

The ogre in global cultural history: A distributional exercise in comparative mythology

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1.1. *The ogre: Introduction*

In the early stage of my engagement with the New Comparative Mythology, around 2005, I worked through the data on cosmogonic myths attested in sub-Saharan Africa in historical times. I was then impressed by what seemed a NarCom (elementary Narrative Complex) in its own right: 'the rescue from the ogre'. In its essential form,

- a protagonist
- is swallowed
- by a much larger and more powerful adversary,
- and subsequently the protagonist is rescued from inside that adversary.

Often the protagonist effects the rescue, not only of himself, but also of others similarly imprisoned, especially his mother. He is often a young hero, accompanied by his mother whose lover he may turn out to be. The protagonist may originally not be imprisoned himself but he may voluntarily accept that condition so as to liberate others.

Already in 2006 did I realise that the ogre narrative could be considered a sophisticated metaphor of all cosmogony, if *cosmogony is conceived as the liberation of Being from the state of non-Being* (cf. Endymion's eternal sleeping in a cave).² An initial 'chaos' invoked in many cosmogonies all over the world (e.g. Greek Chaos Χάος ; Nordic Ginnungagap, etc.). The initial chaos often appears as 'the Primal Waters', and is then hardly distinguishable from the ogre in a concrete, personified sense. By the same token, the *annihilation of Being* (through a deluge, or some other cosmic disaster) seems equivalent to being swallowed by the ogre.

Imprisonment inside the ogre's organic body may be replaced by

¹ This argument amounts to a chapter that for reasons of space and complexity of the overall argument has to be removed from van Binsbergen 2020. That also a number of basic concepts are defined and developed which have to be taken for granted in the present shorter piece, such as NarCom, CITI, Pandora's Box, mt DNA Type. This is a provisional version, and the text will be further edited in order to avoid repetitions and to add some missing references.

² Cotterell 1989; Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 271; Ovid, *Heroides*, 15.89 f., 18.59 f.; Seneca, *Phaedra*, 309 f., 422 f., 786 f.; .Anonymous, 'Selene'.

- a cave (like the one where Amaterasu the hidden sun goddess was hiding – Japan; or the one where Proteus hid Helen, sending a substitute to Troy...; or the cave from which the Zuñi Pueblo culture hero Kanahuhu ushered his people to the surface of the Earth),
- a house (like, among the Navajo, the liberation of the game animals from the house of Crow, the black god)
- a prison (like Minos's labyrinth, from which Daedalus and Icarus rescue themselves),
- the underworld,
- a grave.
- a mother's womb;
- the womb or the cosmogonic primal goddess;
- the pre-cosmogonic chaos in other words the pre-cosmogonic phase of non-being or not-yet-being;
- death.

The equation of the ogre with the Primal Waters brings us back to another fundamental cosmogonic mytheme, that of the Separation of Land and Water – which must have been a dominant cosmogonic theme in the Upper Palaeolithic, until it was replaced, c. 20 ka BP, by another cosmogonic theme: that of the Separation of Heaven of Earth, which has remained dominant world-wide ever since.

One of the most formative narratives of the philosophical tradition of Western Eurasia has been Plato's myth of the Cave (*De Re Publica*, VII; Plato 1975). The image of humanity confined to a cave, against whose walls the secondarily derived projections of the real events out in the open may be made out, has much to remind us – not only of Kant's (1983a) central thesis that all we can know is merely the image we form of reality in our minds, not reality itself – but also of the ogre mytheme. But let us remember that until the end of the Upper Palaeolithic, c. 10 ka BP, the cave was the standard dwelling of Anatomically Modern Humans and their human predecessors (*cf.* Fester 1980b) – although already in the Ice Ages alternative dwellings *e.g.* tents made over large mammal bones have been attested. Again there is a hint here of possible Neanderthal implications of the ogre mytheme.

The standard form of the ogre mytheme is as follows: the human protagonist, possibly with other humans (especially including his mother), is confined to a secluded space as a result of the action (often: eating, swallowing) of a formidable enemy, generically designated as the ogre, who ultimately is defeated by the protagonist, after which all concerned are liberated from their confinement.

Ogre stories show a great variety, ranging from miraculous birth stories (any birth in the animal kingdom upward from viviparous fishes to humans, is in principle a rescue from a confined space; and *a fortiori* births like those of Athena from her father's head, or the 'leg child' which we shall consider separately (van Binsbergen 2020, 'leg child'), or the birth of the twins Helen and Clytemnestra, and their brother the Dioscuri Castor and Pollux, from an egg laid by Leda after mating with Zeus, both in the disguise of a swan)³ to the Orpheus

³ In this form, the narrative is clearly a rationalising transformation of a presumably more original cosmogonic myth centring on the Cosmic Egg to which we shall return below – another form of confinement of pre-cosmogonic not-yet-being, with Leda as echo of the Primal Mother of the Waters, inevitably associated with

motif (where the motif of the descent into the underworld is by no means confined to Orpheus: Odysseus, Theseus, Inanna, her substitute Dumuzi / Thammuz, Canaanitic Anat rescuing Ba^cal from the hands of Mot / Death, Jesus of Nazareth after dying on the cross, all reputedly made the same journey, albeit for different reasons). As a place of confinement, the reduced space may even be a labyrinth, like the one of Minos in Crete – with Ariadne (and her thread)⁴ as liberator. Or the place of confinement may be the leather bag where the wind god Aeolus keeps the winds until they are released to blow forth. There is a variant of the Trojan War narrative, where Helen herself never actually reached Troy, but remained confined to the isle of Pharos in front of the later Alexandria, Egypt, in the custody of the shape-shifting maritime god Proteus, while instead an artificial dummy Helen was brought to Troy; one could hardly think of a better yarn to safeguard Helen's moral integrity and chastity.⁵

It is difficult and risky to structure that variety through rigid categorisation. Strictly speaking, the act of actually consuming, cannibalistically, the confined victims is relatively rarely narrated.

If the emergence of land is the fundamental act of creation, then, of course, the ogre is equivalent to the Primal Waters, from which protagonists (like Thor and Hymir in Nordic European myth; or Maui who in Maori myth (New Zealand) and elsewhere in Polynesia rescues the land by fishing it up. Cf. The Polynesian myth of Tangaroa and Turi-a-faumea, who fished the sea monster Rogo-tumu-here up and hacked it to pieces, after it had swallowed Tangaroa's daughter-in-law [elsewhere named as Hina-a-rauriki] (Cotterell 1989: 244)

What Thor and Hymir actually bring up is not so much land, but the world snake, – but that is not so very different, once we remember that – at least in Indo-European etymology – , the protoform for 'Earth' can scarcely be distinguished from that for 'Snake' (see Appendix 1, below). By the same token, in many myths, with wide global distribution, the world is made from the fragmented body of the initial Water Monster (which is really a personification of the Primal Waters): Tiamat (Babylonia), Leviathan (Ancient Israel), Ymin (Nordic Europe),

white aquatic birds such as the swan.

⁴ Interestingly, the thread motif returns in the same mythical cycle in a different form when, after fleeing Minor and Crete, Daedalus has arrived at Sicily and there puts king Cocalus ('Shell') to the test of winding a thread inside a spiral shell.

⁵ Cotterell 1989: 232, after the ancient source of Euripides's *Helena*. Such a generous rationalisation protecting a prominent woman's reputation of chastity are widespread as a narrative theme. E.g. in Nkoya mythology, the sorceress Likambi Mange is the royal sister of the male King Shihoka Nalinanga; when the latter appears to have usurped her kingship and royal possessions, she constructs an artificial woman in order to seduce (and, apparently through a sexually transmitted disease, kill) her brother. As so much in Nkoya mythology, the story has a Celtic ring about it, and reminds us of crucial episodes in the Arthurian circle involving Ygraine or Morgana. There is also an Ancient Egyptian pendant, situated on the Levantine coast

cf. Willis 1994: 53: Bata, Anubis' brother, flees after a Potifar-like incident (cf. Genesis 39), to Syria, where the Ennead [Ancient Egypt's nine principal gods – WvB] has a wife for him made by the creation god Hnum. This wife is almost violated by Sea. Bata has emasculated himself and has hidden his heart in a pine tree. Etc. Bata becomes a bull, then an avocado tree, then a piece of furniture, whose plinter kills the bad woman. Bata ends up as king.

