

The Folklore of the Ladybird



Cor Hendriks

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(Chapter 1: Grimm, Mannhardt, and their influence)

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1.1. Jacob Grimm and his *Deutsche Mythologie*

Jacob Grimm (1785-1863), in his *Deutsche Mythologie* (trans. *Teutonic Mythology*), collected and set forth all that was known of German paganism (and that exclusively of the complete system of Norse mythology). The ladybird is part of the chapter on beetles. Grimm was able to disclose traces of beetle-worship. There are two old and pretty general terms: OHG *chevor*, *cheviro*, MHG *kever*, *kevere*, NHG *käfer*, Dutch *kever*, AS *ceafor*, Engl. *chafer*. We have no business to bring in the Latin *caper* (which is AS *hæfer*, ON *hafr*); the root seems to be the AS *ceaf*, *caf* = alacer, for the chafer is a brisk lively creature, and in Swabia they still say *käfermässig* for *agilis, vivax* (= lively). The AS has *ceafortûn*, *cafertûn*, for atrium, vestibulum; ‘scarabaeorum oppidum’ as it were, because chafers chirp in it? The second term, OHG *wibil*, *webil*, MHG *wibil*, *webil*, MHG *wibel*, NHG *webel*, *wiebel*, AS *wifel*, *wefel*, Engl. *weevil*, agrees with Lithuanian *wabalas*, *wabalis*, Latvian *wabbols*, and Grimm traces it to *weben* (weave, wave) in the sense of ‘leben und weben’ *vigere, moveri*; we say, *kriecheln und wiebeln* of the swarming of beetles (Grimm says: ‘wiebeln wird mit kriecheln verbunden und gilt von der gewimmel der käfer’).¹

To the Egyptians the beetle (scarabaeus, *κάνθαρος, κάραβος*) was a sacred being, an emblem of inmost life and mysterious self-generation. They believed that he proceeded out of matter which he rolled into globules and buried in manure. ON literature deals in no prose terms, but at once comes out with the poetic name *iötunox(i)* ‘giant-ox’; as that giant maiden took the ploughman with his oxen and plough for crawling beetle, Finnish *sontiainen, sondiainen*, dung-beetle, from *sonda*, *fimur* [dung]), so conversely the real beetle might awaken the notion of a *iötunox*. To liken the small animal to the large was natural.

Our biggest beetle, the stately antlered stag-beetle [*schröter*], the Romans called *lucanus* (Nigidius in Pliny 11, 28), with which I suppose is connected the well-known *luca bos*, *lucanus* or *lucana bos* together, a name which got shifted from the horned beast to a tusked one, the elephant (Varro 7, 39. 40. O. Müller, p. 135). But we call the beetle *hirsch* (stag, French *cerf volant* [Dutch *vliegend hert*]) and even ox and goat, all of them horned beasts, Polish *ielonek*, O. Slav *elenetz* (both stagling), Bohemian *rohač* (corniger), Austrian *hörnler*, Swedish *horn troll*, Again, a Latin name for scarabaeus terrester was *taurus*, Pliny 30, 5 (12), which confirms my *lucanus bos* or *cervus*. To the female the Bohemians give the further name of *babka* (granny). Above (on p. 183; s. 167) we came across a more significant name, *donnerguegi, donnerpuppe*, in obvious allusion to Donar, whose holy tree the beetle loves most to dwell in; and with this, apparently, agrees a general term for beetles which extends through Scandinavia, viz. Westergötl. *torbagge*, Swedish *tordyfvel*, Norwegian *tordivel*, Jutland *torr, torre*. True, there is no Icelandic form, let alone ON, in which Thôrr can be detected, yet this ‘tor’ may have the same force it has in *torsdag* (p. 126; s. 115) and *tordön* (p. 166; s. 151); ‘bagge,’ says Ihre p. 122, denotes juvenis, puer [youth, boy], hence servant of the god, which was afterwards exchanged for *dyfvel* = *diefvul*, devil. Afzelius (*Sagohäfder* 1, 12. 13) assures us, that the *torbagge* was sacred to Thor, that in Norrland his larva is called *mullox*e (earth-ox, the Swiss *donnerpuppe*? Cf. *iötunoxi*), and that he who finds a *dung-beetle lying on his back* (ofvältes) unable to help himself, and *sets him on his legs* again, is believed by the Norrlanders to have atoned for seven sins thereby.

¹ See De Vries 1971, 832: *wevel* (1), mnl. *wēvel, wivel* ‘name of several insects a.o. dung-beetle, gnat; ohd. *wibil, wipil, oe wifel* ‘beetle, weevil, glowworm’, etc., connected with the group ‘weave’.

This sounds antique enough [sehr alterthümlich], and Grimm does not hastily reject the proposed interpretation of *tordyfvel*, false as it looks. For the AS *tordwifel* is plainly made up of *tord* stercus [turd] and the *wifel* above, and answers to the Danish *skarnbasse*, *skarntorre* (dung-beetle analogue); consequently *tordyfvel*, *torbasse* crave the same interpretation [deutung], even though a simple *tord* and *wifel* be now wanting in all the Scandinavian dialects. The Icelandic has turned *tordivel* about [umgeändert] into *torfdifill*, as if turf-devil (from *torf*, gleba [piece of earth]). There is also the Dutch *tor(re)* beetle, and *drektorre* dung-beetle [or devil's coach-horse; also English *dumbledorr* cockchafer], to be taken into account.

But whoever saw even a beetle lie struggling on his back, without compassionately turning him over? The German people, which places the stag-beetle [*schröter*] in close connection with thunder and fire, may very likely have paid him peculiar honours once.

Like other sacred harbingers of spring (swallows, storks), the first cockchafer (Maikäfer) used to be escorted in from the woods with much ceremony; we have it on good authority, that this continued to be done by the spinning girls in parts of Schleswig as late as the 17th century. Folk-tales of Upper Germany inform us: Some girls, not grown up, went one Sunday to a deserted tower on a hill, found the stairs strewn with sand, and came to a beautiful room they had never seen before, in which there stood a bed with curtains. When they drew these aside, the bed was *swarming with gold-beetles*, and jumping up and down of itself. Filled with amazement, the girls looked on for a while, till suddenly a terror seized them, and they fled out of the room and down the stairs, with an unearthly howl and racket at their heels.

On the castle-hill by Wolfartsweiler a little girl saw a copper pot standing on three legs, quite new and *swarming full of horse-beetles* [wimmelnder roskäfer]. She told her parents, who saw at once that the beetles were a treasure, and hastened with her to the hill, but found neither pot nor beetles anymore. Here the beetles appear as holy gold-guarding animals, themselves golden. In Sweden they call the small gold-beetle (*skalkräk*) Virgin Mary's key-maid (*jungfru Marie nyckelpiga*) (Dybeck's Runa 1844, 10); in spring the girls let it creep about on their hands, and say: "*hon märker mig brudhandskar* (she marks/foreshews me bride's gloves)"; if she flies away, they notice in which direction, for thence will come the bridegroom. Thus the beetle seems a messenger of the goddess of love; but also the number of the black spots on its wings has to be considered: if more than seven, corn will be scarce that year, if less, you may look for an abundant harvest (Afzel. 3, 112f).

The little coccinella septempunctata has mythical names in nearly all German dialects: NHG *gotteskühein* (God's little cow), *gotteskalb*, *herrgottskalb*, *herrgottsthierchen* (-beastie), *herrgottsvöglein* (-birdie), *Marienvöglein*, *Marienkäfer*, *Marienkälblein*, English *lady-cow*, *ladybird*, *lady-fly*; Danish *Marihöne* (-hen); Bohemian *krawka*, *krawicka* (little cow). In Upper Germany they call the small gold-beetle (chrysomela vulg.) *frauachüeli* (lady-cow) (Tobler 204^b) and *der liebe froue henje* (our lady's hen) (Alb. Schott's Deutsche in Piemont 297), in contrast to *herrachüeli* the coccinella (Tobler 265^a), though the name probably wavers between the two. By the same process which we observed in the names of plants and stars, Mary seems to have stepped into the place of Freya and *Marihöne* was formerly *Freyjuhæna* which we still have word for word in *Froue henje*, and the like in *Frauachüeli*. And of Romance tongues, it is only that of France (where the community of views with Germany was strongest) that has a *bête à dieu*, *vache à dieu*; Spanish and Italian have nothing like it. At all events our children's song:

<i>Marienkäferchen, flieg aus!</i>	Ladybird, fly away!
<i>dein häuschen brennt,</i>	your little house burns,
<i>dein mütterchen flennt,</i>	your little mother weeps,
<i>dein väterchen sitzt auf der schwelle;</i>	your little father sits on the threshold;

flieg im himmel aus der hölle!

fly into heaven out of hell!

must be old, for in England also they sing: ‘Ladybird, ladybird, fly away home, your house is on fire, and your children will burn [all but Bessie that sits *in the sun*].’ In Germany too the children put the Marienkäfer or sonnenkäfer on their finger, and ask it, like the cuckoo: ‘*sunnekieken, ik frage di, wo lange schal ik leven?* (sun’s chicken, I ask you, how long shall I live?)’ ‘*Een jaar, twee jaar,*’ etc., till the chafer flies away, its home being in the sun or in heaven. In Switzerland they hold the gold-beetle on their hand, and say:

‘*cheferli, cheferli, flüg us,
i getter milech ond brocka
ond e silberigs löffeli dezue.*’

(Little beetle (2x), fly away,
You will get milk and breadcrumbs
And also a little silver spoon.)

Here the chafer, like the snake, is offered milk and crumbs and a silver spoon thereto. In olden times the chafer must have been regarded as the god’s messenger and confidant.² In part III more is said about the coccinella, Indian Indragôpa, Indra’s cowherd; Finnish *lenninkäinen*, which sometimes means the beautiful hero Lemminkäinen; English *god’lmighty cow*; [German] *sünnenkind*, sun’s child; Austrian *sonnenkalbel*, sun’s calf.³ Bohemian *slunéčko* (little sun), *slunečnice*, also *linka*, Polish *stonka* [must be: *slonka?*], Serv. *babe* and *mara* (Mary); the girls set it on their finger, ‘mit einem spruch’. Lithuanian *dėwo jautis* ‘God’s ox, God’s birdie; so the glowworm (Johanniswurm) is in Germany *liebe Gotts lammje*, the dragonfly *unser lieben frauen rössel*, horsie, *Gadespferd*, God’s horse, but also *teufelspferd*, *teufelsnadel*, *teufelshaarnadel*, Devil’s horse, needle and hairpin, and *augenschiesser*, eye-shooter. Finnish *tuonen koira*, mortis canis (death’s dog). Bohemian *hadj hlawa*, snake’s head. The butterfly, Gaelic *eunan-dé*, bird of God, Irish Gaelic *dealan-dé* and Gaelic *teine-dé*, both fire of God, Irish *anaman-dé*, anima Dei; conf. Swedish *käringsjäl* [anima anus] old woman’s soul. Arm. [= Breton] *balafen*, *malafen*, *melven*, *balfennik doué*, petit papillon de Dieu. A butterfly-song of Hanoverian Wendland sounds like the ladybird-song: ‘*Bottervågel, sött di, Våder unn moder röpt di, Mul unn nese blött di* (Butterfly, sit down, father and mother are calling you, thy mouth and nose are bleeding)’; otherwise ‘*Midschonke, midschonke, sött di, mul unn nese blött di!*’ A children’s song at Lüben calls the butterfly *ketelböter*, kettle-mender.⁴

The Dutch researcher Marten Douwes Teenstra (1795-1864), in his third book from 1848 on the forbidden arts⁵, reports that it is a favourable sign when one sees *Lievenheers tuitjes* or *Zomerhaantjes*, being a small round little beetle (*torretje*) as big as half a pea, red shields and black dots, in Germany called *Herrgotts-Thierchen*.⁶ He returns to the ladybird when speaking of the number 7. So with predictions by numbers sometimes they make use of so-called *onzen lieven-Heers-beestjes* or *Godshaantjes* (actually the common *zonne kever*) (*Coccinella septempunctata*); this round beetle, as big as a sliced pea, has a black body, with 6 legs, and red shields, each with three little black dots, and a common dot at the end of the shield, so that the little animal has 7 round spots, from where it has the mentioned Latin name. The soothsayers considered the little animal as a *geluks-tiekje*, for which reason it is everywhere beloved and addressed with flattering names. The Germans call it *Herrgottschäffchen*, *Himmelschäffchen* or

² Grimm p. 695; s. 579.

³ Grimm adds *goldwivil*, translated with *cicindela* [?].

⁴ Grimm p. 1495f. Cf. Dutch *ketelboeter*, German *Kesselflicker*.

⁵ M. D. Teenstra, *Verscheidenheden betrekkelijk Booze Kunsten en Wetenschappen, door eene phantastische wereld geschapen, en wel in zonderheid die der Tooverijen en Waarzeggerijen, zijnde een Rapsodie van Sprookjes van vroegere en latere dagen...*, Kampen 1848.

⁶ Teenstra 1848, 109 (also crickets bring luck; spiders only in the evening).

Sonnekind; the French call it *Bête de la Vierge*, *Vache à Dieu*, the English *Lady Cow*, *Lady Bird*, etc.⁷

The ladybird is also one of the subjects in an article from Pott about religious relations in names of natural objects.⁸ Quite remarkable are the widely dispersed denominations of the lowly and harmless beetle species *coccinella*, of which the most common species is red with black dots. As for instance, *Marienküchlein*, *unserer lieben frauen küchlein*, *jungferkäferlein* etc., in Swabia *herrgotts-kühchen*, in Lower Saxon *Johanniswurm* (Würzburg: *Johannisvögele*. Scottish *lady-landers* (maybe Engl. landress, French *lavandière*, washing woman?). A beautiful little insect called in England *lady-fly* or *lady-bird*, also *lady-cow* from Our Lady. Also one should pay attention to the comparison with different animal species like cow, sheep, horse, chicken, etc. So, maybe because of the most common red colour, with the cattle species: German *gotteskühlein*, Russian *bostja korowka* (actually *dei vaccula*), *sonnenkalb* (somewhat explainable from *sunnwendkäferl* in the Pinzgau), Spanish *buei de dios*, etc. But also *gotteslämmlein*, *gottesschäflein*, so the same as *agnus dei* (God's lamb). French *bête à dieu*, *bête de la vierge*. [Less clear *cheval à* (or: *de*) *dieu*, while in German *gottespferd*, but also *teufelspferd*, *gottessperling* (libellula), and gypsy *dewleskero grai* (divinus equus), locust, because of the flying in the air (to heaven).⁹] But also, besides *herrgottsmückel* (from *mücke*: mosquito), further also *herrgottshühnchen*, Dutch *lievenheers-haantje* (God's little cock), Danish *marihøne*, *vor herrs høne* etc.

1.2. Wilhelm Mannhardt (1831-1880) and his *Germanische Mythen* (1858)

As a boy, Wilhelm Mannhardt has often been ill and was also quite near-sighted which made him a fervent reader of books, especially about mythology. That way he familiarized himself already at a young age with Jacob Grimm's major work, the *Deutsche Mythologie*, that had a determining influence on him. In 1851 he started his study in Berlin but his constitution forced him to seek his own way, which brought him to the works of Kuhn and Schwartz who continued building a 'German mythology' in the spirit of Jacob Grimm. The idea was that customs, legends, fairy-tales, superstitions, songs, in short every kind of oral tradition could be used as documents of the 'vaterländischen Urzeit'.¹⁰

One of the most ardent students of Grimm was Johann Wilhelm Wolf (1817-1855), well-known in the Netherlands for his collection *Niederländische Sagen* (1843). In 1852 he published the study *Beiträge zur deutschen Mythologie*, dedicated to Jacob Grimm. He was also the publisher of the *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie*, which was continued after his death by Mannhardt, but only two issues appeared, because Mannhardt had distanced himself from the thoughts of Wolf and came more and more under the influence of comparative mythology.¹¹ In those days he wrote his *Germanische Mythen. Forschungen* (1858), also dedicated to Jacob Grimm, in which the first part makes a comparison between the Vedic god Indra and the Germanic god Thunar (Donar – Thorr), while the second part is a treatment of Holda and the Norns.

⁷ Teenstra 1848, 188f.

⁸ Pott, 'Religiöse beziehungen in namen von naturgegenständen', in: *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung auf dem Gebiete des Deutschen, Griechischen und Lateinischen*, 4, 1855, 172-175, here 174.

⁹ As the article is about religious relations in general it is not always clear which are the ladybird denominations but I think these are no ladybird but dragon fly and grass-hopper denominations.

¹⁰ Mannhardt 1963, II, ix.

¹¹ Knappert 1894, 199.

