

**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR
COMPARATIVE MYTHOLOGY
&
TOHOKU UNIVERSITY, SENDAI, JAPAN**

**TWELFTH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON
COMPARATIVE MYTHOLOGY**



**MYTHS OF THE EARTH AND HUMANKIND:
ECOLOGY AND THE END OF THE WORLD**

PROGRAM AND ABSTRACTS

**June 1-4, 2018
Tohoku University**

**MAIN VENUE:
TOKYO ELECTRON HOUSE OF CREATIVITY
3F LECTURE THEATER
2-1-1 KATAHIRA, AOBACHU,
SENDAI 980-8577**

**OPENING VENUE:
KOMYOJI TEMPLE
AOBAMACHI 3-1,
AOBA-KU,
SENDAI 981-0916**

PROGRAM

FRIDAY, JUNE 1

VENUE: KOMYOJI TEMPLE

09:00 – 09:30 PARTICIPANTS REGISTRATION

09:30 – 10:00 OPENING ADDRESSES

HITOSHI YAMADA
Tohoku University, Japan

MICHAEL WITZEL
Harvard University, USA; IACM

FRIDAY MORNING SESSION: NEW PERSPECTIVES IN COMPARATIVE MYTHOLOGY

CHAIR: HITOSHI YAMADA

10:00 – 10:30 YURI BEREZKIN
*Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography,
St. Petersburg, Russia*
THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN HOMELAND OF THE COSMOLOGIES

10:30 – 11:00 MICHAEL WITZEL
Harvard University, USA
A DIFFERENT VERSION OF THE FLOOD MYTH

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee Break

11:30 – 12:00 STEVE FARMER
The Systems Biology Group, Palo Alto, California, USA
MYTHS OF GLOBAL DESTRUCTION IN THE EARLY ANTHROPOCENE:
NEUROBIOLOGICAL, HISTORICAL, AND ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

12:00 – 12:30 MAKOTO YOKOMICHI
Kyoto Prefectural University, Japan
COMPARATIVE MYTHOLOGY OF THE BROTHERS GRIMM AND THEIR
SUCCESSORS

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch Break

FRIDAY AFTERNOON SESSION: MYTHOLOGY OF THE AMERICAS AND EAST & SOUTH EAST ASIA

CHAIR: YURI BEREZKIN

VENUE: KOMYOJI TEMPLE

14:00 – 14:30 MARTÍN CUITZEO DOMÍNGUEZ NUÑEZ
Center for Research and Advanced Studies in Social Anthropology (CIESAS), Mexico City, Mexico
THE FIRE OF SKY. A MYTH FROM TWO INDIGENOUS GROUPS IN
NORTHWEST MEXICO

14:30 – 15:00 LUCIE VINŠOVÁ
Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic
HUMANS AS KEEPERS OF THE UNIVERSE: WATER CYCLE IN NATIVE
COLOMBIAN COSMOLOGY

15:00 – 15:30 ŠTĚPÁN KUCHLEI
Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic
TONLÉ SAP: THE BURNING HEART OF CAMBODIA. ECOLOGY, NATURAL
PROCESSES AND MYTHOLOGY

15:30 – 16:00 Coffee Break

16:00 – 16:30 BONG-YOUL KIM
Dongguk University, Gyeongju, South Korea
THE NARRATIVES OF ODYSSEUS AND SEOK TALHAE. A STUDY IN
MARITIME CULTURE AND THE DIALECTIC OF ENLIGHTENMENT: *ON THE
ORIGIN OF RATIONALITY*

16:30 – 17:00 MICHAL SCHWARZ
Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic
MOUNTAINS AND MONSOONS: DIFFICULT WAYS TO HARMONIZE THE
SPIRITS

17:00 – 17:30 EMMA ZHANG
Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong
THE MYTH OF NEZHA AND THE ULTRA-STABLE CENTRALIZED
HIERARCHICAL POLITICAL ORDER IN CHINA

18:30 – Opening Reception and Dinner

Bonten Gyoko Restaurant
Fromone 2F,
5-38 Showamachi,
Aoba-ku, Sendai, 981-0913

SATURDAY, JUNE 2

VENUE (FOR ALL FOLLOWING SESSIONS): TOKYO ELECTRON HOUSE OF CREATIVITY, 3F

SATURDAY MORNING SESSION: MYTHOLOGY AND MODERNITY

CHAIR: KAZUO MATSUMURA

09:00 – 09:30 SACHIE KIYOKAWA
Kobe University, Japan
AN INFLUENCE OF “NORTHERN MYTHOLOGY” ON VICTORIAN BRITAIN

09:30 – 10:00 SEÁN MARTIN
Edinburgh Napier University, UK
FACING REBIRTH: APOCALYPTIC THEMES IN THE FICTION OF DAVID
LINDSAY

10:00 – 10:30 LOUISE MILNE
University of Edinburgh & Edinburgh Napier University, UK
APOCALYPTIC MYTH AND DREAMS IN THE FILMS OF ANDREI TARKOVSKY

10:30 – 11:00 *Coffee Break*

11:00 – 11:30 ALEKSANDAR BOŠKOVIĆ
Institute of Social Sciences & University of Belgrade, Serbia
CLASSIC MAYA MYTHS AND POLITICS: CREATION AND DESTRUCTION OF
THE WORLD

11:30 – 12:00 MARCIN LISIECKI
Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń, Poland
THE POWER OF UNBELIEVABLE STORIES. MOTIFS OF THE END OF THE
WORLD AND HUMAN EXTINCTION IN POLISH URBAN LEGENDS

12:00 – 12:30 TAKESHI KIMURA
University of Tsukuba, Japan
MYTHS OF AUTOMATA: FROM TALOS, PYGMALION, GOLEM TO ROBOT

12:30 – 14:30 Lunch Break
Business Lunch for IACM Board of Directors
and Conference Organizers

SATURDAY AFTERNOON SESSION: INDO-EUROPEAN MYTHOLOGIES I
CHAIR: BORIS OGUIBÉNINE

14:30 – 15:00 VÁCLAV BLAŽEK & MICHAL SCHWARZ
Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic
DIVINE BEINGS CONNECTED WITH EARTH IN THE INDO-EUROPEAN
TRADITIONS AND BEYOND

15:00 – 15:30 JOSEPH HARRIS
Harvard University, USA
SOME USES OF APOCALYPSE: INSTRUMENTALIZING RAGNARÖK

15:30 – 16:00 Coffee Break

16:00 – 16:30 KAZUO MATSUMURA
Wako University, Tokyo, Japan
COMPARATIVE EPIC LITERATURE

16:30 – 17:00 LISA FUJIWARA
University of Tokyo, Japan
ST. AUGUSTINE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE STYX IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

SUNDAY, JUNE 3

SUNDAY MORNING SESSION: MYTHOLOGY OF JAPAN AND ANCIENT EGYPT

CHAIR: STEVE FARMER

- 09:00 – 09:30** KOKO NANGO
Kobe University, Japan
THE METAMORPHOSIS OF “BATEREN” AND “KIRISITAN”
- 09:30 – 10:00** HITOSHI YAMADA
Tohoku University, Sendai, Japan
CRAB AND SERPENT: TOHOKU LEGENDS OF FLOOD AND EARTHQUAKE IN
COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE
- 10:00 – 10:30** DAVID WEIß
Rikkyō University, Tokyo, Japan
WU TAIBO: A CONFUCIAN JAPANESE FOUNDING MYTH

10:30 – 11:00 *Coffee Break*

- 11:00 – 11:30** DAVID T. BIALOCK
University of Southern California, USA
A SERPENTINE STORY: READING A JAPANESE MYTH AT EARTH
MAGNITUDE
- 11:30 – 12:00** KEIKO TAZAWA
The Ancient Orient Museum, Tokyo, Japan
WATER IN THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN MYTHS

12:00 – 13:30 *Lunch Break*

SUNDAY AFTERNOON SESSION: INDO-EUROPEAN MYTHOLOGIES II: SOUTH ASIA

CHAIR: MICHAEL WITZEL

- 13:30 – 14:00** SIGNE COHEN
University of Missouri, USA
END GAMES: DICE, BOARD GAMES, AND THE APOCALYPSE IN INDO-
EUROPEAN MYTHOLOGY

- 14:00 – 14:30** NATALIYA YANCHEVSKAYA
Princeton University, USA
AT THE END OF TIMES
- 14:30 – 15:00** JOANNA JUREWICZ
University of Warsaw, Poland
DEATH, MAHABHARATA, AND STORYTELLING
- 15:00 – 15:30** **Coffee Break**
- 15:30 – 16:00** BORIS OGUIBÉNINE
University of Strasbourg, France
EARTH IN THE RIGVEDA
- 16:00 – 16:30** EIJI RŌ DŌYAMA
Osaka University, Japan
HOW TO BE A HERO IN ANCIENT INDIA: UNUSUAL BIRTH AND
ABANDONMENT OF CHILDREN
- 16:30 – 17:00** SUNIL PARAB
*Joseph Campbell Foundation & Shivalik Institute of Ayurveda and
Research & Sindhu Veda Research Institute, Dehradun,
Uttarakhand, India*
LITERARY AND OBSERVATIONAL STUDY ON DISEASE AS A MEDIUM FOR
END OF THE WORLD BY GODS
- 17:00 – 17:20** POSTERS DISCUSSION SESSION:
- KHATUNA TAVDGIRIDZE
Georgian American University, Tbilisi, Georgia
GEORGIAN MYTHIC ESCHATOLOGICAL CYCLES AND THEIR WORLD
PARALLELS
- HASMİK HMAYAKYAN
Institute of Oriental Studies, Yerevan, Armenia
ON THE BIBLICAL IDENTIFICATION OF DYONISOS–SPANDARAMET