But in these variants, the ogre motif is not conspicuous, apart from the hidden heart in the pine tree.

Vrtra (South Asia) Pan Ku 盤古 (Southern China) – or the South Asian Maruts मरुत (cloud riders), the latter considered to be the fragments of an embryo that was initially supposed to remain long enough in his mother's womb (a hundred years) so as to become greater than Indra (Cotterell 1989: 219).

The cosmogonic connotations of the Primal Waters may doubly combine with the ogre theme, in that a box-like vessel is imagined in which (like from an artificial, secondary Cosmic Egg, to which we shall return below), the Flood Hero is enclosed and thus is enabled to rescue himself and others from the ogre of annihilation: the Ark, the Pumpkin (in the Southern Chinese version of Nu Wa and Fu Xi as Flood Heroes). The Primal Waters, Giants and Flood mythemes further proliferate in a Talmudic story, where, during the Flood, the giant Og rides on the Ark and is fed by Nuaḥ; Og was ultimately slain by Moses (Cotterell 1989: 143)

In addition to these cosmogonic / cosmoclastic conditions, other important associations come to mind in connection with the 'rescue from the ogre' motif:

Any normal birth from a parental body is a delivery similar to 'being rescued from the ogre' – as infantile and pathological adult fantasies often indicate. Thwarted or delayed birth is then another application of the 'rescue from the ogre' theme. Cosmogonic myths from Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece, Nigeria, and from Oceania sketch the initial state of constant copulation between Heaven and Earth, -- the moment of creation consists in the two lovers being prised apart or the male partner emasculated, which (in the Greek and Oceanian versions) finally also allows the second generation of deities, sired by Heaven, to leave their imprisonment in Earth's womb. Miraculous births, *e.g.* the 'leg child variant (Dionysus) or Athena's, inevitably combine initial imprisonment in a body with subsequent rescue – very similar to the ogre scheme, especially in that Zeus in both cases (Athena and Dionysus) first swallows the mother – in counter-imitation of his own father, Kronos, who used to swallow his offspring until Zeus escaped that fate by his mother's ruse (*cf.* the Ancient Egyptian sky goddess Nut daily swallowing her child, the sun).

The underworld as the dwelling of the deceased is similar to the ogre's belly, and very rarely does a protagonist effect a rescue from this place – the motif of Orpheus', Inanna's, Jesus's, and Izanami's descent into hell, etc.

In the two cases involving Zeus swallowing his pregnant mistress (Metis, 'Mind', and Semele – which is sometimes interpreted as 'Moon' but by a Phrygian etymology means 'Earth' – which makes the affair of Zeus and Metis another version of the mating of Heaven and Earth) there is only virtual or symbolic eating, and the emphasis is on confinement and liberation; however, the latter notions may give way to a cannibalistic motif stressing true anthropophagy.

The imprisonment may be merely spatial, no longer corporal, so that it becomes imprisonment in a room (*e.g.* Ancient Egyptian Isis's weaving chamber, *cf.* Greek Penelope's in the *Odyssey* and Amaterasu's in *Kojiki*; Barbe Bleu's / Bluebeard's room – Perrault 1697).

Close to the cosmogonic notion of the liberation of Being under the ogre motif, is that of the Cosmic Egg, in which all potentialities are contained, only to be released at Creation; and the Egg may be replaced by other sealed carriers of generation, such as a seed, a nut, etc. In fact, the modern dominant scientific cosmogony, that of the Big Bang, is from one point of view to be considered a rationalised version of the Cosmic Egg, complete with all potentialities particularly those of space and time, abiding the moment of their release

(Berger 1984; Hawking 1988).

In some narrative versions, The Cosmic Egg theme may have shed its cosmogonic connotations, merely retaining the idea of contained potentialities – and then it becomes the magic box locked with unrevealed contents (Pandora’s – her box was initially a vase), or a coffer or coffin like the one Set tricked his hated brother Osiris into (Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*; St Patrick who lures a snake (perhaps the Rainbow Snake, the Supreme Being – believe in which HAS indications in even remotest prehistory) into a box and drowns it, or the wind god’s Aeolus’s bag full of winds (Homer, *Odyssey*, 10.2; Virgil, *Aeneid*, 6.163f., 9.774, 12.542).

The cosmogonic aspects of the ogre motif may merge with the idea that it is from inside the Earth, from the underworld, that all being originates, and then we have arrived at the cosmogonic motif ‘From the Earth’ (NarCom 10) Clearly, the ogre motif is very complex. It can be said to form a ‘poor men’s’ or bowdlerised version of several of the most fundamental myths of humankind

Ideally we would prefer to classify these various implied myths under a number of clearly distinct NarComs, but under the ogre narrative they turn out to intersect and proliferate in ways that bring out the limitations of all classification, especially in comparative mythology

Considering the complexity and their implication of so many different NarComs, we must expect to encounter great difficulties and inconsistencies when we try and map out the distribution of the ogre motif: we never know which aspect is stressed, and which underlying NarComs may be implied.

The unsatisfactory results of an earlier attempt of mine to map out the distribution of the ogre NarCom (at the 2006 Beijing Round Table for Comparative Mythology; van Binsbergen 2006b, and Fig. 1 below) are probably due, not so much to a deficient data base (although there is that problem, too), but to the multidimensionality and secondary nature of the ogre NarCom.

After discarding those cases where the ‘ogre’ motif is merely implied (see legend), and after lumping the remaining cases in one single category (admittedly, this kind of comparative mythology thrives by simplification, which is also its greatest defect), we are ready to try and reconstruct the historical pattern, if possible in association with a genetic type. The result was Fig. 2:

NarCom 6 is clearly transmitted, in N.E. Asia, Oceania, and N/S America, in combination with mtDNA Types A and B (both!). These two types only emerge in Central Asia c. 40 ka BP, both from mtDNA Type N. The fact that both types A and B are capable of transmitting NarCom 6 into NE Asia, Oceania, and N/S America suggests that in fact NarCom 6 was already present in the common ancestor of types A and B, notably N. It is mtDNA types N and M that carried the contents of Pandora’s Box out of Africa. Subsequently, types M and N were widely distributed in E and SE Asia (including the Andaman Islands), New Guinea and Australia.