In this second part we are immediately thrown into the deep. The ladybird (Marienkäfer: coccinella) and the rose-chafer (Goldkäfer: chrysomela) were in the Germanic paganism surrounded with an ancient religious hallowing, their manifold names were constantly interchanged, so that one and the same mythical meaning must be described to them. They share this also with the cock-chafer (= maybug; Maikäfer: scarabaeus melolontha) which, although it has other popular names, is called upon with the same songs. These denominations of the coccinella and chrysomela stimulate research in different directions. Mannhardt makes a comparison with other insects, who are in his opinion dedicated to the thundergod, and posits that the chrysomela and coccinella are conceived as

- a) chicken: *Marienküchlein, unserer lieben Frauen Küchlein, hiärguots häunken, Herrgotts Hühnchen, der liebe froue henje, sunnekiken, Goldhähnchen*, in Graubünden *la gallina del Signore*, Dutch *lieven heersha[a]ntje*, Danish *Marihöne, vorherreshöne*, in West-Gotland *gullhæna*, at the Island-Swedes on Worms *Gêshêna* (Jesus' hen);
- b) cow: *Frauenkühle, Hergottenkühle, Herrgottskühlein, Herrgottsöchslein, Marienkühchen, Marienkälbchen, Herrgottskälbe, Sonnenkuh, Buköken, Sonnenkalb, Sunnenkalf, Mânkalf* (Moon-calf), English *ladycow, cowlady, cushacowlady*; French *vache à Dieu*; Spanish *buei de Dios*, Russian *božija korowka* (God's little cow), is used in preference, Bohemian *boži kravka* solely for the chrysomela. Among the Lithuanians a little red beetle without dots is called *dewo jautis* 'God's ox'¹²;
- c) horse: in Plön the ladybird is called *marispêrt, uns herrgott sîn best pert*, in Danzig the chrysomela *Herrgottspferdchen*; French *cheval à Dieu* and *cheval de Dieu*;
- d) sheep: *Gotteslämmlein, Gottesschäfchen, Muttergotteslämmchen, Lûrelûrelämmken*; the Lithuanians have the same names for the 'Heerschneppé' and the ladybird, *Dewo ozys, Dewo ozelis, Perkuno ozys, Dangaus ozys* (God's, Perkuna's, Heaven's goat);
- e) cat: in the Elbmarsch the ladybird is called *Maikatt*;
- f) fly: *Herrgottsmüchel, Fliegewäppchen*, English *ladyfly*.

To this should be added more general denominations as: *Marienkäfer, Liebegotschäberli, Herrgottsvöglein, -vögele, Sonnevögele, Himmelstierchen, Goldvogel, ladybird, bête à Dieu, bête de la Vierge*, in the Pinzgau *Sunnwendkäfer*, etc. Without already drawing further conclusions, we can see that the compared animals hen, cow, sheep, horse, cat are such which are also used as symbols for clouds or storm, while he has pointed out about cows and cats in part 1 that they can be the forms taken by the elves or the heavenly water-lady's (Âpas).

Another side of the denominations of our beetles which should be considered is the clearly pronounced relation with the sun, the moon, heaven or a divine being: *Sonnevögele, Sunnenkind, Sonnenkuh, Sonnenkalb, Sunnenkalf, Sunneschinken* (little sunshine), *Mânkalf, Himmelstierchen*. The Bohemians call the ladybird *sluničko*, i.e., Little Sun. On the other side: *Unserer lieben Frauen Küchlein, der liebe fraue henje, Muttergotteslämmchen, Ladybird, Ladycow, Ladyfly, Marienküchlein, Marienkälbchen, Marienkäfer, Marihöne, bête à la Vierge*, etc. *Herrgottspferdchen, Herrgottskühle, Herrgottsöchslein, Vorherreshæne, vache à Dieu, Dewo ozys*, etc. In Swabia a *frauachüele* is the chrysomela, while the coccinella is called *herrachüele*, but in West Prussia it is called *Marienkäfer, -würmchen*, and the chrysomela *Herrgottspferdchen*. The Castilians say in stead of the usual term *gochinilla* for the ladybird *arca de Dios* (God's chest), the Catalonians in stead of their usual *pastereta* also *arca de nostro senyor* or *de la mare*

¹² Also the Indian name for the coccinella *Indragôpa*, which originally meant 'having Indra as cowherd', might be included in this idea when it was really old, but it comes from a time when *gôpa* had lost its old meaning almost completely and had become a term for 'ward' (Schützling) in a general way.

de Deu. In Bohemia the cockchafer has the name of the Slavic mother of the gods Baba; it is called *babka* (young Baba, little grandmother).

Because there exists besides *Sonnenkuh*, *Sonnenkalf* also a *Mânkalf* and *Himmelstierchen*, those denominations cannot be related to the flying around of the beetles in the sunshine, but can only be related to the idea that his home is in the heavenly light-region, in the neighbourhood of the sun and the moon, and this sensory image makes already likely that behind the Virgin Mary and the Lord God, to whom the beetle appears to be consecrated, an old heathen god and a to him related goddess are hidden in whose place in Christian times the Lord and his Mother have stepped in. Even more revealing is a Swedish name that presents the beetle as a personified, with reason equipped elf-like being: *Jungfru Marias nyckelpiga* (Virgin Mary's key-maid), at the Island-Swedes on Runoe *nickelpîa*, on Dagoë *Gêswallpîka* (Jesus' herd-girl). These names bring immediately Nordic goddesses to mind how Freyja, whose virgin Loki in the Thrymsquiða represents, and Frigg who has a divine servant Fulla keeping the jewellery chest and the foot-coverings. Also the plant satyrium is called *Friggjargras* as well as *Jungfru Marie nykäl*, *Santa Pârs nykäl*, *St. Johannis nycklar* (Virgin Mary's, St. Peter's, St. John's key). Also the white women of the German folk-legend carry keys and this is connected to the name of the primula veris *Schlüsselblume* (cowslip, primrose). As confirmation serves the old-Nordic name of the ladybird *Freyjuhoena* (Freyja's hen) that has been put forward by J. Grimm (*Myth.* 658) and Petersen (*Nordisk mythology*, 351), as soon as this name will be confirmed anew from good and real sources. Is according to this Freyja the goddess, to whom the beetle was consecrated, so will be hidden behind Jesus or the Lord God her brother Freyr, an assumption that he will prove next.¹³

Is by Frey's sunshine-spending mildness again the relation of the sun-beetle with this god and his sister confirmed, also the many songs devoted to the beetle carry clearly all characteristics of this divine pair of siblings. These songs can be found in almost the same wording in all Germanic countries, so the beetle must also outside the Germanic North have been consecrated to the equivalents of these gods. At the Slavs and Romans these songs seem to be absent, at least until now careful investigation has not uncovered a single piece.

Children put the beetle (especially the ladybird) on the hand and let it fly up. On the island Fünen the accompanying words are:

<i>Flæi, flæi, vorherreshæne,</i>	Fly, fly, Lord God's hen,
<i>îmorgen bliver det godt veir,</i>	Tomorrow there will be good weather,
<i>den anden dag lifsaa!</i>	The day thereafter also!

Or: *Vorherreshæne flyv til vers og sig mig om vi faaer godt veer î morgen*. The higher it flies, the better the weather.¹⁴ On Bornholm:

Mariputte, Mariputte
îmorgen blier det sôlskîn og grant veir.

With the Island-Swedes on Nuckoe and Worms:

<i>Gullhêna, gullhêna,</i>	Goldhen, goldhen,
<i>lât sôlen skîna!</i>	Let the sun shine.

¹³ Mannhardt 1858, 243-247. Freyja shared the power of her brother Freyr. Like him she enabled rain and sunshine and the fertility of the earth. While he is seen as spender of the sexual appetite who was offered to at weddings, Freyja was good to call upon in love affairs. She especially liked love-songs (*mannsöngr*). Freyr was the oracular god. To him cattle was consecrated, after him the bull is called *freyr* and cows drew his chariot, when his statue was driven around the country in festive choir dance.

¹⁴ Mannhardt says: 'Je nach der Höhe des Fluges ermisst man, ob gutes oder schlechtes Wetter werde.' This is unclear. What is meant is, when it flies up, it is a sign of good weather, when down, then bad weather.

*mullefläken, mullefläken,
lät wære drîwa!
skært up i sunna,
mullen gär nêr i nôrda!*

The raincloud, the cloud-patch
Let the wind drive away
Clear up in the south,
The clouds go down in the north!

In the Swiss Aargau:

*Spanisch, spanisch mugge,
flüg über de hoh' rugge,
flüg über de hoh' berg',
dass mor'n gut wetter gäb.*

In Jeverland:

*Pater flêg up,
mâk morgen môi wê'r!
wenn de wakker meisches
von't melken kâmt her.*

In Westphalia (county Mark):

*Hiärguotshäuneken flüch op,
tüh den hogen hiemel rop,
brenk ne güllne kîe met.*

[Variants:

*Sunneschînken, hâwerkineken,
flüg du in de nüge stadt,
dâ kristu hâwerbroud sad.*

Or in Werdold a.d. Lenne:

*Sunnefüelken, flüg op, flüg den hôgen tourn rop!
flüg mi nit te houg, süs krstú wat oppet ouge.^{15]}*

In Swabia:

*Frauenkühle
steig aufs stühle!
flieg in himmel nuf
und bring gut wetter rus.*

In Lower Bavaria:

*Frauenkäferl sitz auf's stüel
melk dein küel,
flieg hinter die tanebâm
und mach mir ain schön warme suneschein.*

[From Simrock, *Kinderbuch*:

*Herrgottsöchslein flieg in die Büsch,
Bring mir einen Sack mit Haselnüß.*

Or:

Maikäfer, flüg uf, uf die hohe tanne, etc.]

In the Elbmarsch:

*Maikatt weg
flügg weg,
stuff weg,
bring' mî morgen gôt wedder ned.*

¹⁵ This last line is according to Mannhardt later addition (the high tower is a tower of clouds).

In the Aargau:

*Kathrineli, flüg ûs,
übers hêredach ûs,
wenn's chunt go regne
so chumm mir's go sage, etc.*

In Scotland:

*Lady, lady landers,
fly away to Flanders.*¹⁶

The cockchafer has the same kind of invocation (from Denmark):

*Oldenboerre, oldenboerre,
Imorgen faaer vi godt veir.*

Besides in these folk-rhymes the connection of the ladybird with the weather is also stated in superstitious opinions. It is bad luck to shake off a *Herrgottstierchen* from your clothing. In West Prussia and Holstein people believe to have luck when a beetle of this kind walks on their coat and for that reason they call it *Glückskäfer*. When someone kills a *Sünnenschînken*, then the sun will not shine the whole day or the cows will give red milk. Also the Catalanian children say: 'Don't kill the beetle, it is the little worm of God or of the holy Virgin.' In Swabia they go so far as to say: 'Who kills a *Herrgottskäferle*, will go to hell.' In Dutch North Brabant they say to the coccinella: '*Lieven heers læmken kom bij mij, ben je van den duivel, dan ga van mij, ben je van onzen lieven heer, dan blijf bij mij* (Dear Lord's little lamb, come to me; are you from the Devil, then go from me; are you from our dear Lord, then stay with me).' When the belief that the milk of the cows will turn red gives an elucidation to the above mentioned name *Gêswallpîka* (Jesus' herd-girl), while it relates to Freyr's lordship over the cows and shows that next to the representation of the beetle as cow even the other idea as a cow-herding Alb was quite common, this is also further confirmed by folk-rhymes. Already in the rhyme above from Lower Bavaria it is said: '*Frauenkäferl sitz auf's stüel, melk dein küel.*' In the Aargau the people say to the ladybird:

*Ankethineli, Ankethrineli,
wo hesch dine chüehli?
("z' Lauersinge, z' Lauersinge
ûf em selle flüehli!")*¹⁷

Just as Freyr and Freyja are harvest-gods and receive sacrifices for a good outturn of the field (til ârs), the Swedish children count wetter the ladybird has more than seven black dots on its wings. When this is the case, then that year the corn will be very expensive, are there less than seven then a rich harvest can be expected.

Also the connection of Freyr and Freyja with the love-life is not forgotten in the rhymes to the beetle. It is a occasion of luck in Sweden when a young girl sees it in the spring. She takes it on her hand and, while it walks around, she says: '*hon marker mig brudhandskar* (he marks my bridal glove)' When it at last spreads its wings and takes off, she watches with attention in which direction it flies, because, as she believes, from there will come her bridegroom. These folk-beliefs are expressed in several rhymes. In Upland the people say:

*Jungfru Marie nyckelpie, Virgin Mary's key-maid,
flyg öster, flyg vester, Fly to the east, fly to the west,*

¹⁶ Chambers, *Pop. Rhymes*, 43. Pott suspects (*Zt.f.vergl.Sprachf.* IV, 174) that this *landers* comes from English *landress* [laundress], French *lavandière*. This betrays according to Mannhardt again a relation with the clouds.

¹⁷ Here also the last lines are later addition according to Mannhardt. The cows are the cloud cows.

flyg dit mîn käreste bor.

In Södermannsland:

*Jungfru Marie nyckelpie,
flyg öster, flyg vester,
flyg söder, flyg nor,
dit du flyr, der bost kärestan
flyg hem till dina bröder
så fär du nya kläder.*

Fly to where my dearest lives.

Virgin Mary's key-maid,
Fly to the east, fly to the west,
Fly to the south, fly to the north,
Where you fly to, there my dearest lives,
Fly home to your brothers,
Then you will get new cloths.

In Scotland there seems to be or have been the same belief. Here they say to the ladybird:

*King, king Golloway
up your wings and fly away,
over land and over sea,
tell me, where my love can be.¹⁸*

The same in Germany. In Westphalia they say:

*Hiärguotshäunken flüch op,
tüh den hogen hiemel op,
flüch vor mines nâbers hûs,
locke mi de brut herût.*

And also:

*Hiärguâtspiärreken, wå kömstu hiär?
ûtm austen åder ûtm westen?
kær du di nå Lippstadt,
då kristu iä'ten un drinken satt.*

In Witten a.d. Ruhr the little girls say, when they have the ladybird on the top of their index-finger:

*Sunnenschîneken,
riægenschîneken,
wannêr sall ek brut sîn?
ên jâr, twê jâr, etc.*

until the little animal flies up. They are very disturbed when they have to count long. When these rhymes already show a connection with Freyr, the oracle-god, the more so in the next example:

<i>Sunnekieken, ik frage di, wie lange schall ik lêwen? ên jâr, twê jâr...</i>	Sun-chick, I ask you, How long shall I live? One year, two year...
--	--

Or:

*Sunnenkalf, Mânkalf,
wo lang schall ik läwen?
ên jâr, twê jâr...*

When these traditions point to the fact, that our beetle was dedicated in the North to gods like Frigg, Freyja and Freyr (although also Thor as ruler of the cloud-cows, spender of rain and sunshine and giver of marital fortune might be considered), some German nursery-rhymes give us new and also very important points of connection with a German goddess, who is in fact almost or completely one with Freyja. In Lower Bavaria they say:

Suwendkäfer flieg in'n brunn,

¹⁸ Mannhardt refers in a note to a comparable song on the bees: *Bless you, bless you bonny-bee / say, when will your wedding be? / if it be to morrow-day / take your wings and fly away.* Notice though, that this is not an oracular song: the wedding is that of the bee, not of the inquirer.

bring uns morgñg ein schöne sunn.

Near Vienna:

*Käferl, käferl,
flieg nach Mariabrunn
und bring uns ä schöne sunn.*

At Baden in Lower Austria:

*Liawi frau'ku'l,
fliah iwa den brunn
lâs haind odar moargn
schên schainen di sun.*

At Guschterholländer near Driesen in the region of Frankfurt:

*Marienwürmchen fliege fort,
Hinter Schulzenbrunnen,
Da sind deine Jungen.¹⁹*

So the holy beetle lives behind or over [= on the other side of] the well and this well is the heavenly waters, behind which the sun is hidden. But we learn about another faculty of this well: it hides the souls of the unborn, it is the children-well. In Bavarian Middle Francken they sing, holding the coccinella on the hand:

*Herrgottsmoggela flieg auf,
flieg mir in den himmel nauf,
bring a goldis schüssela runder
und a goldis wickelkindla drunder.*

Spread through all of Germany is the old wives tale, that the little 'Wickelkinder' (babies, wrapped in, as was common in those days) were taken from a well [also in the Netherlands where they are fished out of the well by the stork].²⁰ In the well they are guarded by a divine white woman, whom Wolf suspected to be the Germanic goddess Holda. This Mannhardt is able to prove with lots of evidence. The Holda legends that he brings together show clearly that Holda is identical with that white woman who guards the children in the well, a cave or in the wood. This well, mountain or woodhouse are but three different terms for the clouds. That really the woodhouse or the well of Holda and the children-well, to where the ladybird flies up, are one and the same, can be proven with a Lower Saxon legend. A little girl, that liked to play in the wood with beetles, butterflies and other little animals, is taken up in the air by a big gold-beetle (rosechafer) to a good Holde, who sits as an old little mother with her spinning wheel before the door of a straw-cabin. Five years the little girl stays up there, while on earth a heavy war rages. After the peace agreement she returns to her birth-village with a rich dowry of linen and clothing. Almost to the word identical is a legend from Franken, in which Frau Hulle takes a boy chased away by his brothers, the 'krummen Jacob' (twisted, deformed), into her woodhouse and raises him for three years, after which she conducts him back home and helps him to his paternal inheritance.

¹⁹ Mannhardt remarks that the word *Schulzen* is new and brought about by the localisation of the heavenly well on earth. Also he notices the agreement with the song of the Presburger children when it rains: 'Liabi Frau mach's tür'l auf, / lâß di liabi sunn herauf / lâß in reg'n drîna, / lâß in schnê verbrîna. / d'Engeln sitzen hintern brunn / wart'n auf die liabi sunn.' (Dear Lady, open the little door / let the dear sun come out / let the rain stay in, / let it burn into snow. / The angels are sitting behind the well / waiting for the dear sun.) When at that moment the sun comes out, the dancing circle falls down [on their knees, I guess] and sing: 'Sunn, sunn kummt / d'engarln fall'n in 'n brunn.'

²⁰ Mannhardt 1858, 247-255.