MONDAY, JUNE 4

MONDAY MORNING SESSION: HUNGARIAN, FINNISH, BALTIC, AND SLAVIC MYTHOLOGY

CHAIR: MARCIN LISIECKI

- 09:00 – 09:30** ATTILA MÁTÉFFY
University of Bonn, Germany
THE EMERGENCE OF OTHER BEINGS INSTEAD OF HUMANKIND AT THE
END OF THE WORLD: SOME HUNGARIAN ESCHATOLOGICAL LEGENDS AND
FRAGMENTS CORRESPONDING WITH THE MONGOLIAN BUDDHIST
CONCEPTS
- 09:30 – 10:00** MARE KÕIVA
Estonian Literary Museum, Folklore Department, Tartu, Estonia
MER-PEOPLE IN BALTIC-FINNIC TRADITION
- 10:00 – 10:30** IRINA SEDAKOVA
Institute of Slavic Studies, Moscow, Russia
MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURES OF TRANSITION AND BEGINNING
- 10:30 – 11:00** MARINA VALENTSOVA
Institute of Slavic Studies, Moscow, Russia
CHARMING HAIL AWAY IN SLAVIC TRADITIONS
- 11:00 – 11:30** EMILIA CHALANDON
Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan
TWO STORIES FROM JAPANESE MYTHOLOGY RETOLD
- 11:30 – 12:00** GENERAL DISCUSSION & CONCLUDING REMARKS

13:00 – Excursion to the coastal sites
A bus from the Main Venue

18:00 – Conference Closing Dinner
Restaurant Hagi
Katahira Kitamon Kaikan Building 2F,
Ichibancho 1-14-8, Aoba-ku,
Sendai 980-0811

ABSTRACTS

THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN HOMELAND OF THE COSMOLOGIES

YURI BEREZKIN

*Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography,
St. Petersburg, Russia*

The systematic processing of the data on world mythology and folklore (ca. 55,000 texts, ca. 950 traditions and ca. 2500 motifs, i.e. narrative episodes and descriptions of mythological ideas in our database now) demonstrates that the emergence of particular ideas and stories was not a uniform process stimulated by patterns intrinsic to human mind or by ecological conditions. To a large extent, it was a creative development promoted by factors that were regionally specific and historically chance (or at least unknown to us). The world spread of particular mythological themes and topics that explain the origin of the death, fire, human biological and social characteristics, plants, animals, earth, objects of the night sky, etc. is highly uneven. The major differences are among the sub-Saharan Africa, the continental Eurasia (with North Africa) and the Indo-Pacific (or circum-Pacific) region. A vast majority of cosmological tales are concentrated inside the Greater Southeast Asia (from the Middle India to Southern China and formerly probably to Huang He basin). The American parallels for many of such tales provide an argument in favor of their emergence 17-20,000 B.P. at least. This area was the homeland of the world most complex and elaborated cosmological cycle that included the annihilation of the primeval world by the deluge and the subsequent emergence of the new world. The mapping of the recorded variants and the comparison of details that narratives contain suggest that the transcontinental spread of many other most important myths related to the origin of the world and the people (like the earth-diver, the swan-maiden, the animals that argue the length of the seasons, etc.) also had begun from the Indo-Pacific region. The early (before 5000-6000 B.P.) Western Eurasian cosmologies can hardly be reconstructed but nothing suggests that they were a match to the Indo-Pacific ones.

This paper is sponsored by Russian Science Foundation, grant no. 18-18-00361

A SERPENTINE STORY: READING A JAPANESE MYTH AT EARTH MAGNITUDE

DAVID T. BIALOCK

University of Southern California, USA

In an entry dated to the year 1179, a variant of the medieval Japanese epic *The Tale of the Heike* (*Heike monogatari*) recorded the rumble of a powerful earthquake whose seismic ripples were felt throughout the length and breadth of Japan. Taking this as my starting point, this paper explores how a period of natural disasters and war gave rise to a new form of geomorphic history centered on *Kojiki*'s ancient chthonic myth of the serpent (*orochi*). Performed by blind biwa reciters attuned to the chthonic energies of serpent and dragon deities, this new geomorphic history was a cultural response to a series of converging natural, climatic, and human disasters in Japan's early medieval period (late 12th to 14th century). After following its twists and turns in the *Heike*, the paper then carries its analysis of this ancient serpentine myth, reworked over the centuries, into the modern period. Here, I explore how the contemporary writer Ishimure Michiko reimagines this same *Heike* centered myth in her novel *Lake of Heaven* (*Tenko*). Drawing on a rich body of folklore and myth, including the chthonic myth of the serpent and the earthly resonance of biwa music, Ishimure's creative rewriting of ancient mythic lore addresses the destruction of watersheds and the environment. Attuned to the geological, she invites her readers to rethink local Japanese myths at earth magnitude in a time of imminent global climate catastrophe.

DIVINE BEINGS CONNECTED WITH EARTH IN INDO-EUROPEAN TRADITIONS AND BEYOND

VÁCLAV BLAŽEK & MICHAL SCHWARZ
Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic

A purpose of the present contribution is to summarize the divine names connected with "earth" in various Indo-European traditions to determine their etymologies and try to establish if this theonym was used already in the protolanguage. In the first approximation the following theonyms were studied:

Iranian

Young Avestan *Zam-* [*Yasna* 16.6; 42.3; *Sih rōčak* 1.28; 2.28].

Anatolian

Hittite *tēkan*, obl. *tagn^o* n. "Earth [KBo xvii 1 + (StBoT 8) Rs. III 1; Bo 6679, 8].

Greek

Greek Γαῖα [*Il.*+Hesychius], Doric γαῖᾱ / Γῆ [*Il.*], Doric γᾱ, Cypriotic ζᾱ, Mycenaean *ka-ja* [PY] /*gaiās*/, *ma-ka* [KN+TH] /*Mā(trei)-Gāi*/.

Greek Δημήτηρ [*Il.*], Doric, Arcadian, Boeotic Δαμάτηρ, Aeolic Δωμάτηρ, Thessalic Δαμμάτερι, ?Mycenaean *da-ma-te* [PY].

Greek χθών, gen. χθονός, f. "earth" [*Od.* 8.375, cf. 10.149, *Il.*14.349], "Earth", as a goddess, [Aeschylus, *Prometheus vincetus* 207; *Id.*, *Eumenides* 6].

Italic

Latin *tellūs*, *-ūris*, f. "earth, ground, land; Earth" [Varro]

Latin *Tellūmo*, *-ōnis*, m., 'a god among the Romans, the personified productive power of the earth', corresponding to *Tellus* as a goddess [Varr. ap. *Aug. Civ. Dei*, 7, 23 *fin*].

Celtic

Middle Welsh *Dôn* – the ancestress of three personages from *Math fab Mathonwy* (alternatively, Fourth Branch of Mabinogi), namely Arianrhod, Gilfaethwy, Gwydion. In the tale *Culhwch ac Olwen*, she is the mother of the supernatural ploughman Amaethon mab Don and smith Gouannon mab Don.

Germanic

Old Icelandic *Jörð* "Earth, mother of Thor" [Poetic Edda: *Lokasenna* 58; *Thrymskvida* 1; Prose Edda: *Gylfaginning* 9]

Baltic

Zemes māte – Latvian goddess ‘Mother of Earth’ (in *dainas*).

***Žemepatis** – Lithuanian deity ‘Lord of the Earth’ [Lutheran catechism by Martinus Mosvidius, Königsberg 1547].

***Žemina** – Lithuanian ‘goddess of earth’ [Jan Łasicki: *De Diis Sarmatarum caeterorumque Sarmatarum et falsorum Christianorum*; Daukša’s Žemaitic translation of Ledesma’s catechism, printed in 1595].

Tocharian

Tocharian B *keṃ-ñäkte* "earth-goddess" (corresponding to Old Uyghur *yer t(ä)ṅri hatuni*) is really known from the Tocharian B text PK AS 13B.

We can conclude that there probably was a common theonym "Earth" in Proto-Indo-European, appearing as various derivatives of **dʰǵʰem-* "earth" in the daughter branches.

