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The Lunisolar Calendar of the Germanic Peoples

Reconstruction of a bound moon calendar from ancient, medieval
and early modern sources

Translated by Johanna Klapper

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AS	Anglo-Saxon
DAN	Danish language
dial.	in dialects
ENG	modern English language
FIN	Finnish language
GER	German language (recent)
Gmc	Germanic language
GOT	Gothic language
GRE	Greek language
ICEL	Icelandic language
LAT	Latin language
MHG	Middle high German language
MLG	Middle low German language
NL	Dutch language
NOR	Norwegian language
OE	Old English language
OFR	Old Frankish language
OHG	Old high German language
ON	Old Norse language
OS	Old Saxon language
PGmc	Proto-Germanic language
SWE	Swedish language

Indication of the calendar for a date

December
12th^W

December 12th in the Nordic weekly
calendar

December
12th^J

December 12th in the Julian calendar

December
12th^G

December 12th in the Gregorian calendar

Preface to the 1st Edition

Today, the Gregorian calendar is used nearly all over the world. It came into existence through the reformation of the Julian calendar. The Julian calendar is based on the solar year only, the cycles of the moon were not considered for the graduation of the year. From ancient times to the medieval era and up until the modern period, the Gregorian calendar has been used worldwide.

This solar calendar came into existence in ancient Egypt. The land around the river Nile had been a center of solar cults for millennia, and pharaoh Amenhotep IV., later re-named Akhenaten, established the worship of the sun god Aten (Re) as the only deity in the 14th century BC. This ancient sun cult inspired the Alexandrian-Hellenistic scholars.

In the year 47 BC, Gaius Julius Caesar traveled to Egypt, more precisely to Alexandria, which must have been the largest center of the scientific world at that time. Local astronomers like Acoreus, Sosigenes and others introduced him to the calculations of the solar calendar. Two years later, in 45 BC, Caesar implemented the Hellenistic-Egyptian solar calendar in all parts of the Roman Empire.

Before the solar calendar was initiated, the years were also defined by the lunar cycles on the Eurasian continent. Romans, Greeks, Celts, Balts and Germans used lunisolar calendars in which the cycles of sun and moon were adjusted by inserting an intercalary month.

One of these lunisolar calendars was still used in the 17th century in Gamla Uppsala, the ancient center of the Swedish kingdom. The date of the Disting market—which had its origin in an old Germanic festival—was calculated with the

help of so-called primstaves according to a bound moon calendar. In travel journals like the one by Erich Lasota of Streblau and in some chronicles like those of Olaus Magnus and Olaus Wormius, the appropriate rules are preserved. With the help of these rules and other fragments, which have been preserved in several literary sources, this book attempts to reconstruct the bound moon calendar of the Germanic peoples like it has been used evidently in England until the 7th century and in Scandinavia until the 11th century.

The German philologist and literature historian Wolfgang Golther once stated in his handbook on Germanic mythology (1908) that such a lunisolar calendar cannot be reconstructed due to the lack of sources—but the source situation is not really so bad, as deeper research has shown.

This is not the first attempt to approach this bound moon calendar, of course. Especially the groundwork by the Swedish philologist and historian of religion, Martin Persson Nilsson (1920) and the historian of religion, Andreas Nordberg (2006), also from Sweden, have to be honored in this preface. In comparison to their groundwork, this book aims to elaborate more on the continental European aspects, especially the festival days in the year's cycle will be considered. In the rear part of the book, the festive dates of the Germanic religion—which was named *fyrn sidu* (an. *forn siðr*; Steinsland, 2005) in the old sagas, as well as the dates of the more worldly Thing gatherings will be covered with the lunisolar calendar as background. In addition, there are different points of view regarding certain aspects, compared to the groundworks by the other authors.

In the reconstruction of the bound moon calendar, the literary sources from different eras will be observed in accordance with a certain astronomical logic—following this logical thinking to a functional lunisolar calendar.

