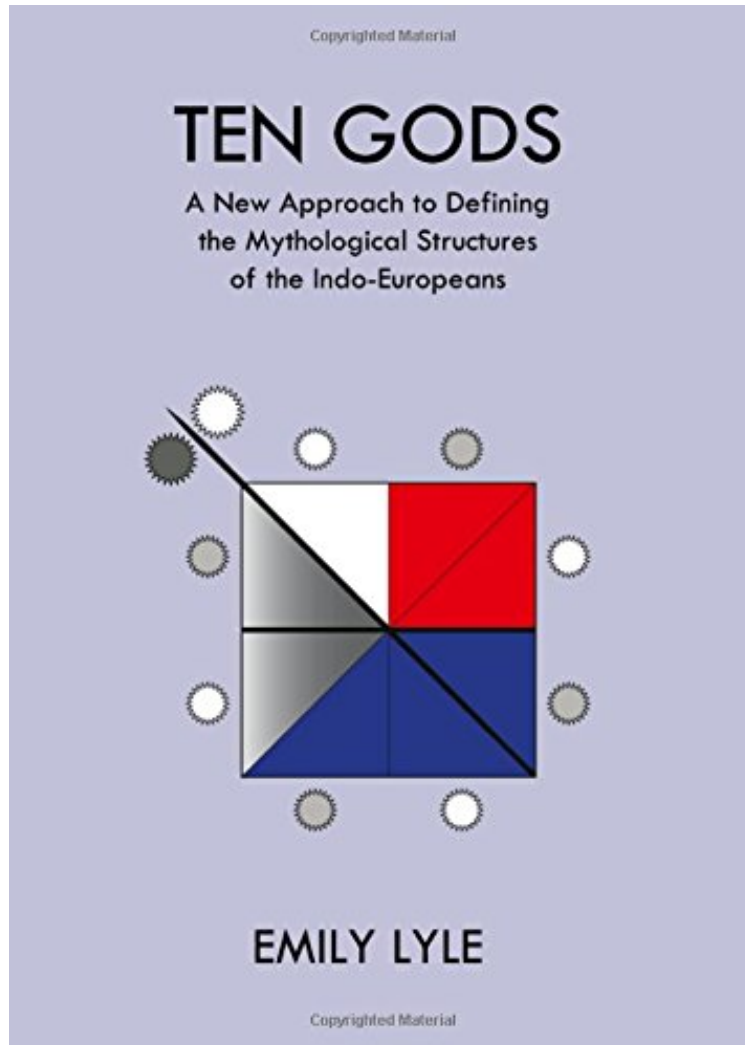


Ten Gods: A New Approach to Defining the Mythological Structures of the Indo-Europeans

Emily Lyle

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Emily Lyle : Ten Gods: A New Approach to Defining the Mythological Structures of the Indo-Europeans before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ten Gods: A New Approach to Defining the Mythological Structures of the Indo-Europeans:

The various Indo-European branches had a shared linguistic and cultural origin in prehistory, and this book sets out to overcome the difficulties about understanding the gods who were inherited by the later literate cultures from this early

silent period by modelling the kind of society where the gods could have come into existence. It presents the theory that there were ten gods, who are conceived of as reflecting the actual human organization of the originating time. There are clues in the surviving written records which reveal a society that had its basis in the three concepts of the sacred, physical force, and fertility (as argued earlier by the French scholar, Georges Dumézil). These concepts are now seen as corresponding to the old men, young men, and mature men of an age-grade system, and each of the three concepts and life stages is seen to relate to an old and a young god. In addition to these six gods, and to two kings who relate in positive and negative ways to the totality, there is a primal goddess who has a daughter as well as sons. The gods, like the humans of the posited prehistoric society, are seen as forming a four-generation set originating in an ancestress, and the theogony is explored through stories found in the Germanic, Celtic, Indian, and Greek contexts. The sources are often familiar ones, such as the Edda, the Mabinogi, Hesiod's Theogony, and the Ramayana, but selected components are looked at from a fresh angle and, taken together with less familiar and sometimes fragmentary materials, yield fresh perspectives which allow us to place the Indo-European cosmology as one of the world's indigenous religions. We can also gain a much livelier sense of the original culture of Europe before it was overlaid by influences from the Near East in the period of literacy. The gods themselves continue to exert their fascination, and are shown to reflect a balance between the genders, between the living and the ancestors, and between peaceful and warlike aspects expressed at the human level in alternate succession to the kingship.