When we go deeper into the meaning and internal cohesion of these traditions, it becomes clear that Holda is a heavenly goddess, who enfolds her power in wind and sunshine, but by preference brings the blessings of the clouds, in which she has her main seat. She is in one word the old waterwoman (Wasserfrau). Her residence in the clouds is thought of as mountain, well or wood. Here she is enthroned with a high god, Wôdan or Donar. With her in the clouds are also the souls of the deceased.²¹ The souls that float up to heaven wait in the company of the gods in the cloud-well near Holda, until they are sent back to earth for a new birth in another body. The stork or the ladybird brings the souls to the birth-giving women in the human world. Out of this came through localization of the heavenly well or mountain on earth and through the generalization of the concept of the soul into soul and body together the old wives tale that the babies are taken out of wells or mountains or that the stork brings the babies.²²

This land of the souls is called *Engelland*. That Engelland in the legends presented by Mannhardt is not the United Kingdom, but rather the land of angels, the heavenly light-space, can be seen from the following folk-rhymes of the ladybird or cockchafer (maybug).

1. Alttöplitz near Potsdam:

*Marienwörmken flüg furt,
Flüg furt nach Engelland!
Engelland ist zugeschlossen,
Schlüssel davon abgebrochen.*

2. Pommerellen.²³

*Herrgottspferdchen fliege,
Vater ist im Kriege,
Mutter ist in Engelland,
Engelland ist abgebrannt,
Herrgottspferdchen fliege!*

3. Weimar²⁴

*Kritzekrebs fliege,
Dein Vater ist im Kriege,
Deine Mutter ist in Engelland,
Engelland ist abgebrannt.
Hinter der Kirche liegt der Sand
Ausgestreut vor Engelland,
Engelland und Spanien,
Dippel dapple danien.*

4. Hildburghausen

*Käfer, Käfer, flieg ählich (alone),
Mei Mutter ist in Krähnich (Kronach a place near Hildburghausen),*

²¹ Mannhardt 1858, 268f.

²² Mannhardt 1858, 272. Hieraus

²³ In a note Mannhardt indicates that he knows this version from a lot of places but all with the name *Pommerland* in stead of *Engelland*, while one has *Pommelnd*. A version from Trier has: *Häverling flieg, dein Vater ist im Krieg, deine Mutter ist im Niederland. Niederland ist abgebrannt, Häverling flieg! Or: Himmelskühchen fliege aus, fliege bis nach Pommerland. Pommerland ist abgebrannt, es steht nur noch die halbe Wand.* From Potsdam: *Marienwürmchen fliege doch, dein Vater sitzt in der Röhre, Mutter ist im Pommerland; Pommerland ist abgebrannt, Marienwürmchen fliege doch.* From Weißenfels: *Schake, schake rit, willst du mit inn Krieg? willst du mit nach Pommerland, wo der Blaukohl stand?* The mythical meaning of this Pommerland (also Bommeland) did not materialize for Mannhardt. (ID., 347f n. 2)

²⁴ *Kritzekrebs* is in Weimar and surrounding area a very common name for the maybug.

- Mei Vater ist im Vaterland,
Sein Häusle dort ist abgebrannt.*
5. Wertheim
*Maikäfer flieg,
Dei Vater ist im Krieg,
Dei Mutter in der Asche
Müëß der 'n Hemdle wasche.*
6. Weißenfels
*Flieg, Käfer, flieg,
Dein Vater ist im Krieg,
Deine Mutter ist in'n Stoefel gekroche,
Hat das linke Bein gebroche.*
7. Danzig
*Herrgottspferdchen fliege weg,
Dein Häuschen brennt,
Dein Kähnchen schwimmt,
Deine Kinderchen schreien nach Butterbrod;
Herrgottspferdchen fliege weg!*
8. Pommerellen
*Herrgottspêrdke,
dine kinnerke schrie,
dîn hûske brennt,
flêg weg!*
9. Weißenfels
*Himmelskühlichen flieg aus!
Dein Haus brennt,
Deine Kinder weinen alle miteinander.*
10. St. Albrecht near Danzig
*Maikäfer fliege!
Dein Häuschen brennt,
Dein Löffelchen schmilzt,
Deine Kinder schreien nach Brot!*
11. Eifel
*Herrgottsschäfschen, Fliegewäppchen,
Dein Töpfchen kocht, dein Kindchen kreischt,
Da kommen ihr sieben mit Spießen,
Wollen dich erschießen!
Has! has! bu!*
12. Hildburghausen
*Herrgottskühle flieg auf und davon,
Flieg zum hintern Türle naus,
Dei Mutterle flennt,
Dei Kinnerle liegen in der Wiege,
Da fressen sie alle Fliege.*
13. [see Grimm]²⁵

²⁵ In Frankfurt a.M.: *Käwerche, käwerche flieh ewegg! dein häusi brennt, dein mudderche flennt, dei vadderche sitzt uff schawelle, flieh hoch in alle helle.* (Firm. II, 65) Cf. also: *Maikäfer flieg uff, dien fiereli brennt, dien sibbele*

14. Hallamshire²⁶
*Ladycow, Ladycow, fly thy way home,
 thy house is on fire, thy children all gone,
 all but one, that ligs under a stone,
 ply thee home, Ladycow, ere it be gone.*
15. [Grimm]
16. Erfurt
*Maikäfer fliege fort,
 Dein Häuschen brennt,
 Dein Kreischen brennt,
 Die Jungen sitzen drinnen
 Und spinnen,
 Und wenn sie ihre Zahl (10 Schock) nicht haben,
 Können sie nicht spazieren gan.*
17. From Simrock's Kinderbuch
*Zulla zulla gogl,
 spinn, spinn a gaare,
 der wewer will eins habe.*
18. Yorkshire and Lancashire
*Ladybird, Ladybird,
 eigh thy way home!
 thy house is on fire,
 thy children all roam,
 except little Nan,
 who sits in her pan,
 weaving gold laces,
 as fast as she can.*
19. Berlin
*Marienwürmchen fliege weg,
 Deine Mutter ist gefangen
 An einer langen Stangen.*
20. Eifel
*Himmelstierchen flieg hoch in die Luft,
 Flieg ins Herrgottsgärtchen,
 Flieg, sonst kommen die Leut mit den Spießem
 Und wollen (mich und) dich erschießen.*
21. From Simrock
*Türkenmännchen, flieg hinweg!
 Die Weiber mit den Stangen
 Wollen dich empfangen.
 Türkenweibchen, flieg hinweg,
 Die Männer mit den Spießem
 Wollen dich erschießen.
 Flieg in den Himmel,*

(Süppchen) kocht, dien muader sitzt uff der schawälle (Schwelle). (Stöber, *Elsäss. Vb.* 44, 48)

²⁶ From Hunters Hallamshire gloss., 56. Cf. Jamieson, *Northern antiquities*, I, 322: *Ladybird, Ldybird fly and begone! your house is a fire and your children at home!*

*Bring einen Sack voll Kringel,
Tunk ich meinen Weck hinein,
Bei dem rotten kühlen Wein.*

22. Alsace

*Maikäfer, fliej uff!
mah dînre mueder d' schür uff.
d' Judde kumme,
d' Heide kumme,
welle mit dir reche,
welle dich und dine liewe kind alli zsamma zu dod steche.*

23. From *Dichtungen aus der Kinderwelt*

*Goldhähnchen flieg hinweg,
Dein Häuschen brennt,
Dein Süppchen siedt.
Der Bauern kommen mit Spießern,
Wollen dein Kindlein tot schießen.
Puh! ti poh! ti puh!*

24. Reußmarkt in Transylvania

*Tipesken (maybug), Tipesken,
flej af de birrebum (pear-tree),
säch, wun de Tattre (Gypsies) kun (come).
de Tattre ku' mät stangen.
der teiwel huot sich erhangen.
der bäscht bræd (the bush burns) um äibjs,
der fuss (fox) huot sich den schwänz versänjt.*

25. Reps and Bistritz in Transylvania

*Herrgottîsken (ladybird),
flej af de birrebum,
säch wenn de Tattre kun.
ech wall dich ä nær schtälche lôken,
ech wall der mätsch (milk) och bruit (bread) broken.*

26. Bistritz in Transylvania

*Härrjotsteißken,
fleij än himmel,
sô mer, wën de motter kit,
sô mer, wën der vätter kit,
sô mer, wën de Tattern ku,
sô mer, wën de Tirken ku,
ech wäl dich zâ mer lôken,
ech wäl der brut (bread) brôken,
ech wäl der möllich geißen (pour in the milk),
ech wäl dich än en gäldän tru änschleißern.*

As we have seen above, the ladybird or the maybug is requested to fly up to the soul-seat of Holda in or behind the clouds. Also in the songs here collected this is explicitly said: 'Flieg in den Himmel' (21); *Flieg inn Himmel aus der Hölle*, or *Flieg hoch in alle Hölle* (to Hella) in any case in the soul-seat (13); *Flieg in's Herrgottsgärtchen* (the Lord God's little garden) (20); *Fly thy way home* (14); *Eigh thy way home* (18); *Fly away home* (15). This homeland of the beetle is

indicated in 1-3 as *Engelland*. The reason of the exhortation is a great danger, in which the homeland of the beetle is. Enemies, especially Jews and pagans, gypsies (Tattern) or Turks came with pikes and poles to take his family prisoner; already its house is burning, the whole of Holda's realm is in flames.

As in the legend, that at the end of times the Turks will advance till Cologne, water their horses in the Rhine and fight a great battle against a white king, who will deliver Germany, the fear of Christianity has taken the place of the demonic giants, who according to Germanic mythology fight the last battle with the gods at the Twilight of the Gods, as especially the Winter-Giants in German spring-games now appear as Turks, so also in our rhymes the Jews, pagans, Turks and Gypsies are nothing else than the most terrible enemies of the world, i.e., from an old-pagan viewpoint the demons (giants), who put the heavenly powers in fetters, close up the clouds, cover the light heaven with the shadows of the night. The evening-red was conceived as such a demonic giant, who brings the darkness over the sky. Therefore Mannhardt suspects that the call to the beetle: 'Your house is burning' (8-10, 13, 16), '*Thy house is on fire*' (14, 15, 18), '*Engelland ist abgebrannt*' has the meaning: go back to heaven, it is evening, your kin is in danger, and you will, if you stay too long, be excluded from your homeland, that the demon now clasps with tight bonds. The clouds painted red by the evening sun is the burning *Engelland*. Noteworthy are the expressions 'Fly onto the pear-tree' (24, 25), 'The bush is burning' (14). Above we saw the woodhouse of the giants and the wood-cabin of Holda are equal to the cloud-rock and the children-well. The same meaning is behind the *Tannenwald* or bush, to where the beetle has to fly (in the Aargau they sing to the chrysomela: '*Goldkäfer flüg ûf, / ûf dîne hohe tanne / zue diner muetter Anne...*'). The enemies in the rhymes are also characterized as demons by the fact that they carry poles (*Stangen*: 19, 21, 24), for they are a distinguishing mark of the giants [they are club-carriers, like Hercules].

The light-beings don't simply take this enclosure by the demons: day and night, summer and winter they fight; there comes war between them (2, 3, 5, 6) that ends with the victory of the night-spirits.

Another twist is taken by 25, 26. They offer the beetle, when the demons come and the land of elves (Engel-land) will be closed, so it cannot go in, to lure it into the barn, milk and bread. This gift is an offer, brought to the messenger of Holda. In Switzerland they say:

*Cheferli, cheferli, flüg us,
i getter milech ond brocka
ond e silberigs löffeli dezue.*

In a rhyme from the Aargau to the *Liebgottschälbeli* it is called '*i gi der milch und mocke*'. The whole song is:

*Liebgottschälbeli, flüg ûf,
der heiland tut der's türli ûf
bring mer drei pfund anken (butter) drûs
und e silberigs löffeli.
Flüg über der hohe rügge,
i gi der milch und mocke,
flüg über de Härtestei
und suech mer vatter und muetter hei.*

Here the beetle has to bring butter from the heavenly light-country, the door of which is opened by the Saviour, as above by Maria, by shoving back the clouds. This butter brought down through the door of heaven can only come from the cloud-cows, whose guard we saw above is the beetle. We noticed there that the beetle itself is called *cow* and betrays by that the relation with the

cloud-cows, i.e., the [night]mares. As confirmation of the identity of the mares with our beetle may serve the expressions in the songs collected above, wherein it is said to the beetle flying to Engelland: ‘*Deine Kinder schreien*’ (7-11), ‘*Dein Mütterchen flennt*’ (12), ‘*Thy children all gone*’ (14), ‘*Your children will burn*’ (15), ‘*Thy children all roam*’ (18). These words are similar to the sayings of the mares: ‘*Wie weinen meine Kinder in Engelland!*’

When already this expression takes us into the realm of the mare-legends, another congruity is in the call ‘*dein kähnenchen schwimmt*’ (7). The beetle must just like the mares cross the water to reach Engelland (an island surrounded by the heavenly waters).²⁷

This idea finds support in the fact, that the insects and especially the beetles are forms in which mares, elves and souls appear. The dragon-fly, in Germany called just like the maybug *Gottespferd*, is called on Runoe by the Island-Swedes precisely *horsho-måra* horse-mare. The may-fly is called there *trullfjällda* ‘witch-butterfly’ and a very similar insect *alpa* ‘elf’. In Betzingen near Tübingen a girl was sleeping so heavy that no amount of shaking could wake her up. After several hours a beetle flew by, crept into the mouth of the sleeping girl and she awoke. So she was a mare. Gold-making kobolds appear as beetle or humble-bee. The relationship of the beetles with the elves and mares can also be seen from the multiple attested legend that beetles are enchanted princes, i.e., elves, as the white enchanted women are equal to female elves (Elbinnen). The beetle finds the key to the children-hiding (cloud-)rock. For there is a story about a poor boy who received from a little grey man a wallet with in it a beetle. A mysterious piper had lured all the children into a mountain and had them locked up. Little Hans opened his wallet, the beetle grubs a key out of the earth, with which a door in the mountain can be opened, that leads to a light ‘Wonneland’ (land of affluence) with the golden castle, for which again the beetle searches and finds the key. The beetle was an enchanted king. In the former evaluation of the insects as mares, elves lies possibly the reason that until late in the Middle Ages they were treated as sensible beings [a trial against the green flies and the gad-flies in 1557, against the grubs of the cock-chafer in 1492, etc.].

The thought-coherence we saw in the rhymes of the maybug and the ladybird has been confirmed from all sides. Mention may also be made of a Swedish children’s game. The child is asked: ‘*har du sett herrans höns?*’ (Have you seen the ladybird?) When the answer is no, the child is lifted up by his ears. So he must search for the beetle ‘in der Höhe’.

The songs for the beetles must be very old. Several of them are sung, while they let a rose-chafer flutter around tied to a string. The same is done in England with a butterfly. Strutt (Royal Library n° II, 6. VII) publishes from a manuscript of the 14th c. the image of a boy, who has a butterfly on a string and lets it fly. According to Aristophanes (*Nubes* 762) the Hellenic youth did this with a rose-chafer.²⁸

As for their mythical meaning the beetles are intimately connected with the butterflies. Like in the North the ladybird is called *Marihoene*, so in several Norwegian regions the butterfly is called also *Marihoena*, in Søndmørstift *Marihane*, in Guldbrandsdalen *Murihoene*.²⁹

In Aargau they say to the ladybird:

*Lieber Herrgottsschäferli,
flüg über de Rhî!
bring dem Herrgottsmüeterli
es glas voll wî.
Chäferli flüg, flüg über de Rhî,*

²⁷ Mannhardt 1858, 347-356; 366.

²⁸ Mannhardt 1858, 367-369.

²⁹ Ibid. 371.

*säg der heilig Sant Chäteri
es sött morn schön wetter sî.*

The ladybird is itself called *Ann-Kethrineli* in Switzerland.³⁰

Swabian rhymes command the maybug to bring fruit from his heavenly homeland:

1.

*Sonnevögele flieg aus,
Flieg in meines Vaters Haus,
Komm bald wieder,
Bring mir Aepfel und Bire!*

2.³¹

*Maikäfer flieg aus,
Flieg in meiner Ahne Haus,
Bring mir Aepfel und Bire!
Komm bald wieder!*

3.

*Maiekäfer flug, flug
In deiner lieben Frauen Häusle,
Gibt dir Aepfel und a Knäusle,
Gibt dir Aepfel und Bire!
Morge z' Nacht wieder.³²*

1.3. English contributions

James Orchard Halliwell wrote in his *Popular Rhymes and Nursery Tales* of 1849:

We find the same trifles which erewhile lulled or amused the English infant, are current in slightly varied forms throughout the North of Europe; we know that they have been sung in the northern countries for centuries, and that there has been no modern outlet for their dissemination across the German Ocean. The most natural inference is to adopt the theory of a Teutonic origin, and thus give to every genuine child-rhyme, found current in England and Sweden, an immense antiquity. There is nothing improbable in the supposition, for the preservation of the relics of primitive literature often bears an inverse ratio to their importance. [...] We could not, perhaps, select a better instance of this kind of similarity in nepial songs as current throughout the great northern states of Europe than the pretty stanza on the ladybird. Variations of this familiar song belong to the vernacular literature of England, Germany, Denmark, and Sweden. The version at present current in the North of England is as follows:

*Lady-cow, lady-cow, fly thy way home,
Thy house is on fire, thy children all gone;
All but one that ligs under a stone,
Fly thee home, lady-cow, ere it be gone!*

In Norfolk the lady-bird is called *burny-bee*, and the following lines are current:

³⁰ Ibid. 388.

³¹ Ibid. 426 n. 2: The father in 1, the forefather (Ahne) in 2 mean the souls in the heavenly light-land, that are conceived here as spirits of the forefathers.