In reconstructing this bound moon calendar of the Germanic peoples, we have to consider five different calendars: the Julian calendar, the Gregorian calendar, the Nordic weekly calendar and the bound moon calendar which will be reconstructed in a Christian-influenced and in a pre-Christian version (before 1084), thus the according dates will be accompanied by a superscript letter for easier distinction (G for Gregorian, J for Julian, W for weekly calendar).

This book tries to manage the balancing act between good scientific work and general perceivability. In line with this, the single sources are given as far as possible. However, this book is not an exact scientific treatise and cannot be compared to a doctorate thesis which claims a complete discussion of all published contributions to this topic.

Still, I would be happy about further reference on different sources on this topic in order to write an improved 2nd edition of this book, one with a greater aspiration on the completeness of contents.

Göttingen, 2013
Andreas Zautner

Preface to the 2nd Edition

As the 1st edition of this book was published five years ago, I would like to give thanks for the positive feedback and correspondence about this book which have motivated me to revise and edit it.

In its main aspects, the first edition will remain valid. What has been added?

- The Roman lunisolar calendar served as attunement to the principles of lunisolar calendars. An illustration on the FASTI ANTIATES MAIORES and a further appendix with a tabular list of the Roman festival days has been augmented.
- The treatises by Shaw and Udolph on Easter and *Éostre* as well as those on *Hretha* (Nerthus) have been added accordingly. In this context, the etymology of the *solmónað* and the *hréðmónað* have been corrected.
- The description of the festivities at the end of the polar night on Thule island by Procopios of Caesarea are now printed here in the Greek original text.

In addition, this island of Thule has now been located exactly, using the geodesic analysis to decode the Atlas of Oikumene by Ptolemaios.

- A further, indirect hint in Wulfila's translation of the letter of the Colossians to a gothic lunisolar calendar has been added as well.
- The new article on the Spurcalia by Nathan Ristuccia, "The Rise of the Spurcalia", has been incorporated.

- Furthermore, the interesting archaeological work of Magnell and Iregren, who verified the sacrificial festivals on the Nordic quarter days on the area of the church of Frösö in Jamtland, Sweden, is introduced here.

Most additions have been made regarding the nine-year of the Germanic peoples. The rune stone of Stentoften has been supplemented as source for the nine-year sacrifice. There is another excursus on the Octaeteris as timekeeper for the Delphic Games and an entirely new chapter on the nine-year in the Germanic mythology also. For better tangibility, the appendix on Frank's Casket on the description of the iconography has almost been doubled.

For better differentiation of the pagan midwinter celebration on the full moon following the first new moon after the Winter Solstice from the Christian Christmas festivities on the observable Winter Solstice on December 24/25 in the text, I follow a regulation which is common in Scandinavian literature—so the first receives the ancient Nordic name 'Jól' and the latter is named 'Jul', the actual Scandinavian word, but this will become a bit tricky in those parts of the text where I write about the time change from the first to the latter.

Beyond these there have been some other smaller changes.

I hope that the overall image of the lunisolar calendars used between the migration period and the time of the Vikings in Northern Europe will be more round and comprehensible through these additions.

Göttingen, 2018
Andreas Zautner

Preface to the 1st English Edition

The first English edition of the “The Lunisolar Calendar of the Germanic Peoples” is based on the second German edition. Thankfully, Johanna Klapper has translated it into English. Since the translation into English was already begun during the works for the second German edition, both editions correspond almost completely in content. There are only a few insignificant additions that are so small in detail that I do not want to list them here individually. The only significant difference to the German edition is that in many cases when a reference to an Old High German term was made, the Old English has been given preference.

Göttingen, 2020
Andreas Zautner

1. The Worldmill is turning—on the Cosmography of the Germanic peoples

In the beginning of this book, we will take a diagramming look on the cosmography of the Germanic peoples. Please note that this is found in similar form among other antique, Indo-European peoples.