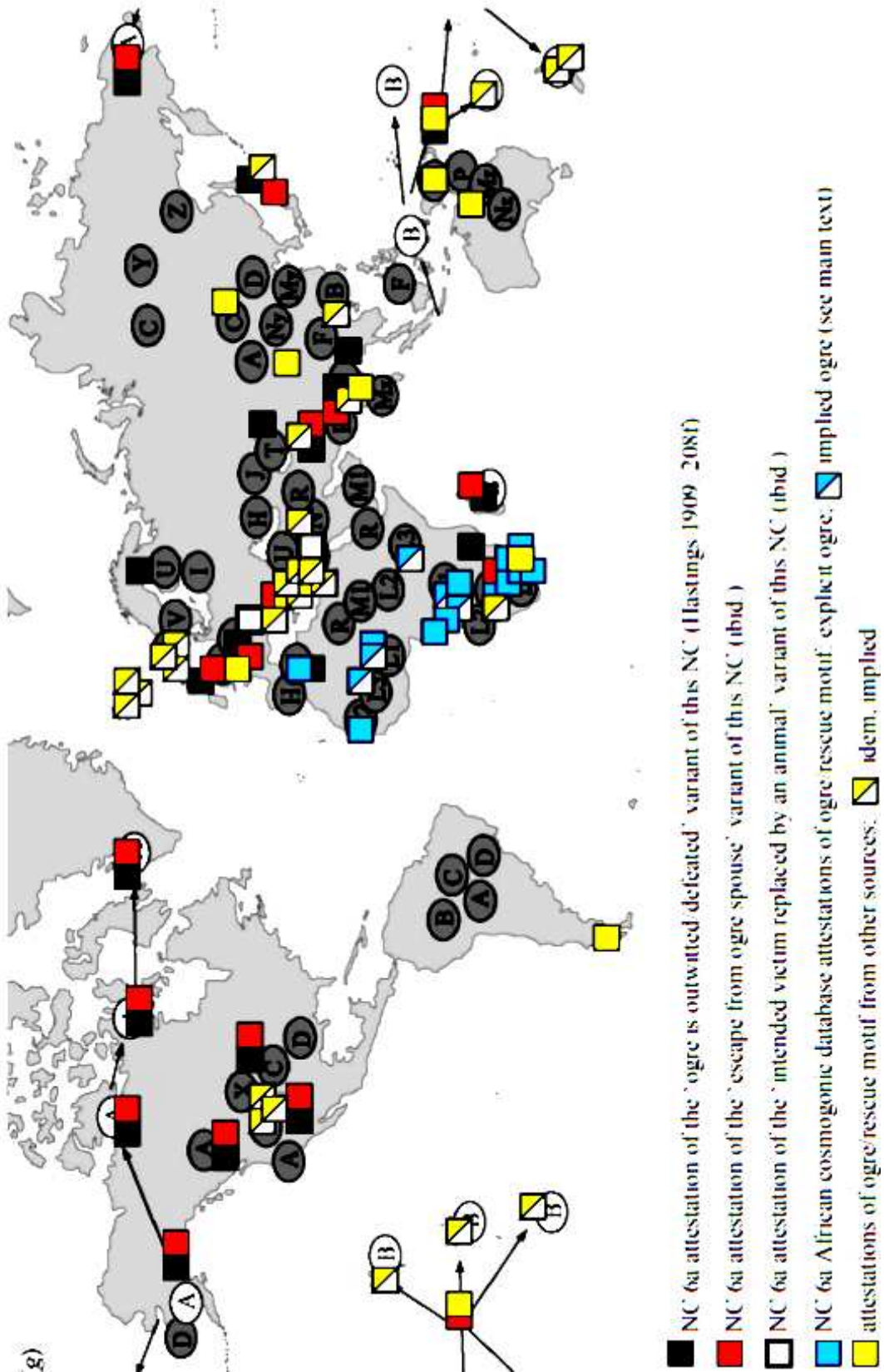


Fig. 1. Distribution of various types of NarCom 6: 'Rescue from the Ogre' (now discarded)

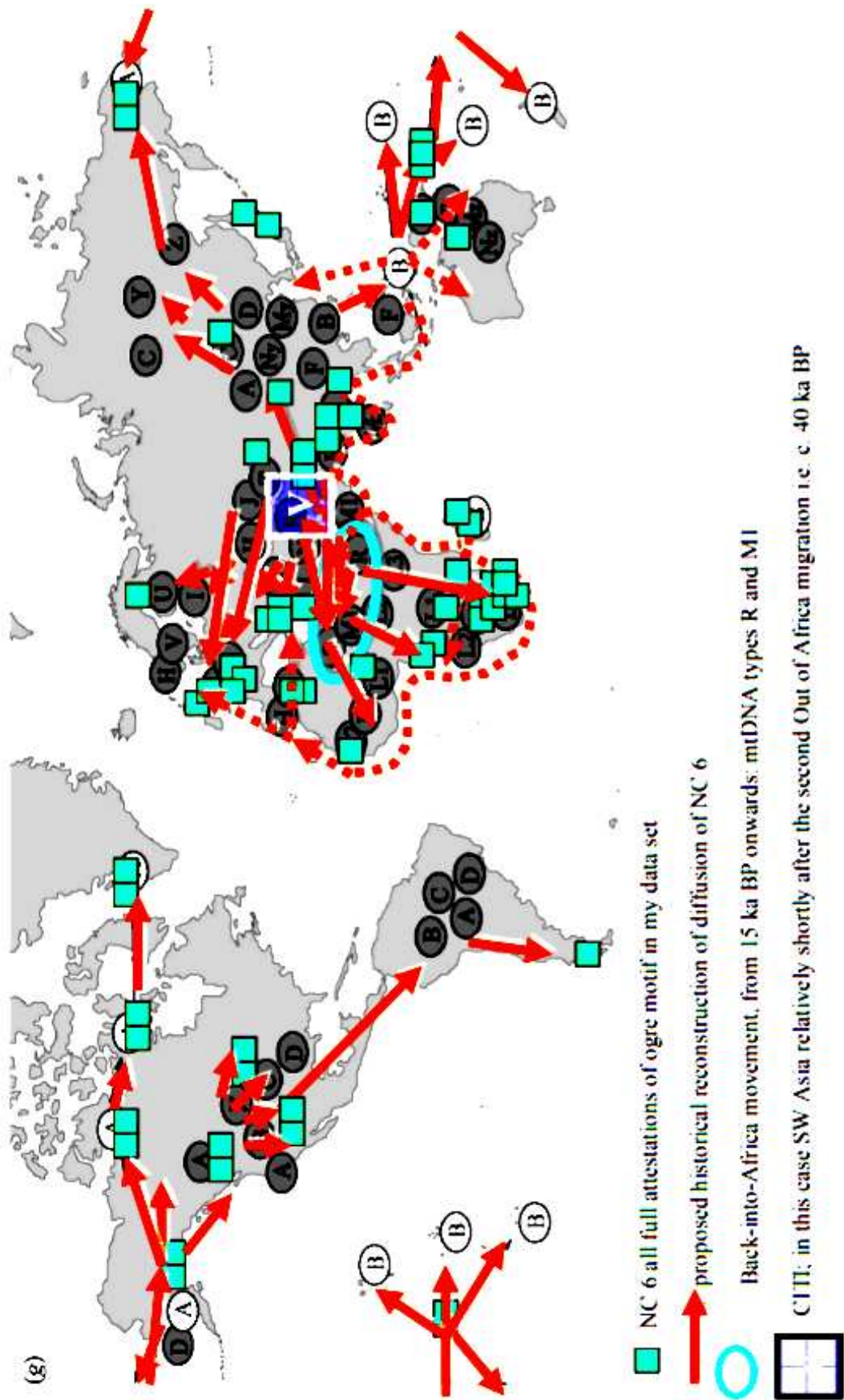


Fig. 2. Historical reconstruction of NarCom 5: Rescue from the Ogre (now discarded)

The Khoi-San attestations have been claimed (Cavalli-Sforza et al. 1994; now this claim is rather obsolete) to have a Central Asian as well as an African (in the sense of pre Out of Africa) background; but even so they may echo very ancient motifs carried out of Africa by N -- so in principle they may still reflect pre Out of Africa motifs, *i.e.* the contents of Pandora's Box. NarCom 6, however heterogeneous in its manifestations in historical times, appears to be very old (at least 40 ka, which is when we can trace it to Central Asia); yet I would not go as far as to include this NarCom in Pandora's Box.

To these contradictory implications in the sub-Saharan African attestations we must add the possible influence of the Back into Africa migration, of which the Khoi-San case may offer an example; but so do the Maasai. Moreover, nearly all other African attestations are in the Niger-Congo realm, which I consider permeated with Back-into-Africa (and potentially Sunda!) elements.

The Dogon attestation of NarCom 6 is interesting. Willis has identified that particular (mainly northern) section of the Niger-Congo speaking area who do not belong to the Bantu-speaking sub-family, as especially rich in elaborate and sophisticated mythologies that, he says, rival those of West Asia and Ancient Europe. The Dogon are a case in point, and remain so, even when we compensate for the scholarly critique that Griaule and Dieterlen's accounts of the Dogon have elicited. I am inclined to see this section of non-Bantu Niger-Congo speakers are largely a manifestation of 'Back into Africa' effects, and do not consider the ogre element here as a genuine and reliable indication of pre Out of Africa mythology.