CLASSIC MAYA MYTHS AND POLITICS: CREATION AND DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD

ALEKSANDAR BOŠKOVIĆ

University of Belgrade & Institute of Social Sciences, Belgrade, Serbia

It is widely believed that ancient Mayan (and Mesoamerican in general) ideologies and worldviews were very much influenced by the idea of periodic creation and destruction of the world. The reason for this is that we have many Colonial-era Mexican sources that describe myths of the “Ages of the World.” Similar stories are also characteristic for other Native American peoples, like the Navaho, Hopi, etc. The main goal of the present paper is to contextualize and problematize the sources and the assumptions that led to such beliefs. The extent to which Colonial (and later) sources could and should be used in explaining cultures that flourished before the European contact was already problematized by scholars like Wigberto Jiménez Moreno and others, with the debates about the validity of the “direct historical approach.” The leading Maya art historian of the second half of the 20th century, George Kubler, proposed instead what he called (following Renaissance art historian Erwin Panofsky) an “intrinsic approach” – looking at images in the context where they originated, and trying to interpret them from that very same context. Panofsky insisted on the understanding of the particular imagery (iconology) as the basis of eventual understanding of its meaning in the wider context (iconography): “...the correct identification of motifs is the prerequisite of their correct iconographical analysis, so is the correct analysis of images, stories and allegories the

prerequisite of their correct iconological interpretation” (1955: 32). The decipherment of ancient texts and fuller understanding of ancient Maya political history that followed in the last couple of decades supports this view. Furthermore, there is now also a rich body of material that points to a complexity that had to do with creation myths permeating different aspects of the Classic Maya life – and also having some very practical political (and historical) consequences.

**END GAMES:
DICE, BOARD GAMES, AND THE APOCALYPSE
IN INDO-EUROPEAN MYTHOLOGY**

SIGNE COHEN
University of Missouri, USA

While Albert Einstein famously claimed that God does not play dice, many Indo-European myths suggest otherwise. Indo-European gods, goddesses, mythical kings, and heroes do play both dice and other games, with the fate of the universe at stake. In this paper, I will analyze Vedic and later Sanskrit texts about dice play, kingship, and the ages of the world, Old Norse texts about board games, dice, kings, and Ragnarök, and Celtic sources relating board games to kingship, decay and cosmic regeneration. I will argue that games, divinity, kingship, and apocalypse are so intertwined in Indo-European myths that we may postulate that these connections are proto-Indo-European in origin.

**THE FIRE OF SKY.
A MYTH FROM TWO INDIGENOUS GROUPS IN
NORTHWEST MEXICO**

MARTÍN CUITZEO DOMÍNGUEZ NUÑEZ
*Center for Research and Advanced Studies in Social Anthropology (CIESAS),
Mexico City, Mexico*

Pa Ipai and Koal are two indigenous groups which live in Baja California, in North Mexico, near the border with the U.S.A. The languages spoken by this two societies are in danger of disappear. In the past they were semi-nomadic hunther-gather but today they are integrated into the globalization process.

Here I present a myth which tells the story about the fire of the sky and its relation with the end of the world, this story is also related with the time concept of the Pa Ipai and Koal people. Finally I analyze this myth through an approach which combines anthropology with semiotics trying to understand the connection between its symbolism and the Pa Ipai and Koal cultural context.

HOW TO BE A HERO IN ANCIENT INDIA: UNUSUAL BIRTH AND ABANDONMENT OF CHILDREN

EIJIRŌ DŌYAMA
Osaka University, Japan

Miraculous life stories are characteristic of heroes in numerous myths worldwide. They typically feature motifs such as an unusual conception (e.g., by god-human intermarriage, parthenogenesis), an unusual delivery (e.g., from the mother's side, from an egg), abandonment after birth (e.g., in a river, on a mountain), being raised by a non-human (e.g., by an animal), slaying a monster (e.g., dragon, serpent), and so on. But it differs from culture to culture how many and which trials an individual must face with before he or she is called a hero. Two of the aforementioned motifs represent the two characteristic components of the heroic myth in ancient India: unusual birth or conception, and abandonment of newborn children, which occur separately in most cases. In this paper, I investigate how these two motifs are expressed in the oldest Indian texts, the so-called Vedic texts, as well as in the later, better-known literature such as the Mahābhārata and Purāṇas. Close observation reveals certain patterns in Indian mythology in the way each motif appears. For instance, many heroes can speak when they are still in the womb as an embryo or fetus, and a newborn child is almost always abandoned by his or her biological mother (often a goddess). By analyzing these and other characteristic patterns in terms of mythological symbolism, I illustrate what ancient Indians thought heroes were like and what they thought the requirements were for a child to be a hero. Finally, I suggest possible interpretations of the sociological and psychological backgrounds for such patterns.

MYTHS OF GLOBAL DESTRUCTION IN THE EARLY ANTHROPOCENE: NEUROBIOLOGICAL, HISTORICAL, AND ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

STEVE FARMER

The Systems Biology Group, Palo Alto, CA, USA

The term 'anthropocene' was popularized in 2000 by Paul J. Crutzen, who won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1995 for studies of human impacts on the ozone layer and climate change. Crutzen eventually generalized the concept of the anthropocene to describe geological periods in which human activity is a dominant force in remodeling the planet, accompanied by large-scale extinctions of life at every scale, from microbes to giant land and sea mammals.¹ Crutzen here was expanding on themes first expressed in George Perkins Marsh's prescient 1864 book, *Man and Nature*. The book was the first extended study that claimed that every side of the planet was being irreversibly transformed by human activity.²

The concept of the anthropocene in Crutzen's work was initially applied only to recent industrial eras, in which human disruptions of planetary ecosystems have become too obvious to be ignored. But in the last decade increasing attention has also been paid by researchers to large-scale disruptions of planetary ecology from at least the start of the Holocene, roughly 12,000 years ago. Recent papers on this topic have included discussions of mass extinctions of large earth mammals at the start of the Holocene and accelerated desertification in early agricultural societies, evident in the desert urban ruins seen in vast extents of Africa, much of the Middle East, Iran, Anatolia, Central Asia, north India, and significant portions of North and Middle America.³

The enormous extent of human-driven ecological disasters in the early Holocene cautions us against romantically exaggerating the ecological sophistication of premodern peoples. But other evidence, collected over many decades by the paleontologist Charles M. Peters and others, also suggests that in some situations premodern cultures fostered responsible use even of

¹ Paul J. Crutzen, "Geology of Mankind," *Nature* 459 (2002): 3.

² George Perkins Marsh, *Man and Nature*, 1864.

³See, e.g., Yannick Garcin, et al. "Early anthropogenic impact on Western Central African rainforests 2,600 y ago." *PNAS* (in press).

rainforests that helped maintain ecological homeostasis in some regions over many centuries.⁴

This paper traces the cross-cultural origins and growth of extreme "correlative" or "fractal" cosmologies linked to complex man-the-microcosm schemes that at times did help mitigate human destruction of the environment. The paper first discusses the origins of these systems in brain-culture networks dependent on evolving modes of literate technologies over thousands of years. It then discusses how the increasing abandonment of these holistic models in the 20th century, reflecting the growing complexities of molecular biology and genetics, coincided with what has been referred to as a "great acceleration" in anthropogenic influences on the planet in the last few decades.⁵

The paper concludes by suggesting how recent findings in molecular biology (involving genomics, transcriptomics, proteomics, and metabolomics, etc.) are driving a revival of holistic views of biology that draw their modeling ideas from fractal geometry, nonlinear dissipative systems, self-organized criticality, and other fields of mathematics pertinent to the study of complex evolving system. It finally discusses nonlinearities in these systems that suggest that planet ecosystems have already entered states that are incompatible with the long-term survival of any global civilization even remotely as populous as the one expected by the mid 21st century.⁶

⁴ Charles M. Peters, *Managing the Wild: Stories of People and Plants and Tropical Forest*, Yale University Press, 2018.

⁵ Will Steffen, Wendy Broadgate, Lisa Deutsch, Own Gaffney, and Cornelia Ludwig. "The Trajectory of the Anthropocene: The Great Acceleration." *The Anthropocene Review*. Volume: 2 issue: 1, pp.: 81-98

⁶ Ulrich Kutschera and Steve Farmer, "Systems biology of eukaryotic superorganisms: an integrative model" (*Theor. Biosci.*, submitted).

ST. AUGUSTINE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE STYX IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

LISA FUJIWARA

University of Tokyo, Japan

One of the famous myths about death is that once people die, they descend to the underworld, cross the Styx, dividing the living and the dead, and finally go to the world of death. In this myth, burial is a prerequisite for crossing the Styx. This story was described in the Aeneid VI and was instilled into ancient Romans. St. Augustine was one of the Romans acquainted with this myth.

When the Roman Empire was invaded and ravaged by the Vandals in the 5th century, many Romans were killed and most of them were left unburied due to the chaotic situation. Augustine mentioned this catastrophe and noted how to deal with those unburied in the City of God and in the Care for the Dead (*De Cura gerenda pro mortuis*). He went as far as to say in the Care for the Dead that Christianity must reject these myths which forbid the unburied to cross the Styx. In this paper, I would like to examine why he held this opinion.

Augustine said that he was going to consider whether it had any effect on the deceased if their body had been left unburied, not according to the common opinion (*uulgata opinio*) but according to a sacred book (*sacrae litterae*). In this case, *uulgata opinio* means the Aeneid VI, 327-8, in which lines the unburied were prohibited to cross the Styx. Augustine dismissed these lines as poetic fiction.

