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THE BEAN AND INDO-EUROPEAN TOTEMISM

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THE earliest archeological finds of the common or field bean¹ belong to the Neolithic age. They are concentrated in the general Mediterranean region, as are also those of the Bronze age. The spread of the field bean into western Europe must have taken place rather later, for the oldest finds in Germany belong to the Iron age. It was formerly the prevalent opinion that the field bean originally spread from two centers, one in northwestern Africa and the other in Persia or southwestern Asia; but the researches of the Russian botanist V. S. Muratova have modified this view. After careful study of the evidence, he concluded that the home of the field bean, that is, the area where it evolved as an independent species and underwent further development, is the zone bordering in the west on the Atlantic and in the east on the Himalayas. He further established that the concentrations of characters for this species lie at the two opposite ends of this region, the large-seeded group in the west and the small-seeded group in the east. He regards southwestern Asia as the principal region where the forms of the field bean originated and considers the Mediterranean region, where the more recent large-seeded group was developed, a secondary center, from which the field bean further spread into Europe and there formed a center of third importance.

The field beans that have been found at various prehistoric sites in the general Mediterranean region, for example, in association with pile dwellings of the Neolithic age in northern Italy and Switzerland and at stations in Hungary and Spain,² in early Bronze-age contexts at Troy,³ and in Egyptian tombs of the twelfth dynasty,⁴ are all smaller and more orbiculate than those grown today, and Theophrastus' description of the field bean⁵ indicates that even in his time it was still comparatively small. As a matter of fact, little improvement was effected in the ensuing centuries, for field beans found at Herculaneum and Pompeii⁶ are also comparatively small.

The usual Greek term for the field bean was *κίβανος*, commonly taken to

¹ To preclude any possible misapprehension, this article is in no way concerned with the kidney bean, *Phaseolus vulgaris* Savi, a native of the western hemisphere unknown in the Old World in ancient times. It deals only with the common or field bean, *Faba vulgaris* Moench (*Vicia faba* L.).

² Those from the dumps of Swiss and north Italian pile dwellings are usually identified as var. *cedicia nana* Heer (cf. Heer, 1866, p. 22; Neuweiler, 1905, pp. 84-87; Schieman, 1932, p. 22). Staub (1882, p. 283) reports the same type from a Stone-age level at Aggtelek. Cf. also Krause, 1895, p. 81; Hoops, 1905, pp. 287 and 401-402; Much, 1908, p. 215.

³ Cf. Wittmack, 1886, p. xxxiii; 1896, p. 29; Much, *loc. cit.*; Hoops, 1905, p. 401.

⁴ Cf. Schweinfurth, 1884 (1), p. 362; (2), p. 186; Wittmack, 1886, p. xxxii; Lorey, 1892, pp. 93-94; Woenig, 1886, p. 212; Joret, 1905, I, p. 55; Ruffer, 1919, p. 73; Petrie, 1890, pp. 49-50.

⁵ *H. Pl.* 3.15.3; 4.3.1; cf. Plin. *N.H.* 13.105.

⁶ Cf. Wittmack, 1904, p. 239.

allude to its flatulent effect.⁷ *Κίβανος* was a less frequent Attic variant.⁸ *Κίβανος* was loosely used as a term for any edible seed or bean, such as the tare, the lupine, and the so-called "Egyptian bean" (the seed of the Indian lotus, *Nelumbo nucifera* Gaertn.); and the field bean for greater precision was therefore sometimes called *κίβανος Ἑλληνικός* or "Greek bean."⁹ The cultivation of beans in the general Aegean region and neighboring parts of Asia Minor even in the prehistoric period is attested not only by archeological evidence,¹⁰ but also by specific allusion to beans in Homer.¹¹ Its antiquity in Greece can be inferred from the celebration of a bean feast in honor of Apollo and the Horae at Athens, variously called *κίβανη*, *πυανή*, and *πυανή*,¹² the serving of this vegetable by the Spartans at the banquets called "Cleavers" (*κοτλές*), given at certain festivals for strangers,¹³ the Attic worship of a bean-god Cyamites,¹⁴ and taboos on beans associated with the Orphic mysteries¹⁵ and the Eleusinian mysteries.¹⁶ In the time of Theophrastus (third century B.C.) cultivation was general.

The Latin term for the field bean was *fabā*, an old word from some South European source.¹⁷ The Romans, since they had abundant evidence of long use of the bean, quite properly regarded it as one of the oldest of their cultivated plants.¹⁸ The Fabian gens, for example, was so-called from the bean,¹⁹ and the

⁷ Cf. Prellwitz, 1905, p. 167; Boisacq, 1938, p. 526. The basic meaning of *κίβανος* is almost certainly related, is apparently "inflate, swell out." Strömberg (1940, p. 51) assumes the verb originally had the sense of a middle voice, i.e., "to be swollen, bloated;" but the parallel from German which he cites (*Bohne* from **bhoumā* "that which swells out") points rather to an active voice.

⁸ Cf. Brugmann, 1913, p. 50; Oick, Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll-Mittelhaus, *RE*, III, 610.

⁹ Cf. Hippocr. 2.672 K.; Diosc. 2.127. ¹⁰ See note 3 above.

¹¹ Cf. Athen. 9.408 a; Plut. *Thes.* 22.4; Hesych. s.v. *πυανή*; Schol. ad Aristoph. *Plut.* 1054.49.

¹² Cf. Athen. 2.56 a (Polemon frg. 86 Preller); 4.139 a; Cratin. 164; Eupol. 138; Phyllyl. 16.

¹³ Cf. Pausan. 1.37.4; Bekker, *Anecdota graeca* I, 274, 14; Hesych. and Phot. s.v. *Κυαμίδης*.

¹⁴ Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 3.24 (II, 206 Stahlin). Cf. Lobeck, 1829, p. 251; Crusius, 1894, p. 165.

¹⁵ Porphyr. *De abst.* 4.16 (p. 255, 5 Nauck); Pausan. 1.37.4; 8.15.4. Cf. esp. Reinach, 1919, p. 174.

¹⁶ The basic form is probably **bhābhā*, denoting tumescence or a swelling body, sphericity. Semantically the word closely parallels the Greek name. The basic form is probably the source of Greek *φάβος*, Old English *bean*, and Old High German *bona*. Cf. Walde, 1927-30, II, p. 131; 1938, p. 436; Tucker, 1931, p. 89; Müller, 1926, p. 170. The Latin word is the source of Italian *fava*, Sardinian *fa*, Catalan *fava*, Spanish *haba*, Portuguese *fava*, French *fève*, and Friulian *fave*. Latin *faba*, borrowed in Greek as *φάβη* (Anon. *De alim.* in Ideler, *Phys. et med. gr. min.*, II, 270; *Ed. Diels*, 6.38, Greek version; Hesych.), developed into Modern Greek *φάβη* and Bovarian *fava*. Cf. Rohlf, 1930, no. 2282.

