Ozge Canbul

Dr. Eijun Senaha

Scholar & Scholarship I

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An Annotated Bibliography:

Literary Criticism on the Dragon Motif within the Last Century

Introduction

This project aims to create a comprehensive bibliography that traces the evolution of the scholarship and criticism surrounding the dragon motif, one of the most prominent staples of folklore. The dragon motif has always been fundamental within origins myths all over the world. The earliest written examples of the dragon motif date back over a thousand years ago, some of which are highly canonized, such as the dragons Tiamat or Vrtra. Although such texts are transcripts of the stories passed down within their communities through oral tradition over the centuries, elements within those narratives, such as dragons, were considered real, as common as elephants, and part of day-to-day life for their contemporary audience. For this reason, since medieval times, scholars and critics have also been captivated by this motif and its representations throughout history. Considering that the written representations of the dragon motif and its study within the European tradition roughly date back to the eighth century, changes in the reception and perception of the motif and its study are inevitable. Medieval historians, such as Geoffrey of Monmouth, approach dragons as tangible parts of their respective

communities' history among their kings and queens. On the other hand, medieval scholars studied the dragons in the same way as the other animals, dedicating entries in various bestiaries. By the eighteenth century, scholars no longer considered dragons to be living and breathing animals but rather part of the origin myths and legends. Scholars have studied the dragon motif's function historically and artistically.

The significance of the motif in reliefs, ensigns, and old texts has been explored through philology, anthropology, and sociology. Until the early 1900s, the discourse concerning dragons has analyzed the motif in many aspects but failed to pay its due diligence to the literary aspect. The history of literary criticism suggests that 1919 is the year when the scholarly trend began to change. Elliot G. Smith's lectures, given from 1916 until 1919 was compiled and published in 1919. Smith's work is not purely literary criticism or theory, but rather its nature is interdisciplinary and comparative. Through the usage of literary references and comparisons, the motif's contribution to the communal identity and the narrative function is analyzed. This analysis opened up the floodgates for a new wave of criticism which regards literary aspect as important as the fields. Although, there have been a few groundbreaking works, such as Stith Thompson's *The Folktale* in 1946 and J.R.R. Tolkien's lecture in 1936, both of which caused great excitement among scholars, this new wave of literary criticism did not quite gain momentum until the 1960s. In the 1950s, partly due to *Beowulf*'s canonized status in academic circles and partly due to Tolkien's fame as an author and scholar, there was quite a few responses both in agreement with Tolkien and disagreement. Tolkien's lecture was, in summary, about creating a reading of *Beowulf*, which stays true to its literary form, an epic poem. This approach required interpreting elements such as the dragon motif through the glass of literary analysis as opposed to its historical importance. In 1960s, scholarly discourse concerning the dragon motif

was largely about *Beowulf*'s Dragon and its various interpretations and connotations within the narrative. Its status as a harbinger of evil or nefarious adversary in relation to its Christian connotations was explored extensively. This association of the dragon motif with the evil and its Christian roots, consecutively, became one of the most prominent trends within the dragon motif scholarship. In the 1970s, studies concerning the dragon motif's religious connotations continued to multiply and expanded into texts other than *Beowulf*. This expansion of trend created another within the dragon motif discourse, which can be summed up as, a colossal adversary versus the hero or, alternatively, evil Dragon versus righteous virgin, and the narrative function, literary importance, and interpretation of such scenes. While in 1980s, the reign of *Beowulf*'s dragon motif continued to dominate the scholarly discourse, during the 1990s it is possible to observe that classification of the dragon motif, as well as the comparative study between the well-established tradition of *Beowulf*'s dragon motif and other less-canonized texts, are the main trends. Furthermore, in 2000s, the dragon scholarship not only developed even further but also branched out to incorporate an interdisciplinary approach to literary analysis and narrative function of the dragon motif. It is important to note that the sheer volume of scholarly works both in print and online, books and articles, in the 2000s, indeed points to an indelible change within the scholarship trend. At this point within the timeline of the dragon motif criticism, the literary analysis of the dragon motif has become as established as its art and history counterparts. From 2010 until the present, the dragon motif scholarship has been continuing to expand and extend to consolidate not only Christian connotations but also other religions, such as Islamic texts and dragon traditions. It utilizes literary analysis, an interdisciplinary approach, and a more globalized outlook on the comparative study of the dragon motif.

This bibliography seems to be the first of its kind: an annotated bibliography in which it is possible to delineate the trajectory of the literary criticism surrounding the prominent folkloric dragon motif.[1] Be that as it may, regardless of the fact that a published annotated bibliography of the dragon motif criticism has not been found, there are similar, albeit different types of, unpublished bibliographies, which additionally include art history and general studies. For instance, Professor Emerita of English, Joyce Tally Lionarons at Ursinus College, has an online bibliography for "Medieval Dragons and Dragonlore."[2]

The entries within this annotated bibliography are essentially included because of their relation to literary criticism and analysis of the dragon motif. Nevertheless, at times, their cardinal subject may not solely involve literary analysis but also an interdisciplinary or comparative approach to determine the dragon motif's narrative function, relation to communal identity, and its relation to good and evil.

Currently, this bibliography includes a total of 56 materials published between 1919 and 2020. Among these materials, there are 17 books, 6 doctoral dissertations, 2 master's theses, 31 articles. The research for this project was made possible by using keywords such as "dragon," "dragon motif," "literature," "hero," "evil," "folklore," and "folklore studies." The sources were collected with the aforementioned key terms through online databases such as ProQuest, JSTOR, EBSCO, Project MUSE, CiNii Articles and CiNii Books, MLA International Bibliography, as well as on-site offline services such as Hokkaido University Library and Inter Library Loan.

List of Abbreviations

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[1] At this time, the search for an annotated bibliography regarding the dragon motif, especially within European folkloric tradition proved unfruitful. Although, this bibliography seems to be the first of its kind, due to the motif's nature and limitations of undertaking such an ambitious project, expansion over time is not only recommended but it is mandatory.

[2] For further information, please visit http://webpages.ursinus.edu/jlionarons/dragons.html

PMLA *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*

(Journal of the Modern Language Association of America)

OE   Old English

DAI   *Dissertation Abstracts International*

MAI   *Masters Abstracts International*

PQDT   *ProQuest Dissertation & Thesis*

Bibliography

1910s

[1] Smith, G. Elliot. *The Evolution of the Dragon*. Manchester University Press, 1919, *Project Gutenberg*, www.gutenberg.org/files/22038/22038-h/22038-h.htm.

A compilation of the lectures given by Elliot Smith between 1916 and 1918. It explores the dragon legends within Egyptian mythology, as well as providing a generous amount of references from Chinese, Indian, Greek, Native American, Melanesian, and Babylonian legends. It provides both literary references and a comparative perspective for the variations of the same concept in various sources. Illustrations are supplied in order to create better visualization of the dragon representations within the legends and myths. Dragon motif's function within the text, its conception, and role within communal identity are analyzed.

1920s

[2] Carter, Frederick. *The Dragon of the Alchemists*. Intro. Arthur Machen. London: Elkin

      Mathews, 1926.

Analyzes the psychological, philosophical, and mystical interpretations of the Dragon as well as

the literary. It connects the foundation of the literary representations with mythical and religious

connotations. It explores the connection between literary aspect and psychological aspect,

through depictions within the appearances, it focuses on the way dragon symbolism has been

studied mainly through philology, philosophy, and psychoanalytical approach. While it lacks

concrete textual evidence, it is highly theoretical.