It appears that he rejected this myth because it was not compatible with the Bible. However, I do not agree with this interpretation. He rather, in my opinion, took the position that would be most appropriate for each occasion and then chose sentences from the Bible or other sources to support his view. When writing the Care for the Dead, there were so many bodies left unburied on the ground that Augustine was discouraged from forcing their families to bury them. As a consequence, he rejected Virgil.

The reasons for this view are as follows. Augustine was fond of quoting Virgil, but in the Care of the Dead Augustine never did so except that he rejected the myth as falsehood. Nevertheless, he cited lines from other poets and it is possible that a part of his opinion in the work was influenced by pagan writers and was not necessarily compatible with the Bible. Augustine did so because he found it necessary to intentionally refrain from citing Virgil since he had declared clearly that his lines were false at the beginning of the argument. In conclusion, Augustine considered that burial was not necessary simply because it was totally impossible to bury all of the deceased and because it was inconceivable for him to impose the duty on their families. He therefore needed to reject the myth which necessitates burial to cross the Styx.

SOME USES OF APOCALYPSE: INSTRUMENTALIZING RAGNARÖK

JOSEPH HARRIS

Harvard University, USA

After describing the famous Old Norse world-ending “Ragnarök” (latterly “Ragnarøkkr” has again become a respectable variant) and briefly locating it in the eschatology of world mythologies, the paper will center on human uses of such an apocalypse in medieval Scandinavia. Since Ragnarök is “the affair of *the gods*,” its variant “the twilight of *the gods*,” what place does it have in the life of *mere humans*, how do *they* utilize the myth? This question would be unwieldy in the great mythologies, especially in Christianity; but the medieval Nordic corpus of texts is so small that tentative answers could be ventured. The most interesting testimony will come from Old Norse-Icelandic poetry and from continental Scandinavian runic inscriptions, but a verbally related Old Frisian text will also be drawn in.

ON THE BIBLICAL IDENTIFICATION OF DYONISOS–SPANDARAMET

HASMIK HMAYAKYAN

Institute of Oriental Studies, Yerevan, Armenia

The Armenian version of the Bible replaces the theonym Dyonisos with Spandaramet or Bacchus. In the Armenian beliefs Spandaramet was patron deity of earth, underworld and vegetation, while his name derives from Middle Persian *spandarmat*. Scholars who studied this issue, suggested that this identification could not have been accidental and Spandaramet might have shown features distinctive to Spandaramet.

The scholars who referred to this issue have also examined possible existence of Dyonisos’ cult across the Armenian Highlands. The purpose of our paper is a more enhanced discussion of the above said and pointing out which particular features of this deity complex structure served a basis for his identification with Spandaramet.

Reviewing the sources about the Armenian Spandaramet, we are able to mention three main functions of this deity such as underworld god, master of hell, earth or earth god, patron god of fertility and vegetation. Reviewing various manifestations of Dyonisos and namely Dyonisos-Zagreus, Dyonisos-Sabazios and others we can argue that these features have been exhibited most evidently in Dyonisos-Zagreus. As known, Dyonisos is son of Zeus and Persephone, who was dismembered and torn apart by Titans, however reborn

from Semele, this time appearing as a son of Zeus and Semele. In early known texts Dionisos is identified with Mother Earth Gaia and called the highest god of the underworld, while Aeschylus identifies him with Hades or Hades' son. According to the researchers, Zagreus might have been a son of Hades and Persephone, while later, the followers of Orphism equated him with Dionisos as a result of which the deity received attributes of a fertility god.

Summing up, it is possible to state that Spandaramet-Dionisos identification in the Armenian translation of the Bible as we believe, is quite justified, provided we accept this is the identification of Spandaramet with Dionisos-Zagreus, which bears evident underworld functions - is an earth god while at a later in Orphism stage, he was attributed with fertility god features just like the Armenian Spandaramet.

DEATH, MAHABHARATA, AND STORYTELLING

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In the paper, I would like to analyze the problem of death in the *Mahābhārata*. I will use the frames of oral storytelling and the concept of literary viewpoints.⁷ This approach is adequate in the interpretation of philosophy of ancient India which preserved its tradition in oral form and this fact could motivate abstract thinking of the composers. Moreover, the battle the essence of which is death is the story told by Sañjaya to Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

Within the frames of this approach, the Absolute is the storyteller and creation of cosmos begins its story. Now, the Absolute is not only the storyteller, but also the protagonists of its story. As the storyteller, the Absolute is unmanifest, as the protagonists, it splits itself into protagonists of the story and manifests itself in cosmos and in men, as their *ātman*. As the unmanifest storyteller, the Absolute is not affected by death. However, as the *ātman* of men, it may lose the viewpoint of the storyteller and become involved in the story with all its fearful reality.

The aim of man's life (*Bhagavadgītā*) is to enable the Absolute to manifest in man as his *ātman*. Thanks to that, the Absolute within man can change the viewpoint and to realize its identity with the unmanifest storyteller. A liberated man unites two viewpoints - of the unmanifest storyteller and the manifest protagonist without being really affected by the story.

⁷ Dancygier B., Sweetser E. E. (eds.) 2012. *Viewpoint in Language: A Multimodal Perspective*. Cambridge.

The approach adopted in the paper contributes to a better understanding of the situation of man in both states, i.e., bounded and liberated. In the former case, the terrifying experience of death can be seen as the ontological situation when the story becomes real for its listener. In the latter, the construal of a new viewpoint from the absolute level and its fusion with the empirical one results (besides the radical ontological and cognitive transformation of the agents) in ironical attitude,⁸ expressed in the description of Kṛṣṇa as *prahasann iva* when he begins to explain to Arjuna the sense of death from the absolute viewpoint (*Bhagavadgītā* 2.10).

THE NARRATIVES OF ODYSSEUS AND SEOK TALHAE, A STUDY IN MARITIME CULTURE AND THE DIALECTIC OF ENLIGHTENMENT: ON THE ORIGIN OF RATIONALITY

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This article examines maritime culture and the birth of rationality by comparing the mythic narratives of Odysseus and Seok Talhae. According to the theory of “dialectic of enlightenment,” as expounded by Horkheimer and Adorno, rationality enabled advanced science and technology, but it also caused a civilizational crisis. Furthermore, this dialectic has reached its peak in our world. The *Odyssey* by Homer records Odysseus’s voyage after the Trojan War. Similarly, according to *Samguk Sagi* and *Samguk Yusa*, Seok Talhae became king of Silla after a long and arduous sea voyage. These two epic heroes represent enlightenment and rationality, since both broke from the mythical veil of older cultures. As leaders who responded rationally, they launched a world in which conquest through seafaring exploits was the main interest, not themselves. This rational worldview can be traced back to the sea peoples, who first appeared in the 13th century BC. Both Odysseus and Seok Talhae use cunning and deceit to win. Also, Odysseus’s later murder proves that his adventure had “the seed of death” in it. This can be a metaphor for our contemporary crisis. Unlike Odysseus, though, Seok Talhae became a king by respecting the pre-existing order. Thus, that myth suggests a possible transformation to a civilization of coexistence and peace. I will say ‘soft rationality’ for this case, in contrast to ‘sharp rationality’ for Odysseus.

⁸ Tobin V. and Israel M. 2012. ‘Irony as a viewpoint phenomenon’. In: Dancygier, Sweetser 2012 (eds.): 25-45.

MYTHS OF AUTOMATA: FROM TALOS, PYGMALION, GOLEM TO ROBOT

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A social concern sometimes draws a scholar back to a lineage of a mythic motif from the ancient time. As interest in the mythic narrative of natural disaster reflects a contemporary social concern, contemporary social interest in technology and robotics directs a scholar back to look for a myth of technology and automata. Among these mythic narratives of technology and automata, Talos, Pygmalion, and Golem are most well-known.

These myths of technology and automata and the contemporary social concern raise several interesting questions regarding an imaginative reason to generate mythic narratives, an asymmetrical gender-sexual relationship (Galatea/ Pygmalion and female robot Sophia/robotics engineer David Hanson) and a technological and magical relationship (Talos and Golem/Programmed Robots and Powered Class/Ordinary Class). If we follow Levi-Strauss, our contemporary societies, which are “never been modern” according to Latour, are continuing to form mythic and bricolaged narratives. If we follow Eliade, contemporary secular narratives are nothing but camouflaged “sacred narratives.”

However, a question concerning a relationship between concrete technology and imaginary motif arises when it comes to examining a history of technological automata. Does a practical presence of technology cause to generate a mythic and imaginary narrative? Does the story of Pygmalion tell a story of impossible artistic technology, as many circulating imaginary stories concerning possible actuality of female robots are not yet realistic? Is a mythic narrative of Talos created by Hephaistos, an automatic soldier to protect Crete, an ancient form of the contemporary TALOS (Tactical Assault Light Operator Suit), a military powered suit, designed and planned by a group of American institutes, whose leader MIT professor Gareth McKinley acknowledged that an Iron Man was his initial model?

In this paper, I will attempt to compare the ancient mythic narratives of technology and the contemporary secular narrative of robotics and to examine what mythic narratives are.