¹⁷ Cf. Ovid. *Fast.* 6.180; Plin. *N.H.* 18.117; Isid. *Orig.* 17.4.3. Note that remains of beans have been found in the Roman Forum (cf. Duhan, 1939, I, pp. 423 ff.).

¹⁸ Cf. Plin. *N.H.* 18.10. Some ancient writers traced the name back to an original *Fovius* from *fovea* "pit" (Fest. p. 77.15 Lindsay) or *Fodius* from *fodere* "dig," with the suggestion that the founder of the family was in the habit of digging pitfalls for wild beasts (Plut. *Fab. Max.* 1). On these and other proper names, cf. also Schrader, 1917-28, I, p. 159.

Fabiani, who acquired their name from this gens, constituted one of the two colleges of the Luperci, a religious organization of considerable antiquity.²⁰ The sacrifices made to the old Italic deity Carna on the first of June consisted of bean-meal and lard,²¹ and this day was known as the *Kalendae fabariae*.²² Beans were also used to lay ghosts at the Lemuria²³ and figured in the sacrifices performed at the Parentalia.²⁴ Beans also played a role in magic rites conducted in connection with Tacita or Muta, a goddess of the dead,²⁵ and must have been used at a festival of the dead in honor of the bean goddess Fabola or Fabula.²⁶ The Priest of Jupiter was forbidden to touch a bean or even to mention its name.²⁷ The name of Fufetia, an early Vestal, as well as that of Mettius Fufetius, is derived from *faba* by Pfund,²⁸ who also identifies with it that of Modius Fabidius, reputed founder of the Cures,²⁹ and even ventures to conclude that a period once existed among the early Romans when agriculture was devoted almost exclusively to beans. His argument entails ingenious analysis of Roman and Sabine land measures and is plausible in so far as it applies to beans; but there is no question that the cultivation of spelt in Italy is at least as old as that of the bean, and that *puls* made from spelt was probably the first staple food derived from field crops. This much at least is certain, that beans were under cultivation in Italy as early as the Neolithic age and were an important food crop for the early Romans. It is indeed by no means improbable that the bean was their first cultivated vegetable.

With the antiquity of the cultivation of the bean in the Mediterranean region well established, it is possible to turn with more assurance to the role it played in religion, philosophy, magic, and dietetics. Plutarch³⁰ in a discussion of the reasons why those who would lead chaste lives abstained from legumes suggests that in the case of beans their motives may have been the same as those commonly assumed to influence the Pythagoreans religiously to refrain from eating them.³¹ The Pythagorean taboo, although Plutarch does not say

²⁰ Cf. Fest. p. 78.2 Lindsay; Ovid. *Fast.* 2.282-302; Propert. 4.1.26; Vict. *Orig.* 22; Crusius, 1884.

²¹ Cf. Macrobi. *Sat.* 1.12.33; Ovid. *Fast.* 6.169-170; Varro apud Non. p. 197 Lindsay.

²² Macrobi. *loc. cit.*

²³ Cf. Varro *loc. cit.*; Ovid. *Fast.* 5.419-444; Fest. p. 77.25 Lindsay.

²⁴ Cf. Fest. p. 77.26 Lindsay. ²⁵ Cf. Ovid. *Fast.* 2.576; Frazer, 1929, II, 450.

²⁶ Cf. Plut. *Quaes. rom.* 35; Schroeder, 1901, pp. 197-198.

²⁷ Cf. Fab. Pict. apud Gell. 10.15.12; Varro apud Plin. *N.H.* 18.119; Fest. p. 77.24 Lindsay.

²⁸ 1845, p. 8. His derivation depends in part upon the assumption that the archaic dative *Mettoi Fabelloi* in Enn. *Ann.* 129 is the correct reading.

²⁹ Cf. Varro apud Dion. Hal. 2.48. ³⁰ *Quaes. rom.* 95.

³¹ The Pythagorean taboo was so stringent that it extended even to treading down the growing bean vine. According to one account (Hermippus apud Diog. Laert. 8.40), Pythagoras, pursued by Syracusan soldiers, could not bring himself to escape by crossing a field of beans, preferring to let himself be taken and killed. According to another (Iamblich. *Vit. Pythag.* 189; Porphyry. *Vit. Pythag.* 61), some Pythagoreans, fleeing from hostile soldiers, stopped when they came to a bean field in flower and defended themselves to the death.

so, may have originated in a south Italian belief of considerable antiquity,³² since Magna Graecia was the home of Pythagoreanism. But it may be of different provenience, since similar taboos existed in Greece,³³ Egypt,³⁴ and India,³⁵ and are found today in Africa.³⁶

One significant and provocative factor, with respect to this abstention, is that the ancients felt toward beans a mingled respect and dread, a complex of emotions suggested by the Greek term *τέπος*, which apparently was generally applied to an object believed to be charged with some supernatural force, contact with which might be either beneficial or harmful.³⁷ Today we generally call this mysterious power *mana* in its helpful aspect and taboo in its harmful aspect. Beans belonged in the category of objects possessing both *mana* and taboo.

The ancients advanced most divergent explanations for the taboo on beans,

³² Cf. Jevons, 1892, introd., p. lxxxvii.

³³ E.g., in connection with the Orphic and Eleusinian mysteries (see notes 15 and 16 above). There are indications that the taboo applied not only to the adepts of the mysteries, but to any person making sacrifice or conducting any other ceremony of a religious nature (cf. Diog. Laert. 8.33; Artemidor. 1.65).