1930s

[3] Tatlock, J. S. P. "The Dragons of Wessex and Wales." *Speculum*, vol. 8, no. 2, 1933, pp.

      223–35. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/2846752.

Explores the dragon motif, its roots, and applications in Wessex and Wales. The dragon motif is

not only part of the literature, but also it is possible to see representations of the Dragon in the

form of ensigns over centuries. The primary connection of the dragon motif and Welsh literature

seems to lead back to Geoffrey of Monmouth. In spite of the repetitive appearances of dragons

on ensigns and flags, dragons in Welsh literature are scarce. However, due to their connection to

evil and Satan, representations of dragons increase after the eleventh century, and "dragon of Wessex" appears in writing for the first time in the twelfth century.

[4] Tolkien, J. R. R. "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics." 1936. *An Anthology of Beowulf Criticism*, University of Notre Dame Press, 2017, pp. 51–103.

Transcription of the lecture, delivered by J.R.R. Tolkien as a part of the Sir Israel Gollancz Memorial Lecture in 1936. It is significant because, before Tolkien's lecture, *Beowulf* was studied mainly due to its historical importance. However, Tolkien suggests that since *Beowulf* is a poem, studying it through the lens of literary analysis as a poem is necessary because the criticism of the dragon motif as a narrative device provides an explanation for the Dragon's appearance that is different from a historical or religious allegory.

1940s

[5] Thompson, Stith. *The Folktale*. 1946. University of California Press, 1977.

"The book is divided into four parts of very unequal length. The first, pp. 3-12, is introductory. The author very usefully defines and distinguishes the several varieties of what in general may be called Folktales, discussing such forms of narrative as *märchen* and *novelle*; legends and sagas; fables and animal stories; explanatory tales … The longest part is the second, of 284 pages; rather more than half the whole book … The author begins with a list of twelve

subdivisions in the material. These are mostly geographical: *India, Scandinavia, France, Italy,*

and so on."

(Book review by Dawkins, R. M. "The Folk Tale, by Stith Thompson." *Folklore*, vol. 59, no. 3,

1948, pp. 136–140. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/1257285.)

1950s

[6] Gang, T. M. "Approaches to Beowulf." *The Review of English Studies*, vol. 3, no. 9, 1952,

pp. 1–12. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/511142.

Written as a response towards J.R.R. Tolkien's lecture "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics,"

which was later published in print as well. Gang's point of view that within the 16 years of

timespan after Tolkien's address, there were only three reviews that are critical of the lecture.

However, according to Gang, these few critics did not touch upon Tolkien's main thesis. The

authorial intent is discussed in detail, and whether authorial intent can be found within the epic

since there is no chance to do a comparative intertextual study.

[7] Bonjour, Adrien. "Monsters Crouching and Critics Rampant: Or the Beowulf Dragon

Debated." *PMLA*, vol. 68, no. 1, 1953, pp. 304–12. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/459922.

Written in relation to discourse on the Beowulf dragon starting with the J.R.R. Tolkien's paper

called "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics." It functions both as an analysis of the Dragon's

function and the relationship between the hero and the Dragon as well as an answer to the paper

written by T. M. Gang, titled "Approaches to Beowulf," wherein he discusses Tolkien's

approach and charges him of being not cogent due to the fact that textual evidence does not

support the claims regarding the dragon symbolism. Bonjour argues that against Gang, as in

symbolical interpretation, has a plethora of internal evidence to support a transcendent dragon

motif as well as a non-ethereal one.

1960s

[8] McNamee, M. B. "'Beowulf': An Allegory of Salvation?" *The Journal of English and*

Germanic Philology, vol. 59, no. 2, 1960, pp. 190–207. *JSTOR*,

www.jstor.org/stable/27707445.

Addresses the question of whether *Beowulf* is purely an allegory for Christian salvation, or is it

possible to create a reading more in line with the pagan roots of the epic? The relationship

between the dragon motif and the connotations of evil are explored in regard to the dragon motif

connection to Satan and hell. Through the connection to Satan and hell, dragon motif within the

poem, it is possible to create a salvation story reading. The conflict between the Dragon and the

hero is more fertile for such an allegorical reading than a historical one.

[9] Aarne, Antti, and Stith Thompson. *Types of the Folktale: A Classification and Bibliography*.

Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 1961.

"Reference works like these indexes of motifs and tale-types are of fundamental importance to any scholar with scientific interest in orally transmitted narratives. They can also be both timesavers and sources of information to anyone, who, curious about a given tale or motif, wonders where else it is known and where to look for what may have been learned about it. ... Aarne, as he worked out the tale-typing system, anticipated the classification of separate episodes and motifs of a tale, and in some instances had to treat material in this way, but mainly he avoided this procedure. Usually a complete tale was the basis for each type. Each type was assigned a number (most of his original numbers are still used) and secondarily a name. The numbering system was continuous for the entire index, which was made up of three groups of tales, each with subgroups. ... It was Thompson's experience in classifying, or in trying to classify, tales of regions outside the area covered by the tale-type index begun by Aarne, which led him to devise the motif-indexing system which can be applied to the folklore of any part of the world. His work on American Indian tales was a decisive factor in trying to overcome the limitations of the tale-type index. In its attempt to define and classify the smallest independent units of a tale, the motif-index recalls the anthropologists' element lists. ... For convenience, folklorists usually refer to the tale-type index as the "AarneThompson" index and thereby acknowledge Aarne's pioneer contribution and Thompson's extensive additions and revisions." (Book review by Katharine Luomala, K. (1963), *The Types of the Folktale: A Classification and Bibliography.* Antti Aarne. American Anthropologist, 65: 747-750. doi:10.1525/aa.1963.65.3.02a00600)

[10] Carlson, Signe M. "The Monsters of Beowulf: Creations of Literary Scholars." *The Journal*

of American Folklore, vol. 80, no. 318, 1967, pp. 357–64. *JSTOR*,

    www.jstor.org/stable/537414.

Explores a new niche within the scholarship. While the contemporary discourse regarding

Grendel, Grendel's mother, and the Dragon focuses mainly on two directions, symbolic

interpretation or analyzing analogues and parallels within folklore, Carlson focuses on the origin.

Carlson discusses the issue of origin in relation to folktales and accretions of oral stories. The

episodes of conflict can be read as the derivations of occurrences between man and beast or

nature or between invading forces and defending forces. Carlson's study delves into the issue of

whether it is possible to find a basis for the dragon motif and the other monsters within *Beowulf*.

Since the Christian connotations of the dragon motif have been explored extensively, using the

Christian references as a starting point creates a more stable reading. However, until the

fourteenth-century, "monster" was not part of the connotations for the Dragon within the poem.

Earlier translations refer to both heroes and the Dragon in a similar way by just using the OE

words, which historically would mean formidable and would not possess the wicked

implications. Hence, other than its roles as a folkloric adversary, a possible interpretation for the

Dragon's appearance within the poem is as the result of the ever-changing and constant political

rivalry between invaders and native inhabitants.

[11] Carlson, Signe M. *The Giant and The Dragon of The Folk Epic*, University of Southern

California, Ann Arbor, 1966. *ProQuest*, https://search-proquest-

com.ezoris.lib.hokudai.ac.jp/docview/302184137?accountid=16200

"The giant and the Dragon are well-known folk-tale motifs. Therefore, in this exploratory study

the giant (wild man) and the Dragon of folktale, as depicted in the epic, serve as points of

departure for linking the humanities and the sciences in order to bring about a better

understanding of the role of folk literature in the story of man … Grendel and the Dragon of

Beowulf are representative of folktale characters of worldwide distribution, as are the dwarf and

the Dragon of the *Nibelungenlied* and related Germanic works … Since the folktale motifs of the

giant (wild man) and the Dragon provided the prototypes for the giant (wild man) and the

Dragon of the folk epic, I shall recapitulate folktale scholarship."