AN INFLUENCE OF “NORTHERN MYTHOLOGY” ON VICTORIAN BRITAIN

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In the late 19th century Britain, there were some poets who had a fervent interest in myths not geographically originated within Britain. Up until then, the linguistic trend to focus on comparing myths had prevailed in Europe. This momentum was led mostly by German attempts, such as Brothers Grimm's, to establish an academic discipline of “mythology” in order to occupy a certain myth as their own; it coincidentally helped even English poets to search “genuine” root for their literature, and let poets turn their eyes outward.

Apparently, thus, it can be said that comparative mythology itself is a product of modernization of the world, yet ancient tales were eye-opening for Victorians and would inspire their anti-modern sentiment. Benjamin Thorpe, an Old English scholar, introduced one of foreign myths to Britain: his *Northern Mythology* (1851) includes the first complete translation of Icelandic *Edda*. In his later work *Yule-Tide Stories* (1880), Thorpe asserted that the European nations initially shared the same myths, and in the course of medieval adaptations to each nation's culture, they became separated from each other.

As an example of Victorian poet fascinated by such an idea, I would like to cast a spotlight on William Morris. Young Morris was an ardent reader of Thorpe, so he even retold Thorpe's translation of a Danish myth, as a short story entitled “Lindenberg Pool” (1856). To Thorpe's version, Morris added discernibly Gothic details, and a timeless narrator gazing the past: Morris's adaptation is imaginative rather than archaeologically accurate. Through comparing Thorpe's and Morris's narratives, how northern myths were accepted in Victorian Britain will be revealed and contribute to clarify the significance of World Mythology, not only in structural analysis but in regard to cultural effects.

MER-PEOPLE IN BALTIC-FINNIC TRADITION

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My paper concerns a subsection of water spirits of the Baltic-Finnic peoples: mer-people, sea spirits. Since Baltic-Finnic ethnic groups live in areas rich in water bodies and on the shores of the Baltic sea, their tradition abounds with narratives and beliefs related to mer-people, water spirits, defenders of fish and boats, and kindred beings. Sea fairies and closely related beings, such as sea cows and horses, sea shepherds, fish-tailed mermaids and the pharaoh people, ship-bound Klabautermanns, form a separate corpus in their heritage.

Sea fairies include a number of well-known beings. Folklorists commonly classify stories concerning them as legends, memorates, personal experience stories, which are characterized by the narrator's belief in the veracity of the encounter, logic-defying meetings with representatives of the supernatural world, and communication with them. While in many subgenres of legends the narratives display a streak of humor featuring the meetings and encounters, stories of encountering mer-people are serious in their tone. A remarkable proportion is based on individual developments, personal experience adapted to local circumstance. I will give some examples of encounters involving tactile, verbal, and visual contact.

While relying on earlier scholarly works, I will examine (using Skriptorium, ELM Department of Folkloristics digital corpus of belief narratives) etiological stories of the pharaoh people, mer-people, sea cattle, and ship spirit Klabautermann (kotermann). It is believed that all these beings represent older mythological beings and vernacular beliefs, but some have been influenced by newer North-European folklore layers.

TONLÉ SAP: THE BURNING HEART OF CAMBODIA. ECOLOGY, NATURAL PROCESSES, AND MYTHOLOGY

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Boeung Tonlé Sap, Cambodia's Great Lake, has been the heart and the breadbasket of the Kingdom of Cambodia for many centuries. The lake and its annual floods belong among the most recognized of Southeast Asia's natural wonders. During the rainy season, the water level in Boeung Tonlé Sap sometimes rises so high, that only the tree-tops stay above the surface. In

Angkor Wat area carvings, we can often see fish swimming through tree-tops – this doesn't necessarily have to be attributed solely to the artist's wild fantasy.

An old Khmer story about the origin of the lake claims, that in this area, there used to be just a wide plain with a rich, marvelous city. This city was – because of its ruler's unjust deeds - sinking deeper and deeper, until the area became the lake, Tonlé Sap. Then a huge buffalo garlanded with lotus flowers emerged from the depths, carrying on its back the most sacred object of the sunken city, a Buddha statue made from a single piece of a magnificent emerald. The beast swam through the lake towards the east, passing through the Tonlé Sap River to the Mekong River and then all the way to the sea, where its traces vanished. The myth has it, that many years later, the statue was found floating in the river by the Thai town of Chiang Rai. Until today, the emerald Buddha represents one of the most sacred objects of the Thai Royal treasure. This sacred statue is not the only Thai royal treasure artifact whose origin can be traced back to the legendary Cambodian lake.

In the ancient tradition of the Khmer Empire, on the third day of the Water festival, when the Moon was full, the Khmer king used to stand above the Tonlé Sap River in the country's capital and loudly order the waters of the current to change its direction and flow back from the Great Lake, Tonlé Sap Lake, to join the waters of the Mekong River and head for the sea.

The waters of the Tonlé Sap River, sooner or later, obliged the orders of the Cambodian king, whose title was no less than "the Master of the Universe". Thus, once again, the supreme divinity of the king was confirmed to the general satisfaction of his subjects. If the current didn't change its direction immediately, then it was certain to do so very soon afterwards.

This natural phenomenon is a consequence of a number of coincidental causes: snow in the Himalayas stops melting; there is the end of the seasonal monsoon winds and rains in Southeast Asia; and the gravitational power of the Moon is at its highest. This all causes the level of the Mekong River to drop under the level of the Boeung Tonlé Sap (filled like a natural reservoir during the rainy season) – so it wasn't very difficult for royal clerks to estimate when the river's flow was going to be reversed and use it to strengthen the traditional authority of their king.

In my presentation, I would like to sketch out a few Cambodian and Thai myths that are closely linked to Tonlé Sap Lake and to the ancient traditions of the south-east Asian conception of kingship, which is strongly intertwined with the history, religious rituals and agricultural cycle of the whole area. I would like to pinpoint the uniqueness of the changing river current as a natural phenomenon, the way it was implemented into some crucial mythological stories, and the way the royal and religious social class has benefited from it. To link the ancient myths with today's concerns, I will also mention a specific disaster, which happened in May 2016, when climate change interfered with the flood patterns and together with deforestation (and massive

illegal logging) and a record-breaking drought, 640,000 hectares of the UNESCO designated wetlands conservation area known as the “Tonle Sap Biosphere” burnt down. Does this mean that a long succession of the Khmer kings who were able to change the river current at their command is coming to an end?

THE POWER OF UNBELIEVABLE STORIES. MOTIFS OF THE END OF THE WORLD AND HUMAN EXTINCTION IN POLISH URBAN LEGENDS

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The main purpose of this paper is to describe Polish urban legends about the end of the world. There are reasons behind the choice of the topic of this essay. First of all, popular culture as the one of the most important channels of contemporary mythology, contains many stories about the human extinction and the end of the world. Secondly, urban legends are a neglected study, but an important component of contemporary mythology. Lastly, motifs of the end of the world and human existence can be found quite often in particular regions of Poland. In order to analyze Polish urban legends more accurately, the content of the lecture will be divided into the following parts:

- Relationship of urban legends with mythology – whether urban legends can be included as a part of contemporary mythology;
- Significance of urban legends in the modern world – whether they serve to explain a particular phenomenon or they are a continuation of folk tales;
- Uniqueness of the popular stories about the end of the world – what is their role in the contemporary culture;
- Motifs of the end of the world in Polish urban legends – what are their sources, meanings, and goals.

FACING REBIRTH: APOCALYPTIC THEMES IN THE FICTION OF DAVID LINDSAY

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Scottish metaphysical author David Lindsay (1876-1945) appropriated apocalyptic myths from the Norse tradition into his novels *A Voyage to Arcturus* (1920) and *Devil's Tor* (1932). I will examine how Lindsay used Norse material in *Arcturus* for his own purposes, reflecting apocalyptic undercurrents in post-Great War culture. *Devil's Tor* also employs Northern material, but this time the novel can be read as a more literal prophecy of apocalypse, being published eight months before Hitler came to power. I will conclude by examining what apocalypse might have meant for Lindsay, and how the concept shifts in his work.

SOME HUNGARIAN ESCHATOLOGICAL LEGENDS AND FRAGMENTS CORRESPONDING WITH THE MONGOLIAN BUDDHIST CONCEPTS

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As one can see in the results of the Catalogue of the Hungarian Historical Legends, Hungarian folklore is quite rich in various eschatological prophecies (Zoltán Magyar: *Mondák a végső időkről. A magyar folklór eszkatológikus hagyományai* [Legends about the End of the World: the eschatological traditions of Hungarian folklore]. *Ethno-Lore*, 2013: 138-196). As the type and motif index reveals, folklore data with Biblical origin form an important part of eschatological prophecies in the Hungarian folklore, but the orally transmitted heritage is dominant (premodern prophecies, unusual natural phenomena, modernization, etc.). However, there are some eschatological legends and fragments, whose motifs can neither be found in the Christian traditions nor in the collections of *Sibylline Oracles* (*Oracula Sibyllina*), which had also influenced the traditional Hungarian eschatological folk beliefs in the course of time, but surprisingly appear in some Mongolian Buddhist traditions (see: Kálmány 1893: 65-74; Koeppe 1857: 267; Nagy 1977, 731). Briefly, these motifs are the following:

- Seven years of drought or barrenness *as premonitory sign of the end of the world* (Hungarian: N 17; N 102.3; Kálmány 1893: 72; Magyar 2013: 151, 179; Pallas: *Samlungen* (sic!) *historischer Nachrichten über die Mongolischen Völkerschaften*. 1741-1811. II: 32); notice: although this motif resembles the story of Joseph and the seven years of plenty followed by the seven of famine in the Old Testament (Genesis 41:54), in the context of the end of the world it is rather different;
- The leaves of the walnut-tree will have been shrunk (Hungarian: N 18.2.; Kálmány 1893: 67) - compare: every creature will have been shrunk (Mongolian; Kálmány 1893; Pallas, *ibid.*);
- Once the humankind disappears from the Earth, other beings come instead of it (Hungarian and Mongolian; Kálmány 1893: 67; Koeppen 1857: 267); notice: in the Tibetan Buddhist literature usually broadly conceived under the idea of *lha 'dre*, "gods and demons";
- Exterminative (Mongolian; Kálmány 1893: 71; Bastian 1871. VI: 588; Pallas 1741-1811. II: 32) or sulphurous (Hungarian; Kálmány 1893: 71) rain, etc.