The core of the term ‘world’ (OE *weorold*, OHG *Weralt*) is of special interest in this connection, because it denotes a time dimension—the era (OE *eald*) in which humans (OE *wer*, OHG *Wer*) exist—the age of man. The original term for the cosmographic structure of the universe was ‘world room’ or ‘world building’ (OHG *Weraltzimbar*). In its basic construction, this world room or world framework consisted of three parts: Middleyard (OE *middangeard*, OHG *Mittangart*, ON *miðgarðr*) was the region where humans lived. The great plain of this middle world was named *eormengrund* (OE; OHG *Irmingrunt*, ON *jörmungrundr*), meaning “largest land”. On the outside, these world plains were confined by the world sea (OE *weorold-wæter*, OHG *Weraltmeri*), its outer rim on the horizon or world ring (OHG *Weraltring*) was circled by a gigantic lindworm (ON *Jörmungandr*), the Midgard Serpent (ON *Miðgarðsormr*).

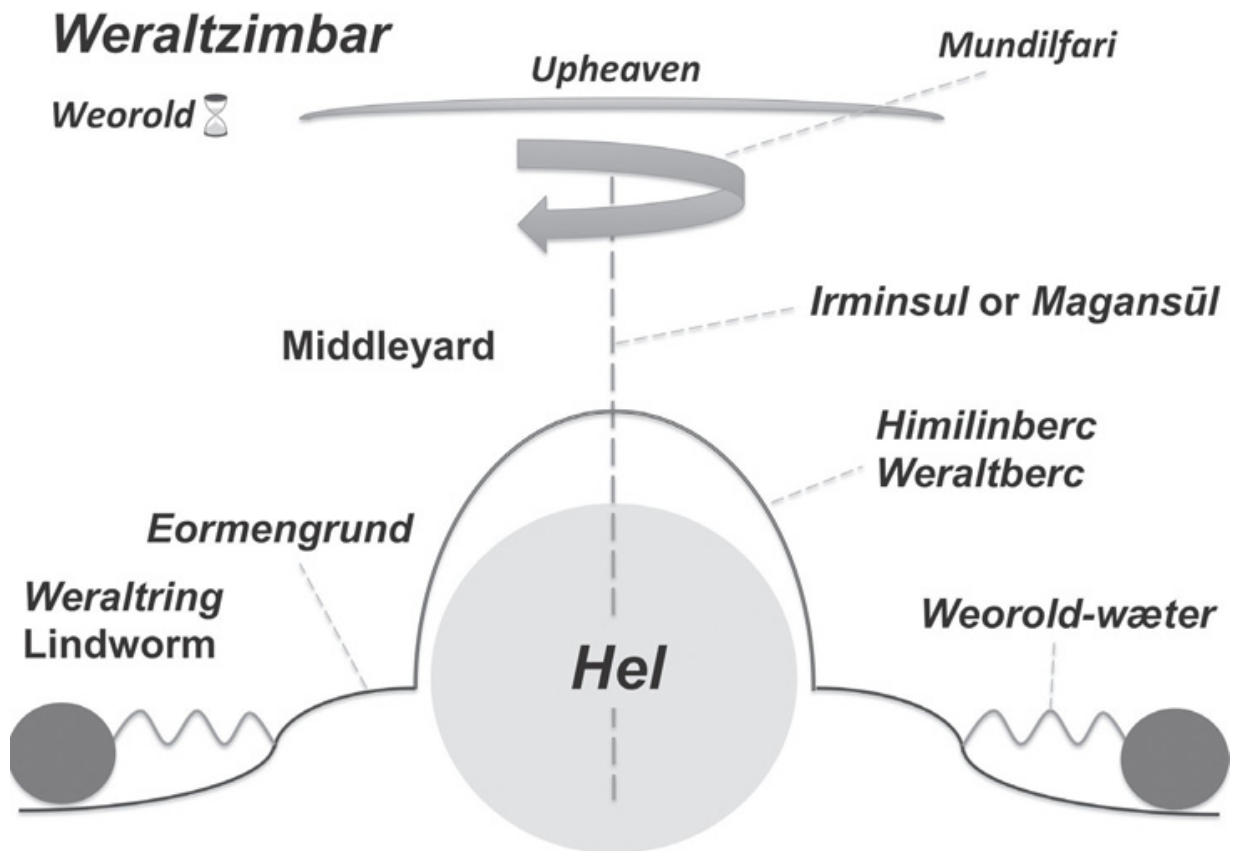


Fig. 2: Scheme of the Germanic cosmography

In the middle of this world is the world mountain (OHG *Weraltberc*) according to Strabo's "Vita of St. Gallus", and above it is the dome of the sky, which was also named 'sky mountain' (OHG *Himilinberc*, ON *Himinbjörg*). Thinking that the world mountain approximates a hemisphere, it shows this world view is not primitive measured against a modern conception of the world.

Inside this world mountain or under this world plane, we find a hidden or rather concealed world—Hel (OE *hel*, *helle*, OHG *Hellia*; ON *Hel*), which is also the abode of the deceased.

Above the human world Middleyard is the so-called upper sky—Upheaven (OE *upheofon*, OHG *ufhimil*, ON *upphimin*;). The summit of the world or sky mountain reaches into it.

The gods are dwelling on this summit or rather mountain crest. An Old High German term for pole, beam or crest and thus also for a mountain ridge was *ans* (OHG; ON *áss*, GOT *ans*, PGmc **ansaz*). Accordingly, this abode of the gods on the *ans* or mountain crest was named *Ásgarðr* (ON). The gods who lived on this mountain crest were named *Æsir* (ON *æsir*, OE *ēse*; OHG *ensī*, GOT *anseis*).

