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The Caucasus: Directions and Disciplines

“The Narts of the Caucasus,  
 a Reconstruction of the Indo-European Storm God”

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**I. Overview**

1. Nart “sagas” are a mixture of old Indo-European lore and local Caucasian themes.
2. They survive across the North Caucasus:
  - Northwest Caucasian peoples
    - Circassians, including Kabardians,
    - Ubykhs,
    - Abkhaz and Abazas
  - Turkic Karachay and Balkar
  - Iranian Ossetians
  - Vai Nakh
    - Chechens
    - Ingush
  - Kartvelian Svans of northernmost Georgia.
3. I will focus on the Northwest corpora.
4. Women are prominent, all knowing, wise, beautiful.
5. Lady Amezan: Circ. /a-mez-a-ne/ the-forest-intimate.prefix-mother
6. Most prominent is the mother of the warband, “Mother of one hundred,” /sete-na+ye/, Circ. /še-q̇ə-ne/, Ubykh /ša-q̇ə-na/, both ‘hundred-sons-mother’

7. The warband mother is married to an aloof, older chieftain.
8. The warband has three distinct heroes:
  - a. Sosruquo, a storm god trickster,
  - b. Pataraz, a moral, pure, and fire-bringing hero,
  - c. (She) (\*)Bartinuquo, a gigantic hunter who saves the chieftain.
9. All three show parallels with other IE heroes.

## II. Remarks on method

1. Contrast folk motifs with inherited material
2. Problem: a myth consists of motifs; a proto-myth will also, otherwise one has not done a proper job of reconstruction
3. This “motif constraint” in comparative mythic reconstruction is analogous to typological constraints on proto-languages.
4. Solution: Motifs are analogous to language universals; it is the encoding of the motif that is inherited.
5. The details are everything! (see Barber and Barber also on this point)
6. These details can jump motifs and appear in new thematic contexts.
7. I shall attempt a reconstruction of a proto-myth of the storm god at the level of sequenced themes.
8. Note:
  - a. Languages typify ethnic groups.
  - b. A reconstructed L attests to a prehistoric ethnic group.
  - c. Myths typify cultural zones.
  - d. A reconstructed myth attests to a prehistoric cultural zone.
  - e. Therefore, one cannot speak of an IE myth, but only of a myth shared by a cultural zone that included PIE.

## III. Summary of the relevant myth(s) - Sosruquo and Sotrash/Totrash

(Colarusso, 2002: 236 – 243, 521-2)

1. NWC relic Storm God myth
2. So-trash, To-trash implies \*Two-astr “two stars”, Morning and Evening Stars,  
(Skr *Tvastr* ‘maker’ from *tvak-tr* must be a folk etymology; see Appendix

on marginal IE, at end).

(Both names must come from a Khotanese or Saka-like form of Iranian, with \*Cw- → Co-, instead of the usual \*Cw- → Cp-.)

3. Sosruquo from a rock (Storm God)
4. sired by Sos (← IE \*k<sup>ʷ</sup>wes- 'breath', Skr *śvas-*, Eng *wheeze*) or Gorgonizh
5. Sosruquo has voice like thunder
6. Totrash is a darkness with eyes that gleam like the Morning and Evening Stars; they are compared to Sirius in brightness.

(Abaza variant:

s-na-pšǎ-yd-ta = yǎ-ḥ<sup>o</sup>a-d sawsrǎq<sup>o</sup>a

I-thither-look-past-as = he-say-past Sosruquo

yǎ-la-k<sup>o</sup>a a-yač<sup>o</sup>á á-pš-ta

his-eye-plural the-star its-look-as

yǎ-k<sup>o</sup>az+k<sup>o</sup>az-ǎyd

they-sjine+shine-dynamic.present

a-šǎ-yač<sup>o</sup>a y-ḥa-y-wá a+wá-y

the-white-star they-change.of.state-grow-present.participle that+distal-  
and

a-ʔá-ra lá tab yǎ-la-k<sup>o</sup>a = yǎ-ḥ<sup>o</sup>a-d

it-so.much-adv dog pan his-eye-pl = he-say-past).

