

# Tracking the Dragon across the Ancient Near East

Robert D. Miller

In 2001, Michael Witzel called for “exploring the historical development” of the Indo-European and Near Eastern myth-families “by setting up a family tree of such groupings,” to “fill the gap between, say, the reconstructed Near Eastern branch and the individual local mythology, e.g., that of the Sumerians or Hittites.”<sup>1</sup> The present essay is part of a larger project to track the storm god-slays-dragon myth across the ancient Near East, from the *Rig-Veda* to Iran and Anatolia, from Sumer through the Levant.<sup>2</sup> This essay is a condensed version of the first half of that trek, “a combination of extremely close reading of text passages in the original ... with the traditional Comparative Method.”<sup>3</sup> The comparative method used here is genetic; fundamentally, “its goal is history.”<sup>4</sup> But it must be used with caution. Scholars tend far too often to equate vaguely similar stories by circular reasoning and leap of faith, to blur vegetation gods with storm gods, for example. Broadly shared mythic themes of the Aarne-Thompson sort are the result of any number of non-genetic factors, as Wim van Binsbergen has written, ranging from shared diffusion from the Palaeolithic period (as per Michael Witzel)<sup>5</sup> to biological-evolutionary factors inherent to the human brain (à la Robert Segal).<sup>6</sup> As Calvert Watkins noted, the dragon slaying myth “may be quasi-universal. We cannot speak of an exclusively Indo-European dragon; our task is rather to sort out the Indo-European modalities of the myth.”<sup>7</sup> Here we will compare a relatively concise mytheme, although a bit more broadly defined than Watkins’ linguistic formulas.<sup>8</sup> We will not hope to derive the fundamental principle of comparison solely from linguistics, although we shall certainly employ this analysis. I am in full agreement with Boris Oguibenine’s lamenting the loose definition of “motif,” and I embrace his definition of “narrative structures generated by agents in a text.”<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Michael Witzel, “Comparison and Reconstruction: Language and Mythology,” 48.

<sup>2</sup> N.B., popular Sanskrit names have not been given in academic transcription.

<sup>3</sup> Calvert Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon: Aspects of Indo-European Poetics*, vii.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>5</sup> Michael Witzel, “Slaying the Dragon across Eurasia,” 265.

<sup>6</sup> Wim van Binsbergen, “Rupture and Fusion in the Approach to Myth,” 323.

<sup>7</sup> Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, 297.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 10–11, 299.

<sup>9</sup> Boris Oguibenine, “On the Concept of Motif in Comparative Mythology,” Cambridge, MA, IV International Conference on Comparative Mythology, October, 2010.

It was Watkins who clearly and magisterially synthesized the linguistic data illustrating the relationship between the Vedic myth of Indra defeating Vṛtra, the Avestan myth from Iran of Thraetaona slaying Aži Dahāka, and the Hittite Illuyanka myth. Here he is talking about myths from individual poetic traditions from which he reconstructs the Common Indo-European element:<sup>10</sup> the storm god<sup>11</sup> defeats the dragon-who-is-water<sup>12</sup> and who stands for chaos,<sup>13</sup> and this is celebrated in New Years' rituals.<sup>14</sup> The present essay is not so much interested in what is Common Indo-European as in its manifestations in the individual traditions and in their non-Indo-European afterlives. Watkins is correct that the *Rig-Veda* and the Hittites have this mytheme from their Indo-European heritage,<sup>15</sup> and not from each other, although the situation is not simple and we shall see a great deal of relatively late movement of Indo-Europeans across the ancient Near East.<sup>16</sup> The common formula is HERO+SLAY (\*g<sup>w</sup>hen in the perfect or imperfect) +SERPENT. In the *Rig-Veda*, this is *Índro vṛtrám* (or *áhim*) *jaghāna* or *áhann*.<sup>17</sup>

The god Indra's primary exploit is the slaying of the serpent Vṛtra (*RV* 8.85.7; elaborated in 1.32 and 1.61.1) – sometimes merely called “the serpent” (3.30.8; 3.32.4; 5.30.6) – which releases pent-up waters (4.19.6; or stolen cows in later 10.108). As hymn 1.32 says, “He slew the serpent (*áhim*), drilled through to the waters.” In other hymns, what is released are “seven streams” (*RV* 4.28.1; 2.12.3). In hymn 2.12, Vṛtra is called the “swelling serpent,” *ojāyámānam yo áhim*; elsewhere, “the encompasser,” *āśáyāna*. The verb for Indra's act can also be *avadhīt*, “slay” (PIE \*wedh-), as in 1.33.4: “You slew the rich Dasyu with your ‘slayer’” – or *tur* “overcome” (*Indreṇa taruṣema vṛtrám*; 7.48.2) or *bhinátti* “split” (PIE \*terh<sub>2</sub>- or \*bheid-).<sup>18</sup>

Indra came to the battle after all the other gods had fled in fear (*RV* 3.32.4; 8.85.7; this may be a later stratum of the story).<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, Indra needs help to defeat Vṛtra.<sup>20</sup> The weapon with which he defeats Vṛtra is the iconic *vajra*, or thunderbolt, which becomes Indra's totem (*RV* 2.12.10; 4.19.1; and, later, 1.57.2, 6; 1.32.5, 15; 1.73.10; 1.101.1; etc.).<sup>21</sup> The weapon was specially made for Indra for the combat by Tvaṣṭṛ (1.61.6), and it is used to split Vṛtra's head (8.6.6, 76.2). The

<sup>10</sup> Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, 50, 165.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 297.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 298.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 299–300.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 300.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 303, 359.

<sup>16</sup> M. L. West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, 21.

<sup>17</sup> Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, 301.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 341.

<sup>19</sup> Raymond Hodgson, “Indra and Vṛtra: A Study of Continuity and Change in the Indian Religious Tradition,” 158.

<sup>20</sup> Uma Chakravarty, *Indra and Other Vedic Deities*, 114.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 97–98.

victory over Vṛtra is mostly treated as a past event, but the tenses fluctuate between past and present (e.g., 1.32.12–13), so that the impression is given that Vṛtra might not quite be dead forever (RV 1.32.14).<sup>22</sup> In any case, Vṛtra is for now consigned to “the deep” (RV 1.32.8).<sup>23</sup>

Indra himself is the giver of agriculture (RV 5.39; 4.32; 8.24),<sup>24</sup> a storm god (RV 2.12; 4.18.9),<sup>25</sup> and identified as a “bull” (vṛṣá; RV 3.50.1; 6.33.1; 8.15.6).<sup>26</sup> Indra was sometimes portrayed as a bull.<sup>27</sup> Indra is also symbolic of kingship (RV 3.26.2; 3.34.2; 4.19.2), especially in later tradition (*Atharva Veda* 3.4.6; *Aitareya Brahmana*; *Satapatha Brahmana* 10.4.1.5; 2.5.2.27–4.8). In the *Puranas*, “Indra” becomes merely a title for rotating kingship of the gods (e.g., *Vishnu Purana*; a tradition as early as the *Aitareya Upanishad*). Mircea Eliade and Boris Oguibenine consider the Indra-Vṛtra to be a cosmogony: the dragon represents formless watery chaos before creation.<sup>28</sup> Indra is the creator in RV 2.12.2, 4, and there are clear references to Indra’s creative acts after the slaying of Vṛtra: RV 5.29.4, “Then he propped both the worlds far apart”; 7.23.3, “Indra with his greatness pushed asunder both the world-halves, as he slew the irresistible Vṛtra.”<sup>29</sup> Multiple other explanations have been given over the centuries, but it is probable that like the other myths we shall examine no single meaning explains the myth.<sup>30</sup> Raymond Hodgson argued the Indra-Vṛtra conflict was utilized in a cultic setting reflecting the king’s ritual function in the New Year’s ceremony.<sup>31</sup> The king overcoming his enemies is homologous to the god of kingship overcoming the dragon.<sup>32</sup>

It is possible, however, that this myth is not originally about Indra at all.<sup>33</sup> Indra performed his deeds “like Trita” (RV 1.52.5), Trita Āptya that is, who in RV 1.187 dismembers Vṛtra.<sup>34</sup> In RV 10.8.8, Trita kills three-headed Viśvarūpa (identified

<sup>22</sup> West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, 257; Chakravarty, *Indra and Other Vedic Deities*, 115–16.

<sup>23</sup> Shanti S. Gupta, *A Study of the God Indra*, 29.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 20–21.

<sup>25</sup> Ev Cochrane, “Indra: A Case Study in Comparative Mythology,” 8.

<sup>26</sup> J. Gonda, *The Indra Hymns of the Rgveda*, 93, 118.

<sup>27</sup> West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, 246.

<sup>28</sup> Ajoy Kumar Lahiri, *Vedic Vṛtra*, 14. Others consider creating to be Indra’s original myth, the dragon slaying being a later accretion, on which see below; Gonda, *The Indra Hymns of the Rgveda*, 4.

<sup>29</sup> Lahiri, *Vedic Vṛtra*, 103.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 24–25.

