

Yuri Berezkin

'The Black Dog at the River of Tears': Some Amerindian Representations of the Passage to the Land of the Dead and their Eurasian Roots¹

Yury Berezkin

Peter the Great Museum of
Anthropology and Ethnography
(Kunstkamera), Russian Academy
of Sciences/European University
at St Petersburg

The New World was peopled at a late date. While there is an abundance of sites dating back to 10,000–11,500 (and even possibly 12,000) BP, reports of earlier finds have invariably turned out to be either manifestly inauthentic, or at the very least unreliable. 10,000–12,000 BP is the Terminal Pleistocene, when in the Far East people had begun manufacturing ceramics, while in the upper reaches of the Euphrates they were erecting stone stelae with images. Among peoples who took part in the initial colonization of

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the New World were groups that not only possessed different cultures, but also had a varied physical appearance. Craniological and odontological studies carried out in the past decade point to the fact that the first humans to have reached the New World were protomorphic groups resembling less the modern Amerindians, and more the Upper Palaeolithic populations of Eastern Asia, and even the modern Melanesian and Australian aborigines. In the Holocene era these populations started to be displaced and supplanted by other, more pronouncedly Mongoloid groups [Berezkin 2003a: 235–239; Haydenblit 1996; Lahr 1995: 170; Neves, Powell, Ozolons 2000; Neves, Pucciarelli 1998]. The racial type does not determine culture, but racial and cultural boundaries often coincide: these were distinct populations with few outside contacts. One can assume that already in the early stages of the peopling of the New World, complexes of folkloric motifs, which the settlers brought with them, also varied to a considerable degree.

The folkloric traditions of the peoples of the New and the Old World have many mutual parallels. Some motifs common to both traditions could have emerged independently; others could have been brought over to the American continent across the Atlantic in the last five hundred years; many motifs were introduced from Siberia via Alaska at different stages in the colonisation of the Americas. Separating these distinct groups of motifs is not simple, but if one uses a substantial amount of ethnographic material and processes this data by modern statistical methods, the task becomes achievable [Berezkin 2002; 2003a; 2003b]. Once these results are correlated with those reached by other disciplines, one should eventually be able to trace the pattern of colonisation of the New World and determine in which parts of Eurasia this resettlement began.

This article is devoted specifically to representations of the passage to the realm of the dead in the folklore of the peoples of America and Eurasia. Much in these representations is universal and is determined by the factual irreversibility of death and by the obvious differences between living and dead matter. This is what the idea of the dichotomy between our own world and the world (or worlds) of the dead is based upon — a dichotomy that entails representations of mirror-like reversals between the two, of a diametrical opposition between some of their key traits, of parallelisms in the way these worlds are sub-sectioned, and finally, the idea that one needs to go down a certain path in order to pass from one world to the other. Alongside this general idea of the world beyond the grave, there are local and regional idiosyncrasies, which are precisely the ones that are most interesting.

The format of this paper does not allow detailed discussion of why a historic approach to the study of the folklore and mythology is

preferred. Let me simply state here that the common flaw of all universalist approaches (structuralist and psychological) is that they cannot explain the profound and systemic differences in the distribution of large sets of folklore motifs across the world. Commentators either ignore the very existence of such global patterns, or are not aware of them in the first place. The functional approach to myth has a sounder basis, but its concern is the interpretation of tales in a given culture, not their content as such [see e.g. Malinowski 1926].

Among 1200 motifs whose area of distribution and linguistic links have been examined by me thus far, the majority are independent from economic activity, social organisation, and environmental factors. Therefore it is not likely that they emerged recently. The emergence of some other motifs may very well have been favoured by environmental and economic conditions; I have attempted to record any such correlations that seem to be of importance.