Because these narrative motifs can be found neither among the motifs and patterns of the sources of the Kauśāmbī Prophecy of Buddhist eschatological tradition (see: Nattier: *Once Upon a Future Time*, 1991) nor in the Tibetan Prophecy *Decline of the Good Age* ("*Récit des Ages*"; Stein Collection: IOL Tib J 73as3, 734 part 1 and 735), I try to find other explanations for the close correspondences of the motifs. In this paper, I am going to make an attempt to analyze the folkloric data in question with the comparative and religio-historical methods.

COMPARATIVE EPIC LITERATURE

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The *Iliad* is full of heroes killing each other and the *Odyssey* is about a wandering hero. While these two epics show two different aspects of heroic characters, in the two epics of India, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana*, the heroes (the Pāndavas and Rāma) wonder and fight, combining above mentioned two heroic elements. Put in a scheme, the Indian epics both combine the two heroic elements, in contrast to the Greek epics, which divided the two heroic elements, allotting one element to each epic.

In Greek myth, when Gaia was once suffering from the weight of men, Zeus, seeing that, decided to bring about the Trojan War and by eliminating many heroes alleviate Gaia's burden, and "the plan of Zeus came to pass".

Likewise, in the *Mahābhārata*, due to the growing numbers of the evil Asuras, the earth became incapable of supporting herself. The earth addresses the situation to Brahman and Brahman orders gods (devas) to be born as humans and by fighting and killing the Asuras alleviate the earth's burden.

The other Indian epic, the *Rāmāyana* narrates King Rāma's search for his kidnapped wife Sītā and her eventual recapture from the demons headed by Rāvana. The *Iliad* and the *Rāmāyana* share a common motif of "fight to regain a kidnapped wife".

In the *Iliad*, Menelaos fights with his comrade-in-arms to recapture his kidnapped wife Helen and the Greeks destroy Troy; in consequence, Zeus' plan to alleviate Gaia's burden is fulfilled. In the case of India, the divine will to alleviate the earth's burden is fulfilled in the *Mahābhārata* and the theme of recapture of a wife is told in the *Rāmāyana*. So the two themes – one, divine will to massacre the lives of heroes to alleviate the earth's burden, and the other, a hero recaptures a kidnapped wife – are present both in Greece and in India, although in Greece the two are united and in India the two are separated. We do not see these two themes in other Indo-European epics: they are unique to Greece and India.

In the *Rāmāyana*, Rāma travels to Lankā Island to recapture Sītā. The Greek kidnapped wife Helen in the *Iliad* is equivalent to the Indian kidnapped wife Sītā. The *Iliad* and the *Mahābhārata* share elements of divine will and massacre, and the *Odyssey* and the *Rāmāyana* share the element of a voyage across an ocean.

So the combinations of motifs in the four epics will be as follows:

- the *Iliad*: earth's burden, kidnapped wife, fight
- the *Odyssey*: voyage across the ocean
- the *Mahābhārata*: earth's burden, fight
- the *Rāmāyana*: kidnapped wife, voyage across the ocean, fight

We can assume a reconstructed proto-Indo-European epic: Heroes make a voyage across water to recapture a kidnapped wife. The two sides fight and a massacre is the result. This massacre is the intended plan by the chief god to alleviate the earth's burden. We see in Greece and India that each tradition has divided the original epic into two epics, although the combination of the motifs was different.

In India, gods reincarnate into humans and fight against the enemy. Reincarnation (*avatār*), however, is not common in Greece. Instead, Greek myth gives a prominent position to heroes, a category of supernatural children born from the union of the divine and the human. Two central figures of the *Iliad*, Helen and Achilleus, are of this category: Helen is Zeus' daughter and Achilleus is the son of the nymph Thetis. In India, Brahman asks gods to be born as humans; in Greece, Zeus creates Helen as his child through the union with Leda. This daughter of Zeus brings about the Trojan War and the heroes' massacre. The cause of the Trojan War is the famous Judgment of Paris, the

judgment beginning when three goddesses fight each other to gain a golden apple sent from the goddess of conflict Eris. This conflict of the goddesses begins at the wedding of Thetis and Peleus. Through their union is born Achilles who kills Troy's guardian hero Hector and makes Troy's destruction possible. The first section of Book One of the *Iliad* sets the main theme of the epic: "Sing, goddess, the wrath of Peleus' son Achilles, accursed wrath which brought countless sorrows upon the Achaeans, and sent down to Hades many valiant souls of warriors..." Then Homer adds: "thus the will of Zeus was brought to fulfillment". Even though the *Iliad* does not openly declare what the will of Zeus is, it is the massacre of heroes, which he manages to accomplish by sending two of his messengers: Helen and Achilles.

APOCALYPTIC MYTH AND DREAMS IN THE FILMS OF ANDREI TARKOVSKY

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War and dreams are paths to the Otherworld in the films of the Russian director Andrei Tarkovsky (1932-86). His seven feature films all include formal dream sequences; and explicitly reference war. Two are dystopian SF fantasies; three explore, in mythic terms, the Cold War fear of World War 3 and nuclear armageddon. This paper explores the relations between dreams, apocalypse and myth in Tarkovsky's cinema, considering its sources in dream-cultures of the Cold War. For example, in 1972, Tarkovsky dreamed that WW3 had started – recording this dream of nuclear holocaust in his journals, as was his normal practice. This nightmare was common in the West at that time (less common in Russia). Tarkovsky expressed the idea visually in increasingly mystical ways between 1962 and 1986. In *Ivan's Childhood* (USSR, 1962), the boy protagonist visits his pre-war childhood in dreams, while the real war-time world is pictured as an increasingly nightmarish limbo. *Stalker* (USSR, 1979) is set in a post-apocalyptic landscape, studded with the detritus of a recent war. In this wilderness, filled with traps and threats visible only to their guide (the "Stalker" of the title, a priest-like psychopomp), three travellers seek a room which grants the heart's desire. The central dream sequence uses a voiceover from *Revelations*, with imagery obliquely referencing the destruction of European civilisation by technology. *Nostalghia* (Italy, 1983) focuses on a prophetic madman who dreams of the end of the world, and includes two acts of ritual action (immolation, pilgrimage) intended respectively to warn the world and end exile. In *The Sacrifice* (Sweden, 1986), a group on a Baltic island hear the

news that WW3 has started. The protagonist dreams of the bombing, and is advised that he can turn back time, again through sacrifice, saving the world and his family. I argue that, in creating these filmic narratives and sequences, Tarkovsky updated mythic themes, images, texts and ideas, to interpret and express the collective traumatic experience of WW2 and the Cold War, for his own and later generations.

THE METAMORPHOSIS OF “*BATEREN*” AND “*KIRISITAN*”

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In Japanese myths it is not popular that human beings transform into animals or natural effects without death, while in European myths and narratives such motif is very familiar. The purpose of my presentation is to rethink on the motif of the metamorphosis of “*Bateren*” and “*Kirisitan*”: Both are constructed by mixing Japanese- European mythic image.

In the 16th century, the Christian missionaries from Europe arrived in Japan. They missionized people so powerfully, that some became Christians, and the others considered them as an enemy aiming to conquer Japan. In the end, the missionaries from foreign countries (aka “*Bateren*”) were expelled from Japan by Tokugawa-Bakufu, which consequently put a ban on Christianity. And domestic Christian (“*Kirishitan*”) left in Japan were executed brutally if they would not abandon their faith of Christianity.

Over hundred years later, in the community no real missionaries were left and most of Japanese people did not know real Christians. But on the other hand, people kept having the images of “*Bateren*” and “*Kirisitan*”: as magicians who can use supernatural power such as “Amakusa Siro,” a famous Christian led the rebellion of suffering Christian, Shimabara-no-ran,.

There are the various depictions of the magic of “*Bateren*” and “*Kirisitan*” in the narratives. When Amakusa Siro’s story is performed as a Kabuki play, he transfigures into the fog. Another example is a *Kirisitan* changes himself into an insect. Such motifs of metamorphosis raise a question that where these narratives originated from. It is unusual in Japanese magical tales that human beings transfigure into other forms, and return human again. Therefore, these narratives must be reconsidered from a comparative perspective by the comparison with European myths.