<sup>31</sup> Hodgson, “Indra and Vṛtra,” ii.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>33</sup> Renate Söhnen-Thieme, “On the Vṛtra Myth in the Rgveda: A Question of Stratification,” 301, 305, 311; Lahiri, *Vedic Vṛtra*, 191. Note that Indra is “born” in RV 6.67.1; 7.20.5; 4.18.10; 10.101.12.

<sup>34</sup> Nataliya Yanchevskaya, “Trita.” Cambridge, MA, IV International Conference on Comparative Mythology, October, 2010.

with Vṛtra and killed by Indra in *Satapatha Brahmana* 1.6.3.2; cf. 1.2.3.2<sup>35</sup>) with “ancestral weapons.”<sup>36</sup> Trita’s name means “third,” or fully “third of waters,” and he is the protagonist of the unrelated story where he is thrown into a pit by his two older brothers (*RV* 1.105), the story picked up by the *Mahabharata*.<sup>37</sup> These are, in the *Rig-Veda*, separate myths – Indra delivers Viśvarūpa to Trita (*RV* 2.11.19), and books 1 and 10 of the *Rig-Veda* are considered the latest,<sup>38</sup> but there is reason to believe the Trita myth is the original.<sup>39</sup>

In Iran, Trita Āptya reappears as Thrita, the haoma-presser (like Indra) whose son kills a dragon, but also as Thraetaona son of Āthwya, who slays the three-headed dragon or “snake of evil religion” (*Yt.* 18.7.490) Aži Dahāka (freeing stolen cows; *Yt.* 5.9.33).<sup>40</sup> The account is preserved in the relatively late *Yashts* (*Yt.* 5.29–35; 9.13–15; 14.38–40; 19.34–52; also in the *Yasna* (*Hom Yasht*) *Y*.9.7–8, 11),<sup>41</sup> but as Watkins showed, the Avestan *yō janat̥ aźīm* is the exact cognate of the Vedic *áhann áhim*, in the same word order.<sup>42</sup> The slaying act also occurs as *tauruuuiiata* (<PIE \**terh*<sub>2</sub>-; *Yt.* 13.38), and *vādāya*<PIE \**wedh* also occurs. In Pahlavi literature, the dragon is chained to Mount Demavend until the end of the world.

This Avestan myth is not derived from the Vedic. Although the Iranian migration followed the Indic by several centuries,<sup>43</sup> Indic was already differentiated from Iranian much earlier.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, as Michael Witzel writes, “Old Iranian *in general* is too archaic to have moved out of India *after* the composition of the *RV*.”<sup>45</sup> We have here a separate, probably earlier, derivation from the Indo-European original.<sup>46</sup>

However, a derivative of the Avestan Thraetaona-Aži Dahāka story is found in Firdausi’s 1000 AD *Shahname* or “Persian Book of Kings.” The book mainly covers Sassanian lore of 225–650 AD, but has a mythological section at its beginning,<sup>47</sup> which is aware of some historical traditions as far back as Artaxerxes in the 5th century B.C.<sup>48</sup> Following the fourth king of the mythical first dynasty, an Arabian

<sup>35</sup> West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, 262.

<sup>36</sup> Muralidhar Mohanty, *Indra in Indian Mythology*, 92.

<sup>37</sup> Yanchevskaya, “Trita.”

<sup>38</sup> Wendy Doniger, *The Hindus*, 104.

<sup>39</sup> West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, 260.

<sup>40</sup> Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, 313; West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, 260.

<sup>41</sup> Mehri Bagheri, “The Myth of the Fettered Dragon,” 185.

<sup>42</sup> Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, 314.

<sup>43</sup> West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, 10; Marta Vannucci, *Ancient Gods and Heroes of East and West*, 21, 302.

<sup>44</sup> West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, 9; but cf. Michael Witzel, “Linguistic Evidence for Cultural Exchange in Prehistoric Western Central Asia,” 9.

<sup>45</sup> Michael Witzel, “Autochthonous Aryans? The Evidence from Old Indian and Iranian Texts,” 53.

<sup>46</sup> William W. Malandra, *An Introduction to Ancient Iranian Religion*, 81.

<sup>47</sup> Olga M. Davidson, *Poet and Hero in the Persian Book of Kings*, 1–3, 8.

<sup>48</sup> B. W. Robinson, *The Persian Book of Kings*, 154.

usurper named Zāḥḥāk takes the throne of Persia.<sup>49</sup> Zāḥḥāk had been previously seduced by Iblis or Ahriman (the devil) and bears two live snakes sprouting from his shoulders as a result.<sup>50</sup> After a thousand-year reign, the Persian hero Fereydūn, whom Zāḥḥāk has dreamt of as the “youngest of three” young men,<sup>51</sup> defeats Zāḥḥāk and chains him to Mount Demavend until the end of the world.<sup>52</sup> Zāḥḥāk is from Dahāka; the dragon has become the dragon-shouldered, although Zāḥḥāk is repeatedly called a dragon himself (e.g., 1.177.634); in Dick Davis’ translation, “the Serpent King.”<sup>53</sup> Fereydūn, as Olga Davidson has shown, is Thraetaona.<sup>54</sup> Fereydūn rides a bull, and his weapon against Zāḥḥāk is a bull-headed mace, forged by the smith Kāva<sup>55</sup> (1.61.183–67. 277),<sup>56</sup> and he is depicted with this mace subduing a demon on a Sassanian amulet in the British Museum.<sup>57</sup> Reasons for highlighting this late permutation of the myth will be clear at a later point.

Although the Hittite version of the Indo-European dragon myth has connections with earlier Hattic material, most scholars consider it a direct inheritance from Proto-Indo-European times and not a borrowing from a later period. In fact, M. L. West considers it a better approximation of the Proto-Indo-European mytheme than the *Rig-Veda*.<sup>58</sup> The Anatolian branch of Indo-European represented by Hittite (or, properly, “Nesili,” as the Hittites called it) and related languages of Asia Minor was the first to diverge from common Indo-European (2900 BC at the latest; perhaps as early as the 5th millennium),<sup>59</sup> and continued to evolve for some time after this divergence before breaking up further.<sup>60</sup> Hittite, Luwian, and Palaic all appear in Anatolia about 1650 BC.<sup>61</sup> But Hittite names occur already in the records of the Assyrian trading colony at Karum Kanesh four hundred years earlier, and Indo-European-speaking peoples were surely well established in Anatolia before 2000, and the geographic distribution concentrating them in southwestern Anatolia

---

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 13–15.

<sup>50</sup> Davidson, *Poet and Hero*, 13.

<sup>51</sup> Abolqasem Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh*, 14.

<sup>52</sup> Robinson, *The Persian Book of Kings*, 16; No villain is as deserving of death in *Shahnameh* as Zāḥḥāk, yet he alone is not put to death after his defeat, presumably because that was integral to the pre-existing myth; Mahmoud Omidisalar, “The Dragon Fight in the National Persian Epics,” 350.

<sup>53</sup> Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh*, 12–13.

<sup>54</sup> Davidson, *Poet and Hero*, 131–32.

<sup>55</sup> Whose name is not only from *kavi*, “wizard,” but reminds us of the Vedic smith Kavya Usanas. Ibid., 103.

<sup>56</sup> Robinson, *The Persian Book of Kings*, 15.

<sup>57</sup> Aḥmad Tafāzẓolī, “Ferēdū.”

<sup>58</sup> West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, 20.

<sup>59</sup> Maciej Popko, *Religions of Asia Minor*, 39.

<sup>60</sup> West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, 5, 10, 20.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 7.

suggests they or at least the language entered not from the east via the Caucasus but from the west, like the Phrygians and Galatians of later eras.<sup>62</sup>

There were non-Indo-European peoples already in Anatolia, the so-called Hattic peoples attested from the Early Bronze Age<sup>63</sup> and mentioned in the Assyrian texts from Karum Kanesh.<sup>64</sup> The Hattic centre of Ḫattuša became the capital for the Hittite Old Kingdom, which include both the Luwian and Palaic lands.<sup>65</sup>

Old Hittite religion was largely Hattic.<sup>66</sup> The name of the Hattic storm god was Taru (*KUB* 20.10.iv.12; 28.3.ovb.1.col.19a, 4 obv.; etc.), and we must note that this cannot possibly be from the PIE *\*terh<sub>2</sub>-*, from which came the Vedic *tur*; the Hatti were pre-Indo-European.<sup>67</sup> We know nothing about Taru except that he was depicted as a bull.<sup>68</sup> The Hittite storm god is Tarḫuna, which certainly is from PIE *\*terh<sub>2</sub>-*, as is his Luwian name Tarḫunzas (in cuneiform Luwian, e.g., *KUB* 35.43.ii.36\*, 44 rev.6; in Hieroglyphic Luwian it was Tarḫunt; *KUB* 32.12.rev.1\*<sup>1</sup>).<sup>69</sup> It was probably easier to syncretize the Hattic and Hittite storm gods because of the coincidental similarity of their names.<sup>70</sup> Tarḫuna was the chief deity of the Hittites. Many of the Hittite rituals are from Luwian regions and reflect Luwian cultic and poetic traditions.<sup>71</sup> The Hittite storm god was represented as or on a bull,<sup>72</sup> as on a vase from Inandiktepe.<sup>73</sup> From the earliest Hittite text onwards, the close relationship between the storm god and the king is emphasized.<sup>74</sup> The Hittite king reigned in the name of Tarḫuna and acted as his chief priest.<sup>75</sup> On a rock relief from Fıraktin, the king and the storm god are depicted almost identically.<sup>76</sup>

---

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 7; There is no way to support the views of Colin Renfrew, Kamil Zvelebil, and Tamaz Gamkrelidze that the Indo-Europeans were indigenous to Anatolia; Popko, *Religions of Asia Minor*, 40.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>64</sup> Bleda S. Düring, *The Prehistory of Asia Minor*, 261.