[DAI-A 27/05]

1970s

[12] Kiessling, Nicolas K. "Antecedents of the Medieval Dragon in Sacred History." *Journal of*

Biblical literature, vol. 89, no. 2, 1970, pp. 167–77. *JSTOR*,

www.jstor.org/stable/3263046.

Delves into the dragon symbol's association with biblical evil and pride. Kiessling analyzes

linguistic aspects to explain the literary tradition of using the Dragon as an allegory for the

representation of evil, delineating the lineage of the Dragon through its appearances both

intertextually and using translations within Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. This article is beneficial in understanding how changes in linguistics and translations affect literary associations and interpretation.

[13] Black, Nancy B. *The Hero's Fight with A Dragon or Giant Adversary In Medieval Narrative*, Columbia University, Ann Arbor, 1971. *ProQuest*, https://search-proquest-com.ezoris.lib.hokudai.ac.jp/docview/302572930?accountid=16200.

"…This study is an extension of Tolkien's analysis of the monsters in Beowulf. The function of the monsters in Beowulf is reexamined in Chapter II, partly to set before the reader a poem of exceptional quality which succeeded in producing symbolically potent monstrous adversaries, and partly to explore further Tolkien's suggestions concerning the specific connotations which the monsters carry. Ultimately, this reading of Beowulf suggests some modifications on Tolkien's overall interpretation of the Northern mythological context of the monsters, specifically on the balance between pagan and Christian concepts in the last half of the poem …" (Abstract was taken from the original dissertation, pg 1.)

[14] Tietjen, Mary C. Wilson. "God, Fate, and the Hero of 'Beowulf.'" *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 74, no. 2, 1975, pp. 159–71. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/27707876.

Explores the religious background of the poem, *Beowulf*. For over a century, *Beowulf*'s Christian tone versus Pagan aspects have been a crucial point of discussion among scholars and shaped the

discourse time and again. However, recent scholarship suggests that it is, indeed, both. The concept of fate is analyzed in relation to poem, Christianity, and Paganism. Beowulf's battle with the Dragon is part of fate, thus an inevitability. Both his victory and defeat against the Dragon are part of his fate, but his victory has been bestowed upon him by God. Hence, from this point of view, the dragon motif functions both as a neutral natural being, abundant in Paganistic beliefs, as well as a worthy adversary sent by God to test the hero.

[15] Miskimin, Alice. "Britomart's Crocodile and the Legends of Chastity." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 77, no. 1, 1978, pp. 17–36. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/27708296.

Argues that Legend of Chastity's Isis Church episode should be interpreted from a Christian point of view in order to understand the authorial intent within the story better. St. Martha's Dragon is considered one of the earliest examples of dragon legends in France. The use of the dragon motif within the stories allows for a comparative reading between pagan Britomart and St. Martha, as both were virgins who defeated evil reptiles. This reading explains the role dragon has played in transforming pagan legends into Christian ones. The well-established evilness of the Dragon is used to strengthen the image of a virgin defeating a dragon-adversary through grace. Virgin-dragon paradigms are used for exploring the sexual tension within societal values.

[16] Allen, Judy, and Jeanne Griffiths. *The Book of the Dragon*. Chartwell Books, 1979.

Provides illustrations for dragon representations matching the appearances of the dragons within stories across the world, from different cultures and civilizations. While it supplies an ample amount of accounts of myths and legends of dragons and dragon-like creatures, it focuses mainly on the most prominent representations within history. Although it provides in-depth details regarding various aspects of the dragons, it does not always provide a literary point of view. It is useful for comparative study.

[17] Ursula K. LeGuin. *The Language of the Night: Essays on Fantasy and Science Fiction*. Ed. Susan Wood. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1979.

"…Her critical perceptiveness in the field of fantasy and children's literature in general has been highly valued by those aware of her writing, which all too often appeared in hard-to-come-by sources. *The Language of the Night*, edited by Susan Wood, puts an end to this difficulty and collects in one convenient volume the most important critical statements LeGuin has made to date.

The collection opens with "A Citizen of Mondath" in which she details the influences on her as a child and as an adult which led her to become an SF/F writer.
The second section of the book is a collection of her major critical writing … In the third section, "The Book Is What Is Real," the editor notes in her introduction that the essays collected in this section present LeGuin talking about her work with the object of finding out what the genre called "science fiction" is and how, given specific examples, it can be made better. Among the critical concerns LeGuin discusses in this section are: the differences and similarities between SF

and fantasy; the creation of characters; and the strengths and limitations of the genre and of the

English language."

(Book review by *The Language of the Night: Essays on Fantasy and Science Fiction, and:*

Ursula K. LeGuin: Voyager to Inner Lands and to Outer Space. Children's Literature

Association Quarterly, vol. 4 no. 2, 1979, p. 19-21. *Project MUSE*, doi:10.1353/chq.0.1373.)

1980s

[18] Kordecki, Lesley C. *Traditions And Developments Of The Medieval English Dragon*,

University of Toronto, Ann Arbor, 1980*. ProQuest*, https://search-proquest-

com.ezoris.lib.hokudai.ac.jp/docview/303092236?accountid=16200.

"This study documents the major occurrences of the dragon motif influential to its development

in medieval English literature. The organizational principle is also my method of interpretation

of the material, that is, I see the motif operating in either the non-symbolic capacity of animal,

the polyvalent level of symbol or the sign level in which the motif evokes a single meaning.

A valid estimation of the medieval perception of the Dragon, be it substantial creature or poetic

image, requires an investigation of the commonly held beliefs about and literary uses of that

class of fabulous creatures to which the Dragon belonged. The medieval aesthetic embraced the

figure of the monstrous animal in certain genres and I trace a number of recurring monsters

historically through the most influential travel writings, encyclopedias, bestiaries and biblical

exegeses. Quite clearly, the material presents instances of both literal and metaphorical uses of

the motifs. … My data and conclusions form a small body of information which can be used as a

springboard for further research in this, as yet, little-known area. Investigation into the grotesque or monstrous elements of medieval literature will, perforce, involve the scholar in fundamental questions of aesthetic principles beneficial to any study of the medieval perspective."

[DAI-A 41/11]

[19] Freimuth, Joanne. *A Comparative Study of the Beowulf Dragon Fight and Twelve Dragon Battles of Norse, German, Celtic and English Legend*, McGill University (Canada), Ann Arbor, 1981. *ProQuest*, https://search-proquest-com.ezoris.lib.hokudai.ac.jp/docview/303053984?accountid=16200.

"This paper is a comparative analysis of thirteen dragon battles found in Western European legend. The main purpose of the study is to illuminate the various aspects of and inter-relationships among tales that stem from different yet intermingling cultures.

Beginning with a general discussion differentiating between the Western Dragon and its Eastern counterpart, the paper then focuses on more specific matters. Chapter II is a study of the *Beowulf* dragon episode, an episode rich in details and motifs. Chapter III concentrates on Norse and German tales (Thor, Ragnar, Frotho, Fridleif, Sigemund, Sigfrit, and Sigurd). Chapter IV focuses on tales from English and Celtic cultures (Tristram and Ysolt, "The Geste of Fraoch," "The Lambton Worm," "The Bisterne Dragon," and "The Dragon of Loschy Wood").
The final chapter draws all the tales together in a more general discussion of motifs. Comparison and contrast are stressed throughout the paper, linking, as well as differentiating among, these tales, which serve as a fair sampling of the Western Dragon Myth."