EARTH IN THE RIGVEDA

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My paper is focused on lexical items as markers of mythological motifs in the Rigveda. By analyzing multiple items meaning "earth" and their contexts, I first attempt to explain the construction of semantically varying narratives that give birth to Vedic myths about earth. Second, I use comparative (primarily, Indo-European) data to find out the specific features of these myths.

LITERARY AND OBSERVATIONAL STUDY ON DISEASE AS A MEDIUM FOR END OF THE WORLD BY GODS

SUNIL PARAB

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The current research paper focuses on diseases and mythical stories associated with emergence of diseases. Interestingly though life taking, in many cultures diseases are not considered as act of devil but rather as punishment by the gods. The author adopts literary as well as observational research as methodology to uncover literature associated with diseases as a medium for end of the world and also takes into account the relevant rituals practiced even today in association with their mythical emergence. The Vedic literature associates gods with emergence of diseases and also focuses on way to eliminate diseases. The Indian Epic mythology also illustrates stories such as Daksha Yagna responsible for emergence of multiple diseases. The Indian folklores are full of regional references as well as remedies associated with diseases. The research paper also compares the observations from Indian Mythology with mythical stories associated with Disease as a medium for end of the world across different mythical cultures. Diseases have always been the matter of curiosity for human beings since ancient era; thus we find its emergence as well as solutions being answered in language of mythology; just as natural calamities. The study concludes with Mythical emergences of diseases accepted by Indian Medicine (Ayurveda) through Indian Mythology *vis-à-vis* etiology of the same diseases as per the Modern Western Medicine. The Mythical narrations then no more remain just the imaginary stories; but takes form scientific observations narrated through popular contemporary motifs.

MOUNTAINS AND MONSOONS: DIFFICULT WAYS TO HARMONIZE THE SPIRITS

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Mountains (山) and waters (水) often have nothing to do with beautiful landscapes paintings (山水). As wild and dangerous especially in mutual interactions, they play an important role in Asian mythologies. I) The present paper describes different natural conditions along the coast of East Asia and compares corresponding religious or mythological explanations of regular vs. irregular monsoons in connection to mountains. II) After that the motif of mountains and the roles of mountain spirits are analyzed from the perspective of ritual practices described in research papers as well as in folk tales. Here the Vietnamese and Korean folk tales (and often remakes of Chinese stories) are the main reference materials together with ecological conditions, historical development and customs of ethnic groups inhabiting mountainous regions (e.g. some Altaic peoples, Hmongs, Koreans) of Central and continental East Asia. The types of mythological narratives may be explained from the point of view of lowlands as the most common habitat of *Homo sapiens*.

MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURES OF TRANSITION AND BEGINNING

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In my presentation, I will analyze and compare three types of the mythological creatures typical for the time of transition and beginning of a calendric and life-cycle periods and the start of any activity. The aim of the study is to discover fundamental similarities and differences of the dangerous creatures and to investigate the dynamics of their transformation in time and space up to modernity.

I will examine the seasonal mythological creatures of the opening period of the new year, e.g., the Twelve days (Yuletide). Terminology (Bulgarian *karakondzho*) and the narratives on the “behavior” of the evil spirits show them as impure and dark (black). Wide Balkan, Slavic and Finno-Ugrian mythological parallels of these seasonal evil spirits can be easily traced.

Another type of demons is the Balkan and Slavic Fates who visit the baby and its mother after the childbirth. The ambivalent character of the

Balkan Fates (Bulgarian *orisnitsi*) and the mixture of the pre-Christian and Christian features are linked to the ambivalent notion of Fate and the symbolism of any beginning. Again, the evil spirits are seen through the notions of impurity and darkness.

A short part of the presentation is dedicated to the depiction of the new “global” demons of beginning, the evil spirits of procrastination, which prevent people from starting any activity. The pictures of these mythological creatures started to circulate in the Internet. The newest pictures of them remind us of the images of the devil on the icons and meanwhile of evil spirits from the movies and cartoons.

GEORGIAN MYTHIC ESCHATOLOGICAL CYCLES AND THEIR WORLD PARALLELS

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Cosmogony and eschatology are put in one semantic field by mythical cyclic conception and are considered to be inseparable structural phenomena. That is reflected in the morphological-genetic wholeness of cosmogony and eschatology.

Let us look through the Georgian eschatological cycles in the context of world parallels. That once again shows us that these cycles are from the wholeness of morphological genetic wholeness of cosmogony and eschatology:

1. In the world-cosmogonic-eschatological cycles the plot of the battle between deity and dragon, and between element of water and land is spread (famous Ugaritic myth of Battle of Baal and Yam, Hittite myth of battle between dragon and deity of thunderstorm), where as a result of the duel cosmogony is constantly replaced by eschatology. This known cosmogonic plot has got the theriomorphic content and is characterized with double encoding of cosmogonic structure. By means of extending of the plot, opposite of the manoeuvring of the final (Hittite and Ugaritic myths), Georgian myth has firmly established story-line, where the ox (cosmos) is always the winner. Though from the moment of final myth starts structural speculation, creates extra structural unit – "the final of the final", which makes possible manoeuvring of "the result" – the winning of the ox deity in one case causes drying out of the lake and creation of land, life; in the other case its winning causes the bursting of the lake and the Deluge.

2. One more interesting eschatological cycle in the Georgian myth is connected with a deity of the Sun. Two qualitatively contrary cycles are confirmed here, which is in one case on luminary light (cosmos) and in the other case on Khton (chaos) beginning are based:

- A. The cycle of the battle between the Sun and celestial dragon is widely spread in the world mythology, which causes swallowing of the luminary for certain time and the dominance of darkness(solar eclipse) in cosmos. In Georgian reality this myth was confirmed with a ritual of "opening the way for the Sun": the society taking part in the ritual imitates the deity of thunderstorm by firing in the sky and noise, which is the deity fighting with dragon and only it can make the dragon "drop" the luminary. In some rituals the shout of own name of the deity is heard to awaken sleeping deity to save swallowed luminary.
- B. The Khton aspect of the Sun dominates in other cycles connected with the luminary. It is connected with the "Sun' Mother" which is genetically settled in the chaotic sea. In this cycle the sun appears with destructive power: "extra suns" (comp. Chinese Archer deeds) or by destructive "eye" (Egyptian Ra eye Hathor) stands before mankind. Eschatological manifestation of the Sun is stopped by Demiurg, armed with a bow and arrows in the Georgian mythological fairy tales "Dead in the daytime." Demiurg puts out one of nine eyes of the Sun with the arrow. That is the start of delimiting of day and night and creation of cosmic rhythm. ("One country has been in darkness since then").

WATER IN THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN MYTHS

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The aim of this paper is to explore the function of water in the ancient Egyptian myths. As with many creation myths in the world, water is an essential element of the creation in the ancient Egypt. Here, however, not only primordial water is discussed but also many types of 'water' such as tears, libation water, river water (the Nile), watery place (marshes) in the afterlife (Field of Reeds/Marsh of Reeds) and 'water of life' in the resurrection ritual for the dead kings in their relations with Re and Osiris can be examined based on the Egyptian mythology. Although we don't have so many consistent and systematized narratives from the ancient Egyptian myths and furthermore are required to pick up and connect several mythical fragments organically from funerary texts, wisdom

literatures, magical texts, hymns, literatures and offering texts, it could be possible to investigate the mythological function of water which the Egyptians admitted and relied on.

Here, again, it would be expected to demonstrate that in ancient Egypt water not simply has generative power, but moreover immortalize and circulate the existing life including 'the second life' in the afterlife on the background of Egyptian myths.

CHARMING HAIL AWAY IN SLAVIC TRADITIONS

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Meteorological magic, or weather modification (rainmaking, preventing or driving away hail, thunder, storm) with the help of magic, is known to all Slavic peoples. This theme has already been the subject of several ethnolinguistic works, much was done in this sphere by N.I. Tolstoy and S.M. Tolstaya.

The weather determined not only the wealth and prosperity of peasants, but their very existence (the hail destroying the crops thus leading to hunger and death; or the lightning taking away lives, etc.). There was only one way to influence the weather – the magic one, using the magic of similarity, partial or verbal magic. All these methods of weather-making were based on archaic mythological beliefs about the world, interrelation of Earth and Heavens, fire and water, souls of the alive and the dead.

Protecting against hail among Eastern Slavs was mainly occasional and generally individual enchantment, it was basically reduced to throwing some things away from the house into the yard at the time of hail, such as firing utensils (a peel, a poker, an oven fork) and sharp instruments (an axe, a scythe, a sickle), burning blessed objects in the stove and praying.

In the Balkans, Carpathians (including the neighboring territories of Moravians and Polacks) there were special people – *oblakoprogonniki*, *gonihmarniki*, *hmurniki*, etc., who concerned themselves with hail suppression in favor of the whole community. They possessed special magic power for driving away the thunderclouds with the help of charms, passes by hands, waving towards the cloud with magic objects or even they could, as believed, fly up ("draw themselves") into the thunderclouds and deal with them, drive them away from the village lands.