<sup>65</sup> Popko, *Religions of Asia Minor*, 62.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>67</sup> In light of the Dravidian *tīr* and Tamil *tīr*, I will allow the possibility of Hattic Taru sharing with PIE *\*terh<sub>2</sub>-* an origin in a Eurasian *\*tVr(H)V*, “to go through”; see Aharon Dolgopolski, *Nostratic Dictionary*, 2426.

<sup>68</sup> Daniel Schwemer, “The Storm-Gods of the Ancient Near East: Summary, Synthesis, Recent Studies, Part II,” 17.

<sup>69</sup> Popko, *Religions of Asia Minor*, 69; Schwemer, “The Storm-Gods of the Ancient Near East: Part II,” 18.

<sup>70</sup> Manfred Hutter, “Aspects of Luwian Religion,” 220–21.

<sup>71</sup> Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, 52. In Palaic, the storm god was Ziparwa; Piotra Taracha, *Religions of Second Millennium Anatolia*, 58. This name is Hattic, originally Taparwasu or Tiparwa, the t>z being quite natural.

<sup>72</sup> Ph. H. J. Houwink ten Cate, “The Hittite Storm God: His Role and His Rule According to Hittite Cuneiform Sources,” 108.

<sup>73</sup> Popko, *Religions of Asia Minor*, 78.

<sup>74</sup> Houwink ten Cate, “The Hittite Storm God,” 86.

<sup>75</sup> Popko, *Religions of Asia Minor*, 78.

<sup>76</sup> Dominik Bonatz, “The Iconography of Religion in the Hittite, Luwian, and Aramaean Kingdoms,” 7.

The Old Hittite form of the Indo-European dragon slaying myth, known from several copies, is the Illuyanka Myth (*CTH 321*).<sup>77</sup> Here, the storm god and “mortal Hupasiyas/Hupashiya [Par II, line 6],”<sup>78</sup> – or in a second variant his mortal son (line 22’)<sup>79</sup> defeat the dragon/serpent Illuyanka (i.e., El+yanka [serpent]<sup>80</sup>; *COS* 1.150-51 #1.56; *CTH 321*), who is also called “the river of the watery abyss” (Line 17). In the second version, the serpent’s initial overpowering of the storm god is explicit (*KBo* 3.7 i 11).<sup>81</sup> In the second variant, the victory takes place at the sea and the son dies (voluntarily) at his father’s hand in the course of his father slaying the dragon (Part III, line 26’),<sup>82</sup> and, although the portion of the text is quite fragmentary, it appears that mortal Hupasiyas also ends up dying in the first version. The introduction of a mortal helper who is killed finally even though the god’s victory is largely his doing is “unique, paradoxical and disconcerting,” in the words of Walter Burkert.<sup>83</sup> “Though the text does not make it very clear why this was unavoidable,” he writes, “it is indicated, instead, that he accepts his death out of his own free will. This is suspiciously reminiscent of sacrificial ideology.”<sup>84</sup> This martyrdom and victory is followed by a banquet assembly of the gods (Part IV).<sup>85</sup> The Illuyanka myth was narrated in the Purulli New Year’s festival,<sup>86</sup> with the king presiding.<sup>87</sup>

The linguistic formula is the same here as in the *Rig-Veda*: <sup>MUS</sup>*illuyankan kuenta* (<PIE \*g<sup>w</sup>hen; *KUB* 17.5 I 17 §12), <sup>MUS</sup>*illuyankaš* <sup>DIM</sup>-an tarhta (*KBo* 3.7 I 11), or <sup>MUS</sup>*illuyankan tarahhūwan* (<PIE \*terh<sub>2</sub>-).<sup>88</sup> As Calvert Watkins masterfully showed, this myth is the old Indo-European inheritance.<sup>89</sup> However, we should note

<sup>77</sup> Gary Beckman, “The Religion of the Hittites,” 104; Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, 450.

<sup>78</sup> T. H. Gaster, *Thespis: Ritual, Myth and Drama in the Ancient and Near East*, 245, 258; Beckman, “Anatolian Myth,” 18. According to Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, the two variants are not “older” and “newer” as per Walter Burkert, *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual*, 8; following Albrecht Goetze.

<sup>79</sup> Gary Beckman, “The Anatolian Myth of Illuyanka,” 24; Beckman, “The Religion of the Hittites,” 105.

<sup>80</sup> G. Komoróczy, “Zu den Anfänger der Mythographie im Alten Orient,” 187; Beckman, “Anatolian Myth,” 11; Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, 449.

<sup>81</sup> Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, 324, 344.

<sup>82</sup> Gaster, *Thespis*, 247, 262–65; Beckman, “Anatolian Myth,” 19, 24.

<sup>83</sup> Burkert, *Structure*, 9.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> Gaster, *Thespis*, 265.

<sup>86</sup> Hatice Gonnet, “La fête hittite du printemps,” 14–15; Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, 154, 444. Note the feast is “at the head of the year” (MU<sup>KAM</sup>-aš SAG.DU-as) or the feast “of the year” (EZEN MU<sup>u</sup>); *KUB* 36.97 iii 3’. Hittite New Year began with the first full moon after the spring equinox; Houwink ten Cate, “Hittite Storm God,” 93–94.

<sup>87</sup> Richard J. Dumbrell, *The Archaeomusicology of the Ancient Near East*, 270.

<sup>88</sup> Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, 302, 321, 356.

<sup>89</sup> And not Hattic, as per Houwink ten Cate, “The Hittite Storm God,” 147 n.76. Hans Güterbock thought one was Hattic and the other Cilician, but this is also unlikely. Galina Kellerman, “Toward the further Interpretation of the Purulli Festival,” 36. The difference of the two versions depends on where the Purulli was performed; Harry A. Hoffner, “A Brief Commentary on the Hittite Illuyanka Myth (*CTH 321*),” 129.

that there were several other Indo-European contacts after the Hittite Old Kingdom. By 1450, the kingdom was crumbling, with Ahḫiya(ma) from Greece taking the coast and Hurrians invading from Syria.<sup>90</sup>

The Hurrians themselves had occupied Upper Mesopotamia since 2200 B.C.,<sup>91</sup> with some living in Anatolia by 2000, as they are mentioned in the Karum Kanesh texts.<sup>92</sup> They are related linguistically only to the later Urartans.<sup>93</sup> By 1600, following further incursions of Hurrians from the northeast, they established the kingdom of Mitanni in Upper Mesopotamia,<sup>94</sup> although the Hurrian population extended far beyond Mitanni.<sup>95</sup> The kingdom was consolidated in the early 15th century, dominated Syria until the mid-14th, and lasted until the 12th.<sup>96</sup> But in spite of the origins of the Hurrian language, which remained the spoken language of Mitanni, *all* of the kings of Mitanni have Indo-Aryan or Indic names.<sup>97</sup> Their gods include Indra and other Vedic deities.<sup>98</sup> Either there were certain groups among the later Hurrian immigrants from Transcaucasia who spoke an archaic form of Indo-Aryan, or, since the evidence of Indo-Aryan is confined to names of rulers and gods and technical terms to do with the training of horses, Indo-Aryan settlers in Transcaucasia influenced some Hurrians – the future ruling class – *before* they

---

<sup>90</sup> Popko, *Religions of Asia Minor*, 63, 85.

<sup>91</sup> Older scholarship attributed the occurrence of Khirbet Kerak Ware with the migrations of the Hurrians around 2650 B.C. (C. A. Burney, “Eastern Anatolia in the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age,” 167; C. A. Burney and D. M. Lang, *People of the Hills*, 49; J. Mellaart, *The Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Ages in the Near East and Anatolia*, 80). Circuitous routes were drawn for a relocating “Kura-Araxes Yanik Shengavit East Anatolian culture of the Eneolithic Copper-Age Early Bronze Early South Trans-Caucasus” from the southeast Georgia south to Armenia, then west across northeast Anatolia, dipping southwest to the plains of Elazig. From there the route went south along the Euphrates, then into the Amuq from the Northeast, and finally into Palestine either via the coast or inland past Aleppo-Hama-Homs (W. Lamb, “The Culture of North-East Anatolia and Its Neighbours,” 30; Burney, “Eastern Anatolia,” 174; Burney and Lang, *People*, 44). But KKW is centuries older than the Hurrians. Gernot Wilhelm, *The Hurrians*, 6). There is no trail of destroyed sites leading from anywhere to Palestine (J. B. Hennessy, *The Foreign Relations of Palestine During the Early Bronze Age*, 88), and KKW is absent in Cilicia (despite the andirons), Islahiye, and Harran (I. A. Todd, *Anatolia and the Khirbet Kerak Problem*, 188). Neither the lack of KKW influence on other local ware, the lack of precursors, nor sudden disappearance dictate migration (D. Esse and P. K. Hopke, “Levantine Trade in the Early Bronze Age,” 332).