³⁴ Herodotus (2.37) relates that in Egypt the people would not grow beans nor eat them raw or cooked, while the priests could not even tolerate the sight of them. But field beans have been found in tombs of the twelfth dynasty (see note 3 above); evidence from the papyri proves that they were under cultivation in the Fayum from the third century B.C. to the third century A.D., and at Alexandria in 5 B.C.; the Papyrus Harris records offerings to the Nile god by Ramses III of 11,998 and 2,396 jars of shelled beans (cf. Breasted, 1906-07, IV, no. 301 and no. 350); and Schnebel (1925, p. 193) maintains that the bean was cultivated in many parts of Egypt in all periods. Diodorus (1.89; cf. Sext. Emp. *Pyrroh.* 3.24), more accurate than Herodotus, says that while some Egyptians ate no beans, they were cultivated in Egypt. There is no doubt that a taboo of some kind did exist, and various implausible explanations have been advanced (cf. Unger, 1859, p. 131; Loret, 1892, p. 111; Thiselton-Dyer, 1918, p. 302). The most convincing hypothesis is that of Schweinfurth (1884 [3], p. 201; cf. 1884 [2], pp. 186-187), who believed that the presence of field beans among offerings in tombs of the twelfth dynasty constituted evidence of a practice analogous to the Roman employment of beans in connection with funeral ceremonies, which rendered them taboo to the Priest of Jupiter. Three facts are indisputable: that beans were raised and eaten by the common people, that they were used as mortuary offerings, and that they were not eaten by priests. On the general subject of totemism in Egypt, cf. Van Gennep, II, pp. 40-74; and on the possible role of Egypt in the Pythagorean taboo, cf. Haussleiter, 1935, pp. 147-150.

³⁵ A bean taboo imposed on those rendering sacrifice is mentioned in the oldest Indian ritualistic text, the *Pajurveda*, as well as in the *Mâitrayani Samhitâ* and the *Kâthaka*. Cf. Schroeder, 1901, pp. 187 ff. The Bagdis of central and western Bengal are apparently of Dravidian descent. In the territory of Bankura, where the original caste structure seems to be particularly well preserved, they are divided into nine endogamous subcastes, which in turn are subdivided into exogamous clans or septs. Many of the latter are totemic, for example, the Patrischi or Bean Clan, members of which will not touch beans. Cf. Frazer, 1910, II, p. 310.

³⁶ Among the Baganda in the vicinity of Lake Victoria Nyanza, the Bean Clan will not eat or even cultivate beans. One of them is said to have eaten beans and died on the spot. Cf. Frazer, 1910, II, p. 492.

³⁷ Cf. Delatte, 1930, p. 33.

some religious or spiritual, some dietetic or hygienic. Aristotle³⁸ (or his source) proposes no fewer than five different explanations, without settling on any one of them. The heart of the problem is to determine whether this ambivalent attitude toward beans is an echo of earlier totemism or whether it is of different origin.

With the concept of totemism in mind, one sees a glimmer of sense in Horace's allusion to the *faba Pythagorae cognata*³⁹ and in the perplexing Pythagorean maxim, "It is an equal crime to eat beans and the heads of one's parents" (ἰσὸν τοι κυάμους τε φαγεῖν κεφαλὰς τε τοκῆων).⁴⁰ It now seems clearer, too, why Pythagoras forbade his followers to eat beans as being human flesh, on the ground that beans were occupied by the souls of the dead and thereby took on the qualities of human flesh.⁴¹ As Pliny says,⁴² "The souls of the dead are in them."

If we accept this notion of beans being the residence of the souls of the dead as the original, primitive concept, diverse and apparently conflicting beliefs and practices current in the historic period take on sense and consistency. The simplest and most direct development was the notion that beans assumed the character of human flesh, as the result of the presence of souls in them.⁴³ By this presence beans were rendered dynamic receptacles of generative power, and we accordingly find peeled green beans compared to human testicles and even said to be the generative principle itself,⁴⁴ the abstinence of the Pythagoreans explained as due to the resemblance of beans to testicles,⁴⁵ the beans of Empedocles interpreted as an esoteric or symbolic allusion to testicles,⁴⁶ and beans alleged to resemble eggs in embodying the generative principle.⁴⁷ Furthermore, we read that beans which are chewed and exposed to the sun will come to smell like human blood⁴⁸ or like human sperm,⁴⁹ that a boiled bean

³⁸ Apud Diog. Laert. 8.34: (1) Because they resemble testicles, (2) because they resemble the gates of Hades in being alone (of all plants) unjointed (i.e., having a nodeless stalk), (3) because they are injurious, (4) because they are like the form of the universe, and (5) because they belong to the oligarchy, since they are used in elections by lot (i.e., the Pythagoreans, partisans of the oligarchal regime, detested beans because they served as the instrument of elections of magistrates by lot in democracies and were therefore a symbol of democracy).

³⁹ Sat. 2.6.63. Pseudo-Acro (II, p. 185 Keller) in his note on this passage comments that Pythagoras *praecipue fabam velut parentem coluerat*.

⁴⁰ Cf., e.g., Heraclid. Pont. apud Lyd. *De mens.* 4.42 (p. 99.23 Wuensch); Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 3.24 (2.206.27 Stählin); Plut. *Quaes. conv.* 2.3.1; Athen. 2.65. f; Geopon. 2.35.8; Eustath. *Il.* 13.589. Commentaries on this maxim indicate that it was taken in a literal, not a metaphorical, sense. Haussleiter (1935, p. 86) believes that the verse is Orphic rather than Pythagorean.

⁴¹ Porphy. *Vit. Pythag.* 43.

⁴² *N.H.* 18.118. A close parallel is found in the prevalent belief of Indonesians that rice is animated by "soul-stuff" (cf. Frazer, 1911-15, VII, p. 182).

⁴³ Cf. Porphy. *loc. cit.* ⁴⁴ Lucian. *Vit. auctio* 6.

⁴⁵ Aristot. apud Diog. Laert. 8.34.

⁴⁶ Gell. 4.11.10. ⁴⁷ Plut. *Quaes. conv.* 2.3.1.

⁴⁸ Porphy. *Vit. Pythag.* 44; Lyd. *De mens.* 4.42.