7. First duel:
  - a. Totrash makes Sosruquo plow the sky like a woolen ball (cloud?)
  - b. T makes S plow the earth with his shoulder like a team of oxen.
  - c. T makes S vomit up all the mother's milk that he had ever drunk  
= loss of kinship ties, since mother's milk is symbolic of kinship
  - d. T dirties S's moustache, and S snots like eight oxen = an old mouth  
wound, emasculation
8. Sosruquo begs for mercy.
9. Totrash grants him a reprieve.
10. They agree to meet on Harama Hill.
11. Second duel:
  - a. She says that Totrash was one of 9 brothers.

- b. The other eight are already dead.
- c. Totrash must “follow their path.”
- d. Wise mother Setenaya advises Sosruquo to put bells on his horse.
- e. The bells will frighten Totrash’s horse.
- f. Sosruquo reaches Harama Hill before Totrash.
- g. Sosruquo creates a fog
- h. When Totrash arrives Sosruquo makes his horse ring the bells.
- i. Totrash’s horse rears up.
- j. Totrash rips out its jaws trying to rein it in (shifted version of Indra’s wound)
- k. Sosruquo strikes at him from the fog.
- l. Sosruquo calls Totrash a piglet (late Muslim slur?).
- m. When Totrash begs for mercy Sosruquo says they could go on forever this way
- n. He cuts off Totrash’s head
- o. He brings it to Setenaya.
- p. Setenaya flies into a fury and demands that he take it away to Totrash’s mother.
- q. He brings it to Totrash’s mother.
- r. She calls him ‘a dog’ and throws a spit/knitting needle at him.
- s. It wounds him in the leg.
- t. He is called Lame Sosruquo henceforth.

#### IV. Comparison:

##### 1. Storm god

- NWC: To-trash is a darkness,  
 Sosruquo has a voice of thunder.  
 Sosruquo is a shape changer, and strikes his enemies as a fog.  
 Sosruquo is a degraded storm god.
- Hittite: Zaskhapuna (Hattic name) is the storm god.  
 (\*)Tarhunnash, ‘Conqueror,’ is the storm god  
 (Fortson, p. 26; Watkins p. 316; this is a reconstructed name).
- Hurrian: Teshub is the storm god.

Ireland: Cú Chulainn exhibits bizarre battle 'tremors.'  
(He changes shape.)

He has a deafening, terrifying battle cry.

Russian: Volkh Vseslavjevich changes shape.

He also has a voice of thunder.

## 2. Stony womb

NWC: Sosruquo is born aflame from a rock.

Hitt: --

Hurr: Ubelluri, a substrate from which heaven and earth arise, bears a  
chthonic monster, Ullikumi

(ulli-kumi striker-(of.)kumi, where Teshub lives;

for Ubell-ur *cf.*, Gk *omphalos*, Eng. *navel* – Gilles Gauthier, p.c.)

## 3. Born aflame, heroic heat

NWC: Sosruquo is born aflame

Hitt: --

Hurr: --

India: *tapas*

Iranian: Ossetian Batradz turns red hot as he dances upon his pyre.

Russian: Ilja Murometz sits on a stove for 33 years so that he can perform  
heroic deeds.

Ireland: Lug turns red hot with rage when he accuses the sons of Turan  
of killing his father, Cian.

Cú Chulainn must be dunked in three vats of water to cool him  
of his battle frenzy when he returns from his first exploits.

Greece: Thetis tries to roast the mortality out of her demi-god son,  
Achilles.

Demeter tries to roast the mortality out of Demophoön.

Norse: Thor has a fiery red beard.

Baltic: Lith. Perkūnas, Latv. Pērķōns has a fiery red face,

## 4. God of the forge, the Great Smith

NWC: Satanaya, Sosruquo's mother, is assisted in her delivery by Tlepsh, the god of the forge.

Aynar is the god of the forge in Abkhazian

(/a-yn-ar/ the-great-gerund, 'the great one')

Sosruquo is rendered lame by Totrash's mother, who is outraged at the death of her son.