Richard Wagner and other national romanticists transported this term as 'Asen' into Modern High German, although, based on the Old High German form *ensī*, 'Änse' would be the correct Modern High German word (Bachmann, 2012). This corresponds to the realm of the Greek gods, the Olympians, who lived on the crest of the Olymp, sharing the same general Indo-European mindset. In the middle of the world mountain and the dwelling of the *Æsir*, we find the world axis, the Axis mundi (LAT), the greatest column – the *Irminsūl* or, according to Notker's translation of Boethius, the *Magansūl* (OHG), which is also named world tree or world ash (ON *askr*).

The dynamic element of this world room which is turning, as we can assume, is of special interest. Within the Nordic mythology, this all-encompassing rotating principle is represented by a being perceived as one of the *jotnar* (Giants), *Mundilfæri* (ON). There are several different interpretations for the name 'Mundilfæri'. One says that the name is composed from Ancient Nordic *möndull* = mill axe and *-færi* = driver in a sense of setting something in motion (Nordberg, 2006). According to this interpretation, Mundilfæri is "the one who sets the world mill in motion", the world mill itself or its rotating axis.

Another explanation links the first part of the name 'Mundil-' to the Old Nordic word *mund* = time, point of time, and the second part of the name, '-færi', to the Old High German word *ferjo* = ferryman. This interpretation makes Mundilfæri the being which moves time or is the ferryman of time. This perception is probably based on bronze-age

imagination where moon and sun were ferried on boats or chariots across the sky, pulled by horses (Nordberg, 2006).

In stanza 23 of the Eddic song *Vafþrúðnismál* as well as in part 10 of the *Gylfaginning* from Snorri's "Prose Edda", we learn that Mundilfæri is the mythological father of sun and moon. According to Rudolf Simek, 'Mundilfæri' could also be a personification of the moon itself (Simek, 2006). This highlights the two cosmological main actors in this book, the "wandering stars", sun and moon—their observation is the basis for the bound moon calendar of the Germanic peoples.