⁴⁹ Hippolyt. *Adv. haer.* 1.2.14.

exudes human blood and seems by its color to be impregnated with human blood,⁵⁰ that a green bean kept for some time in a vessel changes to blood,⁵¹ that if a bean is boiled and exposed to the rays of the moon for a number of nights blood can be drawn from it,⁵² that if a bean is soaked for a day and a night, the water it contains will become the blood of a wound,⁵³ and that the term *κύαμος* is actually a derivative of *αἷμα*, "blood."⁵⁴ From the concept of generative power arose even more fantastic notions—that a wilted bean blossom kept in a vessel will produce the head of a child or female pudenda,⁵⁵ that bean blossoms kept enclosed in a vessel will produce two testicles and a phallus,⁵⁶ and that men will spring from beans planted under manure.⁵⁷

The conviction that beans should not be eaten by persons leading a chaste life⁵⁸ probably arose from this concept of generative power, entailing as it did strong notions of sex, and not from any connection with the dead. It should be noted that a state of purity was attained by avoiding objects and events associated with either death or generation, such as deaths and births, the meat and flesh of animals that have died, eggs and egg-sprung animals, and beans.⁵⁹ Lydus⁶⁰ says that beans have an aphrodisiacal effect and debase the spirit to the act of generation, and Plutarch⁶¹ suggests that the cause of the abstinence might be that the flatulence induced by beans stimulates desire. This notion was perhaps strengthened by an association formed between *κύαμος* and *κύνειν* in the sense of "conceive." In other words, eating beans (*κύαμοι*) might lead a man to cause a woman to conceive (*κύνειν*). It is interesting to note in this connection that the custom of electing by lot a King and often also a Queen of the Bean on Twelfth Night or the eve thereof used to prevail in France, Belgium, Germany, and England. It can be traced back to the first half of the sixteenth century and probably dates from much more remote antiquity.⁶² Some features of the ceremony indicate a connection between beans and the fertility of the coming hemp crop, which implies that the generative power credited to beans was so great that it might influence other crops.⁶³ At the circus at Rome, vetches, beans, and lupines were scattered among the audience.⁶⁴ There is a suggestion here also of the generative concept, for if the bean was dynamic with life, it was at least a symbol of productivity, and like rice

⁵⁰ Ps. Acro on Hor. Sat. 2.6.63 (II, 185 Keller).

⁵¹ Ps. Acro *loc. cit.*; *Papyrus demot.*, col. V, 25-31 (cf. Hopfner, 1921, I, no. 530; II, no. 219).

⁵² Lucian. *Vit. auctio* 6.

⁵³ Lyd. *De mens.* 4.42.

⁵⁴ Lyd. *loc. cit.*

⁵⁵ Lyd. *loc. cit.*; Porphy. *Vit. Pythag.* 44.

⁵⁶ *Papyrus demot.*, *loc. cit.*

⁵⁷ Lyd. *loc. cit.*; Porphy. *loc. cit.*; Hippolyt. *loc. cit.*; Plin. *N.H.* 18.118.

⁵⁸ Plut. *Quaes. rom.* 95.

⁵⁹ Diog. Laert. 8.33.

⁶⁰ *De mens.* 4.42.

⁶¹ *Loc. cit.*

⁶² Schroeder (1901, pp. 197-198) believes that the ultimate source is an early Roman festival of the dead associated with the field goddess Acca Larentia in her capacity of bean goddess under the byname of Fabola or Fabula.

⁶³ Cf. Frazer, 1911-15, IX, pp. 313-315; 1929, II, p. 48; Schroeder, 1901, pp. 196-197.

⁶⁴ Pers. Sat. 5.177-179.

today was something to be thrown among people to make them prolific, fertile, *felices*. But perhaps these were symbols of good health and digestion, like the beans eaten on Carna's day.

Since souls resided in beans, it might be presumed that beans were animated by intelligence. Their use in Athenian elections by lot⁶⁶ is probably of too recent origin to be attributed to any such notion and was probably motivated merely by convenience; but the use of beans in taking the auspices among the Romans⁶⁶ is a relic of earlier times and may embody some such belief. One may note also the custom of ancient diviners of placing salt and beans before their clients.⁶⁷ This practice has persisted into modern times, so that we find beans used for divination on Midsummer Eve in the Azores⁶⁸ and for the same purpose on Twelfth Night in many other places.⁶⁹

The basic concept of beans as the abode of the souls of the dead created an intimate association of beans with death and gave rise to strict rules for priests concerned with the life principle. Thus the Priest of Jupiter, whose functions required scrupulous avoidance of contact with the dead and everything associated with them, was forbidden, as we have seen, to touch a bean or even to speak its name.⁷⁰ It is therefore puzzling to read that beans were regularly eaten at funerary banquets, funerary sacrifices, and invocations to the deceased,⁷¹ for few things are more intimately associated with death than such ceremonies as these. One's thoughts are drawn to the custom of eating beans on Carna's day to insure good digestion and health for the coming year⁷² as a possible explanation; but if a connection exists, it is not readily apparent.

Let us return for a moment to the concept of totemism, one element of which is that the human group generally respects all members of the totem class and refrains from eating them. The practice of eating beans at ceremonies associated with the dead is difficult to reconcile with the usual, normal manifestations of the totemic concept. In fact, it apparently constitutes a direct violation of one of the basic principles. It seems, therefore, that another factor has entered the picture, one of sufficient potency to modify in some degree the customary pattern, or to indicate that the assumption of the existence of such a pattern has no basis.

⁶⁶ Cf. Aristoph. *Av.* 1022; Xenoph. *Mem.* 1.2.9; Aristot. apud Diog. Laert. 8.34; Soph. frg. 404 Pearson; Plut. *Pericl.* 27; Lucian. *Vit. auctio* 6; Iamblich. *Vit. Pythag.* 260; *Corp. Inscr. Graec.*, ed. Boeckh, 82.13.

⁶⁷ Plin. *N.H.* 18.119. ⁶⁸ Cf. Zenob. 1.25; Diogenian. 1.50; Michael. Apostol. 2.75.

⁶⁹ Dames and Seemann, 1903, pp. 142 ff. ⁷⁰ Frazer, 1911-15, IX, p. 316.

⁷¹ Fab. Pict. apud Gell. 10.15.12; Varro apud Plin. *N.H.* 18.119. Varro suggests as a reason for the taboo the *litterae lugubres* found in the flower of the bean, and Festus (p. 77.26 Lindsay) refers to the *in flore eius luctus litterae*. Cf. also Eustath. *Il.* 13.589. Incidentally, it is not known what the "funereal letters" are. Delatte (1930, p. 49) suggests that a black, round spot on each petal of the flower may have had the form of a θ for $\theta\alpha\nu\alpha\rho\varsigma$, but this is not convincing.

⁷² Plin. *N.H.* 18.118; Fest. p. 77 Lindsay; Plut. *Quaest. rom.* 95.

⁷³ Ovid. *Fast.* 6.169-182; cf. Macrobi. *Sat.* 1.12.33.

Beans were conceived to be the abodes of the souls of the dead, but we must be careful not to think of these souls in terms of Christian theology as eternal entities possessing the attributes of the physical beings in which they once lodged. We must rather visualize them as modicums of the life principle, vague and intangible, released from the body at the moment of death. This packet of force, if we may so term it, was both beneficent and maleficent. If it entered an alien organism, it could produce malign effects;⁷³ but it could be absorbed with benefit by a related organism.

