Twitter Thread by Rilker R. M. ■■

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Thread about THE MOON

So this week I was playing the game 'To The Moon', which is fantastic (later I'll post my review here). The amazing soundtrack was created by @Reives_Freebird and @supershigi.

When the 'Moon' subject shows up, I always think about the mythology of this celestial object, and also about the differences between languages to refer to this object.

To be exact, what I really think is: why the hell "the moon" is a masculine word in German (der Mond)?

On this matter, I also think about the Sun: why is it feminine in German?

Nonetheless, I'll focus on the Moon in this thread.

And I'm questioning about the German language because I can only say something about the languages I know. I don't know how the words "moon" and "sun" are in other Germanic or Nordic languages. If I had to guess, I'd say that they'd follow the German style.

Anyway, back to the Moon. If I'm questioning the gender of it in German, I must be comparing to something that I consider to be the "normal", right? And, of course, for me the "normal" is to see the Moon as feminine. But why would be the normal for me?

Well, in English we don't have gender for words and objects. Of course we can use it in some cases (like using "she" to talk about your car). But the moon is the moon. It's not "die/der moon", nor "la/el moon". It's "the".

So why would I naturally consider the Moon as a female archetype? For that, we have to go back to the Ancient Mythology. Greek and Roman, to be specific.

As we all know, our Western Civilization is founded on three main roots: the Greek Philosophy, the Roman Law, and the Judeo-Christian Heritage.

So starting with Greece and its mythology, the Moon is personified in the goddess Selene. It's female.

When we go to Rome, its mythology personifies the Moon in the goddess Luna (the Roman equivalent of Selene). Female.

"Luna" is what generated the words for 'moon' in every language derived from Latin: lua (Portuguese), luna (Spanish and Italian), lune (French) etc. That's why in many countries of the West we see the Moon as a female.

And the Sun, of course, is always a male in these mythologies and languages. The Greek god Helios and the Roman god Sol are the personification of the Sun in their respective mythologies. The god Apollo is also associated with the sun.

And "Sol" generated the words for "Sun" in the Latin languages: sol (Portuguese and Spanish), sole (Italian), soleil (French). All masculine. The Sun is a male.

On the other hand, when we go to the Norse Mythology (the one that substantiate the German language), we have the Moon as a male character, and the sun as a female character.

The Nordic god for the Moon is Máni. He is brother of the Sun goddess Sól. That's why in German we say 'der Mond' (the moon, masculine) and 'die Sonne' (the sun, feminine).

That means that, even though the Germanic and North Europe territory were culturally determined by the Greeks and Romans, their languages kept the old myths alive.

For a German, the moon will always be a male and the sun will always be a female, I guess. And I believe that somehow can determine the "Weltanschauung" (the worldview) of the individuals.

And another curiosity: in Japanese we also don't have gender for words. There aren't even articles. That makes the Japanese grammar quite easy. Anyway, the kanji for Moon is ■ (■■ in hiragana), and the pronunciation is "tsuki".

This kanji can also mean "month", and it has different ways to pronounce.

And in Japan, which is not part of the Western Civilization (I mean, not so much), they associate the Moon with a god, and the Sun with a goddess, like in the Norse Mythology. At least in the Shinto "religion".

■■ (Tsukuyomi) is the moon god (see the kanji) and ■■■■■ (■hirume-no-Muchi-no-Kami) is the sun goddess. ■ is the kanji for "sun".

To conclude this thread that no one will ever read, I'll post an excerpt about the moon, from the fantastic book 'Orthodoxy' of G. K. Chesterton.

But it's gonna be in the next thread, cause there's no more space available in this one.