By the same token, the many attestations of NarCom 6 from among Bantu speakers I would consider a Back into Africa effect rather than a revelation of pre Out of Africa mythology. All attestations, even those in the interior, are conveniently situated on the hypothetical routes of Sunda expansion.

An important consideration in my decision to deny NarCom 6 inclusion in Pandora's Box is contained in the above introduction to this NarCom. Clearly, the ogre theme is complex, contradictory, multidimensional, and secondary rather than original. It is probably not a NarCom in its own right, but the simplified, bowdlerised, 'poor man's' echo of simpler and more original NarComs. One could imagine that this is the form in which cosmogonic myths, featuring the Primal Waters or the origin of Being from inside the Earth, where cast in a simplified form suitable for the consumption by non-initiates or neophytes.

Overlooking the evidence and the above chain of considerations, I propose to situate the origin of NarCom 6 in West to Central Asia, c. 40 ka BP, in the context of mtDNA type N, where it was a derivative from more fundamental NarComs, notably those of 'the Primal Waters' (= NarCom 11) and of 'the Earth' (= NarCom 10), both in Pandora's Box. With this considerable antiquity, and its close affinity with fundamental NarComs which themselves did originate from Pandora's Box, it stands to reason the NarCom 6 followed the subsequent expansion of Anatomically Modern Humans. Thus this NarCom 6 ramified all of Eurasia, where it can be found either as implied or in full form featuring a literal ogre. Expansion into NE and SE Asia, the Americas, and finally Oceania was largely due to the spread of Anatomically Modern Humans specifically carrying mtDNA types A and B. Spread into Northern and sub-Saharan Africa was partly (perhaps largely) due to the Back into Africa migration from Central and West Asia; but, throughout Africa, also with the added effect of the Sunda migration.

The latter may also have helped, to some extent, to disseminate NarCom 6 in North Africa, Western Europe (especially Nordic Europe), and the Eastern Mediterranean especially the Aegean.

That the theme of the ogre is complex and widespread is also clear from the fact that it seems to underly a great many of *Grimm's Tales* when considered in terms of the types of fairy tales classified by Aarne and Thompson, even though distributed over a considerable number of different categories:

Grimm No.	German Title	Aarne-Thompson Type (type titles not given resemble the tales' titles)
5	Der Wolf und die sieben jungen Geißlein	Type 123
15	Hänsel und Gretel	Type 327A. Includes an episode of type 1121, Burning the Witch in Her Own Oven
21	Aschenputtel	Type 510A
26	Rotkäppchen	Type 333, Red Riding Hood
27	Die Bremer Stadtmusikanten	Type 130, Outcast Animals Find a New Home
37	Daumesdick	Type 700, Tom Thumb. Includes an episode of type 41, Overeating in the Pantry
46	Fitchers Vogel	Type 311, The Heroine Rescues Herself and Her Sisters. Similar to type 312, Bluebeard
47	Von dem Machandelboom	Type 720, My Mother Killed Me; My Father Ate Me
50	Dornröschen	Type 410, Sleeping Beauty
56	Der Liebste Roland	Type 1119, Ogres Kill Their Own Children, followed by type 313C, The Girl Helps the Hero Flee; the Forgotten Fiancée
60	Die zwei Brüder	Type 567A, The Magic Bird Heart; followed by type 303, The Blood Brothers. Includes an episode of type 300, The Dragon Slayer
65	Allerleirauh	Type 510B, A King Tries to Marry His Daughter
66	Häsichenbraut	Type 311, The Heroine Rescues Herself and Her Sisters
73	Der Wolf und der Fuchs	Type 41, Overeating in the Pantry
79	Die Wassernixe	Type 313A, The Girl Helps the Hero Flee
81	Bruder Lustig	Includes episodes of type 785, Who Ate the Lamb's Heart?; type 753A, The Unsuccessful Resuscitation; type 330B, The Devil in the Sack; type 330*, Entering Heaven by a Trick;
88	Das singende springende Löweneckerchen	Type 425C, Beauty and the Beast
89	Die Gänsemagd	Type 533
90	Der junge Riese	Type 650A. Introduced with an episode of type 700, Tom Thumb
110	Der Jude im Dorn	Type 592, Dancing in Thorns
113	De beiden Königeskinner	Type 313C, The Girl Helps the Hero Flee; the Forgotten Fiancée
121	Der Königssohn, der sich vor nichts fürchtet	Type 590, The Magic Belt; and type 401A, The Enchanted Princess in Her Castle
122	Der Krautesel	Type 567, The Magic Bird Heart. Similar to type 566, Fruit That Grows Horns (Fortunatus)
137	De drei schwatten Prinzessinnen	Similar to type 401A, The Enchanted Princess in Her Castle
138	Knoist un sine dre Sühne	Type 1965. Includes an episode of type 1963, Sailing in a Bottomless Boat
139	Dat Mäken von Brakel	Type 1476A, Praying to the Statue's Mother
140	Das Hausgesinde	Type 1940, Extraordinary Names

141	Das Lämmchen und Fischchen	Type 450, Little Brother, Little Sister
142	Simeliberg	Type 676, Open Sesame
146	Die Rübe	Types 1960D, The Giant Vegetable; and 1689A, Two Presents for the King. Includes an episode of type 1737, Trading Places with the Trickster in a Sack
163	Der gläserne Sarg	Type 410, Sleeping Beauty
166	Der starke Hans	Type 650A, The Young Giant; and type 301A, The Quest for the Vanished Princesses
174	Die Eule	Type 1281, Burning the Barn to Destroy an Unknown Animal
183	Der Riese und der Schneider	Type 1049, The Heavy Ax; 1053, Shooting Wild Boars; and 1051, Springing with a Bent Tree
186	Die wahre Braut	Type 510, The Persecuted Heroine; followed by type 884, The Forsaken Fiancée
189	Der Bauer und der Teufel	Type 1030, Man and Ogre Share the Harvest
193	Der Trommler	Type 400, The Quest for a Lost Bride; and type 313C, The Girl Helps the Hero Flee; the Forgotten Fiancée. Includes an episode of type 518, Quarreling Giants Lose Their Magic Objects
196	Oll Rinkrank	Similar to type 311, The Heroine Rescues Herself and Her Sisters
197	Die Kristallkugel	Type 552A, The Girls Who Married Animals. Includes episodes of type 302, The Giant Whose Heart Was in an Egg, and type 518, Quarreling Giants Lose Their Magic Objects
198	Jungfrau Maleen	Type 870, The Entombed Princess

Table 1. The ogre motif in the Grimm's tales

What we often see is that the protagonist is a young hero, and the main beneficiary of his rescuing action is his mother.⁶ There is an echo here of the standard (*e.g.* Pelasgian) cosmogony in which the Mother of the Waters first give birth to a male child, then mates with the latter in order to produce the entire world as their offspring.

Incarceration or enclosure in a box or coffin is a widespread form of confinement, so in principle when the Ancient Egyptian god Set lures, and locks, his brother into a coffin this is another application of the ogre theme. Also when the chaos-associated fraternal god Set locks Isis in the weaving room (the same story is told in Japan, with the weaving sun-goddess Amaterasu and her tempestuous brother Susanoo), this is essentially an ogre story. But by the same token, the confinement of the Flood Hero Noah (Utnapishtim), all of his family, and specimens of all animal species, in the Ark is a related theme. So is Jonah (in the Bible book of that name) being swallowed by the whale and subsequently spit out – and the same fate undergone by two Aboriginal taboo-breaking women at the hands of the rainbow serpent (Cotterell 1989: 179). All forms of rescue and liberation, *e.g.* those associated with Redeemers such as Heracles, the Dioscuri, Jesus of Nazareth, the Buddhist conception of the Bodhisattva, and redeemer figures known from Native North American mythologies, may have some implied aspect of the ogre mytheme in them. In order to reduce the available

⁶ Jungian psychology (Jung 1991b) suggests that the 'young hero and his mother' theme is an archetype anchored, not so much in the historic ramifications of global comparative mythology, but in the universal subconscious of Anatomically Modern Humans or perhaps of all humans, dictated by the universal workings of the human mind. A similar position is taken by Jobling 2001. The very spotted and uneven global distribution of the theme strongly suggests otherwise.

data, I have limited myself – admittedly in an artificial fashion, which may not do justice to the data set as a whole – to narratives in which explicitly the term ‘ogre’ is explicitly being used.⁷ That term is often used in a non-mythological sense to denote villains, mass murderers, cannibals, and especially perpetrators of child abuse, etc. (e.g. Ealy 2012; Lévi-Strauss 1989; Tournier 1997); and especially in a literary and scientific context add a pejorative dimension to any expression, and then becomes equivalent to ‘spectre, demon’. Ogre is also the name of a commonly used computer programme. All these non-mythological uses are outside our present scope.