At the moment of death the soul or life principle of a Roman escaped from his body by way of his mouth, and the next of kin caught and inhaled this last exhalation, absorbing the life principle. This could be done not only without danger, but with actual benefit, for the two organisms were closely related. But death is dangerous, inimical to life, and a person needed all the extra vitality he could obtain from any source, not only on occasions directly associated with death, such as mortuary banquets, but even when making funerary sacrifices and conducting invocations to the deceased. Therefore he ate beans, as containing the life principle. In this connection, we may well stress again the statement of Pliny that the *animae mortuorum*, i.e., the breath-souls of the dead, were in beans. And since beans contained a life force, it was natural for them to be eaten on Carna's day to insure good digestion and health for the coming year.

In many patterns of totemism, the relation in which a man stands to his totem is apparently one of friendship and kinship, and the respect which he accordingly feels for his totem generally prevents him from eating it. But the identification of a man with his totem, which appears to be the essence of totemism, may lead him to adopt a directly opposite line of conduct. He may then kill and eat his totem in order to strengthen his physical tie with it, to identify himself with it more completely. On this view a tribe eats its totemic plants and its human dead from precisely the same motive, a wish to absorb the life principle of the plants and of the men.

On first inspection, the Roman usage appears to lie very close indeed to this concept, so much so that it seems to be a vestige of an earlier totemic practice. In both the Roman usage and totemic practice the motive for eating the plant is to absorb a life principle it contains. The chief difference is that in totemism

⁷³ The ancient physicians were in general agreement that beans provided a good, flesh-building food (cf. Diosc. 2.127; Galen. *Alim. fac.* 1.19 [pp. 246-247 Helmr.]; *Bon. et mal. sucis* 7.4 [p. 414.1 Helmr.]; Cels. 2.18 [p. 65.3 Daremb.]), and the vegetable was popular with artisans (Colum. 10.112-113), farmers (Plin. *N.H.* 18.101; Hor. *Sat.* 2.6.63), builders (Mart. 10.48.16), and gladiators (Galen. *Alim. fac.* 1.19 [p. 246 Helmr.]). It is therefore reasonable to assume that we find a vague echo of this notion of the malign effects of beans on an alien organism in Aristotle's suggestion (apud Diog. Laert. 8.34) that the Pythagoreans may have abstained from beans because they were injurious, and Callimachus' recommendation (apud Gell. 4.11.2) that one abstain from beans as being a harmful food. Otherwise, these views, which are in direct opposition to contemporary scientific opinion and popular practice, are inexplicable.

the bean would ordinarily be conceived to be a related organism embued with kindred life, whereas among the Romans the bean was imagined to be the residence of the soul of a dead person, possibly related.

Probably the bean-meal and lard offered as a sacrifice to Carna⁷⁴ constituted a food for the deity, and similarly the beans thrown as an offering on tombs by the Romans "for the safety of men"⁷⁵ were meant to be a food for the spirits of the dead. These formed an especially beneficial fare for the spirits because of the life principle they contained, helping them to become not only a little more material, but also a little more vital. One thinks of archeological evidence of piping through which wine could be conveyed directly to the ashes in the tomb. The beans that figured in the laying of ghosts at the Lemuria⁷⁶ may have been intended to provide convenient residences for restless, ambulatory, ancestral souls, but probably were rather meant to placate the *lemures* by giving them dynamic food that they craved and which would impart to them renewed vigor, for the beans contained souls, i.e., a life principle. It is significant that Ovid in his account of the ceremony says that the ghost picked up the beans which the house-father tossed over his shoulder. The explanation of Delatte⁷⁷ is less convincing. He suggests that the beans tossed to the *lemures* were thought to contain, imprisoned and powerless within them, the souls of the dead, and served as a substitute for the souls of the living which these terrifying phantoms came seeking. Similarly Frazer⁷⁸ says that the ghosts were supposed to accept the beans as substitutes for the

⁷⁴ Ovid, *loc. cit.*; cf. Macrobi. *loc. cit.*; Varro apud Non. p. 197 Lindsay.

⁷⁵ Lyd. *De mens.* 4.42 (p. 100 Wuensch).

⁷⁶ Varro apud Non. p. 135 Lindsay; Ovid, *Fast.* 5.419-444; Fest. p. 77 Lindsay. The ceremony, as related by Ovid, is of special interest. "The house-father at midnight, when everything was still, arose on bare feet, snapped his fingers to prevent any stray ghost from bumping against him inadvertently, washed his hands clean, turned, and took several black beans in his mouth. He tossed these behind him without looking back, saying, 'With these beans I redeem me and mine.' He said this nine times without looking back. The ghost followed behind, picking up the beans. Then the house-father washed again, clashed bronze cymbals together, and requested the ghost to depart from the house, saying nine times, 'Shades of my ancestors, depart.' In Sicily today beans are used in spells against evil spirits. When a Sicilian woman has a child, the oldest woman present at her delivery is supposed to form a cone of nine beans on a table, and by reciting the proper conjuration render certain spirits, *le padrone di casa*, impotent to do her any harm. Cf. Cocchiara, 1938, p. 92. A very similar rite has been performed in Japan in comparatively recent times. On the last night of the year in most Japanese houses a ritual called "the exorcism of the evil spirit" is conducted. The head of the family, clad in ceremonial robes, goes through all the rooms of the house at the hour of midnight, carrying in his left hand a box of roasted beans on a lacquered stand. From time to time he dips his right hand into the box and scatters a handful of beans on a mat, pronouncing a cabalistic formula meaning, 'Depart, demons; enter, riches.' Cf. Humbert, 1870, II, p. 326. According to another account, the ceremony takes place on the night before the beginning of spring, and the beans are flung against the wall as well as on the floor of the house. Cf. Bastian, 1869, V, p. 367.

⁷⁷ 1930, p. 40. ⁷⁸ 1929, IV, p. 38.

living members of the family, whom otherwise they might have carried off.

As has already been mentioned, one regular feature of many totemic systems is a belief that the members of the human group and the members of the totem class have a common ancestor. Delatte⁷⁹ cites two passages of cosmogenic character which he takes to allude to a notion of this sort. The first is a statement of Antonius Diogenes⁸⁰ that Pythagoras forbade his followers the use of beans because man and the bean came into being simultaneously from the same decomposition at the time of creation. The second is a statement by Hippolytus⁸¹ that the bean was born at the time of creation, when the earth was still taking form and was in ferment. There is certainly little trace here of an earlier belief in common ancestry. The factor responsible for this vague cosmogonic concept can more plausibly be assumed to be the prevalent conviction of the remote antiquity of the bean.