³² Ibid., 426. The stork and the maybug as Holda's animals are spoken to in the same way, cf. Firm. II, 419 (Memmingen): *Moiakäfer fluig auf, fluig in deiner ähne haus. Wo bischt heint z' nacht gläaga! z' Buxe in de schäafa. Warum hauscht m'r nex mitbraucht? Ja i haun net an di daucht. Schönmaunk! Schönmaunk!*

*Burnie bee, burnie bee,
Tell me when your wedding be.
If it be to-morrow day,
Take your wings and fly away.*

These lines are said by children, when they throw the beautiful little insect into the air, to make it take flight. Two Scottish variations are given by Mr. Chambers, p. 170. In Germany it is called the Virgin Mary's chafer, *Marienwürmchen*, or the May-chafer, *Maikäferchen*, or the gold-bird, *Guldvogel*. In Sweden, gold-hen, gold-cow, or the Virgin Mary's maid. In Denmark, our Lord's hen, or our Lady's hen.³³ [...]

For the two pretty Swedish songs which follow I am indebted to the MS. of Mr. Stephens. The first is common in the southern parts of that country, the other in the northern.

<i>Guld-höna, guld-ko!</i>	Gold-hen, gold-cow!
<i>Flyg öster, flyg vester,</i>	fly east, fly west,
<i>Dit du flyger der bor din älskade!</i>	you will fly where your sweetheart is.

and

<i>Jungfru Marias Nyckelpiga!</i>	Fly, our holy Virgin's bower-maid!
<i>Flyg öster, flyg vester,</i>	fly east, fly west,
<i>Flyg dit der min käreста bor!</i>	fly where my loved-one dwelleth.

This is a very remarkable coincidence with an English rhyme:

*Fly, lady-bird, fly!
North, south, east, or west;
Fly to the pretty girl
That I love best.*

In Denmark they sing (Thiele, iii. 134):

*Fly, fly, our Lord's own hen!
To-morrow the weather fair will be,
And eke the next day too.³⁴*

The lady-bird, observes Mr. Chambers, is always connected with fine weather in Germany and the north.³⁵

Mother Goose's Melodies 1833 = E. F. Bleiler (ed), 1970, 8:

*Lady-bird, Lady-bird,
Fly away home,
Your house is on fire,
Your children will burn.*

The famous British author Emily Bronte wrote a poem, dated May 4, 1843, which has the following opening:

*Ladybird! ladybird! fly away home,
Night is approaching, and sunset is come;
The Herons are flown to their trees by the Hall;
Felt, but unseen, the damp dewdrops fall.*

³³ 'We may first mention the German song translated by Taylor as frequently alluded to by writers on this subject. The second verse is the only one preserved in England.' (follow several German songs with translations)

³⁴ Cf. Internet: in Denmark a ladybird, called a *mariehøne* ("Mary's hen"), is asked by children to fly to 'our lord in heaven and ask for fairer weather in the morning'.

³⁵ Halliwell 1849, I: Nursery Antiquities.

*This is the close of a still summer day;
Ladybird! ladybird! haste! fly away!*³⁶

1.4. The ‘Curious Facts’ of insects by Frank Cowan

In 1865 Frank Cowan published in Philadelphia his *Curious Facts in the History of Insects, including Spiders and Scorpions*, ‘a complete collection of the legends, superstitions, beliefs, and ominous signs connected with insects, together with their uses in medicine, art, and as food, and a summary of their remarkable injuries and appearances’, that opens with the *Coccinellidæ – Ladybirds*.

The Lady-bird, *Coccinella septempunctata*, in Scandinavia was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and is there to this day called *Nyckelpiga*—Our Lady’s Key-maid, and (in Sweden, more particularly) *Jung-fru Marias Gullhona*—the Virgin Mary’s Golden-hen. A like reverence was paid to this beautiful insect in other countries: in Germany they have been called *Frauen* or *Marien-käfer*—Lady-beetles of the Virgin Mary; and in France are now known by the names of *Vaches de Dieu*—Cows of the Lord, and *Bêtes de la Vierge*—Animals of the Virgin. The names we know them by, *Lady-bird*, *Lady-bug*, *Lady-fly*, *Lady-cow*, *Lady-clock*, *Lady-couch* (a Scottish name), etc., have reference also to this same dedication, or, at least, respect.

The Lady-bird in Europe, and particularly in Germany, where it probably is the greatest favorite, and whence most of the superstitions connected with it are supposed to have originated, is always connected with fine weather. At Vienna, the children throw it into the air, crying,— *Käferl’*, *käferl’*, *käferl’*, *Flieg nach Mariabrunn, Und bring uns ä schone sun. Or,— Little birdie, birdie, Fly to Marybrunn, And bring us a fine sun.* Marybrunn being a place about twelve English miles from the Austrian capital, with a miracle-working image of the Virgin (still connected with the Virgin), who often sends good weather to the merry Viennese.³⁷

And, from the marsh of the Elbe, to this little insect the following words are addressed: *Maikatt, Flug weg, Stuff weg, Bring me morgen goet wedder med. Or,— May-cat, Fly away, Hasten away, Bring me good weather with you to-morrow.* In England, the children are wont to be afraid of injuring the Lady-bird lest it should rain. With the Northmen the Lady-bird—Our Lady’s Key-maid—is believed to foretell to the husbandman whether the year shall be a plentiful one or the contrary: if its spots exceed seven, bread-corn will be dear; if they are fewer than seven, there will be an abundant harvest, and low prices. And, in the following rhyme from Ploen, this insect is invoked to bring food:

<i>Marspäert (Markpäert) fleeg in Himmel!</i>	Marspäert, fly to heaven!
<i>Bring my’n Sack voll Kringeln,</i>	Bring me a sack full of biscuits,
<i>my een, dy een,</i>	one for me, one for thee,
<i>Alle lütten Engeln een.</i>	For all the little angels one.

In the north of Europe it is thought lucky when a young girl in the country sees the Lady-bird in the spring; she then lets it creep about her hand, and says: “She measures me for wedding gloves.” And when it spreads its little wings and flies away, she is particular to notice the direction it takes, for thence her sweetheart shall one day come. The latter part of this notion

³⁶ *Collected Poems of Emily Bronte*, p. 291 after Madeleine Hope Dodds, ‘A Second Visit to Gondaliand’, in: *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Oct., 1926), pp. 373-379, here 377.

³⁷ Thorpe’s *Northern Mythol.*, ii. 104. Jamieson’s *Scot. Dict.* Another designation, in Sweden, is not so honorable, for it is that of *Laetfaerdig kona*, the Wanton Quean.—*Ibid.* The term Lady-bird, in England, has been also applied to a prostitute.—Wright’s *Provinc. Dict.* Jaeger, *Life of Amer. Ins.*, p. 22. It is curious to notice the association of this insect with the cow in the English and French names. Chambers’ *Pop. Rhymes*, 1841, p. 170-1.

obtains in England; and it has been embodied by John Gay (1685 – 1732) in one of his Pastorals, as follows:

*This Lady-fly I take from off the grass,
Whose spotted back might scarlet red surpass.
Fly, Lady-bird, north, south, or east or west,
Fly where the man is found that I love best.
He leaves my hand, see to the west he's flown,
To call my true-love from the faithless town.*

In Norfolk, too, where this insect is called the Bishop Barnabee, the young girls have the following rhyme, which they continue to recite to it placed upon the palm of the hand, till it takes wing and flies away:

*Bishop, Bishop Barnabee,
Tell me when my wedding be:
If it be to-morrow day,
Take your wings and fly away!
Fly to the east, fly to the west,
Fly to him that I love best.*

Why the Lady-bird is called Bishop Barnabee, or Burnabee, there is great difference of opinion. Some take it to be from St. Barnabas, whose festival falls in the month of June, when this insect first appears; and others deem it but a corruption of the Bishop-that-burneth, in allusion to its fiery color.³⁸

The following metrical jargon is repeated by the children in Scotland to this insect under the name of Lady Lanners, or Landers:

*Lady, Lady Lanners, Lady, Lady Lanners,
Tak' up your clowk about your head,
An' flee awa' to Flanners (Flanders).
Flee ower firth, and flee ower fell,
Flee ower pule and rinnan' well,
Flee ower muir, and flee ower mead,
Flee ower livan, flee ower dead,
Flee ower corn, and flee ower lea,
Flee ower river, flee ower sea,
Flee ye east, or flee ye west,
Flee till him that lo'es me best.*

So it seems that also in Scotland, the Lady-bird, which is still a great favorite with the Scottish peasantry, has been used for divining one's future helpmate. This likewise appears from a rhyme from the north of Scotland, which dignifies the insect with the title of Dr. Ellison:

*Dr. Dr. Ellison, where will I be married?
East, or west, or south, or north?
Take ye flight and fly away.*

It is sometimes also termed Lady Ellison, or knighted Sir Ellison; while other Scottish names of it are Mearns, Aberd, The King, and King Galowa, or Calowa. Under this last title of dignity there is another Scottish rhyme, which evinces also the general use of this insect for the purpose of divination:

King, King Calowa,

³⁸ Thorpe's *North. Mythol.*, iii. 182; ii. 104. Gay, 4th Pastoral, 11. 83–8. *Notes and Queries*, i. 132; i. 28, 55, 73.

*Up your wings and flee awa’
Over land, and over sea;
Tell me where my love can be.*³⁹

There is a Netherlandish tradition that to see Lady-birds forebodes good luck; and in England it is held extremely unlucky to destroy these insects. Persons killing them, it is thought, will infallibly, within the course of the year, break a bone, or meet with some other dreadful misfortune. In England, the children are accustomed to throw the Lady-bird into the air, singing at the same time,

*Lady-bird, lady-bird, fly away home;
Your house is on fire, your children’s at home,
All but one that ligs under the stone,—
Ply thee home, lady-bird, ere it be gone.*

Or, as in Yorkshire and Lancashire,—

*Lady-bird, lady-bird, eigh thy way home;
Thy house is on fire, thy children all roam,
Except little Nan, who sits in her pan,
Weaving gold laces as fast as she can.*⁴⁰

Or, as most commonly with us in America,—

*Lady-bird, lady-bird, fly away home,
Your house is on fire, and your children all burn.*

The meaning of this familiar, though very curious couplet, seems to be this: the larvæ, or young, of the Lady-bird feed principally upon the aphides, or plant-lice, of the vines of the hop; and fire is the usual means employed in destroying the aphides; so that in killing the latter, the former, which had come for the same purpose, are likewise destroyed.

Immense swarms of Lady-birds are sometimes observed in England, especially on the southeastern coast. They have been described as extending in dense masses for miles, and consisting of several species intermixed. In 1807, these flights in Kent and Sussex caused no small alarm to the superstitious, who thought them the forerunners of some direful evil. They were, however, but emigrants from the neighboring hop-grounds, where, in their larva state, they had been feasting upon the aphides. The Lady-bird was formerly considered an efficacious remedy for the colic and measles; and it has been recommended often as a cure for the toothache: being said, when one or two are mashed and put into the hollow tooth, to immediately relieve the pain. Jaeger says he has tried this application in two instances with success.⁴¹

James Napier, in his *Folk Lore and Superstitious Beliefs in the West of Scotland within This Century* (1879), recounts: Grown up girls, when they caught a lady bird, held it in their hands, and repeated the following couplet:

*‘Fly away east or fly away west,
And show me where lives the one I like best.’*

³⁹ Jamieson’s *Scot. Dict.* Cf. Chambers’ *Pop. Rhymes*, 1841, p. 170–1. Jamieson supposes the word *Landers* to be derived from the Teutonic *Land-heer*, a petty prince.

⁴⁰ Thorpe’s *North. Mythol.*, iii. 328. Grose, *Antiq. (Prov. Gloss.)* p. 121. Chambers’ *Pop. Rhymes*, 1841, p. 170. *Notes and Queries*, iv. 53.

⁴¹ Baird’s *Cyclop. of Nat. Sci.* Kirby and Spence, *Introd.*, ii. 9. Newell’s *Zool. of the Poets*, p. 48. *Life of Amer. Ins.*, p. 21. Southey addressed his lines to this insect under the name of the *Burnie-Bee*.

Its flight was watched with great anxiety, and when it took the direction which the young girl wished, it was not only a sort of pleasure, but a proof of the augury. In another of the verses, you can supposedly determine where the home of a future lover is:

<i>Lady, Lady, Lady Landers,</i>	Lady, Lady Landers, Lady, Lady Landers
<i>Tak yer cloak about your heid</i>	Take up yir cloak about yir heid
<i>An flee awa to Flanders.</i>	An' flee awa tae Flanders.
<i>Flee ower firth and flee ower fell,</i>	Flee ower firth an' flee ower fell,
<i>Flee ower pool and rennin well,</i>	Flee ower pule an' rinnin' well.
<i>Flee ower muir an flee ower mead,</i>	Flee ower muir an' flee ower mead,
<i>Flee ower leevin, flee ower deid,</i>	Flee ower livan' an' flee ower deid.
<i>Flee ower corn, flee ower lea,</i>	Flee ower corn an' flee ower lea.
<i>Flee ower river, flee ower sea,</i>	Flee ower river an' flee ower sea;
<i>Flee ye east or flee ye west,</i>	Flee ye east or flee ye west
<i>Flee til her that loves me best.</i>	Flee till him that loes me best. ⁴²

Elias Owen, in his *Welsh Folk-Lore* (1887, 347), remarks about the ladybird: This pretty spotted little beetle was used formerly in the neighbourhood of Llanidloes as a prognosticator of the weather. First of all the lady-bird was placed in the palm of the left hand, or right; I do not think it made any difference which hand was used, and the person who held it addressed it as follows:

<i>Iâr fach goch, gwta,</i>	Lady-bird, lady-bird, tell to me
<i>Pa un ai gwlaw, neu hindda?</i>	What the weather is going to be;

and then having said these words, the insect was thrown skywards, the person repeating the while:

<i>Os mai gwlaw, cwympa lawr,</i>	If fair, then fly in the air,
<i>Os mai têtg, hedfana;</i>	If foul, then fall to the ground.

The first two lines were said with the beetle in the hand, and the last two whilst it was thrown upwards; if it came to the ground without attempting to fly, it indicated rain; if, however, when thrown into the air it flew away, then fair weather was to be expected. The writer has often resorted to this test, but whether he found it true or false he cannot now say.

In an unsigned article called 'Nominies' in *The Journal of American Folklore* mention is made of an article in the *London Globe* of April 28, 1890, on the poetic formulas used by the country-folk in England: "The little insect called ladybird, ladycow, goldenbug, etc., is generally ordered to fly from the hand unharmed, and the lines beginning 'Ladycow. ladycow, fly away home' are well known: but in Hampshire the lines are entirely different, running:

*God A'mighty's collycow, fly up to heaven;
Carry up ten pound, and bring down eleven."*

In the same *JAF*-article it is related that in West Somerset they say on seeing a snail:

*Snarley- 'orn put out your corn,
Father and mother's dead;
Zister 'n brither's out to back door,
Bakin o' barley bread.*

⁴² From the internet: The old rhyme addressed by so many south-country children, etc., to the ladybird. See <http://tinyurl.com/6x4p5f5>: A beetle called "Gooldie," which has a beautiful bronze-coloured back, is a great favourite with and pet of children; it is considered lucky to possess one. On the other hand, the black-jet or jet-black beetle is thought unlucky to appear in the house. Though not considered a sign of dirt, this beetle should always be thrown into the fire when it does appear, despite the belief that rain is said to follow the day after killing one.

They then throw a great stone to crush the poor creatures. The more usual rhyme is:-

*Snail, snail, come out of your hole,
Or else I'll make (or beat) you as black as a coal.*⁴³

In the journal *Folklore* of 1902, S.O. Addy communicated a 'Butterfly Charm': When boys at Walkley near that city go in search of butterflies they sing the following words:

*Butterfly, butterfly, fly away home,
Your house is on fire and the children all gone,
All but one sat under a tree,
Writing a letter as fast as she can.*

when a butterfly appears the boys cease to sing, pull their coats off, and, taking hold of them by one sleeve, try to throw them over the butterfly and catch it. Addy adds that the butterfly is regarded in some parts of Europe, as well as in Eastern Asia, as a human soul which has escaped from the body (referring to Frazer, *Golden Bough*, I, 259, 264; Grimm, *DM*, trans. II, 829, where reference is made to the Greek *ψυχή*). And he wonders: 'Can it be that this traditional formula, usually addressed to the ladybird, but here to the butterfly, once had for its object the recall of a wandering soul by rehearsing the misfortunes which required the owner's presence at home? It may be observed that the words "butter-fly," "lady-bird," and "lady-cow," have not yet been explained.'⁴⁴

In the same journal, in 1913, M.E. Hartland reported from Breconshire village: 'Ladybird. – Anne Thomas used to count the spots on a lady-bird's back, to see how many years she should be married. William Thomas used to call it *Little Red Cow*. As a boy he used to put one on his hand, and say, "Are you going to fly, or are you going to fall?" If it flew away, it was going to be fine; if it fell, it was going to rain.'⁴⁵

In *Rustic Speech and Folklore* by Elizabeth Mary Wright (London 1913, 210f) it is said, that in Northumberland the children call a scarlet ladybird a *sodger*. When they have caught one, they throw it up into the air and say:

*Reed, reed, sodger, fly away
And make the morn a sunny day.*

But the usual rhyme, addressing the ladybird, is:

*Cowlady, cowlady, hie thee way whum!
Thy haase is afire, thy childer all gone,
All but poor Nancy set under a pan,
Wavin' gold lace as fast as she can. (Yks.)*

In this study (p. 219) mention is made of the *Sun-beetle*, also *God's horse* (Cum.) and just like the *Rainy clock*, or *Thunder clock* (Cum. Wm.) it is supposed to cause terrible storms when it is killed. Also (p. 315): It starts to rain when you kill a *rain-clock* (beetle), or *rain-bat* (n.Cy. Wor.), a *egg-clock* [cockchafer] (Lan.), or *God's horse* [the sun-beetle] (Cum.).