Smiths are usually lame, so this links Sosruquo with the smithy.

Hitt: --

Hurr: --

Ireland: Cú Chulainn is linked with the forge through Culann.

Finn and his Fiana encounter a young man who is a one-eyed smith (Gregory, 255-6).

Greece: The three original Cyclopes forge Zeus's thunderbolts.

## 5. Quenching and tempering

NWC: Sosruquo is said to be hardened everywhere but his thighs, where the Smith held him with tongs.

Sosruquo is called 'dark,' Circ. /ś'°ac' /, like hardened steel.

Sasruquo says that he is steel, steel alloy (Colarusso 2002: 520-1),

Abaza

a-žǝr s-sʷa-ø-pʷ,

the-steel-my-blood-be-present.stative,

žǝr-ta s-a+l+a+r+č°a-ø-pʷ

steel-adv I-it+into+it-cause-flow-be-pres.stat ('steel alloy').

Hitt: --

Hurr: --

Greece: Achilles' heel

Norse: Sigurd, Saga of the Volsungs (Siegfried in the Nibelungenlied) baths in hot dragon's blood (Fafnir's) to obtain a toughened (steely) skin.

Sigurd is vulnerable only where a leaf landed on his back and

obstructed the dragon's blood.

## 6. Mother of the warband

NWC: Satanaya is "mother of one hundred," "mother of all the Narts."  
(for Circassian and Ubykh forms, see §I.6, above)

Hitt: --

Hurr: Hepa/Hebat (wife of Teshub) is the 'Allmother'

Ireland: Queen Madb honors all the heroes, the three warbands (of Leoghaire, Conall, and Cú Chulainn).

The three Madbs or Brigits appear to be transfunctional.

Iran: Anāhitā is the transfunctional goddess.

Greece: Athena (clearly substratal in origin) is transfunctional.

Russian: (?) Moist, Mother, Earth is a transfunctional formula.

## 7. Marginality of Mother

NWC: Satanaya is from another ethnic group.

Satanaya is raped by a crude shepherd, Gorgonizh, Argwan, Yergwan, all names meaning 'rapist.'

/g°e-r-g°e-n-əʒ/ vagina-loc-stuff-inf-evil,

/e-r-g°e-n/ the-loc-stuff-inf,

/y-e-r-g°e-n/ dir-dative-stuff-inf,

Possible folk etymologies based on Iranian arguwan 'noble'  
(James R. Russell, p.c.)

or by Sos (*cf.*, §§III.2, 4, above) (← IE \*k<sup>y</sup>wes- 'breath', Skr *śvas-*, Eng *wheeze*), with Proto-Indo-Iranian \*šwas-aryānām → Middle-Iranian (Khotanese-like) \*swas-ry-ān, Ossetian *Solan*, with Circassian patronymic, /-ə-q°e/ his.inalienable-son, → \*swas(a)rəq°e), who echoes the Sumerian god of the air and storm, En-lil.

Hurr: Hepa/Hebat is driven from her temple and must assume a lowly role cut off from the other gods.

She must rely upon her mortal helper, Tasmisus, for

information.

- Russian: Mother of Volkh Vseslavjevich is raped by a serpent.  
 Greece: Aphrodite is foreign.  
 Ireland: Gwenwhyver (Irish Findabair) is brought to Arthur's court from another kingdom.  
 Sumerian: En-lil (god of air and storms) rapes Nin-lil (his sister, consort), All-mother, as she is canoeing or as she displays herself to him while she stands on a riverbank (*cf.*, §19, below)

#### 8. Marginality of the young storm god

- NWC: Sosruquo is the result of a rape.  
 Other Narts remain hostile to Sosruquo because he is a bastard.  
 Hitt: Zaskhapuna/\*Tarhunnas assumes a lowly role after defeat.  
 Hurr: After his first defeat Teshub must assume a lowly role.  
 India: Indra is abandoned by other gods during his fight with Vrtra.  
 Indra has some hostility toward the Maruts (who are the sons of Rudra).  
 Greece: Achilles spent most of the Iliad aloof from the other Achaeans.  
 Russian: Heroes, Ilja Muromets and Dobrynja Nikitich, are marginal, non-noble.