<sup>92</sup> Düring, *The Prehistory of Asia Minor*, 261.

<sup>93</sup> Gernot Wilhelm, “The Kingdom of Mitanni in Second-Millennium Upper Mesopotamia,” 1246.

<sup>94</sup> Jacques Freu, *Histoire du Mitanni*, 32–34.

<sup>95</sup> Marc Van De Mieroop, *A History of the Ancient Near East*, 123.

<sup>96</sup> Freu, *Histoire du Mitanni*, 47–49, 222.

<sup>97</sup> Wilhelm, “The Kingdom of Mitanni,” 1246.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.* Note the personal name “Indarota,” known from both Mitanni and the Rig-Veda. The names as a whole are more Indic than Iranian. P.-E. Dumont, “Indo-Aryan Names from Mitanni, Nuzi, and Syrian Documents,” 251.



migrated to Mesopotamia.<sup>99</sup> This bears upon more than the Hittite case, as Indo-Aryan Mitanni names are found in the Late Bronze age all the way down into Palestine.<sup>100</sup>

By 1425, kings of the dynasty ruling from Hattusha had two names: a Hurrian name and at the same time a Hittite one (throne name). There are Hurrian texts preserved from Hatti, although most documents are in Hittite, and there is also an increasing number of texts written containing Luwian terms. The rulers from Hattusha expanded the territory into a Hittite Empire by 1350.<sup>101</sup> The empire would last another two hundred years.<sup>102</sup> Even before the Empire, the Hittite gods had been syncretized with the Hurrian ones of the same nature, identifying Tarḫuna with the genuinely Hurrian storm god and patron of vegetation-giving rain Teshub (*KBo* 24.59.iv.12, 14).<sup>103</sup> The same cuneiform logogram was now used for Taru, Tarḫuna, and Teshub.<sup>104</sup> Increasingly, this god – depicted on or as a bull<sup>105</sup> – was a god of agriculture, too.<sup>106</sup> A 13th-century relief from Melid (Arslantepe) shows Teshub with a serpent.<sup>107</sup> The elaborate Yazılıkaya rock carving at Hattusha illustrates the entire Hurrian pantheon and its mythology, with their Hurrian names given in Luwian hieroglyphs – including Teshub with his two bulls Sherishu and Khurri – right in the Hittite capital.<sup>108</sup> Nothing suggests the Hurrian dynasty of the Hittite Empire was Indo-Aryan, but the Hurrian syncretism in Hatti took place after Indo-Aryan influence (or rule; see above) in the Hurrian homeland.

Another wave of Indo-European immigration came after 1200, when Phrygians came from the Balkans.<sup>109</sup> It is thus of great importance when the Hittite myths originate, whether in the “pure” period of the Old Kingdom or the Middle or Empire period when Indo-European influence could have come anew. Yet, writes Watkins, “For all that the Indo-European languages of 2nd-millennium Anatolia have been in contact with and doubtless culturally influenced by the poetic traditions of Hattic on the one hand and Hurrian on the other, it is clear there is a significant inherited Indo-European component in their component as well.”<sup>110</sup>

Of Hurrian origin is the Kumarbi cycle, the general plot of which is the efforts of the storm god Teshub to defeat the ruling usurper earth god Kumarbi and avenge

---

<sup>99</sup> Wilhelm, *The Hurrians*, 17.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>101</sup> Antonio Sagona and Paul Zimansky, *Ancient Turkey*, 279.

<sup>102</sup> Van De Mieroop, *History*, 156.

<sup>103</sup> Popko, *Religions of Asia Minor*, 87; Taracha, *Religions*, 120.

<sup>104</sup> Sagona and Zimansky, *Ancient Turkey*, 280.

<sup>105</sup> Bonatz, “The Iconography of Religion in the Hittite,” 3.

<sup>106</sup> Popko, *Religions of Asia Minor*, 110.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 165.

<sup>108</sup> Sagona and Zimansky, *Ancient Turkey*, 129.

<sup>109</sup> West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, 8.

<sup>110</sup> Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, 147.

his deposed father (*KUB 47.48 I 9’–14’*).<sup>111</sup> The cycle contains six songs, the order of which is unclear. The fourth and fifth were probably the dragon slaying of Hedammu (preserved in two versions, *CTH 348.I.1-29* and *II.1-2*) and the *Song of Ullikummi* (also two versions, *CTH 345.I.1-10*, preserved in Hittite, and *II.1-2* in Hurrian).<sup>112</sup> The myth of Ullikummi describes the victory of Teshub over the rock-monster Ullikummi, offspring of Kumarbi.<sup>113</sup> This battle, according to Tablet 2, line 32, takes place on Mount Hazzi, which is 1700m-high Jebel el-Aqra (Keldağ in Turkish), on the Syrian/Turkish border. In other texts, this mountain was deified as one of Teshub’s lieutenants.<sup>114</sup>

In the other song, Kumarbi’s son Hedammu, who has the form of a serpent,<sup>115</sup> comes forth from the sea – or is identified as the sea (Hur. *kiaže*) and wreaks havoc on earth before being destroyed by Teshub.<sup>116</sup> Hedammu is also said to have been born on Mount Hazzi, which does in fact overlook the sea.<sup>117</sup> And Teshub is only successful when he is saved by the goddess Ishtar seducing the serpent.<sup>118</sup>

The component songs of the Kumarbi cycle are not all of the same age, but they are not remote in time. Alberto Bernabé argues the Song of Ullikummi was based on the Hedammu myth,<sup>119</sup> although the connection between the two may be one of equivalent products of the creative process. In any case, in all of the songs Teshub needs help from other gods in order to prevail.<sup>120</sup>

Finally, a fragmentary text that may be unrelated (*CTH 349*)<sup>121</sup> mentions a victory of the storm god over the sea (1.17’),<sup>122</sup> as well as mentioning Mount Hazzi (11.19’–20’).<sup>123</sup>

The first million-dollar question is whether any relationship exists between Illuyanka and Hedammu (or Ullikummi). We do not know how extensively the Hittites modified the Hurrian tales themselves,<sup>124</sup> so even if the two myths began independently, Hedammu may have been shaped to the contours of the Indo-European myth.<sup>125</sup> Copies of Illuyanka date to the 16th or early 15th century,

<sup>111</sup> West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, 247.

<sup>112</sup> Jean-François Blam, “Fragment Hittite Bo 7247”; Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, 53.

<sup>113</sup> V. Haas, *Hethitische Berggötter und hurritische Steindämonen*, 149–60.

<sup>114</sup> Wilhelm, *The Hurrians*, 50.

<sup>115</sup> Schwemer, “The Storm-Gods of the Ancient Near East: Part II,” 25 n.67.

<sup>116</sup> Alberto Bernabé, “La lucha contra el dragón en Anatolia y en Grecia,” 129–44.

<sup>117</sup> Houwink ten Cate, “The Hittite Storm God,” 115–16; Robin Lane Fox, *Traveling Heroes in the Epic Age of Homer*, 286.

<sup>118</sup> Fox, *Traveling Heroes*, 285.

<sup>119</sup> Bernabé, “La Lucha contra el Dragón,” 135.

<sup>120</sup> Houwink ten Cate, “The Hittite Storm God,” 119.

<sup>121</sup> But cf. Houwink ten Cate, “The Hittite Storm God,” 117; Manfred Dijkstra, “The Myth of *apsi* ‘the (Sea) Dragon’ in the Hurrian Tradition,” 321.

<sup>122</sup> Gary Beckman, “Mythologie. A. II. Bei den Hethitern,” 569.

<sup>123</sup> Houwink ten Cate, “The Hittite Storm God,” 116.

<sup>124</sup> Sagona and Zimansky, *Ancient Turkey*, 280.

<sup>125</sup> West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, 263.

although the tale may be much older, while the Kumarbi Cycle to the late 15th-early 14th.<sup>126</sup> If they are related, it would probably be dependence from Illuyanka (and the Indo-European common myth) to Hedammu and Ullikummi.<sup>127</sup> Hedammu is described in Hittite as a <sup>MUŠ</sup>*illuyanku*, or snake deity (*KUB* 43.37.ii.14').<sup>128</sup> The second big question is whether the Hurrian myth owes anything to the Semitic world, and we shall return to this issue momentarily.