1.5. The influence of Mannhardt

Three Dutch researchers were influenced by Mannhardt's theory. In the first place there was Laurentius Knappert, who in 1887 in his dissertation *De beteekenis van de wetenschap van het*

⁴³ 'Nominies', in: *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 8, No. 28 (1895), pp. 81-84, here 83.

⁴⁴ S. O. Addy, 'Butterfly Charm', in: *Folklore*, Vol. 13, No. 4 (Dec. 25, 1902), p. 43. His informant is Mr. Charles Rhodes Hirst, aged 23, formerly a clerk in Addy's office, and now in the Town Clerk's office in Sheffield.

⁴⁵ M. E. Hartland, 'Breconshire Village Folklore', *Folklore*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (Dec., 1913), pp. 505-517, here 517.

folklore voor de godsdienstgeschiedenis onderzocht en aan de Holda-mythen getoetst (The significance of the folklore science for the history of religions researched and tested by the Holda myths) devoted much attention to the theory of Mannhardt. Also the ‘meikeverrijmpjes’ (maybug rhymes) are treated: ‘A child has the animal loosely on the hand and gives it its freedom; or it holds it captured at a string. The songs that accompany that action are of great importance for the [study of] mythology.’ Knappert points to the folk-names of the insect that testify to a mythical meaning. After having explained that the general scientific name *Scarabaeus* applies especially to the holy dung-beetle (*Ateuchus sacer*) who was sacred in ancient Egypt and consecrated to the sun-god Ra, Knappert passes on to the coccinella, who above all other beetles has ‘dien bijzonderen voorrang, dat men hem Gods koetje, Gods schaapje, Mariën-kevertje, Lieven-Heerswormpje noemt’ (that special priority that it is called ...), which is, he thinks, because these little beetles don’t harm the crops, but eat the lice.⁴⁶ He lists more names and refers to the Swedish name *Jungfru Marias nyckelpiga*, behind which a heathen goddess is hidden. For Frigg’s servant Fulla keeps the keys of her jewellery-box. Also there was the Old-Nordic name for Marihöne *Freyahoena* which is still literally in *Frauenhenne*, etc., all according to Grimm and Mannhardt. So when the little animal was sacred to Freya, it is not hard to see why it was connected with the weather; and Knappert gives some contributions to the growing number of ladybird rhymes, as from Dömitz:

*Siinnenworm fleeg oewer min hus,
Bring mi morgen good weder to hus.*

A verse from Landau on the Isar refers to the cloud-well (*suwend* = seven):

*Suwendkäfer flieg i ‘n brunn,
Bring uns heut und morgñg ein schöne sunn!*⁴⁷

Then Knappert proceeds to the rhymes in which a certain land is threatened and that is usually called *Engelland*, sometimes *Pommerland*. He quotes some examples from Mannhardt, but the Dutch examples he weaves in are nursery-rhymes (versions of the song *White swans, black swans*) and not rhymes to the ladybird. But from the *Folklore Journal* (I, 187) he has two contributions by Karl Blind, an English and a German ‘ditty song by children’:

*Lady bird, hie thy way home,
Thy home is on a fire, thy children will burn.*

and:

*Maikäfer flieg’!
Dein Vater ist im Krieg!
Deine Mutter ist in Hollerland.
Hollerland ist abgebrannt! Juch he!*

In this *Hollerland* Knappert sees a further confirmation that *Engelland* is the land of Holda.⁴⁸

The second Dutchman involved with but not influenced by Mannhardt was Baron Sloet, who – in the same year as Knappert’s dissertation – published *De dieren in het Germaansche volksgeloof en volksgebruik* (The animals in Germanic popular belief and customs). One of the animals he dealt with was the ladybird, but first he treated ‘De Gouden of de rozenkever’ (rose-chafer) and ‘De meikever’ (maybug). The gold-green or copper-shining metal-bug (*Cetonia aurata*) is sung to by the children of Aargau:

Goldchäber, flüg ûf,

⁴⁶ Knappert 1887, 257f.

⁴⁷ Knappert 1887, 260 after Panzer, *Beitrag zur Deutsche Mythologie*, II, 547 (cf. Mannhardt 1858, 254).

⁴⁸ Knappert 1887, 262, 265, after Blind in: *FLJ* I, 187ff. Also Böhme, 176 (Badische Pfalz).

*Ûf dîne hoche Tanne,
Zue diner Muetter Anne.
Sie git dir Châs und Brod,
S'isch besser as der bitter Tod.*⁴⁹

Sloet points forward to the ladybird, that is also put into relation with St. Anne (the mother of St. Mary). In Germany the rose-chafer is considered a bringer of luck, which is also said about the ladybird. In Sweden the girls let the beetle walk on their hand and say: 'It means to me the bridal glove.' When it flies away, they take notice of the direction; for from that direction the bridegroom will come. According to Sloet it is wrong of Rochholz to apply this to the ladybird.⁵⁰ The maybug, although very noxious, was greeted as harbinger of spring and as it were festively received. The children went to the forests, tied a string at one of the legs of the captured maybugs and walked with them to the green-decorated town-hall. In Schleswig this still happened in the middle of the 17th c. on the Maygravenfest (may-count feast).⁵¹

The ladybird is the favourite of young and old, this in opposition to the rude maybug (*Melolontha vulgaris*), that only has enemies. But in the rhymes they are confused with one another. He gives examples from Swabia, the above mentioned song to the 'Sonnevögele' and the almost identical song to the maybug.⁵² He mentions the number of dots; when more than seven corn will be expensive. It brings luck when a ladybug seats itself on your cloths. When you kill it, disasters will happen: the sun won't shine a whole day, cows will give red milk and in Swabia the killer will go to hell. Sloet paints the development of the veneration of the ladybird making use of the several names the animal has, from which it is clear that it is connected with God, Mary or one of the saints. Then he tells about the games the children play with the beetle: making it walk on a finger and letting it fly away while reciting a little verse that by its standing rhyme and even more by its content betrays its antiquity. Sloet makes a division according to content. The ladybird is 1) consulted in love affairs, 2) sent out for good weather, 3) commanded to receive something and to bring it, 4) warned against dangers that threaten his house and relatives. Most examples from Sloet are taken from Mannhardt. Only at 4) he mentions that he himself as a boy at Voorst (prov. Limburg) had played with maybugs with a string tied to one of their legs, whereby he sang:

*Vlieg, vogeltje, vlieg!
Je vader is in de krieg,
Je vader is in Pommerland,
Heel Pommerland is afgebrand.
Vlieg, vogeltje, vlieg!*

Of course the song is of German origin (*krieg*), where many versions are found (as we have seen above). An example not from Mannhardt is a rhyme from France exhorting the *hanneton* (maybug) to fly up:

*'Au firmanent blue,
Ton nid est en feu,
Les Turcs avec leur épée*

⁴⁹ Sloet 1887, 390 after Rochholz, *Alemannisch Kinderlied*, 464. Simrock, *Kinderlied*, 155 n°612 has such a rhyme but applies it to the butterfly.

⁵⁰ Sloet 1887, 391 after Rochholz, *Unsterblichkeitsglaube*, 6.

⁵¹ Sloet 1887, 391f after Grimm, *Mythologie*, 577f n. 1: 'Ein sonderbarer aufzug der vormaligen Schleswigschen spinradsamazonen einen cantharidem oder mit grünen zweigen maykäfer einzuholen, wobei denn hiesiges rathhaus mit grünem busche ausgezieret.'

⁵² Sloet 1887, 393: he adds the remark: 'Dit strekke ter verschooning van hen, die in dwaling verkeerden' and refers to Knappert 1887, 257, who speaks about 'meikeverrijmpjes'.

*Viennent tuer ta couvée.*⁵³

Sloet closes with a citation from Schiller (*Thekla*): ‘Hoher Sinn liegt oft im Kind’schen Spiel.’ But Sloet has a hard time applying this to the nonsense he has imparted. Still he is of the opinion that the source of it lies in very old myths, in a veneration of the sun in connection with that of love. By the imagination of them who taught the children these songs without knowing their meaning they have become clouded and obscure. Local situations were integrated in the songs. What the children sang in 1848 at Tübingen had a completely political meaning:

*Vögele, Vögele flieg,
Der Hecker ist im Krieg,
Der Struve ist im Oberland,
Und macht die Republik bekannt.*⁵⁴

In his chapter on the mouse he describes how on St Peter’s Day (22 February) in Northwest Germany the lord of the house or the shepherd goes three times around the house with a wooden cross-hammer, knocking on all posts and beams, while saying:

*Rut’, rut Süntevuegel!
Sünte-Peter dai es kuemen,
Sünte Tigge kuemet noch;
Hai veerbütt di Hus un Huof,
Lant un Saat
Lof un Grass.
Bit tinte Jår üm düen Dach
Sall di alle Schelm de lange Hals af.
Gå in de Stenklippe!
Då sastu inne sitten.
Gå in de Stenkule!
Då sastu in verfulen.
Gå nå’ me Klusensten
Um tebrick Hals un Ben.*

When this formality is neglected, the house will be infected in the summer with rats, mice, salamanders, toads and other pests, the woodworm intrudes in the beams, and the cattle will become diseased.⁵⁵

On the same day in Westphalia many boys go in the morning from house to house, knock also with a hammer at the door-posts, while singing amongst others this song:

*Ruit, ruit, Suemerfugel,
Sünte Peiter ies kuemen,
Sünte Tigges will kuemen,
Ruit, ruit alle muis
Ruit, ruit jonge muis,
Allet unglück ut diesem huis.*

⁵³ Sloet 1887, 414.

⁵⁴ Sloet 1887, 415 from Meier. On the internet: *Kåæferlæ, Kåæferlæ fliag! Dær Heckær išt im Kriag, Dær Struve išt im Obærlænd. Und macht d’Republik bækannt.* (Ulm) And: *Maikæfer flieg! Der Hecker ist im Krieg, Der Struve ist im Oberland, Macht die Republik bekannt.* (Forst, Bayr. Pfalz) Another version with the revolution-leader Friedrich Hecker: *Der Maikæfer fliegt, Der Hæcker ist em Kriag, Der Hæcker ist em Oberland, Der Hæcker ist em Unterland.* (Warmbronn, OA Leonberg, Württemberg)

⁵⁵ Sloet 1887, 87f from Woeste, *Volksüberlieferungen*, 24. Montanus, *Volksfeste*, 21 and Jahn, *Opfergebräuche*, 95 have another song.

The opening words of all the songs is the same, except that ‘summer-bird’ is sometimes exchanged for ‘sun-bird’. Sloet comments: ‘What is meant by that I was not able to track down. That name is borne by the ladybird (Lieven Heersbeestje), but this creature stands much too high in the regard of the folk than that it could be chased with noise from the houses in which they sometimes hibernate.’⁵⁶ But this is a misconception of Sloet, for the little animal has to go to work, for his job is to catch lice.⁵⁷

The same kind of verse can be found in the chapter ‘Butterflies’ of Sloet’s compilation. Again he takes the material from Woeste’s chapter on butterflies:

*‘Rut, ‘rut, Süntevuegel!
Sünte-Peter dai es kuemen,
Sünte-Tigges kuemet noch,
Hai verbütt di Hus un Huof,
Lant un Sant,
Lof un Grass,
Bit tinte Jår üm düen Dach
Sall di alle Schelm de lange Hals af.
Gå in de Stenklippe!
Då sastu inne sitten.
Gå in de Stenkule!
Då sastu in verfulen
Gå nå’me Klusenstên,
Un tebriek Hals un Ben.’⁵⁸*

Montanus has the rhyme:

*Herus! Herus! Herus!
Schlangen us Stallen un Hus,
Schlangen un Viemöllen,
Hie nit herbergen söllen.
Sant Peter un de liewe Frau,
Verbiet üch Hus un Hof un Au.
Viemoll un Schlange herus,
Ueber Land un Sand,
Durch Lohf un Grass,
Durch Hecken un Strüch,
In die diepen Kuhlen,
Da sollt ihr verfulen.*

In the Upper Bergland, at the side of Siegen, they call this custom ‘Suntevuegel Jagen’.⁵⁹ It is believed that, when this custom is not being followed, in the summer the milk-sorcerers (*Molkentöwener*) will gather together at the milk-tubs, make the cattle sick, infest the house by rats, mice, salamanders, toads and other vermin, and the woodworm will enter the beams. In the land of Munster, in the county Mark and in Bergland the farmer or the shepherd goes on St.

⁵⁶ Sloet 1887, 88. Sint Tigges is Saint Matthias (24 February, the day of swineherds).

⁵⁷ See for instance on the page <http://www.beesies.nl/lieveheersbeestje.htm> the ‘chapter’ ‘Na de winter meteen aan het werk (After the winter straight to work)’, which opens with (I translate): ‘In the spring the mature ladybirds appear. They immediately go looking for food. One ladybird can eat up to 3000 lice a month. When they have become strong enough they start looking for a suitable place to propagate. They mate in April, May...’

⁵⁸ Sloet 1887, 444 after Woeste, *Volksüberlieferungen*, 24.

⁵⁹ Sloet 1887, 443 after Montanus, *Volksfeste*, 21.

Peter's Day (22 February) before sunrise once or thrice around the buildings, knocks with a wooden hammer on all doors and beams while saying conjurations. Praetorius reports this custom in 1629. He gives this conjuration:

*Herauss, herauss du Schwellenvogel,
St. Peters Stuhlfeyer ist kommen.
Verbeut dir Hauss und Hoff und Stall,
Häwschoppen, Schwerer und anders all,
Biss auff diesen Tag übers Jahr,
Dass hie kein Schade widerfahr.*

The author elucidates that with *Schwellenvogel* are meant toads, vipers, snakes and other *böse Gewürme, das sich under den Schwellen gern auffhält*.⁶⁰ To Sloet (after Jahn) *Sonnenflugel, Summerfiugel, Süntevuegel* are butterfly names.⁶¹

A third Dutchman who was already as a student inspired by Mannhardt's *Forschungen* was the linguist Gerrit Jacob Boekenoogen (1868-1930). As a student he conducted research in his birth-region the Zaan (above Amsterdam), collecting children's games in a manuscript called *Zaansche Kinderspelen*, which was probably his bachelor's thesis. This qualified him to do more extensive research by way of an advertisement in a number of Dutch newspapers in 1891-92. In these advertisements which took the form of a page-long article he appealed to the general public to send him folkloric material: nursery-rhymes, fairy-tales, legends, etc. In this article he made use of the theory of Mannhardt which gave the appeal a scientific outlook that greatly impressed his readers. As for the ladybird his question was: 'Versjes op den ooievaar, op de slak, op het Lieveheershaantje, op den vlinder en op andere dieren zijn zeer welkom. (Rhymes on the stork, the snail, the ladybird, the butterfly and other animals are very welcome).'⁶² He was more specific in a follow-up letter he sent to several respondents in which he poses: 'Also the children speak to all kinds of animals. They sing for instance at Enkhuizen when they put a ladybird (*Lieveheershaantje*) on the hand and wait till it flies up to the sun:

*Engeltje, engeltje, vlieg ereis weg, Little angel (2x), fly (once) away,
Je vaar is dood, je moer is dood, Your father is dead, your mother is dead,
Je kinderen hebben geen droog brood. Your children have no dry bread.*

And then he asks what they say in the respondent's place. Boekenoogen wrote in 1893, while still a student, an influential article in the important Dutch literary magazine, *De Gids*, entitled *Onze Rijmen* ('Our Rhymes'), in which he worked out the first results of his appeal in the newspapers and which also contained a renewed appeal to the public to send him material. In a general way he remarks that the children are on a familiar footing with plants and animals. 'They speak to them and ask for advice and help in all kinds of affairs. And in those conversations there is so much ancient material that we have reason to believe that such questions were also asked many centuries ago. Several of those addressed animals were considered sacred in heathen times. For instance the ladybird (*Lievenheershaantje*) is commanded to fly up to the high heaven (follows the rhyme from Enkhuizen).'⁶³ This nursery-rhyme was sent to him by J.J. Bruijn, a young school-teacher from Enkhuizen, who was very enthusiastic about Boekenoogen's research. In 1902 Boekenoogen repeated his appeal in the folklore journal *Driemaandelijksche Bladen* initiated that year, a publication by the Vereeniging tot onderzoek van Taal en Volksleven in het

⁶⁰ Sloet 1887, 443 after Praetorius, *Von Zauberey und Zaubern*, 61 (in Jahn, *Opfergebräuche*, 95).

⁶¹ Sloet 1887, 443 after Jahn, *Opfergebräuche*, 94.

⁶² Meder & Hendriks 2005, 43.

⁶³ Boekenoogen 1949, 107.

Oosten van Nederland (Company for the investigation of Language and Folk-life in the East of the Netherlands). He started with referring to his previous appeal in the newspapers and his essay ‘Onze Rijmen’ in *De Gids* of 1893. As a result of that he had received hundreds of contributions from all parts of the country and has the intention to make a book out of it (called ‘Groot Nederlandsch Rijmenboek’), but for the moment he is not yet able to do that. ‘For the moment I have to limit myself to organizing and further complete the collected data.’ The book would never materialize, but one more time Boekenooogen explains what he collects and spices this up with citations from the material sent to him, this time with indication of the place from where the citation came. The ladybird (*Lievenheersbeestje*) is sent out to bring nice weather:

*Lievenheersbeestje, vlieg op! vlieg neer!
Vlieg naar den hoogen hemel.*⁶⁴

This little verse comes from Zutphen and is clearly incomplete. For the rhyme, and also to make the nice weather request complete, the second line should be:

Vlieg naar den hoogen hemel en breng mooi weer.

A second verse, originating from Dalfsen (near Zutphen), has:

*Lievenheerswormpje, vlieg op, vlieg hooge op!
Vlieg naar den hoogen hemel op.
Uw vader en moeder is dood.
Het kistje is gesloten,
De sleutel is gebroken.
Vlieg op, vlieg op!
Naar den hemel op!*⁶⁵

We see here again a part of the ‘song of the swans’.