#### 9. An older tradition of a serpentine father may lie behind the marginality of mother and son.

- NWC: lightning as a poisonous serpent in Circassian, /š'əbɫe/ (*cf.*, Iroquoian lightning snake totem)  
 Hitt: --  
 Hurr: --  
 India: Indra fights Vrtra. perhaps his cousin, and hence an exemplar of (older) herpatological kinship.  
 Greece: Laocoön and his sons attacked by a divine serpent;  
 Herakles strangling Hera's snakes;  
 Cadmus and Harmonia turning into snakes in their old age.

[Perhaps folkloric (Minoan), but perhaps also an old retained cult theme.]

Russian: Mother of Volkh Vseslavjevich is raped by a serpent.

Norse: Odin turns into a snake to penetrate Hnitbjorg where Meade of Inspirtaion is guarded by Gunloð, Suttung's daughter. Odin seduces Gunloð (Odin's only seduction), but may still be herpatomorphic at the time.

Sumerian: Snake and Eagle

Myth of Etana combines a serpent with an eagle, both living amicably, at first, in a poplar tree beside King Etana's dias.

After a later animosity, the eagle (female) attempts to assist King Etana to find a tree of birth.

#### 10. Chthonic womb

NWC: (?) Sosruquo born from a rock

Hitt: (Ardzinba's work on flaming Anatolian hero babies born from stones or rocks)

Hurr: Kumarbi sires Ullikumi (a stony, diorite giant) on Ubelluri (amorphous base of heaven and earth)

Norse: Hrungrnir fashions Mistcalf of clay.

#### 11. Two eyes (see Appendix for discussion)

NWC: To-str ← 1st wave "para-Tokharian" or "Twastrian"  
(cf. Bangani in Appendix, §2)

Nart Wardana/Wadana has a blind brother, Cwindizh.

Hitt: Zaskhapuna loses his 2 eyes (plus his heart)

Hurr: --

Norse: Odin yields up an eye, but is not blind

Greek: (?) Cyclopes

Note: Zeus loses his sinews after his first duel with Typhon.

Ireland: (?) Cú Chulainn's war tremors.

(?) Fomoirean Balor with his evil eye

One-eyed young smith who encounters Finn and his Fiana

Rome: (?) Horatius Cocles with his evil eye.

## 12. Plowing the sky

NWC: Sosruquo plows the sky like a cotton ball, a cloud.

Hitt: Zaskhapuna is celestial

Hurr: (?) Ea, wise god, sunders heaven from earth by plowing  
or by means of an ancient copper sickle.

## 13. Painful shoulder

NWC: Sosruquo's shoulder hurts from plowing.

Hitt: ---

Hurr: Ubelluri complains of his shoulder hurting when Ea sunders  
Ullikumi from it.

## 14. Chthonic helper (see also §10)

NWC: Sosruquo is thrown to the earth (must plow the earth).

Hitt: Illuyanka lives underground with his sons.

Hurr: Kumarbi begets a chthonic monster, Ullikumi, upon Ubelluri.

Norse: Hrungnir creates Mistcalf from clay to help in his duel with  
Thor.

## 15. Two (aerial) duels

NWC: 2 battles with Totrash, Sosruquo loses first, and wins second;  
Pataraz jumps into the air to fight.

Hitt: 2 battles with Illuyanka, Zaskhapuna loses first against and  
wins second

Hurr: 2 battles, the first, in the air, going badly for Teshub.

India: Indra fights Vrtra, who is atop a mountain, from the air.

Greek: Zeus has two duels with Typhon, losing the first.