After the Hittite Empire disintegrated around 1200 B.C., several Neo-Hittite states emerged between the two zones of Aramean concentration along the Khaibur River and south of the Orontes around Damascus.<sup>129</sup> Much of the population was neither Aramean nor Hittite, but called themselves Hittites.<sup>130</sup> There were Semitic peoples living in the area prior to Luwian hegemony, probably Amorites, to whom we shall return.<sup>131</sup> A slow Aramaization thereafter took place, especially in contact with Assyria,<sup>132</sup> and the Hittite storm god, already Hurrianized, now merged with the Aramean Haddad, to whom we shall also return (e.g., Malatya 9th century).<sup>133</sup> Although there is little textual material from these kingdoms, seals of the storm god as a bull are found throughout this region.<sup>134</sup>

Farther north, Luwian worship of Tarhunt continued through the 1st millennium down – as far south as Assyria (Tell Ahmar) – until the Roman period, appearing as the Lycian Trqqas and Pisidian Termessus.<sup>135</sup> He continues to be represented as a bull, even in a Roman example from Cappadocia.<sup>136</sup>

The 14th and 13th centuries were the height of the ancient city of Ugarit, only few miles south of Mount Hazzi. Ugarit is the source for the most complete Bronze Age “Storm god vs. Dragon” narrative, the Baal Cycle. The entire cycle is written on six tablets preserved well enough to understand the general flow of the material but with several lacunae ranging from ten to forty lines or more.<sup>137</sup> The first two tablets describe the battle of the storm god Baal with the Sea god, Yamm, who is serpentine (*KTU* 1.83 4–12; 1.3 iii 39–42). The High God El has given Yamm, his beloved son, the kingship of the gods. Yamm sends messengers to convey the news to Baal, who does not give in to Yamm’s edict of subjection, while all the other gods cower in fear (*KTU* 1.2 i 20–25; 1.2 i 37–45). Instead, with the help

---

<sup>126</sup> Popko, *Religions of Asia Minor*, 126.

<sup>127</sup> Vannucci, *Ancient Gods*, 105; Beckman, “Mythologie. A. II. Bei den Hethitern,” 570.

<sup>128</sup> Joshua T. Katz, “How to Be a Dragon in Indo-European,” 318.

<sup>129</sup> O. R. Gurney, *The Hittites*, 39.

<sup>130</sup> David Schloen and Amir Fink, “New Excavations at Zincirli Höyük in Turkey (Ancient Sam’al) and the Discovery of an Inscribed Mortuary Stele,” 7.

<sup>131</sup> Schloen and Fink, “New Excavations,” 6.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>133</sup> Bonatz, “The Iconography of Religion in the Hittite,” 15.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>135</sup> Popko, *Religions of Asia Minor*, 173.

<sup>136</sup> Bonatz, “The Iconography of Religion in the Hittite,” 12.

<sup>137</sup> See *KTU* 1.3 i.1; vi.3 as examples.

of his sister Anat and magical weapons made by Kothar-wa-Khasis (*KTU* 1.2 iv 10–12, 27–28), Baal finally – after a failed first attempt – vanquishes Yamm (*KTU* 1.2 iv 20–28; 1.3 iii). The next two tablets explain how, after much effort, Baal and Anat get underway with the building plans for Baal’s palace on Mount Hazzi, now called Mount Zaphon, and a victory feast to which all the gods are invited (*KTU* 1.4 vi 44–46). Cylinders uncovered at Ugarit also depict Baal’s defeat of the monstrous horned serpent (e.g., *RS* 22.251 (144); *RS* 10.038 (167)).<sup>138</sup> Most scholars understand the myth to focus on the kingship of Baal and, by extension, of the king of Ugarit.<sup>139</sup>

In spite of a few caveats – El, not Baal, is a bull;<sup>140</sup> this is not a cosmogony, Yamm is not evil and is a threat only to Baal, not to the whole of the divine or the world;<sup>141</sup> the Baal myth was not a cultic or liturgical text<sup>142</sup> – this is familiar territory. Baal is a storm-god, identified with the human kingship of Ugarit (*CAT* 1.15 obv. II 11ff).<sup>143</sup> The enemy is the sea, which is also a seven-headed “swelling serpent” (*KTU* 1.5 i 1–2) called “Lord River” like Illuyanka. All the other gods cower in fear of Yamm, as the gods did of Vṛtra. Baal is initially unsuccessful and requires both assistance and specially made weapons. The impression is given that Yamm might not quite be dead forever. Moreover, the story centres on the *same mountain* as Ullikummi and Hedammu.

Dependence on the Kumarbi Cycle is unquestionable, although the myth was gradually built up from bits of other provenance, as well.<sup>144</sup> Moreover, texts in Hurrian have been found at Ugarit, albeit not from the Cycle.<sup>145</sup> Nevertheless, we have already seen that Kumarbi is itself an admixture of strands. Whether or not Kumarbi has any Semitic elements, it is nearly certain that Baal does. Prior to falling under Mitanni’s hegemony in 1500, Ugarit had been Amorite. It was periodically subject to the Hittite Empire, as well.

The epithet *ba’lu* as the proper name of a particular god is attested for all sorts of gods in various eras, but also occurs as the endingless “Ba’al” as early as the 25th century.<sup>146</sup> In the course of the 15th century, it had developed on the Levantine coast from an epithet of the storm god Haddad to his primary name, independently

<sup>138</sup> Pierre Amiet, “Le Dieu de l’Orage dans l’Iconographie des Sceaux Cylinders d’Ugarit,” 10.

<sup>139</sup> Nick Wyatt, “Religion in Ancient Ugarit,” 118; Idem, “What has Ugarit to do with Jerusalem?” 149.

<sup>140</sup> Izak Cornelius, *The Iconography of the Canaanite Gods Reshef and Ba’Al*, 165.

<sup>141</sup> Wyatt, “Religion in Ancient Ugarit,” 123.

<sup>142</sup> Allan R. Petersen, “The Royal God: Enthronement Festivals in Ancient Israel and Ugarit?” 87, 91, 93.

<sup>143</sup> Schwemer, “The Storm-Gods of the Ancient Near East: Part II,” 10.

<sup>144</sup> Popko, *Religions of Asia Minor*, 127; Wilhelm, *The Hurrians*, 61; Houwink ten Cate, “The Hittite Storm God,” 147 n. 75, following Güterbock, Haas, and others. In the polyglot god-list of *RS* 20.123+:35”, El is identified with Kumarbi.

<sup>145</sup> Van De Mieroop, *History*, 155.

<sup>146</sup> Schwemer, “The Storm-Gods of the Ancient Near East: Part II,” 8.

from the gods called *Ba`al* centuries earlier.<sup>147</sup> Storm gods became mutually interchangeable. A colossal statue from Karatepe in the first millennium bears a Phoenician inscription identifying Luwian Tarḫunt with Baal.<sup>148</sup>

The difficulty with the background of the Semitic storm god Haddad, whose origin lies in the Syria-Upper Mesopotamia area,<sup>149</sup> is the absence of myths.<sup>150</sup> We do have iconography. In 18th–16th century Mesopotamia, Adad is always depicted with a bull and often holding lightning,<sup>151</sup> ordinarily a triple trident.<sup>152</sup> This representation continues to the 12th century.<sup>153</sup> The storm god of Aleppo was at first known as Adad, but by the 16th century had merged with the Hurrian Teshub.<sup>154</sup> In the Hittite capital of Hattusha, a temple was dedicated to the “Storm God of Aleppo” already by the end of the 14th century.<sup>155</sup> Not only was Hattusha defined as the “city of the storm god of Aleppo,” but the festival of the thunder of the storm god of Hatti was attributed to the storm god of Aleppo.<sup>156</sup> Yet, the god “Haddad” continues to be worshipped in the Neo-Hittite kingdoms of the first millennium (e.g., Zenjirli has both a Haddad and a Teshub).<sup>157</sup> Thus in the vast region now called Al-Jazira, the same god was known as Haddad, Baal, or Teshub depending on the speaker.<sup>158</sup>

The one myth from the East Semitic world that is comparable to the dragon slaying is also the ancient Near East’s most famous, the *Enuma Elish*. The oldest copies we possess of the *Enuma Elish* are from 1000 BC; it was likely composed at the earliest in the 16th century.<sup>159</sup> Not earlier. We cannot refer to the *Enuma Elish* as the “Mesopotamian Creation Story,” as there are numerous creation stories much older and they look nothing like *Enuma Elish*, having no battle at all.<sup>160</sup>

The story is familiar. The monster Tiamat, who is also the Chaos Sea, threatens to destroy the gods, and no champion can be found. Marduk, the “young bull,”<sup>161</sup> offers to defeat her if he can become king of the gods. Wielding lightning (although he is not a storm god, in spite of “Addu” being one of the fifty names given him in

---

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>148</sup> Bonatz, “The Iconography of Religion in the Hittite,” 13.

<sup>149</sup> Schwemer, “The Storm-Gods of the Ancient Near East: Part I,” 136.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 160.

<sup>151</sup> Van Buren, *Symbols*, 35.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 68–69.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., *Symbols*, 67.

<sup>154</sup> Wilhelm, *The Hurrians*, 50.

<sup>155</sup> Alfonso Archi, “Hurrian Gods and the Festivals of the Hattian-Hittite Layer,” 158.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 161.

<sup>157</sup> Bonatz, “The Iconography of Religion in the Hittite,” 317.

<sup>158</sup> Schwemer, “The Storm-Gods of the Ancient Near East: Part I,” 165.

<sup>159</sup> Wayne Horowitz, *Mesopotamian Cosmic Geography*, 108.