In the reconstruction I made of the Boekenooogen’s framework for the ‘Groot Nederlandsch Rijmenboek’ there are 16 markers with notes on the ladybird with on them 19 separate notes. A part of this consists of notes from already published works. From the *Westvlaamsch Idioticon* of Leonard Lodewijk De Bo (Brugge 1872, 2nd ed. Gent 1892) he copied:

*Olipoli – koorndief,
Vliegt uit naar zijn lief.*

Olipoli is like ‘olifant’ (elephant) and refers to the fact that the little animal produces oil (olie). Koorndief (corn-thief) is a name for the maybug, and he should actually fly to ‘my’ love instead of ‘his’.

From the Flemish magazine *Biekorf* he copied a verse from Maaseik (see §1) and from West-Capelle (Zeeland):

*Pimpampoentje,
Peerlamoentje,
Hoeverre ga-je vliegen?
Over de zee,
Putje carree,
Klinke, klinke belletje.*⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Sent in by Mevr. Boosman from Koog, with mention ‘from Zutfen’.

⁶⁵ Sent in by Jac. Volkers from Bathmen near Dalfsen.

⁶⁶ Coll. Boekenooogen 5762 = *Biekorf* 4, 1893, 32: ‘Mingelmaren’, where the following Flemish denominations are transmitted: *hemelbeestje, capoentje, olifant, olipoli, koorndief, Onzen-lieven-Heeren beestje, pieboele, piepauw, pimpalioentje, pimpampoentje*, enz. At Maeseyk it is called *Leeven-Heers kuikske* (follows the first verse). The second verse has the notation that *peerlamoentje* a corruption is of *peerlemoeder* [mother-of-pearl], that is with a French Persian word *nakar, nacre*. Strange is the remark that *corree* means in Mechelen ‘cordeel’, which

The other notes originate from contributors after his appeals. We saw the little verse from Dalfsen and the rhymes from Edam and Enkhuizen. The last two resembled each other close enough for Boekenoogen to consider them as variants of each other. The same was the case with two rhymes from Winterswijk. One of them, from the *Zutphensche courant* of Friday 9-2-1894, came from a letter to the editor by H.P. Priester, who applauded the collecting action of Boekenoogen, and made an appeal to his fellow citizens and country-folk to send in their 'memories'. Just like Boekenoogen he spiced up his appeal with many examples, and with regard to the ladybird he gave the little verse:

*Zunnekuuksken, zunnekuuksken,
Dien vader en moeder bunt dood!
Dien huusken steet in nöttelenbrand,
Dow kumste nooit wear in dien land!*

The other verse from Winterswijk came from an anonymous donor and is very similar:

*Zunnekuukske, zunnekuukske,
Vleege du nao hooge,
Dien vader en moeder bunt dood,
Die huuske steet in nettelenbrand,
Kumst van dien lèven nie weer in 't land!*

From Steenwijkerwold (Van Essen) in the province of Overijssel came the childish verse:

*Lieve heerennoentje, Ladybird,
'k Geef je haast een zoentje. I give you almost a little kiss,
Ach, wat zijt ge een aardig beest; Ah, what a nice animal you are;
'k Heb u 't liefste allermeest. I love you most of all.*

From Norg (Wesselman 15-2-1894) in the province of Drente came the following childhood memory:

*Zonne-, zonnekindje,
Je vader is dood, je moeder is dood,
't Huisje staat vol water;
Vlieg op, vlieg op!*

From Kampen (Reijers), where the ladybird is called 'chick thief', came the verse:

*Koekendiefien, koekendiefien,
Vlieg weg, kom weer,
Breng ons morgen mooi weertien mee.*

From the island of Terschelling (prov. Friesland, by the ladies Roorda) came the rhyme:

*Engeltje, engeltje,
Vlieg naar den hemel,
Kom nooit weerom,
Breng morgen mooi weer.*

From Beerta in the province of Groningen (Mrs. Kiewiet-De Jonge, 29-3-1892) came:

*Laif Meneers tuutje, vlaig hoog op
En breng mie mörgen mooi weer.*

And from Amsterdam (H.W. van de Moer, of his Amsterdam-born mother) came the rhyme:

*Ons lief Heertje,
Geef mooi weertje,*

Boekenoogen amended to *carree* is 'cordeel' (without explaining this word), but in *Biekerf* it is repeated: 'putjecorrée...? Daar hapert iets! Wie kan 't mij verbeteren, uit den mond des volks, wel te verstaan?' [There is something wrong! Who can improve it for me, from the mouth of the folk, of course?]

*Geef mooi dag,
Dat het zonnetje schijnen mag.*

It is actually a child's prayer. The same verse was also sent in from Arnhem with the only variation: 'Onze Lieve Heertje'. Another ladybird-song from Arnhem (both sent by Miss Van der Bent, head of the municipal nursery school of Arnhem, January 1894), was not taken up in Boekenoogen's 'Rijmenboek':

*Lieve Heers beestje gaat vliegen,
Je huisje staat in brand.*

Why Boekenoogen has not taken up more versions is not clear, for in his collection there are more contributions that certainly would have completed the picture, like a rhyme from Tholen in Zeeland, sent in by a school teacher (P. Engelvaart from Bergen op Zoom, 7-3-1894) who was born in Tholen:

*Piempampoentje, vlieg over den dijk, Ladybird, fly over the dike,
Tien uurtjes varen. Ten hours journey,
Eerst naar de bonte koe, First to the spotted cow,
Dan naar het hemeltje toe. Then up to the little heaven.*

From Delfzijl in the province of Groningen (by Miss Boon, 1-4-1894) came the contribution:

*Lieveheer tuutje, vlieg op,
Naar de hemel toe,
Naar de bonte koe,
Lieveheer tuutje, vlieg op.*

From 's Heerenberg (prov. Gelderland) came:

*Lieven Heers kuuksken, goat vliegen, Ladybird, go fly,
Oe huusken steet in brand Your house is on fire,
De kinderkes schreien. The little children are crying.*

The accompanying text mentions that the children put the ladybird (*Lieven Heershaantje*) on the hand and keep singing the verse until the little beetle flies away. There is also the superstition among simple folks that this animal is sacred. It is also asserted that the buckwheat will fetch as many guilders as there are black dots on the red wings of the ladybird.

From Enschede (prov. Overijssel, by Miss J.A. Elderink, 12-6-1894⁶⁷) came this contribution:

*Zunnekuuksken stoeve,
Zegge dien Vader en Mooder,
Dat 't morgen mooi weer wördt.*

With this you let the ladybird (*zunnekuuksken*) walk up the finger. When it flies away when it reaches the top, there will be nice weather the next day.

From Dalfsen (prov. Overijssel; by Frijling, Utrecht, Febr. 1894) comes the short verse, summoning it to fly up to the highest heaven:

*Lieveheertjeswormpje vlieg op
Vlieg ten hoogste hemel op.*

⁶⁷ I wonder if she is related to Cato Elderink, writer of *Oet et Laand van aleer*, who communicates on p. 119 n°11: *Sunte Kuuksken, stoeve! Zeg dien vaâr en mooder, Dat 't morgenvrog mooi weer is.*' (Bartelink 1967, 49) Also belonging to this time-period is another entry in Bartelink (l.c.) from Volthe (prov. Overijssel) where they call the ladybird *zunnekuukske*. While they let it walk to the tip of the finger they sang: *Zunnekuukske vleege op, Dien vaar is dood, Dien moor is dood, Dien zuster is ne kreëj, Die kan nich spinn'n of neëj'n, Zee döt 'n blauw linnen schötken veur, En doar kan't zien eersken op dreëj'n (~, Your sister is a crow, She can neither spin nor sow, She puts on a blue linen apron, And there it can twist on its little arse).* Shorter is a version from Oldenzaal: *Zunne keukske vleege hoog op, Die vaar is dood, Die moor is dood, Die kinder schreeuwt van honger om brood.*

From Haaren (prov. N. Brabant; by L.J.A.N. Simonis, 28-4-1894) came the distich:

*Lieveheersbeestje, blijf bij mij,
Ziet gij van den duivel, dan vlieg van mij.*

There was also a contribution from Grootshermer (Noord-Holland), where the insect is called *gelukstortje* (little luck-beetle), while at the Zaan they use the name *gouden tor* (golden beetle). When it goes to sit on the hand before twelve o'clock, it predicts good luck, after twelve bad luck. In Aardenburg in Zeeland (Miss A. Hullu, 30-10-1894) they sang:

*Piempampoentje, vlieg over oentje,
Vlieg overal,
Vlieg over lieveneertjes paerestal.*

In Zuidzande (also in Zeeland) they sing: 'Jantjes paerestal (John's horse-stable)'. Another verse from Zeeland (from Breskens) was sent in by Mrs. Cornelis. When they let a ladybird fly away, the children sing:

*Pimpampoentje
Tiereliereleentje
Vlieg op stokje
Vlieg op [blokje]
Vlieg op Lieven'eertjes kerk'offe.⁶⁸*

This little verse has much similarity with a verse recorded by Alfried Harrou at the coast of Flanders, and published in *Ons Volksleven*, the *Antwerpsch-Brabantsch tijdschrift voor Taal en Volksdichtveerdigheid, voor Oude Gebruiken, Wangeloofkunde, enz.*, addressed to the ladybird (*zonnekever*):

*Pimpampoentje,
Hazemoentje!
Vliegt over den blok,
Vliegt over den stok,
Vliegt over Onzen-Lieven-Heertjes-kerkhof.⁶⁹*

This, in its turn, has much in common with a verse, published by Pol de Mont in the first year of publication of his magazine *Volkskunde*, and addressed to the maybug (*veuleke*):

*Vliege, vliege, veuleke,
No 't meuleke,
No 't lant fa Looik,
No 't beirestrooik (sometimes: meulestrooik),
Over de blokken,
Over de stokken (or zokken),
Over Onze Lieve Vra van 't kerkhof.⁷⁰*

De Mont has also some Flemish verses of the ladybird (*Lieve-Vrouwenbeestje*). In Capellen-op-den-Bosch they say:

Piempampoole,

⁶⁸ For Mrs. Cornelis, see: Meder & Hendriks 2005, 114. A modern version in Jonckheere 1999, 156:

'Pimpampoentje, tiederiederoentje, vlieg over de blok, vlieg over de stok, vlieg over Onze-Lieve-Heres kerkhof.'

⁶⁹ A. Harrou, 'Bijdrage tot de Folkore der Vlaamsche Zeekust', in: *Ons Volksleven* 12, 1900, 12.

⁷⁰ P.d.M., in: *Volkskunde* 1, 1888, 140 from Schuermans' *Idioticon*. With minor changes this verse can also be found in Laura Hiel, *Kinderspelen in het Land van Dendermonde*, Gent 1931, 48 also addressed to the maybug: *Vliege, vliege, meuleke! Da' bisje goa noar 't meuleke, Noar het land van Luik, In de molestraat, Over de zokken, over de blokken, Over Onze Lieve Vrâw van 't Kerkhof*. Here the maybug is called *meuleke*, which fits the names of the maybug, called miller (molenaar, mulder, molder, meulder, etc.), while *veuleke* is more a ladybird-name, meaning 'little bird' (from dialect *veugelke* = vogeltje).

*Vlieg over hole,
Vlieg over al,
En zeg waar ons zieltje wonen zal.*

So the ladybird must fly over holes, over everything and tell us where our soul will be living. This last part is a variation on the question where the lover lives as can be seen from a verse recorded by A. de Cock at Hundelgem: ‘*Pimponpole! Vlieg over hole, Vlieg overal; Zeg, waar ik trouwen zal* (tell me where I will marry).’⁷¹ The other verse comes from Schuermans’ *Idioticon*:

*Pimpampoentje,
Vlieg over ‘t groentje,
Vlieg overal,
Waar ons Liefheertje ‘t vinden zal.’⁷²*

As we saw above, there is some confusion (or congruity) with the maybug (Sloet already referred to that). This may be because *meikever* (‘May-beetle’) is also an appropriate name for the ladybird (or as a translation of *Marienkäfer*). So from Zevenaar (prov. Gelderland; sent in by A.J. Joling from Amsterdam, 24-7-1896, born in Zevenaar) came the verse:

<i>Meikèver, gaon vliegen,</i>	Maybug, go fly,
<i>Ouw moeder zal ouw kriegem,</i>	Your mother will get you,
<i>Ouw vader met een dikke stok,</i>	Your father with a thick stick,
<i>Die sleet ouw heele kop kapot.</i>	He will bash your whole head to pieces.

We already saw those threats addressed to the ladybird. Resembling the Engelland-rhymes was a verse sent by an anonymous from Leiden:

*Meikever ga vliegen,
Je moeder is in Bienen,
Je vader is in Bommelland,
Bommelland is afgebrand.*

The same thing can be observed on the French rhymes of the *Hanneton*, two of them from an issue of *Kennis en Kunst* of 1867 taken up by Boekenoogen in his ‘Rijmenboek’:

*Hanneton, vole, vole,
Va-t-en à l’école.*

And:

*Barbat, vole, vole, vole,
Ton père est à l’école,
Qui m’a dit si tu ne voles,
Je te coupera la gorge
Avec un grand couteau de Saint Georges.’⁷³*

The appeal of Boekenoogen in the *Driemaandelijksche Bladen* seems to have had some limited response, at least as far as the ladybird material concerns. In this journal there were that year two contributions to the ladybird songs. The first one is without any indication (*Dr. Bl.* 1, 1902, 39):

*‘Leevenheerswurmken (2x), Vleeg op (2x),
Vleeg ten hemel haarop.
Ow kindjen grînt, ow kelfken blèrt,
Ow huusken steet in bràà-ànd.’*

⁷¹ A. de Cock, in: *Volkskunde* 23, 1912, 24f n°151.

⁷² P.d.M., in: *Volkskunde* 1, 1888, 141 from Schuermans’ *Idioticon*.

⁷³ Also published by Sloet (1887, 404 n. 2), without reference. He writes *Berbat* and *Il te coupera*. [~ Your father is in the school, Who has told me if you don’t fly, I will cut your throat With a big knife of St. George.]

[Fly up to the heaven. Your little child is crying, your little calf is bleating, your little house is on fire!] Th.J. Bosman, in his contribution ‘Nursery rhymes from Druten’ [prov. Gelderland, between Nijmegen and Tiel] has the song, when the boys catch a *lievenheërshaantjē*:

‘*Ons lieven-heers-henneke,
Blijf bij mij, blijf bij mij,
Zij de van de duvel,
Dan vlieg van mij.*’

[Stay with me (2x), Are you from the devil, Then fly from me]. (ID., 92)

Also there is a contribution from the folklorist J. Cornelissen from Elspeet [on the Veluwe near Ermelo] about a beetle (*tor*) they call the *roome slaoper* [probably the maybug]: when they [the boys] catch one, they stick a pin through the wing. The little animal spins around and they sing:

‘*Mîn vao'er is dood, mîn moe'er is dood,
En mîn zuster kwaam mîn tegen,
Al mit 'n schulk vol witte brood,
En die wou me nog niks geven.*’ (ID., 50)

The next year there was a contribution from the folklorist J. Bergsma in an article about ‘The animals in the nursery rhymes of the provinces Groningen and Drente’, with a paragraph devoted to the ladybird (*lieveheersbeestje*)⁷⁴: It is also called *lievevrouwsbeestje*, as well as in Germany *Marienkever*; at Warfum, Uithuizen, Stedum, Bedum usually *leivemeneerstuutje*: *tuut* is chicken (so comparable to the Dutch name *lieveheershaantje*, at Borger *ernshondien*), at Onderdendam and Grijpskerk *leivemeneerstiekje*: *tieck* is beetle (Dutch: *tor*, *kever*). From all these denominations appears already the bias. In the pagan times it was consecrated to Holda, the messenger of the love-goddess; it predicts the love and the weather; at Veenhuizen (Dr.) the children calculate their age by the number of dots. When they kill it, they will die themselves (Warfum). It may not be killed, not even chased away (general). Children let it walk up and down their arm or hold it on the finger and say at Groningen (the city):

‘*Lieveheersbeestje vlieg op en breng morgen mooi weer*; at Marum and at Haulerwijk: ‘*Lievenheerstiekje, vlieg op*’; and also at Huizinge: ‘*Laive meneerstuutje vlaig op*; at Zweeloo: ‘*Lieveheersbeesje vlieg op naar de hemel*’; at Gieten: ‘*Vlieg op naar den hemel en zeg aan den Vader dat het mooi weer word!*’ – When it flies away, then there will be nice weather. At Hooghalen the little animal is called *boerenzeuntje* [‘little farmer’s son] and at Beilen the children say without knowing what they are saying: ‘*Anne lieve zoentje kom in mijn hoentje* [Ann (must be: *arme* ‘poor’) sweet little kiss come into my little chicken].’

1.6. Mannhardt’s influence in Germany

Although Mannhardt had brought together nearly hundred ladybird rhymes from Germany in his quest for the riddle of their meaning, there were still a lot of rhymes to be found. So we find by Sloet rhymes not from Mannhardt, while a lot of rhymes are collected by Böhme in his collection *Deutsches Kinderlied*.

⁷⁴ J. Bergsma, ‘De dieren in de kinderliedjes (Groningen en Drente)’, in: *Dr.Bl.* 2, 1903, 103f.