## 16. Helping woman, perhaps of lowly status

- NWC: Sosruquo helped by mother.  
S. also helped by Aynar the smith (Abkhaz)  
She-Bartinuquo helped by a lowly woman, Radem, "Wheel."
- Hitt.: Zaskhapuna helped by wife, Zaliyanu (a mountain), and by  
Inara/Inra/Inar, perhaps his daughter, whose mortal  
husband, Hupasiyas, makes Illuyanka drunk.
- Hurr: Hepa/Hebat, wife of Teshub, is frantic about his fist battle.  
She must rely upon her mortal helper, a man named  
Tasmisus, to help her with the other gods.
- India: Indra is helped by an eagle who brings him mead from Tvastr.
- Norse: Loki borrows Freyr's eagle suite to save Idunn from Thjazi, so  
the eagle may be feminine.

## 17. Loss of kinship ties, Mother's Milk

- NWC: Sosruquo is forced by Totrash to vomit up all the mother's milk  
he has ever drunk.
- Hitt: Zaskhapuna's son marries the daughter of Illuyanka and must  
swear allegiance to the dragon.
- Hurr: ---

## 18. Trickery and murder

- NWC: Sosruquo kills Totrash by trickery
- Hitt: Zaskhapuna retrieves his eyes and heart by making his son ask  
Illuyanka for them as a "bride price."
- Hurr: ---
- India; Indra is tricky.  
He uses trickery to kill demon Namuci.  
Indra kills his father, Tvastr, who has mead hidden in a  
mountain.
- Norse: Odin kills Suttung who hides mead in Hnitbjorg mountain.

(Compare Norse *Hnit-* with Greek *Knidos* in Asia Minor.)

19. Outrage at murder of kin

- NWC: Sosruquo kills Totrash and Satanaya becomes furious.  
Eight brothers of Totrash have already been killed.  
Totrash's mother is furious at Sosruquo and wounds him so  
that he is lame.
- Hitt: --
- Hurr: ---
- Sumerian: Bilgames kills Huwawa, (one of 7 brothers) the woodland  
monster, and infuriates the gods, En-lil and Nin-lil (*cf.*,  
Hebrew rendering, Lil(ith)), though the god Utu (sun god,  
grandson of Enlil and Ninlil) knew he was to do so (George  
p. 160)  
Huwawa "should have eaten the bread that you [Bilgames] ate.  
He should have drunk the water that you drank." (En-lil)  
This episode is absent from the Akkadian *Gilgamesh*)
- India: Indra flees in horror after killing Vrtra.  
He staggers backward, then turns and flees.  
Vrtra is his cousin, of herpatomorphic lineage.  
Indra killed his father, who is assumed to have been Tvastr.
- Norse: Thor staggers backward (and dies) after slaying Jörmungand,  
the great serpent.  
This is an echo of Indra's revulsion and flight.  
Thor's staggering backward is truncated because of its death  
function in Ragnarök,  
and because it mimics Odin's falling backward off of Yggdrasil.
- Russian: Dobrynja Nikitich is horrified when he has killed the squid-like  
dragon.  
Again an echo of Indra's revulsion,.

## 20. Filicide

- NWC: (?) Sosruquo is later killed.
- Hitt: Zaskhapuna must kill his own son, who insists that he do so that he may die with the honor of his word.
- Hurr: --
- India: Indra confronts his son.
- Iran: Rostam kills his son, Sohrab
- Ireland: Finn allows Diarmaid, a young Fiana, to die.  
Cú Chulainn is led to kill Con(d)lae, because of Conlae's geasa, (Conlae cannot reveal his identity to an opponent).

## 21. Wound to the mouth

- NWC: Sosruquo's moustaches are dirtied and he snots like plowing oxen.  
Totrash rips out the jaws of his horse.
- Hitt: Zaskhapuna is wounded.
- Hurr; ---
- India: Indra loses his jaws to Vrtra.
- Ireland: As part of Cú Chulainn's war tremors his mouth pulled back to his ears and his liver could be seen flapping in it.

## 22. Golden mouth

- NWC: She Batinuquo can be seen from afar because of his golden moustache that glitters.
- Hitt: --
- Hurr: --
- India: Indra receives prosthetic golden jaws after his wound from Vrtra

## 23. Helping eagle from a mountain

- NWC: Pataraz has a bird fly over his head during his mountain battle.
- Hitt: Zaskhapuna and his wife, Zaliyanu, are mountains.