It is remarkable that quite a few ogre narratives derive from West Asia. Since this is also the region where, some 30 ka BP, Neanderthals had their last dealings with Anatomically Modern Humans (Anatomically Modern Humans) before the former became extinct, I have sometimes ventured to thought that the ogre (a fundamentally alien and inimically form of being) may have been a Neanderthal mytheme, or a mytheme keeping the memory of encounters with Neanderthaloids alive among Anatomically Modern Humans.

Among the many East West parallels in mythology which we consider in Part II of my book *Sunda Pre and Protohistorical Continuity Between Asia and Africa* (2020), we have to consider the mytheme of cosmogony being delayed because the birth channel is perpetually obstructed by the incessant mating of Heaven and Earth – a narrative we find in Graeco-Roman mythology (Hesiod), among the Yoruba of Nigeria, and in Polynesia. As a metaphor of the state of non-being on the verge of cosmogony, also here the ogre myth is implicitly manifest.

The following Table presents the various attestations of the ogre mytheme with their sources, as a basis for further distributional analysis.

no. (with lacunae)	reference ⁸	details	group and period	comments
70	Desparmet 1909-1910.		Algeria	
130	Anonymous, n.d., Tribal Folktales	yes, ogre tales	Andaman Islands	
98	van der Sluijs n.d.	Kalunga-Ngombe (male ogre, king of the underworld; Angola): Sudika-Mbambi demands from Kalunga-Ngombe, the king of the underworld, his daughter. This daughter was kidnapped by Kinioka kia Tumba.	Angola	in regional Bantu languages, <i>kalunga</i> = grave and <i>ngombe</i> = cattle; so, interestingly, we have the same association between the underworld and cattle which we also find in Graeco-Roman /Etruscan mythology concerning

⁷ I have refrained from including in the data set: the ogre cases listed in: MacCulloch 1915, but even so I am confident that I have captured the principal relevant cases.

⁸ I will succinctly mention only the most obvious classical references. The present argument is a study of transcontinental relations, not a compendium of Graeco-Roman mythology, of which there are many excellent ones, including the monumental *Pauly-Wissowa Realencyclopädie der klassische Altertumswissenschaft*, with many revisions and additions, and a recent new edition as *Der Neue Pauly*. Also see encyclopaedic collections specifically on classical mythology, e.g. Grimal 1990; Smith 1878; Atsma 2000-2008; Bell 1982; Bullfinch 1881; March 1998; Moncrieff & Moncrieff 1912; Feder 1970; Grant & Hazel 1973; Tripp 1974; Zimmerman 1966,

				Cacus, Hades, Plutus. In Nkoya mythology, Tumba is the ancient Plain of Kings
43	Cotterell 1989	ogre: Aboriginal: rainbow serpent Yurlunyer swallows to female taboo breakers but later spits them out after council with other snakes; this is a much represented motif in Aboriginal art	Australia	
71	Eickelkamp 2004a, 2004b		Australia, Central	
85a	Lacoste-Dujardin 1983 1986		Berber	
85b	Lacoste-Dujardin 1983 1986		Corsica	
124	Werner 1933	Jonah and the Whale (Bible)	Bible World	
125	Werner 1933	ogre story	Cameroon : Duala,	
57	Cotterell 1989: 223	Mot ('Death') ⁹ lord of death, born from the Primal Egg from Air and Chaos; Ba'al is invited by Mot, dies in the underworld; Anat brings him back, killing Mot	Canaan	
40	Cotterell 1989	Nu Wa is the heroine of the (South) Chinese Flood myth. The story as told is reminiscent of the Grimm story of the wolf and the seven kids: the thunder god is captured in a cave by father, but father goes to market, and children are persuaded to release thunder god, who then asks for a sip of water, bursts out of cage, returns to Heaven, gives the children a tooth from which an enormous gourd will grow [stalk	China	

⁹ In passing we detect here a possible Ancient World echo in Nkoya mythology, among many others (van Binsbergen 2010, 2020): Mwaat Yamvo ('Lord Death') had imposed his domination of the earliest Nkoya kings, and had confined them to a humiliating place at the capital, near the pig sties. From here the kings broke away to escape from male genital mutilation and to establish their own kingdoms. In the process they were pursued by Mwaat Yamvo's warriors of the Humbu ethnicity, who sought to re-impose circumcision – in vain, as the narrative claims, but in actual fact the custom was still followed in Nkoya royal circles right up to 1900 CE. Cf. van Binsbergen 1992, 1993. However, several layers of historical and mythological provenance are superimposed in Nkoya mythology (as in most other mythologies, I submit), and by another re-reading the story of the Humbu War is a reminiscence of proto-Nkoya kings, with their orchestras (or being prominent South Asian musicians themselves) fleeing South Asia and forced circumcision at the advance of the Muslim Moghul rulers in the first half of the 2nd mill. CE. Cf. van Binsbergen 2010, 2015b.

		into haven, as bridge / tower theme; also <i>cf.</i> the sowing of teeth by Graeco-Roman Kadmos], and father builds an iron boat in anticipation of disaster - that boat and gourd with children are floating on Flood, but when Flood suddenly recedes, the father crashes in the boat to his death, but children survive		
95	Ting 1978		China	
34	Cotterell 1989	p. 113: Jesus's descent into hell = ogre motif	Christianity : Early	
82	Hulstaert 1971		Congo : Mongo,	
109	Willis 1994	Nut swallows her children, the sun [ogre motif]	Egypt, Ancient	
111	Willis 1994	p. 49 also Isis is a divine weaver: Set has locked her into the weaving room in order to weave a shroud for Osiris, but Isis escapes - ogre motif	Egypt, Ancient	
42	Cotterell 1989	ogre: the vessel from which things are released (<i>cf.</i> Ark, Osiris) is related to ogre theme - but that vessel often turns out to be the Earth ¹⁰	Egypt, Ancient	
115	Hoffman 1986	'In addition to the central adulterous loves of Lancelot and Guinevere and Tristram and Isode, Malory's <i>Morte Darthur</i> includes, at least implicitly, a variety of sexual experiences including cannibalism, castration, intercourse with demons, incest, lesbianism, matricide...'	England : Medieval	
53	Cotterell 1989	Ginnungagap: 'wild and empty' pre-cosmogonic chaos as ogre	Europe : Nordic	<i>cf.</i> Genesis 1:2 'And the Earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.'
67	Cotterell 1989	239: the ogre: Loki and his faithful wife Sigun were themselves locked in a cave until Ragnarok	Europe : Nordic	
37	Cotterell 1989	p. 121 New wall for Asgard (the realm of the Ases), the builder is a giant in disguise helped by a marvellous mare [= Poseidon?]; Loki becomes a stallion and thus	Europe : Nordic, Ancient	possible parallelism with the Hidden sun theme of Amaterasu etc., <i>cf.</i> Witzel 2005

¹⁰ We hit here upon the illuminating insight that the male child which the Mother of the Waters produces in the first place, *Land* – by the cosmology of the Separation of Water and Land which seems to have prevailed in the Upper Palaeolithic prior to the establishment of the even more successful and more permanent Cosmology of the Separation of Heaven and Earth.

