were also probably peculiar to the North, though Ullr at least was known in Denmark. Some of these deities may originally have been quite local. Indeed, such may very well have been the case with Frey, the chief god of the North after Thor and Odin. Tradition at all events uniformly points to Upsala as the original home of his cult. But it is probable that both he and his sister Freyia were really specialized forms of a divinity which had once been more widely known. Their father, Niörõr, the god of wealth, who is a somewhat less important figure, corresponds in name to the goddess Nerthus (Hertha), who in ancient times was worshipped by a number of tribes, including the Angli, round the coasts of the southern Baltic. Tacitus de­scribes her as “ Mother Earth,” and the account which he gives of her cult bears a somewhat remarkable resemblance to the ceremonies associated in later times with Frey. This family of deities were collectively known as Vanir, and are said to have once been hostile to the Aesir, to whom Odin belonged. Their worship was generally connected with peace and plenty, just as that of Odin was chiefly bound up with war. Gefion was another goddess who may represent a later form of Nerthus. In her case tradition points distinctly to a connexion with Denmark (Sjaelland). On the other hand, the portraiture of Skaδi, the wife of Niörõr, seems to point to a Finnish or Lappish origin. The rest of the northern goddesses are comparatively unimportant, and only one of them, Fulla, the handmaid of Frigg, seems to have been known on the continent.

Some of the deities known to us from German and English sources seem also to have been of a local or tribal character. Such doubtless was Fosite, to whom Heligoland was sacred. Saxnot (Seaxneat), from whom the kings of Essex claimed descent, was probably a god of the Saxons. Holda, who is known only from the folklore of later times, appears to have been a German counterpart of Nerthus. Ing, who is connected with Denmark in Anglo-Saxon tradition, was in all probability the eponymous ancestor of the lnguaeones (see above). His name connects him, too, with the god Frey, who was also called Yngvi- freyr and Inguriarfreyr, and he must at one time have been closely associated with Nerthus. The relationship of Ing to the Inguaeones is paralleled by that of Irmin to the Hermiones (see above). He may be the deity whom Tacitus called “ Her­cules.”

Some of these eponymous ancestors may be regarded as heroes rather than gods, and classed with such persons, as Skiöldr, the eponymous ancestor of the Danish royal family, who is not generally included in the Northern pantheon. But the line of division between the human and the divine is not very definite. The royal family of Norway claimed descent from Frey, and many royal families, both English and Northern, from Woden (Odin). Indeed, several legendary kings are described as sons of the latter. Sometimes, again, the relationship is of a conjugal character. Skiöldr, though hardly a god himself, is the husband of the goddess Gefion. So we find Freyia’s priest described as her husband and Frey’s priestess as his wife, and there is no reason for regarding such cases as exceptional.

If it is not always easy to distinguish between gods and heroes, there is still greater difficulty in drawing a line between the former and other classes of supernatural beings, such as the “ giants ’·’ (O.N. *iōtnar,* A.S. *eotenas).* Here again we have intermarriage. Skaδi, the wife of Niörõr, and Gcrδr, the wife of Frey, were the daughters of The giants Thiazi and Gymir re­spectively, though Skaδi is always reckoned as a goddess. Loki also was of giant birth; but he is always reckoned among the gods, and we find him constantly in their company, in spite of his malevolent disposition. In general it may be said that the giants were regarded as hostile to both gods and men. Often they are represented as living a primitive life in caves and desolate places, and their character is usually ferocious. But there are exceptions even among the male giants, such as Aegir, whom we find on friendly terms with the gods. It is worth noting also that some of the leading families of Norway are said to have claimed descent from giants, especially from Thrymr, the chief opponent of Thor. In such cases there may be some connexion between the giants and the semi-civilized (Finnish or Lappish) communities of the mountainous districts. This connexion is more clear in the case of Thórgerδr Hölgabrfiõr, who is known chiefly from the extreme veneration paid to her by Haakon, earl of Lade (+995). According to one story she was the daughter of Hölgi, the eponymous king of Halogaland (northern Norway) ; according to another she was the wife of Hölgi and daughter of Gusi, king of the Fins. She ought perhaps to be regarded rather as a goddess than as a giantess, but she is never associated with the other deities.

Another class of supernatural beings was that of the dwarfs. They were distinguished chiefly for their cunning and for skill in working metals. More important than these from a religious point of view were the elves (O.N. *alfar,* A.S. *ylfe),* who certainly received worship, at all events in the North. They are almost always spoken of collectively and generally represented as beneficent. In some respects, *e.g.* in the fact that they are often said to inhabit barrows, they seem to be connected with the souls of the dead. In other cases, however, they are hardly to be distinguished from spirits (the Icel. *landvaettir,* &c.), which may be regarded as *genii locorum.*

In addition to the above there were yet other classes of super­natural beings (see Norns and Valkyries). Mention, however, must be made here of the *fylgiur* and *hamingiur of* Northern belief. These are of two kinds, though the names seem not always to be clearly distinguished. Sometimes the *fylgia* is represented as a kind of attendant spirit, belonging to each individual person. It may be seen, generally in animal form, in visions or by persons of second sight, but to see one’s own *fylgia* is a sign of impending death. In other cases the *fylgiur* (or perhaps more correctly the *hamingiur)* apparently belong to the whole family. These generally appear in the form of maidens.

Human beings, especially kings and other distinguished persons, were not infrequently honoured with worship after death. In Sweden during the 9th century we have trustworthy record of the formal deification of a dead king and of the erection of a temple in his honour. In general the dead were believed to retain their faculties to a certain extent in or near the place where they were buried, and stories are told of the resistance offered by them to tomb-robbers. It would seem, moreover, that they were credited with the power of helping their friends (and likewise of injuring other people) very much in the same way as they had done in life. Hence the possession of the remains of a chief who had been both popular and prosperous was regarded as highly desirable.

The blessings which kings were expected to bestow upon their subjects, in life as well as after death, were partly of a supernatural character. Chief among them was that of securing the fertility of the crops. The prevalence of famine among the Swedes was attributed to the king’s remissness in performing sacrificial functions; and on more than one occasion kings are said to have been put to death for this reason. Under similar circumstances Burgundian kings were deposed. In connexion with this attribution of superhuman powers, we may mention also the widespread belief that certain persons had the faculty of “ changing shape,” and especially of assuming the forms of animals.

Besides the various classes of beings to the worship of which we have already referred, we hear occasionally also of sacred animals. Tacitus tells of horses consecrated to the service of the gods, and of omens drawn from them, and we meet again with such horses in Norway nearly a thousand years later. In the same country we find the legend of a king who worshipped a cow’. Besides the anthropomorphic “ giants, ” mentioned above, Northern mythology speaks also of theriomorphic demons, the chief of which were Midgarõsormr, the “ world­serpent,” and Fenrisulfr, a monster wolf, the enemies of Thor and Odin respectively. These beings are doubtless due in part to poetic imagination, but underlying this there may be a substratum of primitive religious belief. In contrast with later Scandinavian usage Tacitus states that the ancient Germans