2. Preliminary Considerations: On Nights, Days and Weeks

Before we attend to the actual calendar and the months, we turn towards the smaller time units, the nights, days and weeks, to understand the time concept of the Germanic peoples.

DE MINORIBUS REBUS PRINCIPES CONSULTANT; DE MAIORIBUS OMNES, ITA TAMEN, UT EA QUOQUE, QUORUM PENES PLEBEM ARBITRIUM EST, APUD PRINCIPES PERTRACTENTUR. COEUNT, NISI QUID FORTUITUM ET SUBITUM INCIDIT, CERTIS DIEBUS, CUM AUT INCOHATUR LUNA AUT IMPLETUR; NAM AGENDIS REBUS HOC AUSPICATISSIMUM INITIUM CREDUNT. NEC DIERUM NUMERUM, UT NOS, SED NOCTIUM COMPUTANT. SIC CONSTITUUNT, SIC CONDICUNT: NOX DUCERE DIEM VIDETUR.

C. P. Tacitus: De origine et situ Germanorum liber (11)

Translation:

The High Ones counsel on small things, all consider the bigger things in a way, saying that the people's decisions will be exerted by the High Ones. The community gathers – if nothing unusual or sudden happens—at certain times, when the moon is new or full, because they consider this the most lucky beginning to discuss matters. Incidentally, they do not calculate the number of days, but of nights—in this way they state purpose and commitment, night seems to precede the day.

We easily recognize the original understanding for the beginning of the day at midnight by this quote from Tacitus. A day begins in the middle of the night—at midnight,

reaching its peak from morning to noon, at the highest rise of the sun, finding its end along the evening until next midnight. This principle is still valid today.

Original time counting after days, i. e. in the nights, can still be seen in old names for festival days like Christmas night, the Twelve Nights or Beltane night (Walpurgis night). Furthermore, the propitious role of the waxing moon is elucidated in this text.

In his annals, Tacitus reports about a feast happening in a starry night:

... DELECTA LONGIORE VIA CETERA ADCELERANTUR: ETENIM ATTULERANT EXPLORATORES FESTAM EAM GERMANIS NOCTEM AC SOLLEMNIBUS EPULIS LUDICRAM. CAECINA CUM EXPEDITIS COHORTIBUS PRAEIRE ET OBSTANTIA SILVARUM AMOLIRI IUBETUR: LEGIONES MODICO INTERVALLO SEQUUNTUR. IUUVIT NOX SIDERIBUS INLUSTRIS, VENTUMQUE AD VICOS MARSORUM ET CIRCUMDATAE STATIONES STRATIS ETIAM TUM PER CUBILIA PROPTERQUE MENSAS, NULLO METU, NON ANTEPOSITI VIGILIIS: ADEO CUNCTA INCURIA DISIECTA ERANT NEQUE BELLI TIMOR, AC NE PAX QUIDEM NISI LANGUIDA ET SOLUTA INTER TEMULENTOS.

C. P. Tacitus: Annalium liber primus (50)

Translation:

One chooses the longer [path] and cares for quick action in everything, because scouts have reported that this night will be a festive night for the Germanic peoples, and there will be a lot of food and treats. Caecina has been given order to move in closer with light cohorts and make way through the forests. The legions will follow at short distance. A clear, starry night was beneficial for the operation, and so the Marsian villages were reached and surrounded by troops, while the inhabitants were still lying in their beds or on the tables, without a notion of danger and without sentinels. They were so disbanded in their lack of concern, without fear of martial attacks, and the peacefulness and quietness among them was caused by indolent flaccidity and current drunkenness.

Festivals were celebrated at night accordingly. The moon was not mentioned as light source here—this may be interpreted as happening in the new moon phase.

