

The goal of this study of Perun is to systemize the existing knowledge of the given issue, to introduce the main sources, important theories and to attempt to find traces of the Slavic thunderer's cult in the folk culture of the Slavic nations. The study is divided into two parts: Perun's History and Perun's Typology. In part one there are main written sources about Perun, etymology of his theonym, traces of his cult with the Slavs of the Central Europe and the Balkans and the portrait of the Old Russian heathenism. The second part presents profiles of Indo-European thunderers, the main attributes of the Slavic thunderer, the transformations of Perun into figures of Slavic folklore and the main theories concerning Perun's role in Slavic archaic religion which have appeared over the past forty years. The chapter on sources contains texts dating back to the times of Kievan Rus – the only texts of the Early Middle Ages referring to Perun. Next, there are early modern age sources from Poland from which some errors concernig Perun's cult arose. The chapter on etymology proves the Indo-European root from which Perun's name was derived and its semantic extent which is connected with the thunderers' cult in the traditions of many Indo-European nations. The chapter which seeks traces of thunderer's cult with the Slavs of the Central Europe and the Balkans shows a number of documents proving that the Slavs of these territories were also acquainted with Perun. This is testified by both folklore material and toponymy. The analysis of the Old Russian heathenism gives examples of practical cult, deals with the names from the so called Vladimir's pantheon and it is also devoted to the texts of contracts between Muscovy and Byzantium, which mention gods Perun and Volos. Even the story of Perun's fall is not omitted – it follows from Nestor's Chronicle that destruction of Perun's idol was in fact heathen ceremony the purpose of which was to expel the old god. ...