Folkloric Material

In 1991, Elizabeth Benson published an article in which she surveyed data concerning the role of the dog in representations of the other world among Amerindians [Benson 1991]. The article was clearly influenced by Roe — the principal proponent of structuralism among the US ethnographers studying the native people of South America [e.g. Roe 1982]. Benson strove to show the general association of the dog with the other world in the ethnography of Amerindians as it was realised in different, yet homologous, forms among different groups. Intentionally or not, Benson demonstrated an uneven regional distribution of such representations. For example, the dog did not appear as a guide to the other world throughout the American continent, but only in the area between Mexico and Peru, while in the east and the far south of the South American continent this motif could not be found. This absence cannot be explained by the poverty of ethnographic material in these regions, because we do, in fact, possess detailed descriptions, reconstructed from testimonies of Amazonian shamans, of the realm of the dead and of the path that is meant to lead to it [e.g. Carneiro 1977; Caspar 1975: 189, 199; Mindlin 1995: 137–40; Pereira 1974b: 4; 1985, No. 8: 68–77; 1987, No. 179: 680–1; 1994: 325–6; Schultz 1962: 248–50; O.Villas Boas and C.Villas Boas 1973: 127–34; Zerries 1958]. To be fair, there is one mention of a dog in the account of a dream experienced by a Sherente Indian in Eastern Brazil. In this dream the dog's bark warns the errant soul of the threat of a hidden monster [Nimuendaju 1942: 91]. However, in the absence of related examples it is impossible to interpret this one isolated instance. Benson does not cite any North American data. The latter was considered a few years later by Schwartz, whose study turned out to be even more universalist in its conclusion: *'People everywhere have perceived the dog as straddling*

this world and the next, linking nature and culture, sky and earth' [Schwartz 1997: 94].

The present study takes into account as fully as possible the published folkloric texts of all the different native groups of America and Siberia which contain information on the association of the dog with the Beyond. Although the presence or absence of particular motifs in publications concerning different native groups depends on a variety of attendant circumstances, systematic regional differences that are evident in the database created in this study cannot be seen as accidental.

The connection of the dog with the world beyond the grave is a general theme that is reflected in a series of more concrete motifs. Among them are the following:

1. The dog helps the soul reach the realm of the dead or makes existence there easier.
2. In particular, the dog ferries the deceased across a river.
3. The condition for receiving help from the dog, either in gaining access to the next world or in avoiding punishment there, is having treated actual dogs well during one's lifetime. It is especially significant that this motif has been recorded in regions where the prevailing attitude towards dogs was, in fact, one of indifference or cruelty [Ariel da Vidas 2002].
4. The dog appears as the master, the inhabitant or the guardian of the other world.
5. The subject has to win the dog over with food and/or possess the appropriate weapon to defend himself from the dog in order to be let through or be helped by the dog.
6. The otherworldly dog lives on the Milky Way and is associated with it.
7. In the world beyond the grave there are special settlements of dogs, or else there are particular paths leading to the other world that are designated especially for dogs.
8. In the land of the dead or on the path to it there are rivers or lakes of tears, blood, pus etc.

The last motif is independent and is found both together with the motif of the 'otherworldly dog' and separately. However, insofar as there is an areal correlation between this motif and the dog motifs, and in America specific plot connections as well, it is likely that we are dealing with a single folkloric complex. The general motif can be divided into more specific ones, namely stores of tears (rivers, lakes, etc.) shed by relatives, and rivers of blood and other excretions.

Rivers of tears are more frequent in descriptions of the voyage of the soul of an ordinary deceased person, while rivers of blood are more characteristic of stories about shamans and heroes.

The table below charts the presence of particular motifs in different mythologies and cosmologies. ‘x’ signifies the presence of a motif as such. Motif 1 is marked with a ‘g’ if the dog acts only as a guide to the realm of the dead, or with an ‘h’ if it actively helps the soul overcome obstacles. Motif 8 is marked with a ‘t’ if it is a river of tears, and with a ‘b’ if it is a river of blood or some other substance. If motif 8 is not connected with the motif of the ‘otherworldly dog’ in the same text, it is marked with an asterisk. The same data is presented in greater detail and with reference to sources in the Appendix at the end of the article.

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		Dog helper	Ferried across river	Good relations	Guard, master	Buy off with food or fight off	Milky Way	Dog settlement, footpath	River of tears and blood
Mediterranean	Greece, Egypt				x				
Central, Western, Southern Asia	<i>The Rigveda</i>	g			x				
	<i>The Avesta</i> , Zoroastrians	h		x	x				
	Kashmir (Dards), Tibet								b*
	Turks, Armenians								b*
	Turkmen, Kazakhs, Kirgiz								t
Northern Eurasia	Finns, Mari (Cheremis), Chuvash, Komi				x				
	Saami, Nenets, Nganasans, Selkup, Evenks								b*
Southern Siberia	Tofa			x		x		x	
	Tuva				x	x	x		tb*
	Altaic Turks, Shor				x				tb*