The eldest recordings⁷⁵ can be found in the collection *Des Knaben Wunderhorn. Alte deutsche Lieder*, collected by Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano and published between 1806 and 1808. From Hessen they present a ‘maybug-song’:

*Maikäfer flieg,
Der Vater ist im Krieg,
Die Mutter ist im Pulverland
Pulverland ist abgebrannt.*

The writers remark that in Lower Saxony they say *Pommerland*.⁷⁶ Böhme has the same song with an addition from the neighbourhood of Marburg:

*Es kommen drei von Gießen,
Die wollen dich erschießen.
Bum, bum, bum!*⁷⁷

Next comes a song to the ladybird (*Marienwürmchen*), constructed from traditional elements dressed in a sentimental style, wherein the insect is called upon to show itself: ‘Ich tu dir nichts zu leide.’ (I will do you no harm.) In sharp contrast stands the second verse of this song:

*Marienwürmchen, fliege weg,
Dein Häuschen brennt, die Kinder schrein
So sehre, wie so sehre.
Die böse Spinne spinnt sie ein,
Marienwürmchen, flieg hinein,
Deine Kinder schreien sehre.*

In the third verse the sentimental tone returns, whereby the little animal is ordered to fly to the house of the neighbours, where the little children also want to look at its spotted wings and will do it no harm.⁷⁸

In the appendix with remarks there is another version of the song of the maybug, also present in Böhme and quite similar to the version of Sloet:

*Maikäferchen, Maikäferchen, fliege weg!
Dein Häuschen brennt,
Dein Mütterchen flennt,
Dein Vater sitzt auf der Schwelle:
Flieg’ im Himmel aus der Hölle!*⁷⁹

Another rhyme from the appendix that also can be found in Böhme is:

*Goldvogel, flieg’ aus,
Flieg’ auf die Stangen,
Käsebrode langen,
Mir eins, dir eins,
Alle guten G’sellen eins.*⁸⁰

Böhme presents us with a version of the Pommerland-song from Vogtland:

⁷⁵ On the internet (Wikipedia) there is an even older one, from an 18th c. Luxemburg folksong collection: *Kiéwerlénk fléi, Deng Mamm déi ass am Klé, Déi Papp as an der Frücht, Kiéwerlénk fléi an d’Lûcht*.

⁷⁶ See: Otmar (= Johann Karl Christoph Nachtigal): *Volcks-Sagen*. Wilmans, Bremen 1800, S. 46. In a variant from Thuringa in Josef Götz: *Kindervolkslieder - eine Sammlung echter Volkslieder*, Wien 1920, S. 23 it has become a ladybird: *Marienkäfer fliege / dein Vater ist im Kriege / deine Mutter ist in Engelland Engelland ist abgebrannt*. (See: John Meier, *Volksliedstudien*. Straßburg 1917, 244. Quoted from: Wolfgang Steinitz, *Deutsche Volkslieder demokratischen Charakters aus sechs Jahrhunderten*. Bd. 2, Berlin 1962, 189.

⁷⁷ Arnim & Brentano 1963, 155; Böhme, 166 n°799.

⁷⁸ Arnim & Brentano 1963, 155, only referred to as ‘mündlich’ (also to found in Kieser, 258).

⁷⁹ Arnim & Brentano III, Anh. 83 = Böhme 168 n°809; cf. Grimm, *DM*, 2, 657, also Kieser, 237.

*Maikäfer Mai,
Deine Mutter Lei,
Dein Vater ist in Pommerland,
Pommerland ist abgebrannt,
Deine Brüder weinen,
Sitzten hinter'n Steinen.
Haben kein' Messer und Gabel,
Fressen mit dem Schnabel.⁸¹*

From Swabia comes a beetle-song that takes a different direction:

*Käferle, Käferle, flieg',
Dein Vater ist im Krieg!
Flieg' du in das Bäckchenhaus,
Nimm' mir drei Weck mit 'raus,
Mir ein, dir ein, allen guten B'raus,
Mir ein, dir ein, allen guten Büblein ein.⁸²*

In a Pommerland-rhyme from Thüringen follows after the 'afgebrannt'-line:

*Saßen große Bauern drin,
mit der weißen Zippelmütz',
fielen all in die Pfitz.
Mutsche-kühbchen, flieg'!*

Also concerning the gift-bringing Böhme has many variants. In a Westphalian version the *Herrgottsthierche* has to bring a new *gulde Rock*, in another the *Herrgotts-häunken* must bring from the high heaven a *güllne Ki'e* (gold chain).⁸³ Elsewhere the *Sunneschäfele* is commanded to fly *nauf's Hirtenhaus*, to drink out a pot full of honey and to bring back a full pot, or the *Goldschäfel* to fly to heaven and bring back knife and fork, then he may also eat with.⁸⁴

Strongly influenced by Mannhardt was the contribution by C.M. Blaas about 'Der Marienkäfer im niederösterr. Kinderspruch', that appeared in 1874 in *Germania*, quarterly magazine for knowledge of German Antiquity. According to Blaas, Mannhardt had extensively proven in his *Germanische Mythen*, that the coccinella was in the North consecrated to godheads like Freyr, Freya and Frigg. In Lower Austria the ladybird is held, like in Germany, in high esteem and considered sacred, as is already obvious from the names given to the little animal: *Herrgottskäferle*, *Frauenkäferle*, etc. Also it is considered a lucky animal and killing it is seen as a grave sin. Further it is obvious from the nursery-rhymes, considered by Blaas, following Rochholz, to be as old as the hero legends, that the insect can bring nice weather. The *Spinzerl* (ladybird) is called upon to fly to *unsan Herrgott in's Tümpferl* or 'in the golden well' and to bring today or tomorrow a nice sun.⁸⁵ This well is called frequently *Hollabrunn*, but also *Mariabrunn* and *Karnbrunn* appear, just like simple *Brunn*, while also *davon* (away) is used as

⁸⁰ Böhme, 174 n°860 (Arnim & Brentano, Anh. 82). Sloet 1887, 441 from Simrock, for the butterfly. Also Wilhelm Grimm sent a contribution for *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*: 'The beautiful, spotted *Marienwürmchen* the children place on the fingertip and let it crawl up and down till it flies away; meanwhile they sing: "*Marienwürmchen, fliege weg, fliege weg! Dein Häuschen brennt! Die Kinder schreien!*" (see: Heinz Rölleke (Hrsg.), *Das Volksliedebuch*, Köln 1993, 256.)

⁸¹ From Bautzen. Böhme, 166 n°800 after Köhler, *Vogtländische Bräuche*, 355.

⁸² Böhme, 167 n°806 after Birlinger, *Schwaben*, 82.

⁸³ Böhme, 170 n°827a after Kuhn, *Westfälische Sagen*, 78; ID., 170 n°830 after Simrock 553.

⁸⁴ Böhme, 173 n°852a after Dunger, 63; ID., 174 n°855 after Dunger, 61.

⁸⁵ Blaas 1874, 68 n°1 from Reingers (= *Tümpel* = pool, puddle), n°2 from Stockerau.

rhyme word to *Sunn*.⁸⁶ The ladybird is also requested to fly over the Rhine, in rhyme with *schein* (shine) and *sein*. Another rhyme-pair is formed with a 'cloth' (*Kload*) the little animal has to bring to God's Mother. Here the insect is commanded to fly *af d'Woad* (wood), *über d'Woad* or *af d'Hoad*.⁸⁷ Another rhyme appears only once:

*Frau'nkäferl, Frau'nkäferl fliag fort,
such' mir an schên Ort,
entweder Himmel oder Höll.*

Another communication from the same place assumes that the animal knows how the soul will fare after death:

*Frau'nkäferl,
komm i in 'n Himmel oder in d'Höll?*⁸⁸

Finally Blaas has two little rhymes, containing the house-on-fire warning:

*Sprinzerl, fliag hoam,
deine Kinda wear'n woan,
dei Häuserl wird brinna,
deina Kinda wear'n versinka!*

And:

*Sprinkäferl fliag hoam,
dei Muada thuad woan,
deine Kinda thoan singa,
dei Häuserl thuad brinna!*⁸⁹

In Petersen's *Kiekinnewelt* ('Lookintheworld'), issued in 1905⁹⁰, a paragraph is devoted to the *Marienkäfer*, also called *Sonnenwurm*, *Sonnenkälbchen*, *Gotteskind*, *Gotteskuh*, *Türkenmännchen*, *Herrgottsschäfchen*, which in many areas [of Germany] the children let crawl around on their hand and wait till it flies up; with that they sing:

*Sünnworm, fleig äwer't Huus,
Bring uns morgen gaud Weder in't Huus!
(Mecklenburg – K. Bartsch)*

*Herrchots-Tierche flug mer fort,
Bring mer'n neue chuldne [= goldnen] Ruck!
(Westfalen – A Kuhn)*

*Sünnenworm, fleig na'n Heben [= Himmel];
Dor sast du in Freuden leben.
(Mecklenburg – K. Bartsch)*

*Kumm, Sünnenschiening, sett di dal [= nieder],
Kumm, Sünnenschiening, plätt [= glätte] di mal,
Woll up den gollen Durnbusch!
(Mecklenburg – Fr. Reuter)⁹¹*

Maikatt [= Maikätzchen].

⁸⁶ Blaas 1874, 68-70: 4x Hollabrunn, 1x Mariabrunn, 2x Karnabrunn, 5x Brunn, 2x davon.

⁸⁷ Blaas 1874, 71 n°19-21.

⁸⁸ Blaas 1874, 71 n°22-23 from Stockerau.

⁸⁹ Blaas 1874, 71 n°24-25, both from Reingers.

⁹⁰ Petersen 1978 (= 1905), *Kiekinnewelt*, 99-100: An den Marienkäfer.

⁹¹ This is actually a butterfly-song! Cf. ID., 100: An den Schmetterling: 'Buttervögelken, sett dik / Op miene Hand,' etc. (after K. Simrock).

Flügg weg,
Stüff [= Stieb] weg,
Bring mi morgen goot Wedder met.
(Holstein – K. Müllenhoff)
Sünnenworm, burr [= fliege] up,
Burr up ton [= zum] hogen Himmel,
Bring mi ‘n Sack vull Kringel,
Mi einen, di einen,
Vader un Mauder ok einen.
(Mecklenburg – Nach K. Bartsch)

Maikäfer, flüg up, up, up
In den hogen Himmel,
Bring mi en Körf vul Kringel,
Mi een,
Di een,
Lütje Sofie ock een.
(Köhler)

Leev Engelke
Wo lang läf ick noch?
Een Jahr, twe Jahr, (u.s.w. bis es auffliegt).
(Ostfriesland – Kern & Willms)

Sunnenschienken,
Riägenschienken,
Wannär sall eck Bruut sien?
Een Jahr, twe Jahr, (u.s.w. bis es auffliegt).
(Westfalen – A. Kuhn)

Sünnskürnken [‘Sonnenkörnchen’], fleeg wech,
Bring mi morgen good Wäder,
Lat en Regen öwergahn,
Lat de Sunnen wedderkaam’n,
Bring mi morgen good Wäder!
(Westfalen – A. Kuhn)

Finally I want to consider the article of Rudolph Riegler in the *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaube*, where some distance is taken from the ideas of Mannhardt. That the ladybird is everywhere indicated with names of domestic animals that are sometimes also used as cloud or thunder symbols, is no reason to interpret them mythically. Conspicuously often the names carry the attributes ‘God’ or ‘Maria’. The contention of Mannhardt that they are christianisations of original names of gods may be correct, but the so-called old-Nordic *Freyuhunna* has not been attested with certainty. But it is obvious from the verses that the ladybird played from of old the role of messenger or servant of the godhead. It even comes out of heaven, is an angel, like in Lower German *ängelsquadirche*, *herrgottsängelche*, *leev’engelke*, Breton *elik douè*, Venetian *anzoeto*, and delivers the person who has spared it a place in paradise (cf. in Mons: *biette du paradis*), as in a rhyme from the Manche:

Barbelote, barbelote, monte au ciel,

*Garde-moi une place auprès du bon Dieu.*⁹²

The insect is summoned to take the children with it to the heaven or to indicate the way there. Notable to Riegler is the agreement of names with a mythical meaning over far separated language areas. So in Swedish there is the name *Jesu vallflicka* (Jesus' shepherdess), in Italian *boarina dal Signor* (shepherdess of the Lord) and in Sanskrit *Indragôpa* 'Indra's shepherd'. Next to God the animal is consecrated very often to God's Mother, not only in Germany, but also in France and Italy, while also the consecration to other saints exists. Notable is the role of bringer of gifts, not only to the inhabitants of heaven but also back to the human, who wants new cloths, a bag full of pretzels, a golden key or a golden chain. Riegler points to a Parisian rhyme:

*Bête à bon Dieu, au ciel en vole-toi,
Tu m'apporteras de l'or et de l'argent.*⁹³

The flying to or over a well we have encountered so often is connected by Riegler just like Mannhardt to the heavenly waters, wherein the souls of the unborn children are (he points to the rhyme of the golden diaper-child). The connection of the soul (Greek *psyche* = butterfly) is evident from names like *anima de la Madonna* (Belluno), *anîmèla de san Piero* (Riva) and *anima del paradiso* (Massa e Carr.) and is compared with the veneration of house-spirits, who receive milk like house-snakes (cats, etc.). Whoever kills a ladybird, will die the next day and go to hell.⁹⁴ Frequently the ladybird, just like the maybug, is warned for danger. He must go home quickly because his house is on fire. Also it is said: *Engelland ist abgebrannt*. This is the Land of the Angels. Mannhardt sees in this the mythical memory to the sunset glow conceived as a demonic giant. The ladybird must return quickly to his by a demon threatened homeland (above the earth). Later in stead of the giants came the typical enemies of Christianity: Jews, heathens and Turks. Riegler points at the numerous connections with the sun which is certainly based on a mythical relation with the sun. In Czech the ladybird is called *slunéčko* 'little sun', while in Germany all kinds of compounds with the sun exist (*sünnenkind*, etc.). The name on Rügen *Sünnenkinning* is brought into relation with the English rhyme:

*King, king Golloway,
up your wing and fly away.*

Mannhardt continues with:

*over land and over sea,
tell me, where my love can be.*⁹⁵

So it is a love-oracle verse. The ladybird is seen as an oracular animal. Not only can it predict the weather, but also as we saw whether you go to heaven or to hell or where your lover will come from. In Westphalia the ladybird is summoned to fly over my neighbour's house and to lure the bride destined for me out of the house:

*Flüch över mines nåbers hus,
locke mi de brut herut.*

In Sweden the girl on whose hand a ladybird lands says: *hon marker mig brudhandskar*: he measures out bridal gloves for me.⁹⁶

Almost everywhere the ladybird is considered a sign of luck or a bringer of luck (Italian *porta fortuna*), but it is seldom used in folk-medicine.

⁹² Riegler, in: *HDA V*, 1691f; rhyme from Rolland, *Faune*, III, 356.

⁹³ Riegler, a.c., 1692-5, rhyme from Rolland, *Faune*, III, 355.

⁹⁴ Riegler, a.c., 1695f, names from Garbini, *Antroponimie*, 1212. *Anima* is very close to *animal*, and might just mean 'beast' (cf. French *bête*).

⁹⁵ Riegler, a.c., 1696f after Mannhardt, 253 from Chambers, *Popular rhymes of Scotland*.

⁹⁶ Riegler, a.c. 1699 after Wolf, *Beiträge*, II, 449 and Mannhardt, 252.

Summarizing Riegler concludes that the ladybird which, as no other insect, is surrounded with a poetical light that works on in a motley mass of folk-names, has undeniable a great mythical meaning. The attempt of older mythologists to anchor this in the old-Nordic world of gods is *wohl* not succeeded, because the words proposed as proofs of evidence can also comparably be found with non-Germanic peoples. Mythical connections with the sun are certain, with the moon and the evening-glow probable. As elfic being the ladybird mediates the traffic of humans with the other world, from where it brings gifts and children. Notable are its divinatory skills, by preference it is questioned in love-affairs. Christianity took it over from paganism and elevated even more its meaning by placing it under the protection of God and especially the Holy Virgin, who possibly is a substitution for a heathen goddess. As animal consecrated to God it can delight in the greatest consideration.

Promotion of the theories of Mannhardt in England was done by Karl Blind, who wrote an article called 'Freia-Holda, the Teutonic Goddess of Love', in the *Cornhill Magazine* of May, 1872, and repeated a part of it in the first volume of *The Folk-Lore Journal*, triggered by an article by the Countess Martinengo-Cesaresco in that same magazine a month before. Her article, called 'Songs for the Rite of May' contained the following: '[I]n Germany [...] children run about on May-day with buttercups or with a twist of bread, a *Bretzel*, decked with ribbons, or holding imprisoned may-flies [= maybugs], which they let loose whilst they sing: "Maikäferchen fliege, Dein Vater ist in kriege, Deine Mutter ist in Pommerland, Pommerland ist abgebrannt, Maikäferchen fliege." May chafer must fly away home, his father is at the wars, his mother is in Pomerania, Pomerania is all burnt. May chafer in short is the brother of our ladybird.'⁹⁷

Blind, in his article called 'May-Chafer and Spring Songs in Germany', referred to the song above (May-chafer and Lady-bird ditties of Germany) and finds it appropriate to mention that there is good reason to believe that the word 'Pommer-land' (Pomerania), in the song alluded to, is evidently a late corruption. There are several versions of that children's song. In one of them, 'Engelland' is brought in; which may mean either England, or the Land of the Angels. For the solution of the question he quotes from his previous article. Having referred to the Lady-bird, the hallowed messenger of that German Aphrodite (meaning Holda) he said:

'The cock-chafer, too, seems to have been a hallowed insect of yore. It is called Mai-Käfer in German, from the period of the year when it generally comes first out of the ground; and that period, as said before, was the sacred time of the Goddess of Love. German children have a custom of placing that beetle on their left hand, to which they generally attach it by a thread; and then they sing a verse the meaning of which has long puzzled investigators. Mannhardt (*Germanische Mythen*) has collected quite a variety of such verses, all taken direct from the lips of German boys, in order to prove that they refer to that final catastrophe (Ragnarök, the Dusk or Doom of the Gods) when the Gods and their Giant antagonists are warring with each other, and the Asa-world collapses in a fearful tumult and universal conflagration. All the rhymes collected until now make it extremely probable that they refer to the danger which envelops, and finally destroys, Holda's reign. Still, Mannhardt was not able to give any verse in which her name is distinctly traceable. ... I believe I can supply the missing link in regard to the curious Cock-chafer Songs which are of such high mythological interest. I distinctly remember a ditty sung by children, in which the cock-chafer is bidden to fly to his father (presumably Wodan, the consort

⁹⁷ Evelyn Martinengo Cesaresco, 'Songs for the Rite of May', in: *The Folk-Lore Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 5 (May, 1883), pp. 153-163, here 158.

of Freia-Holda⁹⁸, who is said to be “at war”, and to his mother, who is “in Holler-Land”, where a conflagration has broken out, which consumes Holler-Land:

Maikäfer, flieg’!
Dein Vater ist im Krieg!
Deine Mutter ist im Holler-Land;
Holler-Land ist abgebrannt!
Iuch he!