[MAI 40/07M]

[20] Tally, Joyce A. *The Dragon's Progress: The Significance Of The Dragon In "Beowulf," The "Volsunga Saga," "das Nibelungenlied," And "der Ring Des Nibelungen" (Scandinavia, Germany, England)*, University of Denver, Ann Arbor, 1983. *ProQuest*, https://search-proquest-com.ezoris.lib.hokudai.ac.jp/docview/303147356?accountid=16200.

"This study examines the figure of the Dragon in four works: Beowulf, the Volsunga Saga, Das Nibelungenlied, and Wagner's Ring cycle. It concludes that the idea of a composite, pan-Germanic "dragon" is a literary abstraction, for despite obvious surface similarities,

each Dragon is unique to its own work, and reveals its own significance and function only within the context of that work. The Beowulf dragon is a "real," flesh-and-blood monster with supernatural qualities, and its functions as an "anti-king" in opposition to the hero. With the deaths of both hero and monster, an age ends, leaving only ordinary men and

allegorical dragons to carry on. The Volsunga Saga's Fafnir is equally real, but no distinction is made between natural and supernatural. He functions as one in a series of teachers for the hero in Sigurðr's initiation process into manhood, and is partially "internalized" by Sigurðr when the hero eats the Dragon's heart. The Dragon in Das Nibelungenlied is almost totally internalized into the figure of the hero, who thus assumes the Dragon's role and function in the poem. The literal dragon slaying barely appears in the work; the true dragon slaying is Hagen's murder of Sîfrit. … In addition, each dragon functions as a center of power that is displaced: the power of heroes and monsters gives way to that of ordinary men in Beowulf; Sigurðr gains the power of adulthood in the Volsunga Saga; unconscious, instinctual power is overcome by conscious, political power in Das Nibelungenlied; and Wagner imagines a shift from political power based

on force and law to the power of universal human love in the Ring. The Dragon thus remains a

figure of power while undergoing progressive internalization in these four works."

[DAI-A 44/06]

[21] Evans, Jonathan D. *A Semiotic of the Old English Dragon*, Indiana University, Ann Arbor,

1984. *ProQuest*, https://search-proquest-

com.ezoris.lib.hokudai.ac.jp/docview/303309584?accountid=16200.

"The Dragon's prominence of *Beowulf* and a number of other early medieval texts suggests that

a rich body of traditional lore served to unify medieval conceptions of this imaginary creature.

This dissertation seeks a recovery of details and functions of that lore through the use of modern

narratology and semiotics. My analysis of more than two dozen texts in Old English and Old

Norse explores the dragon-slayer episode as a patterned narrative unit, investigating ways it

encodes the meaning of the Dragon and the dragon-slayer in the cultural milieu in which

Beowulf took shape. The pattern consists of five essential elements. Typically, the hero prepares

for battle by taking on armaments, travels to the remote setting in which the battle takes place,

combats the Dragon in a scene in which the hero slays the monster, and finally receives reward

for his success. This plot structure is informed by a set of stylistic features emphasizing the

Dragon's nonhuman and antiheroic attributes: dragons hoard wealth, attack people, destroy halls,

and oppress kingdoms; heroes distribute wealth, rescue people, build halls, and protect

kingdoms. … The dragon-slayer episode generally affirms the ethics of heroism, but--depending

upon the manner in which it is composed--also allows skeptical treatment of heroic themes. In

such cases, ironic usage of dragon lore serves as the vehicle for a literary critique of the heroic code."

[DAI-A 45/06]

[22] Nelson, Marie. "Beowulf, II. 2824b-2845a." *The Explicator*, vol. 43, no. 2, 1985, pp. 4–7., doi:10.1080/00144940.1985.11483850.

There have been many different interpretations regarding the function of *Beowulf*'s Dragon. So far, the majority of the critics argue that the Dragon represents internal evil, anger, sexual desire. Thus, it has been suggested on many occasions that the Dragon functions mostly as a foil and an adversary to the hero who needs to shine against it. This paper argues that the original Dragon within *Beowulf* performs the same function as its revival in John Gardner's novel about Grendel. In order to support this argument, the close reading technique has been applied, such as using epithets for both the hero and the Dragon. The value of Beowulf and his actions depend on the might and worthiness of the Dragon as an adversary, and the adjectives and epithets used to describe the Dragon are essential tools to establish the dragon motif's value.

[23] Taylor, Paul Beekman. "The Traditional Language of Treasure in 'Beowulf.'" *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 85, no. 2, 1986, pp. 191–205. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/27709647.

A philological study of the words associated with riches and treasures within *Beowulf*. It focuses on the scene when Beowulf and Wiglaf are battling and victorious against the Dragon. Hoarding

the treasure is an essential aspect of *Beowulf*'s Dragon. Dragon's hoarding nature is what acts as a foil for Beowulf's heroic nature and his gratefulness at the end of the battle for being able to acquire such a treasure, the treasure previously guarded by the Dragon, for his people. Dragon's unwillingness to share the gold is considered due to its evil nature. This argument is exemplified by the deliberate lack of alliteration between *gold* and *God* within the poem, while other words for treasure carry multiple connotations, many of which are positive.

1990s

[24] Cooper, J.C. 1992. *Symbolic and Mythological Animals.* London: Aquarian/Thorsons.

A collection of entries regarding the most well-known motifs from various canonized stories around the world. While the length of the entries differs, the dragon motif's symbolic and mythological significance is discussed in detail. The motif's function is analyzed in connection with the legends and myths where the representations appear. There is also a bibliography at the end for further reading.

[25] Parks, Ward. "Prey Tell: How Heroes Perceive Monsters in 'Beowulf.'" *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 92, no. 1, 1993, pp. 1–16. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/27710761.

Aims to combine the contemporary behavioral perspectives and authorial intent within *Beowulf* in order to create a comprehensive interpretation of the monsters within the poem and the

ambiguity surrounding their essence. The dragon motif is especially difficult to place, according to Parks, because it is quite different from previous monsters within the poem. While Grendel possesses both humanoid and monstrous aspects, the Dragon is an enemy but not necessarily predatorial. The Dragon does not feast upon the humans but attacks with ferocious intensity. The existence of the Dragon in such a setting implies that if the opponent is far beyond the common understanding of man or beast, it can be impossible to defeat alone, as it is proven by the fact that Beowulf can only defeat it with the help of Wiglaf.

[26] Richardson, Peter. "Imperfective Aspect and Episode Structure in 'Beowulf.'" *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 93, no. 3, 1994, pp. 313–25. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/27711016.

Analyses the use of imperfective aspects as a narrative choice within *Beowulf*. Through the philological approach, it is possible to deduce authorial intent and apply various interpretations. The use of infinitive, simple past and imperfect has divided the discourse. It is argued that imperfective constructions tend to cluster around influential events, such as the dragon episode. For instance, Dragon's lair or the battle is depicted in imperfective construction. Initiations of these events are marked by imperfective, while the rest of the event is narrated in perfective.

[27] Schroth, Randall E. *A Pantheon of Dragons: Images of Vermicular Monstrance in English Literature from "Beowulf" through "the Cantos,"* University of Colorado at Boulder, Ann Arbor, 1994. *ProQuest*, https://search-proquest-com.ezoris.lib.hokudai.ac.jp/docview/89235660?accountid=16200.