		begets Sleipnir. Loki is locked up in a cave		
5	Ashliman 1998-2005	The devil in the sack is transformation of ogre	Europe, Early Modern	The theme of the ogre is complex and widespread. For instance, it may be argued to underly a great many of Grimm's Tales when considered in terms of the types of fairy tales classified by Aarne and Thompson, even though distributed over a considerable number of different categories
89	Lovell-Smith 2002	Bluebeard and other ogre's housekeepers	Europe, Early Modern	
93	Tatar 2014	The Boy Steals the Ogre's Treasure	Europe, Early Modern	offers Aarne-Thompson numbers and references
6	Ashliman 1998-2005	no. 166 Strong Hans Der starke Hans Type 650A, The Young Giant; and type 301A, The Quest for the Vanished Princesses OGRE;	Europe, Early Modern	
7	Ashliman 1998-2005	The Giant Whose Heart Was in an Egg	Europe, Early Modern	interesting combination of giant / ogre theme with cosmic bird and its egg theme
77	Goldberg 2000	Gretel's duck: The escape from the ogre in AaTh 327	Europe, Early Modern ; and comparative	offers many Aarne-Thompson (AaTh) numbers
73	Fester 1980b	possibly ogre	Europe, Upper Palaeolithic	
75	Jakobsson 2009		Europea Middle Ages	
48	Cotterell 1989: 189	Bluebeard	France, Early Modern	
90	McLoughlin 2006	the ogre as depicted by Doré has an eye disease	France, Early Modern literature	
81	Howe et al. 2018		general, psychology	
83	Jobling 2001	'Stories in which a hero defeats a semi-human ogre occur much more frequently in unrelated cultures than chance alone can account for. This claim is supported by a discussion of folktales from 20 cultures and an	general, psychology	such an appeal to innate hence universal human nature makes nonsense of a distribution analysis as basis for historical reconstruction

		examination of the folk-tales from a random sample of 44 cultures. The tendency to tell these stories must, therefore, have its source in the innate human nature discussed by evolutionary psychologists. This essay argues that these stories reinforce innate positive biases in the perception of self and ingroup and negative biases in the perception of outgroups'		
35	Cotterell 1989	p. 117: ogre – all Ouranos' children were imprisoned in Gaia's belly'	Graeco-Roman	non-being, but also: subterranean origin; this is an old theme, also in Kabylia, p. 109, and links up with the NarCom 'From the Earth, the Earth as primary
32	Cotterell 1989; Euripides 1949	p. 232: from the ogre: Helen was hidden in a cave by Proteus, while he sends her substitute to Troy!	Graeco-Roman	
36	Cotterell 1989; Hesiod, <i>Theogonia</i>	also Kronos swallows his children at birth, in his turn - this is also ogre motif	Graeco-Roman	
38	Cotterell 1989	Minotaur: this is not the bull sent by Poseidon, but a son of that bull by Minos's Queen Pasiphaë, 'the All-Shining', i.e. Sun or Moon dit is niet de stier de Poseidon zoon, maar een zoon van die stier bij Pasiphae	Graeco-Roman	
38a	Cotterell 1989	the Cretan labyrinth is another metaphore of the ogre	Graeco-Roman	
41	Cotterell 1989; Hesiod, <i>Theogonia</i>	Gaia and Ouranos: so much love-making that Gaia's children could not escape from her womb; Kronos emasculates his father, making room: escape from ogre, separation of Heaven and Earth. Kronos pushes farther up to the sky, so that Kronos becomes equivalent to Ancient Egyptian Shu.	Graeco-Roman	
44	Cotterell 1989; Willis 1994; Hesiod, <i>Theogonia</i>	ogre: Kronos swallows his own children ; Zeus liberates himself and his brothers	Graeco-Roman	
46	Cotterell 1989; Diodorus Siculus 4.7.6, 4.8.3	p. 182: ogre: Aeolus' bag of winds	Graeco-Roman	
47	Cotterell 1989	box, ogre: Arsinoë was shut up in a chest by her brothers after the latter slayed Alkmaeon	Graeco-Roman	
51	Cotterell 1989; Hyginus,	ogre: Selene's (the Moon) mortal lover Endymion, brought to	Graeco-Roman	

	Fabulae 271; Ovid, <i>Heroides</i> 15.89 f., 18.59 f.; Seneca, <i>Phaedra</i> 309 f., 422 f., 786 f.; Anonymous, <i>Selene</i>	eternal sleep in a cave		
52	Cotterell 1989; Hesiod <i>Theogonia</i> ; Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> , 15	ogre: = Chaos (Greek)	Graeco-Roman	
54	Cotterell 1989; Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> , VIII: 183–235	p. 208: ogre: Daedalus and Icarus escape from Minos' captivity	Graeco-Roman	
59	Cotterell 1989; Homer, <i>Odyssey</i> ; Euripides, <i>Cyclops</i>	p. 232: Polyphemus son of Poseidon, as ogre; Odysseus effects the escape of his companions and himself	Graeco-Roman	
61	Cotterell 1989, Euripides, <i>Helena</i> ; Homer, <i>Odyssey</i> iv.430 f.	p. 232: Proteus, 'son' of Poseidon: shapeshifter, replaced Helen by a dummy sent to Troy, keeping her safe at the isle of Pharos opposite the later Alexandria – an enigmatic turn; cf. Shihoka Nalinanga en his magical seductress (<i>Likota Iya Bankoya</i> – van Binsbergen 1988, 1992)	Graeco-Roman	
64	Cotterell 1989; Apollodorus, <i>Bibliotheca</i> , 11.5-7	ogre motif: Zeus in the Diktaean Cave, Crete	Graeco-Roman	
92	Mondi 1983	Homer's cyclopes	Graeco-Roman	
118	Plutarch, <i>Vitae parallelae</i> , <i>Theseus</i>	Theseus slays the Minotaur	Graeco-Roman	
17	Cotterell 1989; Hesiod, <i>Theogonia</i>	Zeus tricks his mistress Metis (pregnant with Athena) into becoming a fly, ¹¹ then swallows here, so that Athena has to be born (as a 'leg child') from her father's head	Graeco-Roman	double ogre motif
18	Cotterell 1989	117 father eats child = ogre theme,	Graeco-	

¹¹ The comparative mythology of the fly is not extensive enough to readily explain this detail. In West Asia the fly with its shimmering reflection of the sun light on its wings was a solar and cosmogonic evocation (Dräffkorn Kilmer 1987). In New Kingdom Ancient Egypt a golden fly was a token of great valour sporadically issued to soldiers. In the Syro-Palestinian Levant the fly was the familiar or alter-ego of Ba'al-ze-Bub, 'Lord of Flies', with negative, satanical connotations in the Bible world (as any actually or potentially dethroned god from the perspective of a later dispensation), but in fact a primal god.

