming of winter. The trigram of wind is depicted as two yang lines on top of a yin line, symbolizing cold winds undermining the last warmth before winter. Mountains are associated with hardness because they appear jagged and rocky. However, their roots anchor deep into the earth. The trigram of mountain is therefore depicted as a yang line on top, symbolizing the rocky peaks

thrusting up to the sky, with two yin lines at the bottom, symbolizing the mountain's roots penetrating into the earth. Finally, a lake is a body of water whose surface is soft and pliable, but within its depth is a strength that can support myriad life forms. Thus the trigram of lake is depicted as a yin line on top of two yang lines. Because the eight trigrams are said to describe the way things exist naturally before the intervention of humankind, they are known as the pre-celestial (or precreation) Bagua.

Reference:

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