- Hurr: --
- India: An eagle escapes from a mountain and brings *soma*.  
An eagle brings mead to Indra in his battle with Vrtra.
- Norse: Odin, as an eagle, steals the Mead of Inspiration from a  
mountain, Hnitbjorg.
- Sumerian: Eagle hen helper in myth of King Etana (Knipe)

## 24. Intoxication

- NWC: Sosruquo brings *sana* back from a mountaintop.
- Hitt: Inara makes Illuyanka and his sons drunk so that her father,  
Zaskhapuna can slay them.
- Hurr: --
- India: Indra is aided by mead in his fight with Vrtra, but it is not clear  
who gets to drink it.

## 25. Rival storm gods from rival lineages.

- NWC: Totrash is a dark mass  
Sosrsuquo strikes his enemies from a fog.  
Sosruquo has a voice of thunder.
- Hitt: --
- Hurr: Kumarbi conceives a rivalry with Teshub.  
Rival storm gods, in effect.
- India: Vrtra has his own lightning, etc., and is a cousin of Indra's.  
Vrtra is an *Asura*, while Indra is a *Deva*.
- Norse: Odin and Suttung both have eagle suites, and both dwell in  
lofty settings:  
Odin sits upon Hlidskjalf, the High Seat, and Suttung dwells in  
Hnitbjorg.

## 26. Mark on forehead

- NWC: Sasruquo (Abaza) has a brother-in-law who has a distinguishing  
mark, a half moon, on his forehead (Colarusso 2002: 232).
- Hitt. --

- Hurr. --
- India: Rudra has a third eye.  
Shiva (shifted epithet of Rudra) has a crescent moon on his forehead.
- Norse: Thor acquires a battle wound, a piece of Hrungrir's whetstone in his decisive battle with the giant.  
Groa, the old seeress, cannot remove it because Thor distracts her.  
It seems to have protruded as a crescent.
- Irish: Cú Chulainn's luan laith 'warrior's moon' is of unclear origin.  
A young woman, Youth, bestows a love mark on Diarmaid of the Fiana.

#### V. Proto-Myth

1. There are two storm deities, one benevolent and humanoid, the other malevolent and draconian or herpatomorphic
2. The humanoid one has an marginal mother from a foreign land.
3. The humanoid storm god is conceived when his mother is raped, while she is in or near water, perhaps by a serpent, but a serpent with aerial and storm associations.
4. Her status remains marginal because she is transfunctional and supports all the original warbands (moieties, later Dumézilian functions).
5. The benevolent storm god is young, wields a thunderbolt, and has a voice like thunder (his battle cry).
6. The malevolent storm god is older, monstrous, and also has all the accoutrements of a storm god, hail, lightning bolts, etc., but also venom.
7. The myth has celestial aspects, linking the glowing eyes of one with the Morning and Evening Stars (likened to Sirius).
8. The good storm god is marginal, a bastard, his transfunctional mother having been raped by a shepherd, earlier a serpent with links to a god of air and storms.
9. He is linked to the god of the forge, who befriends his mother.
10. He is born aflame and spends most of his gestation in a rock womb.
11. He is quenched and hardened, but retains a spot of vulnerability.

12. The good storm god starts his life aloof from his peers, and resented by them.
13. He lives with the smith, and only gains integration as head of the warband after his triumph.
14. These two gods engage in two duels, with the benevolent god losing the first.
15. This quarrel may be over the good storm god's eyes, the Morning and Evening Stars.
16. The benevolent god is injured in the mouth and receives a golden mouth, face.
17. The defeated god was made to plow the sky like a cloud, and the earth like an ox.
18. The defeated god asks for a reprieve and is granted one, to resume the duel on another day.
19. The defeated god is forced to yield up his eyes and heart to the victorious, malevolent god. This leaves the benevolent god crippled (*cf.*, Zeus' loss of his tendons to Typhon in his first duel).
20. The defeated god receives the aid of a woman, perhaps lowly or younger, whom he eventually marries or is the offspring of his marriage.
21. The god himself suffers degradation and is relegated to a lowly, if temporary, station.
22. Either he, his daughter, or the god of the forge are called 'the great one,' which is borrowed from the NWC \*/yǝn-re/, big-gerund, 'the great one', whence Indo-Aryan *Indra*, Avestan *indara*, Hittite *I-na-ra* (<inra>), as shifted epithets.
23. The son of the benevolent god falls in love with and marries the daughter of the dragon (Dawn? IE \**Aew-s-os* or \**AeE-w-s-os*) and must renounce his kinship bonds because of matrilocal requirements peculiar to the western Caucasus.
24. The benevolent god engages in a ruse, and uses the linking of his family with that of the dragon's to regain his missing eyes and heart, but dooming his son in the process.