"This traces a trajectory of "monstrance" in the twists of Wyrm/ dragon/serpent imagery and language applied to monsters: through Beowulf, medieval drama, and works of Shakespeare, John Keats, Bram Stoker, Joseph Conrad, and Ezra Pound. Following Pound's assertion (after Fenollosa) that "All nations have written their strongest and most vivid literature before they invented a grammar," it examines how instabilities of language that subvert formality, often manifested most clearly in encounters with "vermicular monstrance," are incorporated into texts--and how they test and strengthen literary forms."

[DAI-A 55/10]

[28] Lofmark, Carl, and George Albert. Wells. *A History of the Red Dragon*. Gwasg Carreg

Gwalch, 1995.

Focuses on the lineage of regarding the red dragon motif. It traces its connection to Wales and the roots. It starts off by exploring the general dragon mythos and the appearances of the dragon representations within various cultures, their physical attributes as well as assumed habitats. There is also a plethora of references to the various texts throughout history, including the Geoffrey of Monmouth and other canonized legends. The function of the Red Dragon is briefly explored within those legends and myths. Although in-depth analysis is lacking at times, it is quite comprehensive.

[29] El-Shamy, Hasan M. "Archetype." *Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Beliefs, Customs, Tales,*

Music, and Art, edited by Thomas Green, ABC-CLIO, 1997, pp. 36–9.

A compilation of multiple entries of folklore, organized in accordance with standardized folklore indices and classifications. Within the 1997 version of the encyclopedia, as well as within the 2011 version, the dragon motif is part of various entries, as it is an integral part of the folklore, both in terms of narrative function and conceptualization of other elements of the legend, myth, or tale, in which dragon motif makes its appearance. Consequently, the dragon-slayer motif is quite interwoven into the representations of the dragon motif, especially within the myths originated from Europe. In his entry, "Archetype," El-Shamy argues that archetypes are components of the collective unconscious mind of both a social unit and an individual. Hence, Dragon and dragon-slayer must coexist together in order to complete the symbolic portrayal of evil and good, right and wrong, hero and adversary, and so on.

2000s

[30] Blust, Robert. "The Origin of Dragons." *Anthropos*, vol. 95, no. 2, 2000, pp. 519–
36. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/40465957.

"This paper addresses a question that has puzzled scholars for more than a century: "Why is a belief in dragons found over much of the earth"? It argues that dragons evolved from rainbows through the concept of the rainbow serpent, a concept that itself extends far back into the Pleistocene. In this perspective many seemingly arbitrary traits which are widely associated with dragons are seen to have a physical explanation."

(Abstract was taken from the original paper, pg 519.)

[31] Evans, Jonathan D. "Dragon." *Medieval Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Myths, Legends,*

     Tales, Beliefs, and Customs, edited by Carl Lindahl et al., ABC-CLIO, 2000, pp. 233–240.

A compilation of numerous medieval folkloric motifs from around the world. There are multiple references to canonized works of literature both from oral and written traditions, as well as various art forms. The chapter is written by Jonathan Evans, aptly titled "Dragon," delves into the religious connotation of the dragon motif. Evans argues that the Middle Eastern concept of the Dragon is highly interwoven to the European concept. Accordingly, it is the result of combining Biblical symbolism and indigenous Celtic and Germanic motifs. This amalgamation produced the now-well-known maleficent dragon imagery due to the mistranslations from Hebrew and the influence of Christianity. Only in Eastern countries are dragons both maleficent and beneficent.

[32] Rauer, Christine. *Beowulf and the Dragon: Parallels and Analogues*. D.S. Brewer, 2000.

Consists of five chapters that are explored under two larger categories, "*Beowulf* and Early Medieval Dragon-Fight" and "The Literary History of Dragon-Fights: Case Studies." It also includes appendices which include texts, translations, and bibliographies. Dragon episode within *Beowulf* is analyzed in terms of analogues. The dragon motif and the fight within the episode bear similarities to both the late medieval secular Germanic tradition and the early medieval hagiographical dragon-fight legends. Both oral and literary forms are taken into consideration, as

Dragon's function, idiosyncrasy, and possible connection to the historical background are explored deeply.

[33] Riches, Samantha. *St George: Hero, Martyr and Myth*. Sutton, 2000.

Saint George is one of the most well-known patron saints of Europe. However, Saint George's story is, for the most part, shrouded in obscurity. The most crucial and famous aspect of Saint George's legend is the encounter with the Dragon and the ensuing battle. Samantha Riches not only explores the narrative choices and development of the dragon motif within the legend but also the possible sexual aspect and presence of female dragons due to the fact that Saint George's legend is part of the medieval tradition that casts chaste hero against evil dragon adversary.

[34] Zipes, Jack, editor. *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales*. Oxford University Press, 2000.

Oxford University's companion book for students who would like to study folktales or fairy tales. This study analyzes the differences between folk tales and fairy tales and focuses on the distinction created by oral and written literary traditions. It explores narrative choices, socio-historical background, and scholarly discourse surrounding oral folk tales and written fairy tales. The book itself purposes that the oral folktales and literary fairy tales are disparate. However, it yields to the point that fairy tales are rich in folkloric motifs, such as dragons. While Dragon itself does not have a separate entry, it is a currenting motif in many of the entries since it is an inherent part of both oral folk tales and literary fairy tales.

[35] Hansen, William. 2002. *Ariadne's Triad: A Guide to International Folktales Found in*

Classical Literature. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

"The bulk of the book consists of mini-studies of nearly a hundred individual folktales in their ancient and modern manifestations. By itself, any one such example seems problematic: the reader may wonder whether the correspondence is real (meaning that the ancient and modern versions derive from a common source), or whether it might be merely a figment produced by chance or by some basic laws of storytelling. In large quantities, however, the evidence for continuity grows more convincing.

The introduction gives concise descriptions of the comparative study of folktales and of the evidence for folktales in ancient Greece and Rome. It initiates a discussion, which is continued in most of the chapters, regarding the differences in genre and in content between ancient and modern narratives. A typical chapter in the main part of the book begins with a general description of a tale type as it is found in later oral tradition (and sometimes in medieval or early modern sources), and follows this with detailed summaries of two to four representative modern texts. Then, marked by a separate section, comes the ancient example of the same tale, again retold in detail, with information about its source(s). This is followed by a discussion of the similarities and differences between the ancient and modern examples. At the end of the chapter comes a paragraph of bibliography. Many of the folktales have more than one ancient example, each in its own section. The arrangement of these chapters is alphabetical according to titles that are appropriate for the modern tale types. Three indexes help to make things easier to find. The index of ancient sources, which includes more than 150 authors, is the most complete: it is the only one that gives references to notes as well as to text. The index of tale type numbers and

selected motifs refers only to the main chapters, not to tales mentioned in passing. The general index includes characters' names, words and phrases that pertain to events in the tales, and terms used for different kinds of narratives."

(Book review published in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* by Bryn Mawr College.

https://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2002/2002.05.07/)

[36] Birkalan, Hande A, and Jane Garry. "Mythical Animals: Dragon, Motif B11." *Archetypes and Motifs in Folklore and Literature: A Handbook*, by Jane Garry and Hasan M. El-Shamy, M. E. Sharpe, 2005, pp. 73–79.

A study of the most common themes and motifs which can be found in various stories around the world. There are multiple entries divided by larger categories, such as "Mythological Motifs," "Mythical Animals," and "Magic." Entries under the categories are done according to Stith Thompson's well-known Motif-Index. Within the "Mythical Animals," "Dragon, Motif B11" is the reason why I decided to include this work within the bibliography. Due to the universal aspect, dragon representations can be found in diverse cultures. Hence, such a listing proves really helpful.