On the sacred way which led to Eleusis there was in ancient times a small temple to a deity called Cyamites. Photius⁸² suggests that this deity may have been named from the bean, because in his presence archons were elected by lot with beans, or because the bean market was located not far from there. Pausanias⁸³ speculates that Cyamites may have been the first to sow beans or that adepts of the Eleusinian mysteries may have assigned some hero to beans because it was not permitted to them to attribute to Demeter the discovery of beans. Elsewhere,⁸⁴ in commenting on the cult of Demeter at Pheneus in Arcadia, he says that to those who had received her in their homes and had given her presents of hospitality the goddess gave all the legumes except the bean, and adds that there was an esoteric story (*τεπος λόγος*) regarding their reason for viewing the bean as an impure legume. Delatte⁸⁵ suggests that Cyamites may have been conceived as the primitive man-bean, the common ancestor of man and the bean, at the same time admitting that this hypothesis is a bold one in view of the paucity of the evidence. There is assuredly no clear evidence of the existence of a belief in the common ancestry of man and the bean.

The evidence as a whole does indicate, however, that the original concept was that the souls of the dead took residence in beans. This is the only explanation that reconciles the medley of beliefs and practices current in the historic period. In this connection, it must be emphasized that, whether or not totemism existed at an earlier time, there is no intent to postulate it for the historic period. In the case of Pythagoreanism in particular, Aristoxenus,⁸⁶ who was thoroughly conversant with earlier literature, in his work on Pythagoras says that, far from abstaining from beans, he ate no vegetable more often, because

⁷⁹ 1930, p. 47. ⁸⁰ Apud Lyd. *De mens.* 4.42 and Porphyry. *Vid. Pythag.* 44.

⁸¹ *Ado. haer.* 1.2.14. ⁸² S.v. *Κυαμίτης*. ⁸³ 1.37.4. ⁸⁴ 8.15.4.

⁸⁵ 1930, pp. 48-49. ⁸⁶ Apud Gell. 4.11.4-5.

of their easy digestibility and loosening effect upon the bowels. Moreover, Aristoxenus denies that he refrained from eating animal food, declaring that young pigs and tender kids formed a regular feature of his diet. Actually, it is immaterial whether Pythagoras did or did not eat beans, nor is it pertinent to the present problem what esoteric meanings may have been associated with the abstention by Pythagoras or his followers,⁸⁷ except in so far as these are echoes of earlier beliefs. The only important and relevant factor is that such an abstention was attributed to him.

What we are faced with in a problem of this nature is a heterogeneous group of practices and superstitions that represent vestiges of an earlier systematized belief. By the classical period this integrated concept had so degenerated that Greek and Latin scholars were baffled in their attempts to explain current usages. In seeking today to reach a satisfactory explanation, some six factors would seem to merit consideration: the flatulent effect of the bean, the nodeless character of the bean stalk, a hygienic reason, the resemblance of the bean to a human testicle, its possible emergence as the first cultivated vegetable, and the rapidity of its growth.

If we were sure of the precise original meanings of the Greek and Latin names for the bean, we might find in the pristine application of these terms to the bean a clue to the characteristic which most forcibly impressed men in that remote era, and hence possibly the factor responsible for the rise of the soul concept. As has already been pointed out, *κίβανος* is commonly taken to allude to the flatulent effect of the bean. It is cognate with *κίβαν*, the basic meaning of which is apparently "to inflate, swell out," the denotation "to be pregnant" developing from the swollen appearance of a pregnant female. *Faba* apparently basically denotes tumescence, a swelling body, sphericity. It is obviously possible to explain both the Greek and the Latin names as words that were applied to the bean because of its flatulent effect—"the seed that inflates," as it were.

There is, however, a simpler and more convincing explanation, for the bean, while it does cause flatulence, scarcely inflates to the point of sphericity, a sense which seems to be inherent in both the Greek and the Latin words. In the early period when these terms were applied to the bean, it was not only smaller, but more orbiculate. Hence the original meaning of the names as terms for a kind of vegetable was probably "a round seed, a spherical body," a sense which scholars have been reluctant to propose because of their familiarity with the appearance of the bean as it is today. It is worth noting, in this connection, that these names were not applied exclusively to the bean, but to other seeds as well, seeds characterized not by their flatulent effect, but by their roundness. This interpretation, even if it is not wholly acceptable, is suffi-

⁸⁷ Boréas (1927), for example, argues that a belief in the transmigration of souls underlies the Pythagorean abstention from beans.

ently plausible to throw doubt on the necessity of taking the bean's flatulence to be the factor originally responsible for the application of these terms to it. In short, no reliable evidence on the soul concept can be adduced from the etymology of the names.

Delatte⁸⁸ reasons that the bean's leguminous character was primarily responsible for the persuasion that souls resided in beans, since the complex of beliefs and practices pertaining to the bean applied in some degree to other legumes as well. It is true that the most striking property of the bean is its flatulent effect, often remarked by ancient writers,⁸⁹ and Delatte attaches considerable importance to the observation of Diogenes Laertius⁹⁰ that beans, by reason of their windy character, participate more than any other legume in the nature of the soul. This point merits elaboration. Cicero says:⁹¹ "Plato advises us to go to sleep in such a bodily state that there may be nothing to cause mental confusion or delusion. It is thought that this is the reason why the Pythagoreans were forbidden to eat beans, as producing marked flatulence and therefore disturbing to a soul searching for the truth." Cicero goes on to explain that the soul is still active when the body is asleep, but is severed from physical ties. Elsewhere,⁹² however, he ridicules the notion that the soul and not the stomach is filled with wind from beans. Diogenes Laertius in the passage cited above suggests abstinence from beans to insure smooth and untroubled dreams, and Pliny⁹³ comments that beans cause bad dreams. The mythical dream interpreter Amphiaras abstained from beans, because he prophesied from dreams, and beans were held to cause uneasy dreams.⁹⁴

Boehm⁹⁵ reasons that if beans were thought to cause bad dreams, this would have been a good and sufficient reason for abstaining from them, for those who believed that true and good dreams came from the gods would imagine that false and bad dreams came from evil spirits or ghosts, and they would naturally shun a food which brought them under the influence of these dreaded and dangerous beings. It is on this basis that he explains the maxim of Pythagoras, and Frazer⁹⁶ accepts this as the most plausible interpretation.