<sup>160</sup> Svetlana Tamtik, “*Enuma Elish*: The Origins of its Creation,” 66–67.

<sup>161</sup> Philippe Talon, “*Enuma Elish* and the Transmission of Babylonian Cosmology to the West,” 266. The late Syrian author Proclus equates Marduk with Haddad; *Plato Latinus* 3.59–61, 95; Talon, “Transmission,” 274.

7.119),<sup>162</sup> he is victorious, and from her now-split carcass creates the world –just like Indra. When he finishes, he is declared king, and the gods build a temple-home for him, just as in the Baal Cycle. The subtext is kingship – both of Marduk, and the human king of Babylon, his installation as heir to the cosmic victory.

The myth was ritually rehearsed in the Akitu festival,<sup>163</sup> which although does not appear to be in origin a New Year festival,<sup>164</sup> became so in the Neo-Babylonian period.<sup>165</sup> In the full Neo-Babylonian Akitu, the defeat of Tiamat and creation of the world were ritually linked to the enthronement of the Babylonian king: as we said of Indra, the king overcoming his enemies is homologous to the god of kingship overcoming the monster.<sup>166</sup> This myth-and-ritual complex lasted into the Persian and Hellenistic periods.

In the bilingual gods' lists at Ugarit, the Akkadian parallel of Yamm is Tiamat.<sup>167</sup> Since no copy of the *Enuma Elish* predates the Baal Cycle, and the probable origin of the *Enuma Elish* no more than two hundred years prior to the Baal Cycle, and since the *Enuma Elish* looks so odd to anyone who has read the Sumerian and Akkadian creation myths, Thorkild Jacobsen once argued that the myth had travelled from northwest to southeast. The myth was Northwest Semitic (Amorite) or even Indo-European, and moved into Mesopotamia in the 2nd millennium (Friedrich Delitzsch thought it was the other way round).<sup>168</sup> It does seem unlikely that Mesopotamians would come up with a battle against the sea.<sup>169</sup>

Unfortunately things are much more complicated. First, there are major differences between the other myths and *Enuma Elish*.<sup>170</sup> Baal is not a creation myth; the battle takes place on a fully created earth. Baal, Teshub, and even Tarḫuna only defeat the dragon with great difficulty, while Marduk has no trouble. Tiamat is a danger to the entire universe; Yamm is not. And it is not clear Tiamat is a serpent or a dragon. Nowhere is she described as being such, although some iconography suggests she is serpentine (e.g., on Neo-Assyrian seal and the Ain es-Samiya goblet).

Secondly, some of the materials used by the author of the *Enuma Elish* are much older, such as the list of monsters Tiamat creates (1.141–46), which is found in

---

<sup>162</sup> Schwemer, "The Storm-Gods of the Ancient Near East: Part I," 127–28.

<sup>163</sup> Julye Bidmead, *The Akitu Festival*, 60. It was recited, even if not re-enacted as Jacobsen and Lambert believed. Piotr Michalowski, "Presence at Creation," 393.

<sup>164</sup> Mark E. Cohen, *Cultic Calendars of the Ancient Near East*, 417; Bidmead, *Akitu*, 41.

<sup>165</sup> Alasdair Livingstone, *Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works of Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars*, 156; Bidmead, *Akitu*, 42–43; Benjamin D. Sommer, "The Babylonian Akitu Festival: Rectifying the King of Renewing the Cosmos?," 85; Michalowski, "Presence at Creation," 391.

<sup>166</sup> Bidmead, *Akitu*, 83.

<sup>167</sup> P. Matthiae, "Some Notes on the Old Syrian Iconography of the God Yam," 177.

<sup>168</sup> J.-M. Durand, "Le mythologème du combat entre le dieu de l'orage et la mer en Mésopotamie," 50, 56–57, 60.

<sup>169</sup> Tamtik, "*Enuma Elish*: The Origins of its Creation," 75.

<sup>170</sup> Wayne Pitard, "The Combat Myth as a Succession Story at Ugarit."

two Sumerian texts (*Lugal-E* and *Angimdimma*; their destruction is attributed to Ningirsu or other deities).<sup>171</sup> Tiamat herself is known earlier, but only as a breeder of monsters.<sup>172</sup>

Third and most important are textual snippets that prefigure the narrative of *Enuma Elish*. A seven-headed *muš.SAG.imin* is killed by the god Ninurta, as is a *bašmu* snake dragon (*KAR 6; Return of Ninurta to Nippur*),<sup>173</sup> and some argue that Marduk in *Enuma Elish* is modelled on Ninurta.<sup>174</sup> On the other hand, the sea plays no role as the opponent of the gods in any of the Ninurta myths.<sup>175</sup>

A text from Mari in Syria dated to 1780 has, “Thus speaks Haddad, ‘I have brought you back to the throne of your father, and have given you the arms with which I fought against Tiamat’” (*ARMT A.1968, 2’*).<sup>176</sup> And even more interesting is a 2350 text from Eshnunna in central Mesopotamia: “Steward of Tiamat, fierce warrior, arise! Tishpak, steward of Tiamat, fierce one, arise!” (*MAD 1.192*).<sup>177</sup> Here Tiamat is neither evil nor chaotic. But Tishpak is interesting.<sup>178</sup> His iconic figure is the *Mušhuššu* dragon, at least from the 25th century.<sup>179</sup> Marduk later takes this symbol over from Tishpak.<sup>180</sup> Some argue that Marduk takes this totem because of *Enuma Elish*,<sup>181</sup> but the image is attached to Marduk as early as 1800 while not restricted to Tishpak and Marduk, and it does not look serpentine.<sup>182</sup>

To return to Tishpak, he is a storm god of Eshnunna.<sup>183</sup> In an Old Akkadian text,<sup>184</sup> Tishpak fights a different dragon the sea or “River” has created (*CT 13.33–34 obv. 6, 23; Eshnunna seal*).<sup>185</sup> The other gods cower in fear (*CT 13.33–34 obv. 14*). Tishpak’s weapon is the thunderbolt (rev. 5–7), and his reward for victory is kingship (obv. 19). The standard representation of Tishpak shows him with two snakes emerging from his shoulders, looking exactly like Zahhāk.

---

<sup>171</sup> Horowitz, *Mesopotamian Cosmic Geography*, 108.

<sup>172</sup> F. A. M. Wiggermann, *Mesopotamian Protective Spirits: The Ritual Texts*, 155.

<sup>173</sup> Wiggermann, *Mesopotamian Protective Spirits*, 162.

<sup>174</sup> Livingstone, *Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works*, 142.

<sup>175</sup> Schwemer, “The Storm-Gods of the Ancient Near East: Part II,” 26.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>177</sup> The text is too early to be considered “Amorite” as per Nick Wyatt, *Space and Time in the Religious Life of the Near East*, 99.

<sup>178</sup> Jacobsen initially thought his name connected with “Teshub,” but this is unlikely and Jacobsen later abandoned this idea. Theodore J. Lewis, “*CT 13.33–34 and Ezekiel 32: Lion-Dragon Myths*,” 28.

<sup>179</sup> F. A. M. Wiggermann, “Transtigridian Snake Gods,” 37.

<sup>180</sup> Béatrice André-Salvini, *Babylone*, no. 147.

<sup>181</sup> Salvini, *Babylone*, no. 159; Wiggermann, *Mesopotamian Protective Spirits*, 162, 169.

<sup>182</sup> Lewis, “*CT 13.33–34 and Ezekiel 32: Lion-Dragon Myths*,” 37.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>184</sup> On the dating, see F. A. M. Wiggermann, “Tishpak, his seal, and the dragon *mušhuššu*,” 123–26.

<sup>185</sup> Lewis, “*CT 13.33–34 and Ezekiel 32: Lion-Dragon Myths*,” 30.

Many creative scenarios have been proposed to explain the Mesopotamian myth. Some attribute the story to supposedly Indo-Aryan Kassites,<sup>186</sup> a people from the Zagros Mountains first mentioned in the 18th century BC who took over Babylon around 1500.<sup>187</sup> Aside from the fact that this is too early for the *Enuma Elish* and far too late for Tishpak, only a few Kassite words come from Indo-European (e.g., *Šuriišaš* “sun god”; *Maruttšaš* “divine Marut comrades of Indra”; equestrian terms such as *akriyaš* = *agriya-s* “(running) in front?”, *timiraš* “black?”, etc.<sup>188</sup> The Kassite language is unrelated to any other known language family.<sup>189</sup> It is minimally possible that a few Indo-European warriors came west with the art of horse-warfare and stimulated the hitherto benign Kassites to their sudden aggressiveness in the 17th century.<sup>190</sup>

Others (William Crooke, Buddha Prakash) have cited parallels to argue for influence *from* the Mesopotamia to the *Rig-Veda*.<sup>191</sup> All sorts of things are possible, as trade and, no doubt, influence runs from early contacts to the Greek rulers of India in the first century.