25. The good storm god arrives to fight on the appointed resumptive date.
26. His woman has advised him to strike first and treacherously.
27. In either the first or second duel the enemy storm god fashions a chthonic helper to mimic the stony origin of the good storm god.
28. The malevolent god called upon a chthonic figure to assist him.  
This helper proves useless because it lacks holy heat / fire.
29. The chthonic helper is “cut down” with a sickle.
30. In this portion of the battle the Storm God is, perhaps, wounded and acquires a fragment of that sickle as a lunate mark on his forehead.
31. A woman healer is unable to heal this distinctive wound.
32. He is aided by an eagle, his daughter, who has stolen mead from a mountain where the god’s father dwells, perhaps the same mountain where the battle is taking place.
33. He kills the evil storm god, despite the fact that the latter begs to be granted mercy.
34. He flees in panic at his deed because he has killed kin, his earlier serpent father or later a dragon cousin.
35. He has also had to kill his own callow son, who has been crucial to his father’s victory, but who will not accept his father’s mercy extended to him on the field of battle (a mountaintop) because of honor.
36. By killing a cousin,(perhaps earlier his father), he incurs the wrath of his mother or of a patron god(dess).
37. He becomes pre-eminent and leads the warband through the sky.

## VI. Conclusions

1. The myth can be traced back to an ancient cultural zone that included PIE and much of the N(W)C.
2. The myth is not of Hurrian or native Anatolian origin, as some (Watkins; Fortson) suggest, since the Hurrian lacks too many details.
3. The Hurrian myth shows strong Middle Eastern (Sumerian) influence, with some Indo-European elements from the old Mitannian Indo-Iranian aristocracy.

(Klimov: Caucasus has old IE loans, IE \*tepo- → Old Georgian *Teplisi*)

(whence Russ. *Tiflis*), Georgian *Tbilisi*, Kevin Tuite, p.c.)

4. The PIEs and the Sumerians share some very ancient features, suggesting either a IE element near to the oldest Middle Eastern Sumerian centers, or a Caucasian (northern) origin for the Sumerians (which they themselves claim). Note the rapist, En-lil, god of air and the storm, and Sos (← IE \*k<sup>ʷ</sup>wes- 'breath').
5. The storm god myth was the paradigm for heroes, for heroic tales, and for the warband ideology.
6. His origins may have been as a hunter (Narts, Finn, Iranian kingly hunt, Russ. 'Hunter' Dobrynya)
7. With the exception of the forehead mark the sequence in the myth is fairly clear.
8. Hence we have a proto-myth and may fairly rechristen Comparative Mythology as 'Historical Mythology.'

#### **Appendix: Marginal Indo-European**

1. First wave IE languages seems to have had a system \*t<sup>ʰ</sup>, \*t, (\*d), etc., as with Germanic, Sicel, Tokharian, and perhaps Lepontic (whence Keltoi ≤ \*két(é)l-oj, rather than Goidel).
2. Bangani (Abbi) is just such a first wave language still surviving in India: Bangani ᳵngᳵ, "unknown", ← IE \*n-gno-, E. unknown, Skr, ajna-, Gk \*a-gno-t-ia.
3. `Tw(o)-astr "two-stars" an old variant of the Divine Twins, (or a folk etymology within Circassian?)
4. Skr Tva-str, father of Indra, is borrowed from a first wave IE language; derivation from tvak-tr make-er, is a folk-etymology.

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