[37] "Vernacular Versions of the Hagiographic Foundation-Myth." *Saint Michael the Archangel in Medieval English Legend*, by Richard F. Johnson, Boydell & Brewer, Woodbridge, Suffolk; Rochester, NY, 2005, pp. 49–70. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/10.7722/j.ctt81w52.9.

In this chapter of the book *Saint Michael the Archangel in Medieval English Legend*, the etymology of Saint Michael's name and his miracles. Unlike Saint George and Saint Margaret, most of Saint Michael's legendary accomplishments do not include the dragon motif. However, one of the versions does include a dragon and battle scene. The association between the Dragon, evil, and number twelve are established through the account of the battle and its aftermath. This episode is in line with the other hagiographic and secular legends in which dragon-fights are an integral part of the narrative, and it is possible to draw similarities between St. Michael's Dragon and a highly canonized work such as *Beowulf*.

[38] Falk, Oren. "Beowulf's Longest Day: The Amphibious Hero in His Element ('Beowulf', II.
 1495b-96)." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 106, no. 1, 2007, pp.
 1–21. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/27712633.

Focuses on the issue of realism or rather selective realism regarding the interpretation of various scenes within the poem, especially regarding the landscape and background. Considering that the battle with the Dragon is one of the most analyzed, Dragon's hovel or cave plays a crucial part in defining the connotation of the dragon motif within the poem. Depicting the Dragon's abode as a hell-like pit would create a strong reading in which the Dragon becomes a harbinger of both earth and the sky. The connection between humans and monstrous remains as humans exist in the middle plane while Beowulf is changing locations in order to counter the dragon motif. Depending on the interpretive choice, the Dragon's cave being conquered by Beowulf can mean land being conquered by men.

[39] Morrison, Elizabeth. *Beasts Factual and Fantastic: The Medieval Imagination*. Paul J. Getty

   Museum, 2007.

"'Beasts Factual and Fantastic' is the first in the Medieval Imagination series of small, affordable

books that will draw on manuscript illuminations from the Middle Ages and early Renaissance.

Often, as is in the case of the imaginary beasts that readers will encounter in this volume, artists

depicted that which they did not see or know but which was nonetheless shaped by the prevailing

beliefs, fears, and rudimentary science of the time. In other cases, manuscript illuminators

recorded what they indeed did see - which, centuries later, reveals much about the world in

which they lived. This volume features vivid and charming details from the wealth of

manuscripts in the collections of the J. Paul Getty Museum and the British Library, along with a

lively text; together both word and image provide an accessible and delightful introduction to the

imagination of the medieval world."
(Abstract was taken from Yale University Press, ISBN: 9780892368884,

https://yalebooks.co.uk/display.asp?k=9780892368884)

[40] Sherman, Josepha, editor. *Storytelling: An Encyclopedia of Mythology and Folklore*. M.E.

   Sharpe, 2008.

Focuses on the vast world of storytelling and oral tradition. Due to its nature as an encyclopedia,

it does contain not only an entry about the dragon motif but also various other eminent ones.

"…Though storytellers, here considered primarily those who tell their tales orally, less frequently

field this question, the study of creativity has a place in folkloristics. *Storytelling: An*

Encyclopedia of Mythology and Folklore is, more or less, a book of ideas. It has three substantial parts: an introduction, an alphabetical listing of entries, and a selection of retellings of some stories mentioned throughout. Following the retellings are a list of storytelling festivals and courses at colleges and universities, a bibliography, and an index.

The introduction sets out a series of items to consider when becoming a storyteller. It addresses various kinds of stories, how to select which ones to tell, and methods of performance, among other topics. From this portion of the text, it is tempting to characterize the encyclopedia's intended audience as aspiring storytellers, but that is never quite clear. The format, a three-volume hardcover encyclopedia, might require a prohibitive cost. The preface declares, "Taken as a whole, you will find this three-volume reference set to be a most definitive and fascinating study of the wide world of storytelling" (p. xv). Libraries, certainly, will be where this book finds its home, and as a reference title, it probably will not circulate to be read comprehensively or repeatedly. Which is, of course, not what an encyclopedia is designed for in the first place, but it might be what an aspiring storyteller needs …"

(Annotation taken from *Journal of American Folklore* via *Project MUSE*, Peretti, Daniel. Review of *Storytelling: An Encyclopedia of Mythology and Folklore*, by Josepha Sherman. *Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 126 no. 499, 2013, p. 100-101. Project MUSE muse.jhu.edu/article/501394.)

2010s

[41] Byrne, Deirdre. "Woman↔Dragon: Ursula K. Le Guin'S Transformations in Tehanu, The Other Wind and Tales from Earthsea." *Mousaion*, vol. 29, no. 3, 2011, pp. 154–65.

"In this article, I explore Ursula K. Le Guin's representation of dragons in her later Earthsea fiction: Tehanu (1991), The other wind (2001b) and Tales from Earthsea (2001a). I argue that Le Guin engages transformatively with traditional depictions of dragons by linking them to women. While this is in keeping with earlier perspectives on dragons, in Le Guin's fiction the association becomes a source of power, rather than (à la Julia Kristeva 1982) abjection of the women whose lives are linked to dragon nature. All the same, the author does not sentimentalise either dragons or women, but uses transgressive porousness between them as signs in order to refigure both. The Dragon, in Le Guin's writing, finds and reclaims hybridity and monstrosity rather than transcending them."
(Abstract from the Author, pg 154.)

[42] Jakobsson, Ármann. "Vampires and Watchmen: Categorizing the Mediaeval Icelandic

      Undead." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 110, no. 3, 2011, pp.

      281–300. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/jenglgermphil.110.3.0281.

Focuses on the folkloric motif of *draugr*, type of medieval Icelandic undead, and different ways to interpret its appearance in stories. There have been three distinct methods to approach *draugr* so far, using the well-established definitions and categorization that was created in the nineteenth century, philological study where all the instances of the word and surrounding descriptive vocabulary, and to analyze the function of monster to interpret the essence and reason for its existence. Jakobsson argues that the first two methods are incapable of fully exploring the connotations of the medieval Icelandic undead; creating a new categorization based on function

and characteristics is necessary. Part of this categorization involves the similarities between

dragons and undead. Their predisposition to live in caves or mounds and their greedy nature

allows them to draw connections between these two folkloric creatures and their general function

in stories.

[43] McCormick, Charlie T., and Kim Kennedy White, editors. *Folklore: An Encyclopedia of*

Beliefs, Customs, Tales, Music, and Art. 2nd ed., vol. 3 3, ABC-CLIO, 2011.

The second iteration of the *Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Beliefs, Customs, Tales, Music, and*

Art. The First edition was around 400.000 words with a plethora of entries regarding genres,

custom, criticism, and theory. This revised second edition has expanded to over 500.000 words,

which includes recent entries to reflect the ever-changing nature of the folklore studies as well as

updating any existing entries.

(Please refer to annotation 28, El-Shamy, Hasan M. "Archetype." *Folklore: An Encyclopedia of*

Beliefs, Customs, Tales, Music, and Art, edited by Thomas Green, ABC-CLIO, 1997, pp. 36–39.)

[44] Scarborough, Connie L. "The Rare Case of a Dragon in Medieval Spanish Literature."

Medieval Perspectives, vol. 26, 2011, p. 7.

Examines the wide-spread knowledge about dragons in Medieval Spain which appears to be a

part of folklores and mythologies even throughout the world. It notes that such a creature appears

in works of history, astrology, and science produced in Spain though some of the sources

originated outside the Iberian Peninsula. It mentions that one of the most likely sources for the

Dragon would have been hagiographic works in which saints are often portrayed as overcoming

a dragon or demons. Further, the author states that other local legends about dragons are found in

Extremadura.