The dragon slaying in the *Rig-Veda*, *Avesta*, and Illuyanka are independent manifestations of the common Indo-European heritage. It is also clear *Shahname* is a genetic descendent of the *Avesta*, the Baal myth is directly dependent on the Kumarbi Cycle, and the *Enuma Elish* is indebted to earlier Mesopotamian myths. The relationship within the Near East of Hittite Illuyanka, Hurrian Kumarbi Cycle, Canaanite Baal myth, and Mesopotamian myths remains incredibly complex. The Baal Myth probably combines Indo-European, Hurrian, and Semitic elements; *Enuma Elish* perhaps has all these plus Sumero-Akkadian influence. *Shahname* could easily take on influence from these stories to its west.

The various dragon-slaying myths of the Near East influenced each other repeatedly and in all directions, each society building its own myth out of various components in a manner unique and particular, as Emily Lyle has described.<sup>192</sup> As the folklorist Slavica Rankovic says, “What we hoped to be a string (something one can actually follow) would immediately start splitting at its tip, shooting innumerable threads both horizontally synchronically ... and vertically/diachronically ... The texture of this network is hardly as regular as that of a fishing net or a sweater. ... There is no regularity in the way of sprouting, or the intervals in the progression

---

<sup>186</sup> Vannucci, *Ancient Gods*, 97; and most recently in the work of Hindutva theorist Subhash Kak: “On the Decipherment of the Indus Script,” 51–62; “Babylonian and Indian Astronomy: Early Connections,” 847–69; “Akhenaten, Surya, and the Rgveda,” 1–34.

<sup>187</sup> D. T. Potts, “Elamites and Kassites in the Persian Gulf,” 112–13.

<sup>188</sup> Witzel, “Linguistic Evidence,” 9; Vyacheslav V. Ivanov, “Comparative Notes on Hurro-Urartian, North Caucasian, and Indo-European,” 71.

<sup>189</sup> Potts, “Elamites,” 114; Van De Mierop, *History*, 173.

<sup>190</sup> George Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, 227.

<sup>191</sup> Lahiri, *Vedic Vritra*, 124–25, 207.

<sup>192</sup> Emily Lyle, “The Cosmological Theory of Myth,” 269.



of branching: the threads would not always depart from one another – some would occasionally merge into one and the same point, some would also have to loop back into the point from which they started.”<sup>193</sup>

As stated earlier, this is only halfway along the dragon’s elusive trail. Further research is leading northwest, to Zeus slaying Typhon also on Mount Hazzi/Zaphon, forward to St. George or El-Khidr, whom Muslim writers felt connected to Fereydūn, and south to the elusive dragon-slaying bull god known as Yahweh.

## References

- Amiet, Pierre. “Le dieu de l’orage dans l’iconographie des sceaux cylindres d’Ugarit.” In *Natural Phenomena: Their Meaning, Depiction, and Description in the Ancient Near East*, edited by Diederik J. W. Meijer, 5–17. Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde: nieuwe reeks, vol. 152. Amsterdam, North-Holland: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1992.
- André-Salvini, Béatrice. “Babylone.” In *Exhibition, Musée Du Louvre, Paris; Pergamon Museum, Berlin; British Museum, London*. Paris, 2008.
- Archi, Alfonso. “Hurrian Gods and the Festivals of the Hattian-Hittite Layer.” In *The Life and Times of Hattušili III and Tuḫaliya IV: Proceedings of a Symposium Held in Honour of J. de Roos, 12–13 December 2003, Leiden*, edited by Th. P. J. van den Hout, 147. Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2006.
- Bagheri, Mehri. “The Myth of the Fettered Dragon.” In *Dynamics of Tradition: Perspectives on Oral Poetry and Folk Belief; Essays in Honour of Anna-Leena Siikala on Her 60th Birthday 1st January 2003*, edited by L. Tarkka, 184–90. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2003.
- Beckman, Gary. “The Anatolian Myth of Illuyanka.” *Journal for the Ancient Near Eastern Society* 14 (1982): 11–25.
- . “Mythologie. A. II. Bei den Hethitern.” In *Reallexicon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie*, vol. 8. Berlin-Boston: De Gruyter, 1997: 564–72.
- . “The Religion of the Hittites.” *Biblical Archeologist* 52 (1989): 98–108.
- Bernabé, Albert. “La lucha contra el dragón en Anatolia y en Grecia: el viaje de un mito.” *Huelva Arqueológica* 19 (2004): 129–45.
- Bidmead, Julye. *The Akītu Festival: Religious Continuity and Royal Legitimation in Mesopotamia*. Gorgias Dissertations, Near Eastern Studies, vol. 2. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2004.
- Blam, Jean-François. “Fragment Hittite Bo 7247.” <http://antiquitatis-notae.univ-paris1.fr/blamfragka.pdf> [accessed 25 June 2005].
- Bonatz, Dominik. “The Iconography of Religion in the Hittite, Luwian, and Aramaean Kingdoms.” In *Iconography of Deities and Demons in the Ancient Near East*. Zürich: Universität Zürich, 2007. [Electronic Pre-Publication.] [http://www.religionswissenschaft.uzh.ch/idd/prepublications/e\\_idd\\_anatolia\\_north\\_syria.pdf](http://www.religionswissenschaft.uzh.ch/idd/prepublications/e_idd_anatolia_north_syria.pdf).
- Burkert, Walter. *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979.
- Burney, C. A. “Eastern Anatolia in the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age.” *Anatolian Studies* 8 (1958): 157–209.
- , and D. M. Lang. *People of the Hills: Ancient Ararat and Caucasus*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971.

---

<sup>193</sup> Slavica Ranković, “Who is Speaking in Traditional Texts?,” 298.

- Chakravarty, Uma. *Indra and Other Vedic Deities*. Contemporary Researches in Hindu Philosophy & Religion, vol. 8. New Delhi: D. K. Printworld, 1997.
- Cochrane, Ev. "Indra: A Case Study in Comparative Mythology." *Aeon* 2 (1991): 1–28.
- Cohen, Mark E. *Cultic Calendars of the Ancient Near East*. Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1993.
- Cornelius, Izak. *The Iconography of the Canaanite Gods Reshef and Ba'Al*. Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis, vol. 140. Fribourg: University Press Fribourg, 1994.
- Davidson, Olga M. *Poet and Hero in the Persian Book of Kings*. 2nd ed. Bibliotheca Iranica Intellectual Traditions, vol. 12. Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 2006.
- Dijkstra, Manfred. "The Myth of *Apši* 'The (Sea) Dragon' in the Hurrian Tradition." *Ugarit-Forschungen* 37 (2005): 315–28.
- Dolgopolsky, Aharon. *Nostratic Dictionary*. Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, 2008.
- Doniger, Wendy. *The Hindus*. New York: Penguin Press, 2009.
- Dumbrill, Richard J. *The Archaeomusicology of the Ancient Near East*. Victoria, BC: Trafford Publishing, 2003.
- Dumont, P.-E. "Indo-Aryan Names from Mitanni, Nuzi, and Syrian Documents." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 67 (1947): 251–53.
- Durand, J.-M. "Le mythe du combat entre le dieu de l'orage et la mer en Mésopotamie." *Mari* 7 (1993): 41–61.
- Düring, Bleda S. *The Prehistory of Asia Minor*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Esse, D. and P. K. Hopke. "Levantine Trade in the Early Bronze Age." In *Proceedings of the 24th International Archaeometry Symposium*, edited by S. J. Olin and M. J. Blackman, 327–39. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1986.
- Ferdowsi, Abolqasem. *Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings*. Translated by Dick Davis. New York; London: Penguin, 2006.
- Fox, Robin Lane. *Traveling Heroes in the Epic Age of Homer*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009.
- Freu, Jacques. *Histoire du Mitanni*. Collection Kubaba, Série Antiquité, vol. 3. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003.
- Gaster, T. H. *Thespis: Ritual, Myth and Drama in the Ancient and Near East, Revised Ed.* New York: Doubleday, 1961.
- Gonda, J. *The Indra Hymns of the Rgveda*. Orientalia Rheno-Traiectina, vol. 36. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1989.
- Gonnet, Hatice. "La fête hittite du printemps." *Revue de la Société des élèves, anciens élèves et amis de la Section des Sciences religieuses de l'EPHE V<sup>e</sup> Section 2* (1989): 14–20.
- Gupta, Shanti S. *A Study of the God Indra*. Concepts in Communication Informatics and Librarianship, vol. 85. New Delhi: Krishna Publisher, 2001.
- Gurney, O. R. *The Hittites*. London: Penguin Books, 1990.
- Haas, Volkert. *Hethitische Berggötter und Hurritische Steindämonen: Riten, Kulte und Mythen*. Eine Einführung in die Altkeinasiatischen Religiösen Vorstellungen, vol. 10. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1982.
- Hawkins, John David. "What Does the Hittite Storm-God Hold?" In *Natural Phenomena: their Meaning, Depiction and Description in the Ancient Near East*, edited by Diederik J. W. Meijer, 53–82. Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde: nieuwe reeks, vol. 152. Amsterdam, North-Holland: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1992.
- Hennessy, J. B. *The Foreign Relations of Palestine during the Early Bronze Age*. London: Colt Archaeological Institute Publications, 1967.
- Hodgson, Raymond. "Indra and Vrtra: A Study of Continuity and Change in the Indian Religious Tradition." Ph.D., McMaster University, 1975.