2.1. The Separation of Day and Night

Witnessed by old Anglo-Saxon and Nordic solar discs (OE *sol-merca* or *dægmæl*, ON *sólarhringr*), we know exactly how the day was segmented. Both day and night were cut into eight pieces, the so-called ‘Eight’ (ON *átt* or *eykt*) in the sense of octants. These pieces encompassed approximately three hours in modern time, they were named *stunda* (hours) or *tíd* (times). We find the names for these segments throughout the Old High German, Old English and Old Nordic literature (Anderson, 1998):

- 0-3 **Midnight** (OE *midniht*, OHG *mittinaht*, ON *miðnætti*)
h:
- 3-6 **Ūht** (OE *úht*, OHG *ūhta*, ON *óttá*, Gmc **uhtwón*) Time
h: before daybreak, perhaps the time when it was best to be very cautious.
- 6-9 **Morning** (OE *morgen*, OHG *morgan*, ON *miðr morgun*)
h: [Midmorning])
- 9- **Undern** (OE *undern*, dial. *oanders*, *aunders*, *andrum*,
12 OHG *untarn*, ON *undorn*, *undorneykt*, *nón* or *undarn*,
h: Danish *unden*, Old Frankish *unden*, *ond*), means approximately between-time or meal time.
- 12- **Midday**, Noon (OE *middæg*, OHG *mittitag*, ON
15 *miðdagr*, *miðr dagr*, *hádegi* [High Day])
h:
- 15- **Afternoon** (OE *ofernon*, OE *gelotendæg*, ON
18 **eptirmiðdagr*)
h:
- 18- **Evening** (OE *æfen*, OHG *ābant*, ON *aptann*)
21
h:
- 21- **Night** (OE *niht*, OHG *naht*, ON *nótt*)
24
h:

Many of these terms are still used today. But the exact meaning or origin of some of these terms has been forgotten in everyday language. The most important time marker was noon. In order to define the exact noon time, people looked at the landscape, mostly for the so-called Midday mountain which we find in county and country names to this day: Middagsfjället, Middagshorn, Middagshaugen, Middagsnib, Middagsberg und Middagsfjeld (Anderson, 1998).

In the sixth stanza of *Völuspá* (Prophecy of the Seeress), five or eight Eights of the day are named together with other time terms—not in their timely order, but according to the rules of the alliteration.

Old Norse	English Translation
Þá gengu regin öll á rökstóla, ginnheilög goð, ok um þat gættusk; nótt ok niðjum nöfn of gáfu, morgin hétu ok miðjan dag , undorn ok aftan , árum at telja.	So all the aldermen went to their seats, most holy Gods to hold council: To night and nid (waning/unseen) moon they gave names, named the morning and the mid of day , as well as undern and evening , to tell/count the years.

own translation

2.2. The Week

The term ‘week’ (OE *wicu*, OHG *wohha* or *wehha*) basically means chronology or change (LAT *VICES* = change). The Old Norse word *vika* does not only mean week, but also nautical mile. The nautical mile was used here as measure of length for the change of oarsmen in a certain rhythm of the drummer. Accordingly, a week is the change of the succession of week days, changing (like oarsmen) in the rhythm of night and day. The Gothic word *wiko* has a similar meaning, succession order in service (de Vries, 1962).

2.2.1. The Nine-Night Week of the Baltic peoples

In the 14th century, a lunisolar calendar was evidently used in the grand duchy of Lithuania. Its function could be decoded with the help of the scepter of the grand duke Gediminas which was found in 1680.

This serves as proof of the fact that the ancient Balts, i. e. the Lithuanians, segmented the siderian month into three parts and thus used a nine-night week.

In this calendar, the year began in April and was segmented into 12 months, which encompassed 29 to 31 days each. Every one of these months began with a new moon. The moons are shown as symbols on the scepter. (Gusev, 1865; Klimka, 1995).