[45] Al-Rawi, Ahmed K. "The Religious Connotation of the Islamic Dragon." *Fabula*, vol. 53,

no. 1-2, 2012, doi:10.1515/fabula-2012-0005.

Explores the religious connotations of the dragon motif within Mesopotamian legends. While it

mainly focuses on Islamic and Arabic texts, there are many references to Jewish tales from the

Old Testament, as well as Sumerian and Babylonian myths. Most of the representations of the

dragon motif within these texts are attributed to evil and an adversary of the forces of good.

However, some Jewish texts present Dragon as an agent of God, which punishes sinners. Islamic

dragon motif has its roots in Jewish representations within Torah, such as in the story of Moses,

as well as stories like *Arabian Nights*. Depending on the situation, Islamic Dragon can represent

both good or evil. It can even act as a neutral natural phenomenon.

[46] Dresvina, Juliana. "The Significance of the Demonic Episode in the Legend of St Margaret

of Antioch." *Medium Ævum*, vol. 81, no. 2, 2012, pp. 189–209. *JSTOR*,

www.jstor.org/stable/43632929.

Analyzes the relationship between the dragon/black devil within the legend of St. Margaret or St.

Marina and the early Judeo-Christian demonology during the Middle Ages. Although the dragon

motif is an integral part of the legend, some versions do not name the Dragon nor include the

scene where the Dragon swallows the saint. The Dragon represents the temptation and the guile

of evil while St. Margaret perseveres and overcomes this hurdle. The majority of the

iconography that has been created in accordance with the legend depicts St. Margaret standing

over the Dragon. The connection between the Dragon and St. Margaret has become foundational

to the Middle Ages demonology and understanding of good. "Birth" of Margaret from the

Dragon's belly created a long-term association between exorcism and childbirth.

[47] Cheetham, Dominic. "Dragons in English: The Great Change of the Late Nineteenth

Century." *Children's Literature in Education*, vol. 45, no. 1, 24 May 2013, pp. 17–32.,

doi:10.1007/s10583-013-9201-z.

"The impetus for the incredible variety found in the modern literary Dragon is commonly seen to

stem from the creative genius of either E. Nesbit or Kenneth Grahame. However, examination of

dragon stories in the late nineteenth century shows that several different authors, on both sides of

the Atlantic, were producing similar stories at about the same time, suggesting that the change

was part of a general literary and cultural development rather than simply inspired storytelling.

This study examines dragon stories of the late nineteenth century and argues that the rediscovery

of the Scandinavian Dragon, the discovery of the Chinese and Japanese dragons, and possibly the

nineteenth-century publication of folktales parodying traditional dragon stories, gave authors

new ways of looking at dragons. Traditional St George type dragon stories had already shifted

into children's literature, making books for children the natural environment for the development

of the Dragon, and it is argued that the combined pressures of the new ideas about dragons, the

parody, and the enormous cultural changes of the late Victorian period, were sufficient to

stimulate the great change in the literary Dragon, which has continued and diversified ever since."

(Abstract was taken from the original paper, pg 17.)

[48] Ogden, Daniel. *Dragons, Serpents, and Slayers in the Classical and Early Christian*

       Worlds: A Sourcebook. Oxford University Press, 2013.

"Stories about dragons, serpents, and their slayers make up a rich and varied tradition within ancient mythology and folklore. In this sourcebook, Daniel Ogden presents a comprehensive and easily accessible collection of dragon myths from Greek, Roman, and early Christian sources. Some of the dragons featured are well-known: the Hydra, slain by Heracles; the Dragon of Colchis, the guardian of the golden fleece overcome by Jason and Medea; and the great sea-serpent from which Perseus rescues Andromeda. But the less well known dragons are often equally enthralling, like the Dragon of Thespiae, which Menestratus slays by feeding himself to it in armor covered in fish-hooks, or the lamias of Libya, who entice young men into their striking-range by wiggling their tails, shaped like beautiful women, at them. The texts are arranged in such a way as to allow readers to witness the continuity of and evolution in dragon stories between the Classical and Christian worlds, and to understand the genesis of saintly dragon-slaying stories of the sort now characteristically associated with St George, whose earliest dragon-fight concludes the volume. All texts, a considerable number of which have not previously been available in English, are offered in new translations and accompanied by lucid commentaries that place the source-passages into their mythical, folkloric, literary, and cultural contexts. A sampling of the ancient iconography of dragons and an appendix on dragon slaying

myths from the ancient Near East and India, particularly those with a bearing upon the Greco-

Roman material, are also included. This volume promises to be the most authoritative

sourcebook on this perennially fascinating and influential body of ancient myth."

 (Abstract was taken from Oxford University Press, ISBN: 9780199925117,

https://global.oup.com/academic/product/dragons-serpents-and-slayers-in-the-classical-and-

early-christian-worlds-9780199925117?cc=jp&lang=en&#)

[49] Ogden, Daniel. *Drakōn: Dragon Myth and Serpent Cult in the Greek and Roman Worlds*.

    Oxford University Press, 2013.

"*Drakon: Dragon Myth and Serpent Cult in the Greek and Roman Worlds* is the first substantial

survey to be focally devoted to the 'dragon' or the supernatural serpent, the *drakon* or *draco*, in

Greek and Roman myth and religion. Almost every major myth cycle of the Greek and Roman

worlds featured a dragon-fight at its heart, including the sagas of Heracles, Jason, Perseus,

Cadmus, and Odysseus. Asclepius, the single most beloved and influential of the pagan gods

from the late Classical period until Late Antiquity, was often manifest as a giant serpent and

even in his humanoid aspect carried a serpent on his staff.

    Detailed and authoritative, but lucidly presented, this volume incorporates analyses of all

of antiquity's major dragon-slaying myths, and offers comprehensive accounts of the rich

sources, literary and iconographic. Ogden also explores matters of cult and the initially

paradoxical association of dragons and serpents with the most benign of deities, not only those of

health and healing, like Asclepius and Hygieia, but also those of wealth and good luck, such as

Zeus Meilichios and Agathos Daimon. The concluding chapter considers the roles of both pagan

dragon-slaying narratives and pagan serpent cults in shaping the beginnings of the tradition of

the saintly Dragon- and serpent-slaying tales we cherish still, the tradition that culminates in our

own stories of Saints George and Patrick."

(Abstract was taken from Oxford University Press, ISBN: 9780199557325,

https://global.oup.com/academic/product/drakon-9780199557325?cc=jp&lang=en&)

[50] Earl, James W. "The Swedish Wars In *Beowulf.*" *The Journal of English and Germanic*

   Philology, vol. 114, no. 1, 2015, pp. 32–60. *JSTOR*,

   www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/jenglgermphil.114.1.0032.

Argues that close reading *Beowulf* is difficult but can help produce readings that can suggest

authorial intent. However, focusing on the more prominent elements within the plot can also

produce a well-reasoned reading. In order to create a comprehensive reading without relying on

the close reading, the article focuses on the dragon battle scene. The Dragon, as it is argued,

represents history and time, both for Beowulf and his people. However, there are discrepancies

regarding narrative within the dragon battle scene, according to James Earl. Using the Geatish

and Swedish history and Swedish Wars as a background, it creates a connection between dragon

motif, overcoming adversary, and loyalty.