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		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Far East	Nanai, Udeghe, Oroch	g			x			x	tb*
	Nivkh							x	
	Ainu	g							
Alaska, Arctic, Subarctic	Chukchi			x			x		
	Koryak			x	x	x			
	Yukaghirs			x	x				
	Central Yupik			x				x	t
	Eastern Inuit (Labrador, Greenland)				x				
	Alaskan Atabaskans (Ingalik)	h						x	t
	Tlingits	h						x	t
	Carrier								x
Midwest and Eastern USA and Canada	Menominee			x	x				
	Winnebago			?	x				
	Ojibwa			x	x				
	Massachuset			x	x	x			
	Lenape (Delaware)			x	x		x		
	Shawnee			?	x				
	Iroquois, Huron				x		x	x	
	Cherokee				x	x	x		
	Muskogee, Natchez						x	x	
The Southwest	Eastern Pueblo (Taos)								b*
Latin America	Western Mexico (Huichol, Colima)				x	x			
	Mesoamerica (Aztecs and modern Nahua, Otomi, Huastec, Totonac, Zapotec, Mixtec, Mazatec, Popoluca, Mixe, Tzotzil, Lacandon)	hg	x	x	x	x			bt

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Honduras-Panama (Jicaque, Rama, Miskito, Talamanca, Cuna)	h	x	x	x				b*
Northern Columbia (Kogi, Yukpa, Metis of Aritama)	h	x	x		x			tb
Western Amazonia (Shuar, Letuama)	h		x					
Central Andes (Aymara, Quechua)	h	x	x				x	b
Montaña (Urarina, Ashaninka, Machiguenga, Shipibo)	g		x				x	
Southern Venezuela (Yanomami)								b*
Guyana (Kalica, Locono, Taulipang)			x	x		x		
Antilles (Taino)				x				

I have not analysed material on Africa and Western Europe, while gaps are possible in the database on Australia, Oceania, South, East and South-East Asia. In any case, I have been unable to find in these regions the most characteristic motifs of the above series, although the dog does seem to occur as the inhabitant of the realm of the dead in the folklore of these islander populations too. Among the Papuans of Kiwai, thunder is the bark of two dogs announcing the arrival of new souls in the land of the dead [Landtman 1927: 311–2]. Among the Melanesians of d’Entrecasteaux Islands, dogs guard the path into the other world and gobble up people who have not been through initiation rituals in this life [Jenness, Ballantyne 1920: 145]. Nguba of Vanuatu would kill a dog on a new grave so that it could accompany its master into the next world and defend him against attack by a person carrying an axe [Schütz 1969: 229–30]. It is therefore evident that the link of the dog with concepts about the

world of the dead was familiar in Melanesia as well. Yet at the same time the descriptions that occur are bare of the details that are usually found in Eurasian texts and in texts from the Americas (for example, there is no river dividing the world of the living from the world of the dead, with the shaky bridge running across it). It is difficult to say whether the motif emerged in Melanesia independently of Eurasian influence or not, but in whatever case, the Melasian materials are so far removed from the others both in territorial terms, and in terms of content, that including them here would be of little obvious benefit.

Let us begin with Eurasia. In the distribution area of the above group of motifs, Northern Siberia, Europe, Southern Asia and the Mediterranean are on the periphery. In these regions one encounters the motif of the dog as a guardian or inhabitant of the other world and the motif of the 'river of blood' without connection to the motif of the 'otherworldly dog'. It seems that only among the Mari and the Chuvash was the concept familiar according to which dead people would appear at the funeral ceremony in the guise of a dog or riding on the muzzle of a dog. The motifs of the above complex are concentrated to the greatest degree in Southern Siberia, in Tuva, to be more precise. Among the Tuva and the Tofa there is the motif of the good treatment of actual dogs as the requirement for obtaining help from them in the next world, the motif of cajoling the otherworldly dog, the motif of a dog village in the world beyond the grave, of the dog on the Milky Way, as well as the motif of rivers or lakes of tears and blood. I have been unable to trace material on this topic in the Khakass folklore [Mainagashev 1915]. In the texts of the Altaic Turks, the hero comes across dogs, as well as other guardians of the other world, on his way to see the lord of the dead, and he needs to bribe them to get past. The motif of the descent to the underworld and the bribery of dogs who attack the hero is also found in traditions further west, such as those of the Kazakhs [Potanin 1972, No 3: 112–3] and even the Saami [Kharuzin 1890: 353–354]. However, in the latter cases, such motifs have little connection with actual mythological representations, and dogs are easily omitted from the list of guardians of the underworld (e.g. among the Komi [Novikov 1938, No. 47: 161–2]). The motif of the river or lake of tears shed during the mourning of the deceased is found both in Tuva and the Altai. A remote reference to this motif in Bashkir epics [Sagitov 1987: 296] is an argument in favour of its dissemination across Eurasia with the Turks. However, the latter could ultimately have borrowed it from the Iranians: at any rate, the river of tears is described in the Medieval Zoroastrian (Mazdian) sources [Carnoy 1964: 344–5].