Delatte assumes a development somewhat as follows: Legumes and more especially beans generate winds that interfere with contemplative activity; beans accordingly contain winds that exercise an unfavorable action; souls, especially those of the dead, are winds, generally conceived as nocent; therefore beans contain the souls of the dead. There are two defects inherent in this

⁸⁸ 1930, pp. 54-56.

⁸⁹ Cf., e.g., Ps.-Hippocr. *De diet.* 2.45; Aristot. *H.A.* 3.107; apud Plut. *Quaes. conv.* 8.10.1; Diog. Laert. 8.24; Iamblich. *Vit. Pythag.* 109; Ovid. *Med. fac.* 70; Galen. *Alim. fac.* 1.19 (p. 246 Helm.); XI, 373; XII, 44, 49; XV, 465 Kühn; Ruf. Eph. frg. p. 542 Daremb.; Diosc. 2.127 W.; Paul. Aeg. 1.79; Actuar. *De spir. an.* 2.5.22 (in Ideler, *Phys. et med. gr. min.*, I, 361); Psell. *Carm. de re med.* 141; Simeon Seth pp. 113 and 131 Langk.; Anon. *De alim.* in Ideler, *op. cit.*, II, 270.

⁹⁰ 8.24.

⁹¹ *De div.* 1.30.62.

⁹² *Id.* 2.58.119.

⁹³ *N.H.* 18.118.

⁹⁴ *Geopon.* 2.35.

⁹⁵ 1905, pp. 15-17.

⁹⁶ 1929, IV, pp. 39-40.

hypothesis. The first is that the factor originally responsible for the rise of the soul concept may have been but was not necessarily common to legumes in general. If it initially applied only to the bean, the complex of beliefs and practices that evolved would inevitably have spread in some degree to similar plants in the course of time. This is a common phenomenon. The second is that his hypothesis is appropriate to a sophisticated level of society and must be reduced to a simpler terminology to become plausible. It might be simplified in the following terms: The soul is air; beans produce air; therefore souls are in beans. So phrased, it represents more convincingly the kind of thinking one would expect to find in early society. Furthermore, it provides for the rise of the soul concept, and the explanation of Boehm does not.

If we grant that the flatulent effect of beans gave rise to the concept of souls residing in them, it is still a problem to explain how it was imagined that they got there. Delatte⁹⁷ supposes that the nodeless character of the bean stalk, remarked in ancient sources,⁹⁸ may have made a forceful impression on the mind of early men, suggesting to them that here lay an unobstructed route for the return of the souls of the dead to terrestrial life. But this is also too sophisticated an explanation. Furthermore it assumes a belief that the souls of the dead were pent underground and could find no escape except through an unimpeded plant channel. Yet even in the historic period of Rome the *lemures* wandered footloose and free above ground and had to be laid, and among the Greeks the belief was current that ghosts roamed the surface of the earth and that the souls of the dead returned to earth at the festival of the Anthesteria. This interpretation must be rejected, it appears, as inconsonant with the superstitions and practices current in the historic period. The fact that this notion existed at a later time does not make it necessary to postulate it as an essential element of the original concept.

No plausible hygienic factor can be conceived which would lead to a general taboo on eating beans. Moreover, the character of the notions and practices found in the historic period militates against the hygienic factor. Such taboos as existed were of special character, arising from the association of beans with death, from their dynamic character, or from the concept that the souls of ancestors occupied them. On the other hand, we find the ritualistic

⁹⁷ 1930, pp. 37 and 56.

⁹⁸ E.g., Aristot. apud Diog. Laert. 8.34. Two verses found in Eustathius (*IL* 13.589) and the scholiast of the codex Townleyanus (ad *IL* loc. cit.) read as follows (as restored by Th. Bergk, *Neue Jahrbücher für Philologie und Pädagogik*, 101 (1870), p. 837): ψυχῆς ἀεὶ ἥσαν βίαν ἄμραν, ἥ δὲ ἀναπαύει ἐξ Ἄδου δόμων θῶν ἀβύσσας ἐκκεύων. ("Bean plants serve as a flight of stairs for souls full of vigor when they come back up to the light of day from the abodes of Hades.") This apparently alludes to the same notion. Similarly, Porphyrius (*De antro nymphaeum* 19 [p. 70.3 Nauck]) says that theologians observed that bees never lighted on bean blossoms, because they symbolized the direct and immediate return of souls to terrestrial life.

eating of beans associated with religious ceremonies of patent antiquity. There is little reason to entertain more than fleetingly the notion that a taboo based on some simple hygienic factor could have procured the medley of superstitions found in the historic period.

It is tempting, too, to attribute the rise of the concept of beans as the abode of the souls of the dead to the resemblance of beans to testicles, occasionally remarked in ancient sources. The reasoning in this case would have been somewhat as follows: The testicles are the seat of generative power; beans resemble testicles; therefore beans possess generative power; if they possess generative power, they must contain a life force; therefore they are occupied by souls. There are several objections to this hypothesis. First, the resemblance of the bean, so far as appearance is concerned, is to a testicle removed from the scrotum and is therefore not one which would forcibly strike the attention. The mutilations of war, accidents, and deliberate castration would disclose this similarity of appearance; but this would not be a common experience. A more obvious resemblance is the tactile one, unnoticed in ancient sources. The testicle in its scrotum has the feel and the shape of a bean. Second, it is not necessary to postulate a reasoning process of this sort to account for the development which apparently occurred. Once the belief that the souls of the dead lived in beans came into being, irrespective of its origin, the concept of beans as dynamic receptacles of generative power would inevitably ensue, and efforts to explain the latter belief would lead in turn to fastening on the resemblance of beans to testicles. Third, it should not be assumed as a matter of course that anatomical knowledge was sufficiently accurate for the testicles to be recognized as the seat of generative power, which is often associated with the sperm and the penis, but only rarely with the testicles. It is therefore probably wise to discard this as a working hypothesis.