		Kronos / children of Gaia [or Rhea] ; " Ouranos and children of Gaia [or Rhea = Cybele]	Roman	
20	Cotterell 1989; Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> III.308-312; Hyginus, <i>Fabulae</i> 179; Nonnus, <i>Dionysiaca</i> 8.178-406; Anonymous, <i>Semele</i>	Zeus swallows Semele, the pregnant mother of Dionysus, so that the latter must be born of his thigh as a leg child	Graeco-Roman	
24	Cotterell 1989; Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> ,	Adonis delivered from a tree = wooden encasement : his mother Myrthe had become a tree	Graeco-Roman	there is close similarity with Osiris locked in a coffin by the latter's brother Set
25	Cotterell 1989	Osiris, trying out a coffin, and imprisoned in it by Seth (Plutarch 1934-1935)	Graeco-Roman . Ancient Egyptian	although Plutarch's account of Isis and Osiris has met with much scepticism from scholars, yet many Egyptologists agree that it tallies with much older, authentically Egyptian sources (Richer 2001; Hopfner 1940-1941).
13	Conrad 1999	blinding the one eyed ogre in Western and Turkish traditions	Graeco-Roman	
14	Homer, <i>Odyssey</i>	Polyphemus as ogre	Graeco-Roman	
30c	Cotterell 1989	also ogre theme is : descent into the underworld of Odysseus (<i>Odyssey</i> , XI)	Graeco-Roman	
30d	Cotterell 1989	also ogre theme is : descent into the underworld of Heracles	Graeco-Roman	
74	Fontenrose 1980 / 1959	Syleus, a Lydian ogre: pp. 110, 112 f.; compared with Mot, p. 137; with Antaios, p. 331	Graeco-Roman : Lydia / N.W. Asia Minor	
56	Cotterell 1989	p. 219: ogre: Maruts, born from shattered embryo, meant to remain in Didi's womb for a 100 years and become stronger than Indra	India	
68	Cotterell 1989	p. 246: Vrtra: huge snake, ogre motif, swallowed Indra, but the gods gagged Vrtra so that Indra could jump out and kill Vrtra with the thunderbolt	India	
88	Lorimer & Lorimer 1919: No. 51		Iran	

39	Cotterell 1989	p. 130: ogre: Mithra emerged from rock with knife and torch, killing of the bull in the cave	Iran / Roman Empire	
65	Cotterell 1989	p. 237: ogre: St Patrick gets rid of a snake by enticing it into a box and drowning it	Ireland	
3	Burton 1893: The Voyages of Sindbad the Seaman	this is clearly an extended Flood story. The hero is shipwrecked time and again, and is confronted with the destructive mythical force of the sea in very many different shapes, e.g. as the Old Man of the Sea, which constitutes illustrations of some of my principal NarComs including the ogre. The pious Islamic dressing cannot take away the awareness of an very ancient Flood story. Includes many references to the Odyssey, e.g. Lotophagi and Polyphemus	Islam, early 2 nd mill.	
101	Warner 1997		Italy, Early Modern	
16	Cotterell 1989	66: Amaterasu sun goddess, reversed ogre motif: she does not want to come out of the cave = weaving room	Japan	
94	Thomson at al. 1885, Japanese fairy tale, no.18: Ogre's arm.		Japan	
79	Gorfain & Glazier 1978		Kenya	
2	Willis 1994; Cotterell 1989	trickster Heitsi-Eibib, in confrontation with Ga-gorib [= leopard] above a pit; the latter is apparently also some kind of ogre	Khoi / San, Southern Africa	
78	Goldman 1998		Melanesia	
9	Cavendish c.s. 1991 / 1980	p. 278	Melanesia incl. Papua New Guinea	
62	Cotterell 1989	p. 232: ogre: Qasavara, Banks Isl., Melanesia; Qasavara kills Qat's brothers; Qat kills Qasavara and revives the brothers from bones, invites the bones to laugh	Melanesia : Banks Isl	shamanistic motif; Banks Isl. has only been inhabited for c. 3,000 year
10	Chakravarti-Gigibori 1974		Melanesia : Papua New Guinea	
30a	Cotterell 1989; Buccallati 1982	p. 105: Inanna's descent into the underworld	Mesopotamia ;	Inanna's handmaiden (or vizir) effects her return, and then she appoints Dumuzi as substitute; cf. Odysseus, who also descended into Hades
11	Chen Gang-	Mangus must defeat the sor, an	Mongolia	

	long 2006	evil object, then becomes a white elephant	and Tibet	
106	Junod 1897: 198, 200.		Mozambique: Baronga	
105	Werner 1933	p. 220 : the giant Ngumbangumba is killed by the boy Bokenyane, who, like Kachirambe, is produced from an abscess on his mother's leg [again a leg child] (...) Bokenyane first hit the ogre with an arrow, and the other two went on shooting at him till he died. It was the mother who cut the body open-in this case with an axe. The conclusion is somewhat unusual. After the people had begun rebuilding their villages they asked who was their deliverer; the mother answered, "It is Bokenyane." They gave the three brothers five wives apiece, and then chose Bokenyane for their chief, because it was he who had shot the first arrow.	Mozambique Baronga	
104	Werner 1933	In the Delagoa Bay region the 'Swallowing' (or 'Engulfing') Monster theme is represented, in a somewhat different form, by two tales [2]: in one a little herd-boy, swallowed by a cannibal ogre, made him so uncomfortable that the ogre's own companions, with his consent, cut him open and thus released-not only the boy, but all the people and cattle previously swallowed.	Mozambique coast	
104a	Grimm brothers, 1812-1815; Ashliman 1998-2005	Little Red Riding Hood: the hunter cuts open the wolf's belly and finds her alive and intact	Central Europe, Early Modern	
112	Willis 1994: 233	the Navaho myth of the liberation of the game animals from the house of Crow = the black God	North America : Navaho	
29	Cotterell 1989	Pueblo Indians, as no. 112, but rescue not from cave but from nut	North America : Pueblo	
28	Cotterell 1989	Zuñi Poshaiyankaya, first human to find an escape from the cave	North America : Zuni	
108	Willis 1994: 28	Ogre, two sisters were eaten, but with mussel shells they cut themselves free from the belly	Oceania	
50	Cotterell 1989	Patagonia: El-lal, hero; ogre: father, wishing to eat El-lal, tore his from his mother's womb; saved by Rat	Patagonia	gadfly as an ogre-related theme also in Zeus's swallowing Athena's mother

		in hole; inventor of bow and arrows, killed a giant by taking the form of a gadfly; rises to Heaven on the wings of a swan		Metis; swan is reminiscent of the ancient Mother of the Waters creator goddess
41a	Cotterell 1989; Willis 1994	incessant love-making of Heaven and Earth prevents the world to be born: Maori, Tuamotu Isl, Hawaii, Tahiti	Polynesia: Maori, Tuamotu Isl, Hawaii, Tahiti	
72	Fairbrother 1924	4 brothers and 4 ogres	Polynesia	
84	Karipa Te Whetu, 1897	Kame-Tara and his Ogre Wife	Polynesia : Maori, New Zealand	
102	Werner 1933		South Africa : Basutu= Sotho	
55	Cotterell 1989; Werner 1933	Cotterell p. 213 ogre: Kholumulume / Khodumodumo, or Kammapa	South Africa : Sotho	
119	Theal 1886	ogre story	South Africa : Xhosa	
120	Werner 1933	Untombinde ogre story	South Africa : Zulu	
69	Cotterell 1989: 248	Kanahuhu was Zuñi Pueblo shaman and culture hero. Helped the first member of his tribe from underground caves to the surface	America, North: Zuni	
60	Cotterell 1989	p. 232: ogre motif: Pueblo Zuñi indians: first man Poshaiyankayo: born from one of the four wombs created by god of Heaven and god of Earth; womb encased in slime. Poshaiyankayo requested the creator god to release the creation	America, North: Zuni	ogre = birth , coming into being
76	Geider 1992		Swahili	
122	Werner 1933	ogre tree	Swahili	
123	Werner 1933	ogre story	Tanganyika, C. District	
27	Cotterell 1989	ogress in story of Avalokiteshvara in Tibet	Tibet	