2.2.2. The Nundinal Cycle of the Romans

In the Roman republic, a week of eight days or nine nights was used, the so-called 'market week'. It may be seen as heritage of the Etruscans. The Latin term for this market week was NŪNDINUM (plural NŪNDINAE). Derived from this Latin term, the rhythm of these market weeks is called a 'nundinal cycle' (Graf, 1997). Nundinae means nine days. This term was used for the weekly rhythm as well as the included market day itself. The expression 'nine-dayed' is somehow misleading though, because the length of the Nundinal week encompasses only eight days altogether. It can be explained by the inclusive calculation common within the Roman republic—the two flanking market days were included. This means that there were only seven days between the singular market days (LAT NUNDINALES dies). But the eight days, as mentioned above, were flanked by nine nights.

Beginning with January 1, the days of a market week within the calendar were marked with the nundinal letters 'A' to 'H' in succession. The letter for the market day changed on a yearly basis because the sum of the year's days (365) is not the multiple of 8 (days). Principally, this is a weekly calendar used in the Roman republic and likewise a weekly calendar was also used in Iceland and the Faroese Islands (more on this later).

The nundinal cycle was a basic rhythm-giver for daily life within the Roman republic. On market days, many people traveled from rural areas to the city and the city dwellers bought their natural produce for the next eight days. During

the early empire period, after the Julian calendar had been introduced, the nundinal cycle was replaced by the seven-day week. The system of the nundinal letters has been fitted to the new week, which consisted of seven days. Thus, the Sunday letters have their precursors in the nundinal system. For a certain time, the seven-day week and the nundinal cycle existed simultaneously, but when the Christian seven-day week with Sunday as day of rest was officially introduced by Constantine the Great in 321, the nundinal cycle became obsolete.

2.2.3. The Seven-Day Week (Planetary week)

The seven-day week is a cognition of the astronomers in the ancient Orient (according to Walthard, 2010). If the periods of the waxing and the waning moon, i. e. the waxing and waning half of the month, are seen as two parts, we get two weeks each, consisting of seven days.

The old astronomers assigned each of the seven days to a planet and thus to a god or goddess. The Romans adopted this idea and the allocations spread, along with the Julian calendar, to the Germanic lands in the time of the first centuries of the Roman empire. Here, the Roman names for the gods were replaced by Germanic ones. Thus the Babylonian day of Nergal, day of Ares, later Mars, became the day of the Germanic Ziu/Tiw.

While adopting the seven-day week from the Romans, which happened in the 2nd or 3rd century, i. e. in the Roman Imperial period (Maier, 2003), the convention of starting the week with the dies Jovis, i. e. Thursday, was also adopted. According to the Icelandic law book “Grágás” (Gray Goose Laws), the seafaring days (ON *farðaga*) started with the first Thursday in the 7th week after April 14th^W. The Allthing met on a Thursday exactly 4 weeks later. The

Easter hare delivering the eggs on Holy Thursday (still done regionally today) could be a relic of this regulation. In “Indiculus” (c. 20) we find *de feriis, quae faciunt Iovi vel Mercurio*, i. e. along with Thursday/*dies Jovis*, Wednesday/*dies Mercurii* should be hallowed. Thus, Wednesday and Thursday became the weekend back then. The names of the week days are as follows:

Thursday (OE *Þunresdæg*): The *dies Jovis*, day of the lightning-wielding Zeus-Jupiter, became ‘Thunor's day’ or ‘Thors day’ (ON *Þorsdagr*, OHG *Don(a)restag/toniristac*) for the Germanic peoples. This name remains even today in English speaking countries, Scandinavia, the Netherlands, and Germany, except for Bavaria, where ‘Pfinz day’ (GER *Pfinztag*) mirrors a correction by the church. This was the first day of the week for both Germans and Romans, a similar position to today’s Sunday, a sort of weekly festive day.

Friday (OE *Frīgedæg*): The Germanic people interpreted the Roman goddess Venus as Frige (ON *Frigg*, OHG *Frija*). Indeed, both names are related to the Old Indian *prya* (lover). In Allemanic German, the Old High German form *Frijatag* remained as *Friitig*. This corresponds to the Old Icelandic *friadagr*. In Bavaria, this name was also covered with a Christian name. The ‘Pferinday’ was the preparation for Sabbath. This term has become extinct.