[51] Walker, Kathleen M. "Chasing the Dragon's Tale: Europe's Fascination and Representation

   of the Dragon from the Twelfth to the Seventeenth Century." Electronic Thesis or

   Dissertation. Kent State University, 2015. *OhioLINK Electronic Theses and Dissertations*

   Center.

"This thesis explores myths, religion, and Asian art in an attempt to understand the factors which may account for the prevalence of dragon imagery in Western European art from the twelfth to the seventeenth century. Asian art is briefly mentioned to explain the dual nature of dragon iconography. Our fascination with the Dragon has endured, and scholars have classified dragon depictions into two distinct archetypes, one good and one evil. Both dragon archetypes warrant further investigation to demonstrate how they mainly reflect the continuity of a theme, one of power … While the debate about the origin of the creature remains, the Dragon appears in art and literature in both Eastern and Western cultures … The Mesopotamian Creation Epic Enūma Elish is an early example of dragon imagery in a culture. The tale could contain elements that become the basis for both Asian and European dragons. In the Enūma Elish, the goddess of the sea, Tiâmat, defended her children by creating monsters to protect them, and among this group was the Dragon. Her dragons represented the protective aspects associated with Asian dragons, while the dragon-like or hybrid sea-monster known as Cetus or ketos in the later Greco-Roman Story of Perseus and Andromeda usually embodied the evil antagonist qualities associated with Western European dragons."
(Abstract was taken from the Thesis's Introduction, pg 1.)

[52] Dresvina, Juliana. *A Maid with a Dragon: The Cult of St. Margaret of Antioch in Medieval England*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

"This is the first comprehensive interdisciplinary study of the cult of St Margaret of Antioch in medieval England. Margaret was one of the most famous female saints of both the Catholic

world and of Eastern Christianity (where she was known as St Marina). Her legend is

remembered for her confrontation with a dragon-shaped devil, who allegedly swallowed

Margaret and then burst asunder. This episode became firmly established in iconography,

making her one of the most frequently represented saints. Margaret was supposedly martyred in

the late 3rd century, but apart from the historically problematic legend there is no evidence

concerning her in other contemporary sources. The sudden appearance of her name in liturgical

manuscripts in the late 8th century is connected with the dispersal of her relics at that time. The

cult grew in England from Anglo-Saxon times, with over 200 churches dedicated to Margaret

(second only to Mary among female saints), and hundreds of images and copies of her life

known to have been made.

The book examines Greek, Latin, Old English, Middle English and Anglo-

Norman versions of Margaret's live, their mouvance and cultural context, providing

editions of the hitherto unpublished texts. By considering these versions, the

iconographic evidence, their patronage and audience, the monograph traces the changes

of St Margaret's story through the eight centuries before the Reformation. The book also

considers the further trajectory of the legend as reflected in popular fairy-tales and

contemporary cultural stereotypes. Special attention is given to the interpretation of St

Margaret's demonic encounter, central to the legend's iconography and theology."

(Abstract was taken from *British Academy Scholarship Online*,

DOI:10.5871/bacad/9780197265963.001.0001,

https://britishacademy.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.5871/bacad/9780197265963.001.

0001/upso-9780197265963)

[53] Senter, Phil, et al. "Snake to Monster: Conrad Gessner's *Schlangenbuch* and the Evolution of the Dragon in the Literature of Natural History." *Journal of Folklore Research*, vol. 53, no. 1, 2016, pp. 67–124. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/jfolkrese.53.1-4.67.

"Dragons, in the original sense of the word, are real animals. These iconic monsters of European folklore are the literary descendants of ordinary snakes that evolved through the centuries with much help from the discipline of natural history. Classical authors applied the term *dragon* to large snakes such as Aesculapian snakes and pythons. Over time, so many fabulous traits accrued in the descriptions of these animals that by the Renaissance dragon descriptions strained credulity, and eighteenth-century scientists dismissed dragons as mythical. Particularly important among dragon descriptions in the literature of natural history is that of Conrad Gessner in the snake volume of his animal encyclopedia *Historiae animalium*. Published in 1587, it incorporates a more comprehensive review of dragon lore and literature than any previous work. This makes it an important reference for describing the conceptual evolution of the Dragon from an ordinary snake into a fabulous monster. The volume was first published in Latin, then in German in 1589 under the title *Schlangenbuch*. Here we use *Schlangenbuch*'s sources to trace the evolution of the Dragon in the literature of natural history, with comments on the dragons of folktales, myths, and legends. We also present the first English translation of the dragon section of *Schlangenbuch*, annotated to identify Gessner's sources and their contributions to the conceptual evolution of the Dragon. In addition we present, similarly annotated, the first English translation of the dragon section of Ibn Sīnā's *Canon of Medicine*, a source that Gessner repeatedly cited."

(Abstract was taken from the original paper, pg 67.)

[54] Abram, Christopher. "Bee-Wolf and the Hand of Victory: Identifying the Heroes

    of *Beowulf* and *Vǫlsunga Saga*." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol.

    116, no. 4, 2017, pp. 387–414. *JSTOR*,

    www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/jenglgermphil.116.4.0387.

Uses the dragon motif, the idea of dragon-slaying, and the status of being a dragon-slayer as narrative tools in order to create a comparative study between *Beowulf* and *Vǫlsunga Saga*. The dragon and dragon-slayer motifs help create the identity of a hero. Without the opposition created by the Dragon, heroes' values and character faults would be sorely lacking their foil. It also creates a base for the argument regarding the fact heroes, such as Beowulf, are distillations of the stories passed down through oral tradition. Hence, the dragon motif works not only as a foil for the hero's character and values but also the values of the community.

[55] Sciacca, Claudia Di. "The Old English Life of Saint Margaret in London, British Library,

    Cotton Tiberius A. III: Sources and Relationships." *The Journal of English and Germanic*

    Philology, vol. 118, no. 3, 2019, pp. 354–388. *JSTOR*,

    www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/jenglgermphil.118.3.0354.

"The most iconic moment within Saint Margaret's story is the confrontation and the ultimate victory over the evil in the form of both a dragon and black demon, respectively. The image of St. Margaret being swallowed by the Dragon and then bursting out of it has been part of the discourse for a long time, however, this paper analyzes the Eastern apocryphal influences and

demonological topoi in relation to both the demon and dragon motifs. The battle and the dragon motif are crucial because it is an act of self-exorcism and self-baptism."

(Abstract was taken from Oxford University Press, ISBN: 9780197265963,

https://global.oup.com/academic/product/a-maid-with-a-dragon-

9780197265963?cc=jp&lang=en&#)

[56] Kordecki, Lesley. "Margaret and the Dragon: Lydgate's Adoption of the

Apocryphal." *Preternature: Critical and Historical Studies on the Preternatural*, vol. 9,

no. 1, 2020, pp. 53–75. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/preternature.9.1.0053.

"In the rather strange life of Saint Margaret of Antioch in John Lydgate's fifteenth-century (ca. 1426) Middle English version, The Legend of Seynt Margarete, Margaret is swallowed by the Devil in the form of a dragon, but after she performs the sign of the cross, the creature bursts into pieces, freeing her. Although the pervasive Devil/dragon character in medieval texts may seem too reductively metaphoric for serious monster scholars today, it is useful to explore what this particular religious appearance can show us in our study of a significant creature "other," the Dragon—here encompassing patriarchy's ultimate gender other, the woman. I argue that the emblematic maneuver of this text, with its apocryphal detail of the Dragon eating Margaret, although ostensibly written to inspire piety, also demonstrates the correspondence of marginalized others: a loquacious Devil/dragon and an articulate woman/saint."

(Abstract was taken from the original paper, pg 53.)

Critics Index