The latter joyful exclamation may be supposed to be the Christian “*Io triumphe*”, the utterance of joy over the destruction of the heathen Asa-world. I need scarcely remind the reader that the song which is sung in Germany about the cock-chafer is also sung in some parts of this country about the ladybird:

Lady-bird, lady-bird, hie thy way home!
Thy house is on fire! thy children all roam!

Or:-

Lady-bird, lady-bird, fly away home!
Your house is on fire! your children will burn!

So far the quotation from the article in the *Cornhill Magazine*. As to the ‘children’ who are said to be in danger of burning, they are, according to the myth, the Unborn who dwell in the fragrant domain of the Goddess of Love, on flowery meadows, and in the foliage of her garden, until the little lady-bird, the messenger of Our Lady Freia-Holda, comes to call them into human existence. There is, no doubt, still some beetle-lore worth collecting for the better reconstruction of these ancient poetical beliefs; and therefore I thought I might refer more fully to this subject. I may add that I have heard the above version of the Cock-chafer version in the Baden Palatinate, where it is, no doubt, still current. I have stated elsewhere, in connection with Freia, that even such apparently silly children's songs as

Ringe, ringe Reihe!
Sind der Kinder dreie;
Sitzen auf dem Holler-Busch,
Schreien alle: husch! husch! husch!

are clearly an infantine ceremonial, of combined dance and song, in which there is not – as may seem at a first blush – any reference to the elder-tree, but rather an allusion to the bushes of the fragrant meadow in Freia-Holda's realm, on which the souls, or faint forms, of the Unborn await their incarnation on the ‘Holler-Busch’.⁹⁹

Excursus: The game of the maybug in the Netherlands

In the collection Boekenoogen, kept in the Meertens Instituut in Amsterdam, which I had the opportunity to investigate during the period I was working for the Instituut, I found several references to the game played with the maybug (see Sloet). The first one is from G.E. Bruinsma, from Steenberg (province Overijssel), on a postcard to Boekenoogen, dated November 14, 1893: ‘...I also want to inform you about the terribly boring children’s ditty below, that is commonly in use in the NW of the province of N. Brabant (and perhaps elsewhere) at the playing with maybugs and whereby these little animals in order to make them fly, while they crawl over a

⁹⁸ In the old German faith, Freia’s image is not yet split into two figures, as among the Northmen (Freyja and Frigg).

⁹⁹ Karl Blind, ‘May-Chafer and Spring Songs in Germany’, in: *The Folk-Lore Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 6 (Jun., 1883), pp. 187-190, here 187-9.

step or window sill (with a pin attached to a thin thread), are pressed with the (sharp) [finger] nail on one of the legs; the children repeat the monotonous ditty hundreds of times without a pause:

<i>“Eentje, beentje,</i>	Little one, little leg,
<i>scherpe steentje,</i>	little sharp stone,
<i>mes,</i>	knife,
<i>drie honderd en zes</i>	306,
<i>tel je geld</i>	count your money
<i>en vlieg maar weg!</i>	and just fly away!”

Counting money is the rubbing over each other of the two front (or hind) legs.’ The second contribution is from Mr Hofer from Hattem (prov. Limburg), called: ‘A strange contribution: At the playing with maybugs on a thread they sing:

<i>“Jan, pas op, de koffie kookt,</i>	John, watch out, the coffee is boiling,
<i>Van één, twee, drie,</i>	Of one, two, three,
<i>Zijn zuster heet Marie;</i>	His sister is called Marie,
<i>En als ze geen Marie heet,</i>	And when she’s not called Marie,
<i>Dan heet ze één, twee, drie.</i>	She is called one, two, three.”

This song has nothing whatsoever to do with the game and the last part is known from other games as well. But also Mr. Reijers from Kampen (prov. Overijssel) reported as song to make the maybug fly: ‘*Jan pas op, de koffie die kookt, Van één, twee, drie.*’ According to Mr Simonis, Haaren (N. Brabant): ‘With the maybug (*mulder* = miller), attached to a thread and that way “milling” (= turning round like a mill)[, they sing]:

<i>“Mulderke, mulderke, malen</i>	Little miller (2x), grind,
<i>De duivel zal u halen</i>	The devil will come to get thee.”

According to Mr Vossen, Terneuzen (Zealand):

<i>‘Meulenaar, meulenaar, tel je geld,</i>	Miller (2x), count your money,
<i>En ga dan nog eens vliegen.</i>	And then go fly once more.’

Information from a later date is provided by J. Vader (*N.V.* 14, 1964, 215f): On the island Walcheren (Zealand) maybugs are called *meulenaars* or *piepetollenaers*. The verse is: ‘*Meulenaertje (2x), Wilt dan nog is vliege* (please fly once again).’ On the island Tholen (Zealand) the verse is:

*‘Roenkeltje (2x),
Tel je geld en gae dan nog ‘s vliege(n) (bis),
Vliegen nae de mossen toe,
De mossen zà wer opendoe(n).’*

(Fly to the sparrows?). (*E.V.* 1, 1929, 343: This is sung at the flying-game with maybugs. With the throwing-game, called *knevelkute*[, they sing:]

*“Mossiepij,
Zit op stik,
Zit op stik te roeren.”)*

At Tiel (Gelderland): ‘To make a maybug fly:

*“Mölder, mölder, tel oe geld
En gao dan aon ‘t vliege.”* (*Dr.Bl.* 3, 1907, 35)

More from the collection Boekenoogen (1892-4). In Den Bosch they sing with the maybug:

*“Mulderke, mulderke, tel oe geld,
En ga dan nog eens vliegen.”*

The same by Miss Veerman from Heusden (not far from Den Bosch) and by Miss Vigilius in Utrecht (without dialect: *muldertje; je geld*). Mr Sicking from Den Bosch has the above song:

*“Mulderke, mulderke, telt oe geld,
En gaat dan nog ‘reis vliegen,
Jan spring op, de koffie die kookt,
Van een, twee, drie.”*

(But P. Scheltema reports only the first two lines, idem Miss Veerman for Heusden and Miss Vigelius for Utrecht.) Mr. Moulijn from Rotterdam reported: “They tie a thread to the leg and let the beetle walk. At the end of the song they pull the thread to make the animal fly.

*“Mossieplik,
Boter op je stik,
Kaas en brood,
Morgen is heele mossieplik dood.”*

Boekenoogen himself wondered: ‘The sparrows [Dutch: *mus*, in dialect *mos*] pick (eat) a lot of beetles, maybe that gave the name?’ That already the children of the ancient Greeks and Romans had it fly on a thread, see Zingerle, 142.

E.S. Haagens from Sommelsdijk (S. Holland):

*‘Mosjepik!
Butter op stik,
Kaas en brood,
Morgenochtend is mosjepik dood!’*

Dr C. Bakker, reporting from Zeeland: ‘When children [want to] make maybugs fly, that they have caught [they sing]:

*‘Moschjepik,
Zit op slik,
Kaas en brood,
Morgen is ons Moschjepik dood.’*

Miss Kleijnhens from Utrecht:

*‘Musschje, musschje pik,
Boter op je stik,
Kaas en brood,
Morgen is musschje pik dood.’*

Mr. D. Hansen, Maastricht: ‘Children that make maybugs fly at a thread sing at this:

*“Mosjepik,
Wille, wille, wik,
Koffiedik.”*

Also in Flanders:

*‘Mosjepik (2x),
Butter op stik,
Butter op brood,
Morgen is mosjepik dood.’* (Vloten 1894, 89)

In [Vlaams] Lillo:

*‘Musschenpik!
Vogelenschrik!
Boter op stik,
Boter op brood,
Morgen is musschenpik dood!’* (Volkskunde 1, 1889, 139)

At Antwerpen just: “Musschenpik! Vogelenschrik!” The maybug “counts his money”, when it opens the shields very slowly and prepares to fly. The boys then sing:

“*Moldenerreke!*

Telt oe geld,

En ga dan nog eens vliegen!

Little miller!

Count your money,

And then go fly again!” (*Volkskunde* 1, 140)

The denomination *roenkeltje* can be explained with a version from Denderleeuw where the laced to a thread is called ‘in den griffel’: ‘Steekt den preekheer [lit. preacher] nen draad in zijn gat [his bottom/asshole], Hij zal ronken [whirr], hij zal ronken! Steekt..., Hij zal ronken gelijk een kat!’ (C&T 6, 161) The denomination *preekheer*, *prinkeerm* is given to the maybug in Brussels and surroundings, *ronker* at Zegelsem, *ruiter* at Turnhout (C&T 6, 163). At Utrecht they sold *molenaren* to the youth and the sellers had the rhyme:

‘*Molenaren!*

Hooi en strooi!

Zoek ze maar uit:

Twee voor een duit

(two for a farthing).’

(*Volkskunde* 1, 140: Denominations: *meuldeneer*, *moldener*, *molder*, *mulder*, *molderinneke*; red maybugs: *keuninginneke* (little queen) or *keuningske*; black maybugs: *papper*, *pepzak*, *paster*, *schouwvêger*, *schauwvager* [chimney sweeper], etc.) In Middle Limburg they sing at a game that spurs all animal protectors into indignation:

‘*Meulderke, meulderke, tel je geld,*

En ga dan eens vliegen.

Als je niet vliegt, dan roep ik de vos [‘I’ll call the fox,’ probably just for the rhyme],

Dan laat ik het heele touwtje [the whole thread] *los.*

Van een, twee, drie!’ (*E.V.* 3, 238)

In West N-Brabant the children sing to exhort the maybugs to fly, while they have the beetles on a thread and now and then give them a push on their legs:

‘*Meulenèrken tel doe geld,*

En gaat dan nog eens vliegen,

Want anders kommen de dieven

[otherwise thieves – for the rhyme – come],

Die nemen oe mee naar ‘t veld [they take you with them to the field – also for rhyme],

‘t Geld is in den rommelpot geteld [the money has been counted in the rumbling-pot].’

(*E.V.* 6, 255) At Kortgene, N. Beveland (Zealand): ‘They bind a twine thread to a leg of the *meulenaer* and they sing the following verse: “*Meulenaertje* (2x), *Telt je geld.*” This ditty the children sing just so long till the insect decides to fly. The children hold the thread and the miller fun reached its zenith. There is also mentioned the game ‘*Oldenbarneveldje spelen*’ [a famous Dutch politician who was beheaded]. The children then say the following song to the *meulenaer*:

‘*Steven, Steven,*

Oe lank zà je leve(n),

Drie dagen en ‘n nacht.

Steven, Steven,

Je kop gaet d’r af.’

How long will you live,

Three days and a night.

Stephen, Stephen,

Your head will go off.

And at the last line the head of the miller was cut off with a knife. (*E.V.* 11, 434). At Utrecht, around 1870: At the letting fly of millers:

‘*Molenare koop en stroop!*

Vier om een duit!

Zoek ze maar uit!

Ho, ho, huismusschen!

at-home’]’ (*Dr.Bl.* 22, 92)

[4 for a farthing]

[make a choice]

[house-sparrow, but also ‘home-bird’, a ‘stay-

At Doorn a *mulder* is a female maybug, while the male is called *Toereweever*. In the town Utrecht *meulenaar* is the denomination of the maybug. (ID., 99; 102) At Deventer the boys went out in Spring to catch *meiwörms* [which approaches maybugs]. There were beautiful, old beeches and in the twilight you could hear them whirr, the *äolieslagersmennenes* and *-wiefkes* (the oil-producing little men and women) and the *muldersmennenes* and *-wiefkes*. The first ones, slim and shiny-brown, were the first there to ‘count their money’. (*Dr.Bl.* NS 3, 36).¹⁰⁰

The maybug and the ladybird are the subject of a paragraph of J. Vader’s article ‘Fifty boys’ games’, entitled ‘Roenkels en Piempampoentjes’, which are a bit strange names for someone not from the island of Walcheren (prov. Zealand). The first named are maybugs, which were also called *meulenaers* and had before 1875 the denomination *piepetollenaers*. They were caught in the late Spring (in May), put in tin cans, with small holes in it and some leaves to eat. They had shields that looked as if they were covered with meal, for which they were called ‘millers’. In order to play a thread was tied to one of the legs and the little animal placed on a smooth surface. Then it had to start flying, which could take a while, because it didn’t want to obey the command of the soon impatient boy. He called this ‘laziness’, to which he had an answer. With the fingertip he pressed on one of the legs, upon which the little animal took flight. The boy veered out the thread and let the beetle fly in circles, till it dropped from exhaustion. To summon it to fly the boy sang: ‘*Meulenaertje, meulenaertje, Wilt dan nog is vliege!*’ But sometimes, especially when it was a cold Spring, there were few maybugs. In that case the boys took *pampoentjes*, also called *piempampoentjes*, which was the denomination on Walcheren for the ladybird, very tiny beetles with orange coloured shield with black dots. They were not caught to play with. But girls as well as boys collected them with passion because they were ‘such sweet little animals (*zukke eele lieve beesjes*)’. They were kept in matchboxes with some willow leaves, but when mother found it she said it was a sin to put these sweet little animals in such a narrow prison, and let them fly away.¹⁰¹

In the *Hessen-Nassauisches Volkswörterbuch* by Luise Berthold a map of denominations of the maybug (Maikäfer) has been taken up (map 29). The reported denominations are:

- a) Compounds with Mai: *Maiding, Mai(en)kalb, Maienmummel, Mai(en)wiebel, Maigaul, Maigewürm, Maihammel, Maihirsch, Maihüinkel, Maikafel, Maikäfel, Maikäfer, Maikäferz, Maikammel, Maikiejel, Maikleber, Maiklemmer, Mai(en)klette(r), Maikrätschel, Maikrätzer, Maikriebel, Mailatz, Maimucke, Maitier, Maivogel, Maiwalster, Maiwatz.*
- b) Compounds with Baum: *Baum(s)kleber, Baumklette*, with Hühner: *Hühnerkleber, Hühnerklette(r)*, with Kirschen [cherries]: *Kirschenkleber, Kirschentier*, with Laub: *Laubfresser, Laubgaul, Laubhans, Laubvogel*, with Weiden [willow]: *Weidenkäfer, Weidenkleber*, further: *Johanniskleber, Schnurre(n)käfer, Viehkäfer.*
- c) Simple denominations: *Hammel, Käferletz, Käferz, Piwwiz, Wiebelchen.*
- d) Also the butterfly denominations: *Molkenzauber(sche/chen)* [= milk magic(ian)].

¹⁰⁰ In the Alsace the children sing when they see a cabbage-butterfly (cabbage-white, Dutch *koolwitje*): ‘Miller, Miller, Maler, S’ Bärwel um e Dahler, S’ Lissel um e Schissellumpe, S’ Gretel um dreihundert Gulde.’ In Katzenthal the children sing: ‘Mullermaler, Katzentaler, Äpfelbisser, Birneschisser’ or also: ‘Müller, Maler, Roggenstecher, Mümpfelebisser, Hosseschisser.’ From: W. Godelück, ‘Erotische und skatologische Kinder- und Jugendreime (im Elsaß gesammelt)’, in: *Anthropophyteia* III, 1906, 218-243; here 231.

¹⁰¹ J. Vader, ‘Vijftig jongensspelen’, in: *Neerlands Volksleven* 14, 1964, 215f. He tells mostly his own memories which are from the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

Thomas Keithley, in *The Mythology of Ancient Greece and Rome* (1838, 243), remarks about the maybug: The nymphs then changed Terambos himself into the animal called by the Thessalians *kerámbyx*, or cockchafer, “of which the boys make a plaything, and cutting off the head carry it about; and the head with the horns is like the lyre from the tortoise.” (Nicander, apud Ant. Lib. 22. Ovid, *Met.* vii. 354). Keithley adds: We need hardly observe that the legend was invented to account for the origin of the cockchafer.¹⁰²

¹⁰² According to Vollmer 1874, 427b was Terambus, son of Eusirus and the nymph Idothea, a musical herdsman on the mountain Othrys in the region Melis; for his slanders of the nymphs he was punished, first by a cold that killed his herd, and he himself was changed into a stag-beetle, whose horns have the form of a lyre. In the article by Dimitri Karadimas, ‘Animism and perspectivism: Still anthropomorphism? On the problem of perception in the construction of Amerindian ontologies,’ *INDIANA* 29, 2012, 25-51, there is as *Figure 6*. Contemporary artistic photocomposition; anthropomorphic and analogical presence in a “naturalist” ontology. Stag Beetle by Chrissie Cool, photomanipulation, 2008 (<<http://chrissiecool.deviantart.com/art/Stag-Beetle-96598168>>).