The venerable antiquity of the bean as an article of food in southern and southeastern Europe has already been adequately established. If by any chance this legume was the first cultivated vegetable of the Indo-European ancestors of the Greeks and the Romans, possibly antecedent to any grain, it may well have assumed thereby a peculiar importance in their minds, as the giver of life and strength. Even by itself, this might lead to the conviction that it contained the life principle, a life force. But the bean in comparison with other vegetation is rapid-growing; it is pregnant with life—vital and vitalizing. This additional factor would further stimulate the rise of a belief that it contained a life force, which would be conceived as being a soul. Such a vitalizer would, of course, be regarded as *iephós*. It is substantially on this basis that Wright⁹⁹ explains the abstention of the Pythagoreans, deriving *κῆπος* from *κῆν* in the sense "to be pregnant" and explaining the meaning as "the thing big with life,"

⁹⁹ 1921, pp. 155-156.

denoting something endowed with life which thus became an emblem of exuberant fertility. Similarly, Boyancé¹⁰⁰ argues from the testimony of Martianus Capella that the egg possessed for the adepts of the Orphic mysteries a divine vitality that transformed one's being, and calls attention particularly to the practice of eating eggs at funerary banquets as embodying the same belief.

If this hypothesis is sound, one would expect to find in the etymology of the names a clue to this concept of beans. But, as has already been indicated, both *κίναρος* and *faba* apparently originally denoted only a round seed and were used with generic force, even in the classical period retaining some of this semantic looseness of application. The notions of growth associated with *κίναρος* are seemingly secondary, as are those of pregnancy and conception. Furthermore, archeological evidence has established only that the field bean was in use as a food as early as the Neolithic age, when the practice of agriculture had barely been initiated. The field bean raised in that era was not far removed from the wild prototype, and the diet of the people was still varied and consisted in considerable part of the products of wild plants. There is no material evidence that the field bean bulked large in their daily diet or enjoyed any especial importance as an aliment. The linguistic evidence likewise implies that the bean was not a food of any great importance. The Greek and the Latin names for the bean are of different origin, and the Asiatic branch of the Indo-Europeans used still another term. It is true that there is a Greek word, *φάκος*, which comes from the same source as *faba*, but it denotes another plant, the lentil. There was, accordingly, no specific Indo-European name for the bean. This indicates that the bean was not brought under cultivation, nor became a food of any great importance, until the dispersal of the Indo-Europeans was sufficiently advanced for the groups which ultimately infiltrated Greece and Italy to have lost close contact linguistically. By that time grain was under active cultivation and would therefore have assumed a role of primary importance as a food. For these reasons, it seems very doubtful that the bean played a significant enough role as a food in the early period to give rise to the soul concept, nor is there any clear indication that the exuberance of growth of the bean plant was a factor.

We are thus forced back to the simplest explanation consistent with the known facts, that the life spirit was conceived as something unsubstantial, like air, breath, and wind, that this life spirit escaped from the body at the moment of death, and that it found residence in beans, for beans produced wind, the essence of the life spirit. From this simple concept there developed in the course of time an elaborate complex of beliefs and practices, and this in turn lost its systematic character and developed into a heterogeneous medley of beliefs and usages.

¹⁰⁰ 1935, pp. 95-112.

This brings us to the core of the problem. Was the pattern that developed totemic, or was it something else? There has been a loose tendency on the part of scholars to impute earlier totemism from various Greek and Roman superstitions and practices.¹⁰¹ Delatte¹⁰² in his article on the Pythagorean bean enumerates the following features common to totemism and the bean: (1) Beans contain the souls of dead parents; (2) they can then be considered one's parents; (3) they have the same origin as man; (4) they play a role in reincarnation; and (5) they are *ισοποι*, so that it is forbidden to eat them, and contact with them is dangerous. He therefore concludes that we are concerned here with totemism, which implies the existence of totemism among the Indo-Europeans.

But Frazer¹⁰³ maintains that if totemism is to be proved for the Indo-Europeans, it must be shown, not only how they lost it, but also how they lost the institution of exogamy and the classification system of relationship as well. There is no binding reason why totemism and exogamy should be associated, but there is a positive correlation between them.¹⁰⁴ One would expect at least to find totemism associated with a specific clan. It has already been noted that in the case of the Romans the Fabian gens was named after the bean, that the Fabiani, who acquired their name from this gens, constituted one of the two colleges of the Luperci, a religious organization of considerable antiquity, that an early Vestal may have been named after the bean, and that the reputed founder of the Cures may also have received his name from the bean. It would be rash indeed to conclude from these meager scraps of evidence that a bean clan once existed, and Delatte does not do so. The evidence for the existence of totemic clans in early Greece is likewise negative.¹⁰⁵

But the factors enumerated by Delatte as common to totemism and the bean are only partially correct. Beans were thought to contain the souls of the dead, possibly of dead parents or other relatives; but they were not conceived to be one's parents. They were regarded only as the abodes of souls, not as reincarnated beings. Furthermore, there is not even a faint echo of a belief in common ancestry in the cosmogenic notions uttered during the historic era, for these reflect only a conviction of the great antiquity of the bean. As for the taboo on beans, one must weigh against this the Roman practice of eating beans at rites associated with death.

The following appears to have been the general course of development. The field bean grew wild in the area where the Indo-Europeans lived and was used by them as an article of food, but probably attained no great importance as such and was not actively cultivated. The flatulence induced by beans gave rise to a conviction that they were occupied by human souls. This in turn led to the

¹⁰¹ Cf. e.g., Farnell, 1896-1909, I, pp. 88 ff.; Reinach, 1905, I, pp. 9-78; Hornyanszky, 1907; Harrison, 1912, pp. 119, 128-129; 271-272; Meier, 1919; Besson, 1929.

¹⁰² 1930, p. 52.

¹⁰³ Cf. Ankersmann, 1917, pp. 482-483. ¹⁰⁴ Cf. Van Gennep, IV, p. 225.

notion that they took on the character of human flesh and possessed dynamic generative powers. Since they were occupied by the souls of the dead, those whose functions required avoidance of death shunned them. But since the souls which resided in them were modicums of the life principle, beans were eaten on occasions closely associated with death.

This is a striking and distinctive pattern, but it has little in common with totemism. The salient points of difference are the absence of a belief in common ancestry, the isochronous existence of a taboo and the ritualistic eating of beans, and the general diffusion of the complex. The vestiges of the pattern surviving in the historic period, doubtless enriched by imaginative speculation, are peculiarly rich and varied. Indeed, no plant or animal known to the Indo-Europeans produced a more luxuriant growth of beliefs. If totemism existed among the Indo-Europeans, one would confidently expect to find evidence of it in connection with the bean, not only because of the unique profusion of the evidence, but also because the basic soul concept was peculiarly well adapted to evolution into a totemic pattern. The lack of evidence of such a development is sufficient justification to view with considerable skepticism any attempt to prove that totemism existed among the Indo-Europeans.

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a.o. discussion of the bean-tabu in
 Magna Grecia among the Pythagoreans
 Beans