Usually, in these beliefs the weather dragon also appears – he either withstands the "cloud-away-driver", fights with him in the air, or – as in the western Slavic traditions – acts together with him, serves to the weather magician.

Similar beliefs and parallel personages of neighboring Romanians, as well as specific elements of the weather enchantment of Hungarians, which could be revealed in the Carpathian-Balkan Slavic traditions, afford an opportunity to speak about complex processes of repeated borrowings and mutual enrichment within this region and formation of a peculiar complex of meteorological enchantment with archaic roots, which “sprout” till nowadays.

HUMANS AS KEEPERS OF THE UNIVERSE: WATER CYCLE IN NATIVE COLOMBIAN COSMOLOGY

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Indigenous communities living since time immemorial in secluded areas of Colombian mountains have always recognized the crucial importance water has to the well-being of their society and to Life in general. They possessed a surprisingly detailed knowledge of the water cycle and linked the beginning of the Universe and the birth of all living beings to water. The role of humans was to watch over the delicate balance the cosmos was once created into. The ability to efficiently and sustainably manage their water supplies was on the ideological level supported with water related myths and strengthened with rituals regarding agriculture and healing. Thus the people were continuously reminded of the essential role water played in their life and in their natural environment, which they considered their home. With *páramos* (alpine tundra ecosystems – the main source of water in the Colombian Andean areas) being continuously threatened by mining industries and with climate and civilization related changes altering the delicate cycle of water, people as a species have seemed to fail retaining the title of the “Keepers of the Universe”.

Last year, at the 11th Annual Conference in Edinburgh, I introduced some essential cosmological principles of the Misak and Nasa tribes (communities living in the mountainous areas of south-west Colombia). This year, I would love to focus on cosmological beliefs and rituals of these tribes in connection to one of the most prominent features of ecology- the water cycle. During my study, I will compare the knowledge and beliefs of the aforementioned ethnic groups with the Kogis (a very unique tribe living in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia, which is well known for its deliberate seclusion from the outside world). I will provide insight into mythological and cosmological motifs linked to the importance of water (creation myths, creatures impersonating the water element, the birth of legendary chieftains etc.), the way it is manifested in religious and healing rituals, and the original role of human beings as keepers of this life-giving force. At the end, I will

sketch out the recent threats human activities represent to the fragile ecosystems of *páramos* and the efforts to save them.

WU TAIBO: A CONFUCIAN JAPANESE FOUNDING MYTH

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The myth of Amaterasu, the sun goddess and progenitress of the imperial family of Japan, is well known and played a crucial role in discourses on Japanese national identity in early modern and modern times. This myth emphasizes Japanese uniqueness and centrality by situating the creation of the world in a purely Japanese setting. Less well known is an alternative founding myth that enjoyed popularity among Japanese Confucian scholars especially in the early modern period: the myth of Wu Taibo. In contrast to the Amaterasu myth, which claimed heavenly descent of the Japanese emperors, this narrative traced the sovereigns' genealogy back to a Chinese prince. Japanese scholars who endorsed this myth were less interested in emphasizing Japanese uniqueness than in showing that the Confucian teachings had been transmitted to Japan at an early date. They argued that Japan was the last stronghold of Confucianism since the Confucian Way had only been maintained in Japan, whereas it was forgotten on the Asian continent. The paper draws attention to the political utilization of the Wu Taibo myth during the seventeenth century, when Neo-Confucianism came into its own in Japan and brought with it the necessity to find an acceptable position in the sinocentric world order of civilized and barbarians.

A DIFFERENT VERSION OF THE FLOOD MYTH

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The universal flood myth (pace Dundes 1988), derived from the ocean rising, rain, emptying a bowl, etc., is well known (Witzel 2010). However, in a range of areas, from Khotan (in Xinjiang), Kashmir, the Kathmandu Valley and tribal areas in Nepal, the flood arises from an emptied lake or pond. Perhaps this can be extended to northern China and (in a fairy tale) to Japan.

CRAB AND SERPENT: TOHOKU LEGENDS OF FLOOD AND EARTHQUAKE IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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Japanese Archipelago, located in the Pacific “Ring of Fire”, has been struck by natural disasters such as earthquake, flood or eruption since time immemorial. Especially after the severe tsunami calamity in 2011, we have seen growing interests in disaster studies not only in natural sciences, but also in social sciences as well as humanities: historians e.g. are searching for historical documents on earthquakes and people’s reaction against them; folklorists and anthropologists are trying to find out how damaged people are surviving, reconstructing human networks and local communities.

Having this trend in mind, I pick up here some legends on natural disasters collected in Tohoku Region, compare them with parallel tales from Eastern Asia, and argue that some of such traditions may reflect people’s real experiences and their wish to hand down emergency instructions to descendants. Of particular interest are legends of conflicts between a crab and a serpent, which causes or stops a flood. This type of narratives is known from Japan as well as Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, and probably China, thus widespread in Eastern Asia. Besides, there are legends in which specific places are said to be safe in case of flood or earthquake. These may be based on local inhabitants’ experiences and knowledge, which should be re-examined from today’s scientific point of view.

AT THE END OF TIMES

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My paper compares a series of eschatological myths and folktales of different Indo-European traditions, concentrating on the South Asian, Iranian, Greek, Scandinavian, Germanic, and Slavic materials. Having analyzed the common motifs, I attempt to reconstruct characteristic features of the Indo-European eschatological proto-myth. A special attention is paid to the Indo-European deities of time, fate, and death and their role in eschatology as well as to the concept of Cosmic cycles and “ages” of the universe.

COMPARATIVE MYTHOLOGY OF THE BROTHERS GRIMM AND THEIR SUCCESSORS

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In the 19th century, so many modern academic disciplines were pioneered in Europe. The German-speaking world was one of the major centers. The most famous pioneer of comparative mythology is German-born scholar Max Müller who was naturalized and lived in Britain. However, preceding him, there were also important pioneers. For example, the Brothers Grimm (Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm). In this presentation, I will discuss about the comparative mythology of the Brothers Grimm and their successors.

Jacob Grimm's *Teutonic Mythology (Deutsche Mythologie)* has been often mentioned in histories of comparative mythology. His other works often deal with the topics of comparative mythology as well. However, his writings contain multilingual and interdisciplinary nature. In addition, his works have some political aspects, which was utilized by Nazism after his death. Therefore, even nowadays, his works are very difficult to discuss keeping a fair balance. Jacob's younger brother Wilhelm Grimm has been widely known as the main author of *Grimm's Fairy Tales (Kinder –und Hausmärchen)*. Actually, this book had the academic notes which are related to the comparative mythology, but this fact is not well known among researchers: it is not seldom that even the researchers who focus on the Grimm's folk tales do not know that.

I will also consider to the works of researchers who belonged to the next generations of the Brothers Grimm: especially, Wilhelm Mannhardt, the student of Jacob Grimm, and Johannes Bolte, the successor of Wilhelm Grimm.

What significance does the comparative mythology of the Brothers Grimm and their successors have for today's research? This is what I will explain in this presentation, referring to today's new researches of World Mythology.

NO END IN SIGHT

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The Chinese myth of Nezha was first solidified and popularized by the Ming dynasty novelist Xu Zhonglin between the reigns of Long Qing (1567-1572) and Wan Li (1573-6120) in his epic novel *Creation of the Gods*. Nezha is the only Chinese mythological figure who actively rebels against and attempts to murder his father. Unlike many patricidal figures from Greek myth, such as Cronos, Zeus and Oedipus, who successfully overthrow the reigns of their fathers and establish a new world order, Nezha's desperate rebellion ultimately ends in the defeat of the son. In the myth, Nezha commits suicide by dismembering himself. He returns his flesh to his mother and his bones to his father so as to sever the father-son connection. Freed from his mortal flesh, the deified Nezha hunts his father down and overpowers him, but his patricidal rage is eventually brought under control by the Taoist Sage Ran Deng. Ran Deng bestows a magic tower upon Nezha's father Li Jing, giving him the power to subdue his rebellious son henceforward.

In his introduction to *Creation of The Gods* (2000), Shi Changyu states that Nezha's myth was written during a time of political turmoil. Ming emperors were particularly ruthless towards their subjects, and rebellious movements were stirring nationwide. As the product of a culture, mythology both reflects and helps shape its ethical values. The Nezha myth raises questions about the legitimacy of sons who challenge their tyrannical fathers and hence the validity of subordinates who seek to overthrow their despotic, patriarchal rulers. In the *Origins of Political Order* (2011), Fukuyama pointed out that China established an ultra-stable political order in the Qin Dynasty (221-206 B.C.). The centralized, hierarchical, bureaucratic Chinese state was established more than 2000 years ago but its basic structure is largely maintained to this day. The Nezha myth helps illuminate a primary rationale behind China's ultra-stable political system. It demonstrates that while Nezha's patricidal rage against Li Jing is somewhat justified, the ultimate system of father-son hierarchy cannot be severed or challenged. This paper argues that Nezha myth gives insight into the phenomenon that although there have been countless rebellions throughout Chinese history against despotic emperors and rulers, the system of a centralized patriarchal hierarchy is as stable as ever in modern day China. Although Chinese ideology allows particular rulers to be usurped, the system of hierarchy itself is sacrosanct.