Table 2. Referenced attestations of ogre mythologies world-wide

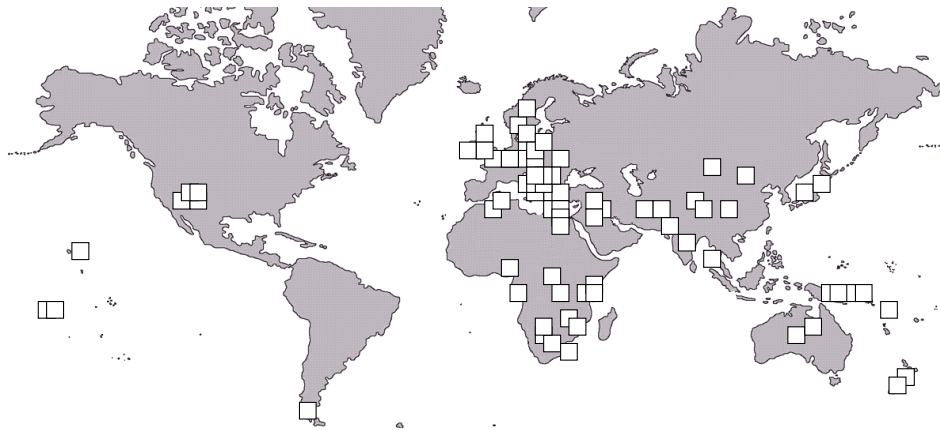
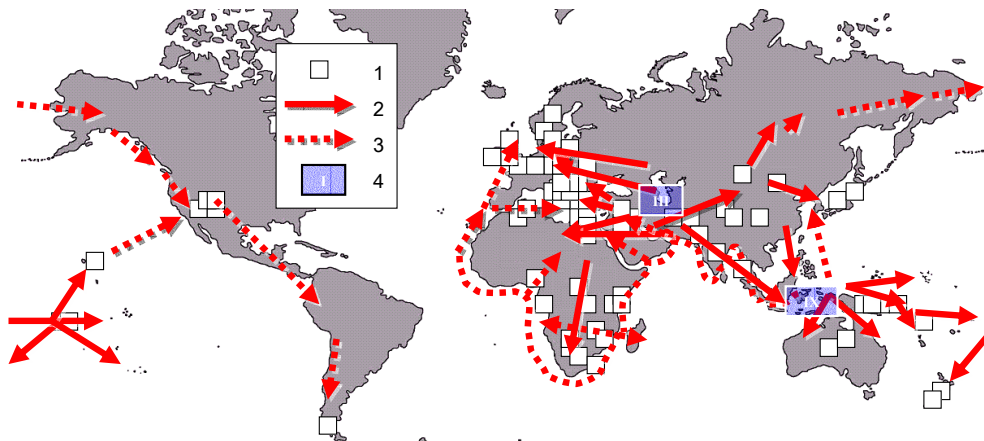


Fig. 2. Attestations of NarCom 6 = ogre, all categories lumped together

The paucity of attestations in the Americas, and even in most of Asia apart from the South East, confirms our idea that this mytheme did not find itself in Pandora's Box. I suggest we take CITI III to be its origin. Against the massive attestations in sub-Saharan Africa, the Mediterranean and the rest of Europe, the relative paucity elsewhere suggests that the mytheme was not so much transmitted by the Pelasgian cross mechanism, but was subsequently redefined and started on a specific new transmission trajectory in South East Asia (CITI IX). From there the mytheme was spread, on the wings of Sunda expansion, all over Oceania (and perhaps, sporadically, further afield: to eastern North America and Patagonia, while also *some* of the attestations along the western Pacific (Japan) and the African coasts of the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean, perhaps even all the way up North, once more into the Mediterranean, and to the British Isles and Scandinavia, may be due to Sunda expansion.



Legend:
 1 NarCom 6 all attestations of ogre motif in my data set
 2 proposed historical reconstruction of diffusion of NarCom 6
 3. as (2) but even more conjectural
 4 CITI III: W Asia c. 40 ka BP mtDNA Type N ; and IX, Sunda, c. 7 ka BP.

Fig. 4. Proposed historical reconstruction of the spread of NarCom 6, 'Rescue from the ogre'

This concludes our analysis of the ogre mytheme. Our immensely time-consuming efforts have led to a meagre result: in the case of this one mytheme, a moderate Sunda effect cannot be ruled out.

14.2. Digression from the ogre discussion: The lexical near-equivalence of 'Earth' and 'snake' in Indo-European as listed in the Tower of Babel etymological database

Above I hinted at the remarkable Indo-European etymology linking 'snake' and 'Earth', clearly detectable in the *Genesis* myth of the Fall of Man, although that came to us in Hebrew and not in an Indo-European language.

<p>*Borean (approx.) : TVKV, 'Earth' Eurasianic : *DVG-, 'earth' proto-Indo-European: *dhǵhem-, 'Earth' Hittite: tekan n., gen. taknas 'Erde', dagan, tagan 'nieder, zu Boden'; Httite-Luwian takamia 'Erde', Luwian tijammi id. (Friedrich 1932: 204, 220) Tokharian: A tkam, B kem 'Erde' (Adams 1999: 192) Old Indian: kṣāḥ, gen. jmāḥ, gmāḥ, kṣmāḥ, acc. kṣām, instr. jmā, kṣamā, loc. kṣāmi 'ground, Earth', kṣāmya- 'terrestrial' Avestan: zō, gen. zəmo, acc. zaṃ, loc. zəmi 'Erde, Erdboden' Old Greek: khthŌn, -onós f. 'Erde, Erdboden, Land', khthamaló- 'niedrig', neo-khmó- 'neu, ungewöhnlich, fremdartig' Slavic: *zemljā; *zemь Baltic: *žem-i f., *žem-iā f., *žam-iā f. Latin: humus, -i/-ūs f. (/m.) 'Erde, Erdboden', humilis 'niedrig' Other Italic: Oskian hu(n)truis 'inferis', huntrus 'inferos', Umbrian hondomu 'infimo' References: Pokorny 1959-69: I 662 f; Buck n.d.: 16. Comments : Hard to distinguish from the reflexes of *g'hem- #3258. All Italic forms (Latin humus, etc.) may in fact belong there. Afroasiatic : daḳʷ- Sino-Caucasian : *[t]VQV Austrian : Proto-Austronesian) *bitak, *-tak, *litek 'mud; Earth, ground', ?Proto-Austroasiatic) 'sticky' Amerind (misc.) : *tVk- 'dirt' (Bengtson & Ruhlen 1994: 42) African (misc.) : Bantu *-tàkà 'soil'. Reference: Illich-Svitych 1967 / 1965; Bengtson & Ruhlen 1994: 42 *tika (+ North Caucasian) (...)</p>
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Source: based on © Tower of Babel, Starostin Starostin 1998-2008

Table 3. Long-range etymology of the reflexes of *Borean TVKV, 'Earth'

The above comment concerning *g'hem- #3258 refers to (*Tower of Babel*, Indo-European etymology) :

<p>Proto-IE: *g'(h)em-, *g'(h)mēy-, 'snake, worm' Slavic: *zmьjā, *zmьjь, *změjь Baltic: *žema- Albanian: dhémje 'caterpillar' References: Pokorny 1959-69: I 790</p>
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Source: based on © Tower of Babel, Starostin Starostin 1998-2008

Table 4. Semantics 'snake, worm' in Indo-European

Clearly the 'snake' / 'Earth' equivalence does not occur in the other phyla within Eurasiatic

(Tower of Babel, '[Eurasianic /] Nostratic etymology'):

Eurasianic

Altaic: *t' ägo [+ Tungus-Manchu *tuka(la)?]

Kartvelian: *diq-

Dravidian: *TūK-

Eskimo-Aleut: *taɣŋə- (~ -ŋɣ-) ?

References: Illich-Svitych 1967: 342, Illich-Svitych 1971-1984: 1, 220; Dolgopolski, n.d.: 551 *dEqV 'earth' compares Georg[ian] with quite dubious Afroasiatic forms; Dolgopolski n.d.: 233: 1 *t'ogE 'dust, earth (substance)' (Indo-European + somewhat different Altaic. + quite dubious Afroasiatic; 2347 *t'uk[a] 'earth, mud, dust' (Tungus-Manchu + Drav[idian] + Afroasiatic.

Source: © based on Tower of Babel, Starostin Starostin 1998-2008

Afroasiatic appears in some of the relevant sections of the Tower of Babel as SH = Semito-Hamitic

*Table 5. Long-range etymology of the reflexes of *Borean TVKV, 'Earth', continued*

so the etymological equivalence of 'snake' and 'Earth' must be considered to be peculiar to Indo-European only.¹²

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¹² There seems to be a certain Indo-European element in the data and phenomena we are investigating here and in the ogre context in general, but it is hard to put one's finger on it. But for instance, Blažek 2010 considers the P'an-Ku myth to be of Indo-European origin.

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