Saturday/Sun-Evening (OE *Sæterndæg/Sunnanæfen*): The German day name ‘Sonnabend’ (Sun-Evening) means the evening before Sunday and shows another peculiarity of the Germanic calendar. In all Germanic languages, the evening before a day is added to the next day. ‘Christmas eve’ is the evening before Christmas. The Danish ‘Sankthansaften’ is the evening before St. John’s Day, and

the German 'Feierabend' (afterwork hours, lit. celebration evening) is the eve before a working day.

Instead of years, people counted winters and marked nights instead of days, as we will also see later. Festivities within the Germanic cultural sphere happened at night, next to the above-mentioned examples we have the 'Mothers' night' according to Bede the Venerable, as well as the 'Fasnacht' (Carnival night) and the 'Percht's night' or 'Hullegewomen's night' in German tradition.

The day ended with the evening, and the coming night belonged to the next day. Thus, the Wednes/Wodens night led into Wodens day, and Thor's/Thunor's day turned upon the rising darkness to Frige's night.

The beginning of night must have been marked by the appearance of the Evening Star, the transition to day with the appearance of the Morning Star. The sunrise is an old German expression, the term sunset is still avoided today by down-to-earth dialect speakers in the Alp regions, maybe because of its apocalyptic connotation.

The term 'sun-eve/sun-evening' (for Saturday, Old High German *sununaband*, GER *Sonnabend*) originates from the Old English *sunnanæfen* and has been introduced as Anglicism by Anglo-Saxon missionaries, mainly in Northern Germany; while the term disappeared in England. According to Middle High German, the Sun never sets, but only goes to rest and grace. It has been a common tradition to raise one's hat to Sun and Moon and to salute the celestial bodies.

This rather special denomination of the previous day to Sunday can also be explained by the exceptional position of Sunday as middle and pinnacle of the week within Christian beliefs.

‘Samstag’—the name of Saturday in the Southern parts of Germany—is the only day without a god’s name, according to the *INTERPRETATIO ROMANA*. It was introduced by the Greek language into Bavarian language. The Old High German *Sambaztag* harks back to the Greek *Sambaton* and means ‘Sabbath day’. In Northwest Germany as well as in England, the name ‘Sater’s day’ (GER *Saterstag*, EN *Saturday*), which is a direct transmission of the Latin *DIES SATURNI* (Day of Saturn), has prevailed. In the North, the Saturday/Sun-Evening is named *laugardagr*, i. e. washing or bath day. Taking the weekly bath and washing laundry on a Saturday was also commonly known in Germany, and the tradition is still alive in the Alp regions. It is either an ancient custom or came into being after the Christianization because everybody had to be clean on the day of the lord. Furthermore, in Old Nordic we find the term *sunnunótt*, i. e. Sun-Night, for the night before Sunday. Thus, the term Sun-Night concurs substantially to Sun-Evening as the end of the week.

Sunday (OE *Sunnandæg*): The fourth day of the week was named *DIES SOLIS*—day of the Sun—by the Germanic people and Romans. Within the Romanesque regions from the fourth century on, the name *dies dominica* (day of the Lord) was established along with the consolidation of the seven-day week. Analogously, we find the name *Fronsdæg* (day of the Lord) in German-speaking regions later on.

Monday (OE *Mōnandæg*): Analogously to ‘Sunday’, the fifth day of the week was named ‘Monday’ as day of the moon, *dies Lunae*. The Old High German form *Mana-day* remained in the dialect term *Määntig*. In Old English there is also the name *Tiwesniht* (Tiw’s Night), which means Monday night – the night before Tuesday (see Saturday/Sun-Evening; Pollington, 2011).