- Hoffner, Harry A. "A Brief Commentary on the Hittite Illuyanka Myth (CTH 321)." In *Studies Presented to Robert D. Biggs*, edited by Martha T. Roth, Walter Farber, Matthew W. Stolper, and Paula von Bechtolsheim, 119–29. Chicago: Oriental Institute, 2007.
- Horowitz, Wayne. *Mesopotamian Cosmic Geography*. Mesopotamian Civilizations 8. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1998.
- Houwink ten Cate, Ph. H. J. "The Hittite Storm God: His Role and His Rule According to Hittite Cuneiform Sources." In *Natural Phenomena: Their Meaning, Depiction, and Description in the Ancient Near East*, edited by Diederik J. W. Meijer, 83–148. *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde: nieuwe reeks*, vol. 152. Amsterdam, North-Holland: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1992.
- Hutter, Manfred. "Aspects of Luwian Religion." In *The Luwians*, edited by H. Craig Melchert, 211–80. *Handbuch der Orientalistik. 1, Der Nahe und Mittlere Osten*, Bd. 68. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
- Ivanov, Vyacheslav V. "Comparative Notes on Hurro-Urartian, North Caucasian, and Indo-European." *Journal of Indo-European Studies* 1 (1996): 147–264.
- Kak, Subhash. "Akhenaten, Surya, and the Rgveda." In *The Golden Chain*, edited by G. C. Pande, 1–34. New Delhi: CSC, 2005.
- . "Babylonian and Indian Astronomy: Early Connections." In *History of Science, Philosophy & Culture in Indian Civilization*, edited by G. C. Pande. Vol. 1, part 4, 847–69. New Delhi: CSC, 2005.
- . "On the Decipherment of the Indus Script." *Indian Journal of the History of Science* 22 (1987): 51–62.
- Katz, Joshua T. "How to Be a Dragon in Indo-European: Hittite Illuyankaš and its Linguistic and Cultural Congeners in Latin, Greek, and Germanic." In *Mir Curad. Studies in Honor of Calvert Watkins*, edited by J. Jasanoff, H. C. Melchert, and Lo Oliver, 317–34. Innsbruck: Institut für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Innsbruck, 1998.
- Kellerman, Galina. "Toward the Further Interpretation of the Purulli Festival." *Slavica Hierosolymitana* 5–6 (1981): 35–46.
- Komoróczy, G. "Zu den Anfängen der Mythographie im Alten Orient." *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 19 (1971): 179–99.
- Lahiri, Ajoy Kumar. *Vedic Vṛta*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1984.
- Lamb, W. "The Culture of North-East Anatolia and its Neighbours." *Anatolian Studies* 4 (1954): 21–32.
- Lewis, Theodore J. "CT 13.33-34 and Ezekiel 32: Lion-Dragon Myths." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 116, no. 1 (1996): 28–47.
- Livingstone, Alasdair. *Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works of Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1986.
- Malandra, William W. *An Introduction to Ancient Iranian Religion*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983.
- Matthiae, P. "Some Notes on the Old Syrian Iconography of the God Yam." In *Natural Phenomena: Their Meaning, Depiction and Description in the Ancient Near East*, edited by Diederik J. W. Meijer, 169–92. *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde: nieuwe reeks*, vol. 152. Amsterdam, North-Holland: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1992.
- Mellaart, James. *The Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Ages in the Near East and Anatolia*. Beirut: Khayats, 1966.
- Michalowski, Piotr. "Presence at Creation." In *Lingering Over Words*, edited by Tzvi Abusch, John Huehnergard, and Piotr Steinkeller, 381–96. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990.

- Mohanty, Muralidhar. *Indra in Indian Mythology*. Kolkata: Punthi Pustak, 2008.
- Omidisalar, Mahmoud. "The Dragon Fight in the National Persian Epics." *International Review of Psychoanalysis* 14 (1987): 343–56.
- Petersen, Allan R. "The Royal God: Enthronement Festivals in Ancient Israel and Ugarit?" *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplements*, vol. 259. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.
- Popko, Maciej. *Religions of Asia Minor*. Warsaw: Academic Publishers Dialog, 1995.
- Potts, D. T. "Elamites and Kassites in the Persian Gulf." *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 65, (2006): 111–19.
- Ranković, Slavica. "Who is Speaking in Traditional Texts? On the Distributed Author of the Sagas of Icelanders and Serbian Epic Poetry." *New Literary History* 38, no. 2 (2007): 293–307.
- Robinson, B. W. *The Persian Book of Kings*. London: Routledge, 2002.
- Roux, George. *Ancient Iraq*. 2nd revised ed. Penguin, 1980.
- Sagona, Antonio and Paul Zimansky. *Ancient Turkey*. New York: Routledge, 2009.
- Schloen, J. David, and Amir S. Fink. "New Excavations at Zincirli Höyük in Turkey (Ancient Sam'al) and the Discovery of an Inscribed Mortuary Stele." *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* (2009): 1–13.
- Schwemer, Daniel. "The Storm-Gods of the Ancient Near East: Summary, Synthesis, Recent Studies, Part I." *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 7, no. 2 (2007): 121–68.
- . "The Storm-Gods of the Ancient Near East: Summary, Synthesis, Recent Studies, Part II." *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 8, no. 1 (2008): 1–44.
- Söhnen-Thieme, Renate. "On the Vrtra Myth in the Rgveda: A Question of Stratification." In *Philologica et Linguistica*, edited by M. G. Schmidt, and W. Bisang, 302–15. Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2001.
- Sommer, Benjamin D. "The Babylonian Akitu Festival: Rectifying the King of Renewing the Cosmos?" *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 27 (2000): 81–95.
- Tafazzoli, Ahmad. "Ferēdū." In *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, 1999.
- Talon, Philippe. "Enuma Elish and the Transmission of Babylonian Cosmology to the West." In *Mythology and Mythologies : Methodological Approaches to Intercultural Influences*. Melammu Symposia, vol. II, edited by R. M. Whiting. Helsinki, 2001.
- Tamtik, Svetlana. "Enuma Elish: The Origins of its Creation." *Studia Antiqua* 5, no. 1 (2007): 65–76.
- Taracha, Piotra. *Religions of Second Millennium Anatolia*. Dresdner Beiträge zur Hethitologie 27. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2009.
- Todd, I. A. "Anatolia and the Khirbet Kerak Problem." In *Orient and Occident: Essays Presented to Cyrus H. Gordon on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, edited by Harry A. Hoffner, 181–206. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1973.
- van Binsbergen, Wim. "Rupture and Fusion in the Approach to Myth." *Religion Compass* 3 (2009): 1–34.
- Van Buren, E. Douglas. *Symbols of the Gods in Mesopotamian Art*. Analecta Orientalia, 23. Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1945.
- Van De Mieroop, Marc. *A History of the Ancient Near East*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2007.
- Vannucci, Marta. *Ancient Gods and Heroes of East and West*. New Delhi: D. K. Printworld Ltd., 2007.
- Watkins, Calvert. *How to Kill a Dragon: Aspects of Indo-European Poetics*. Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- West, M. L. *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Wiggermann, F. A. M. *Mesopotamian Protective Spirits: The Ritual Texts*. Cuneiform Monographs 1. Leiden: Brill Academic, 1992.

- . “Tišpak, His Seal, and the Dragon Mušḫuššu.” In *To the Euphrates and Beyond*, edited by O. M. C. H. Haex, H. Curvers, and P. M. M. G. Akkermans, 117–33. Rotterdam: A. A. Balkema, 1989.
- . “Transtigridian Snake Gods.” In *Sumerian Gods and their Representations*, edited by I. L. Finkel and M. J. Geller, 33–55. Cuneiform Monographs, vol. 7. Groningen: STYX, 1997.
- Wilhelm, Gernot. *The Hurrians*. Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1989.
- . “The Kingdom of Mitanni in Second-Millennium Upper Mesopotamia.” In *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, Vol. 1. Edited by Jack Sasson, 1243–54. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995.
- Witzel, Michael. “Autochthonous Aryans? The Evidence from Old Indian and Iranian Texts.” *Electric Journal of Vedic Studies* 7–3 (2001): 1–93.
- . “Comparison and Reconstruction: Language and Mythology.” *Mother Tongue* 6 (2001).
- . “Linguistic Evidence for Cultural Exchange in Prehistoric Western Central Asia.” *Sino-Platonic Papers* 129 (December, 2003): 48–70.
- . “Slaying the Dragon across Eurasia.” In *In Hot Pursuit of Language in Prehistory: Essays in the four fields of anthropology. In honor of Harold Crane Fleming*, edited by John D. Bengtson, 263–86. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2008.
- Wyatt, Nick. *The Mythic Mind: Essays on Cosmology and Religion in Ugaritic and Old Testament Literature*. Bibleworld, Vol. 8. London: Equinox, 2005.
- . “Religion in Ancient Ugarit.” In *Handbook of Ancient Religions*, edited by John R. Hinnells, 105–60. Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- . “What has Ugarit to do with Jerusalem?” *Studies in World Christianity* (2002): 138–60.