Motifs connected with the image of the 'otherworldly dog' are present in abundance in the Zoroastrian tradition. In the *Avesta* and

later sources, the dog appears both as a guardian and as a helper, while the condition of a person's receiving help is that he or she had a good attitude towards dogs during his or her lifetime. Parallels between the *Avesta* and the *Rigveda* (especially the distinction accorded to 'four-eyed' dogs with dark marks above the eyes) show that the motif of the 'otherworldly dog' reaches back to the ancient roots of Indo-Iranian culture. Corresponding motifs in the *Avesta* and Zoroastrian folklore are most likely to date back to the era when the ancestors of both the Iranians and the Indo-Aryans lived further north, in the steppes. It is also possible that in some regions, South-Siberian Turks borrowed the motif of the 'otherworldly dog' from populations who inhabited this area before them and who were at least in part Indo-European. This is supported by the absence of the theme of the otherworldly dog among the Buryat and the Mongols who lived further east in the area, where Indo-Europeans were hardly likely ever to have penetrated. Both traditions, the Turkic and the Iranian, which together contain the full range of motifs examined here, might have originated in one and the same ancient culture common to the steppe and forest-steppe belt of Central Eurasia.

In the Zoroastrian tradition the dog is considered to be a pure being, second in importance after man, and in some contexts equal to him [Kryukova 1999: 17–20, 23–4; Khismatulina, Kryukova 1997: 236–7; Boyce 1984: 139–43]. The tradition emphasises that the dog is able to see the evil spirit and chases it away from the deceased. In this context, the Northern Eurasian transformation of the dog into an impure creature and the myth of the dog actually 'surrendering' man to the evil spirit appears as a direct polemic with Zoroastrianism that may have come about as the consequence of some ethnic or social conflict. The Zoroastrian representation of the dog as a creature called upon to protect *'the physical body of Adam'* (see Appendix) and the assertion that Ahura Mazda had created the dog *'clad in its own clothes, shod in its own shoes'* [Kryukova 1999: 18] make this hypothesis particularly plausible. According to the Northern Eurasian myth, the creator forms human bodies and leaves the dog in charge of protecting his creation while he himself takes care of the souls. The evil spirit arrives, unleashes the bitter cold, and then gives the dog a warm fur coat in exchange for gaining access to the humans whose bodies it desecrates. God then punishes the dog by turning it into man's servant and by forcing it to feed on human scraps. Among the Selkup it is especially emphasised that from this moment on dogs are no longer able to see evil spirits and no longer bark at them. The theme of the 'dog-traitor' is recorded among the Russians [Dobrovolsky 1891, No. 9: 230–1; Kuznetsova 1998: 60], the Ukrainians [P.I(vanov) 1892: 89–90], the Komi [Konakov 2003: 44; Rochev 1984, No. 107: 114], the Chuvash [Egorov 1995: 117–8], the Mordvin [Devyatkina 1998: 169; Sedova 1982: 13–5], the

Mari [AktSORin 1991, No. 7: 38; Vasilyev 1907: 50–1], the Nenets [Golovnev 1995: 399–400; Labanauskas 1995: 13–5; Lar 2001: 188–205; Lekhtisalo 1998: 9–10], the Mansi [Lukina 1990, No. 114B: 300], the Khanty [Lukina 1990, No. 14: 75], the Ket [Anuchin 1914: 11–2; Porotova 1982: 59–60], the Selkups [Pelikh 1972: 341], the Yakut [Middendorf 1989: 20], various groups of Evenks [Vasilevich 1959: 175–9; Mazin 1984: 22; Pinegina et al. 1952: 49–50; Romanova, Myreeva 1971, No. 1, 2: 325–6], the Evens [Chadaeva 1990: 124], the Metis of the Russkoe Ustye [Azbelev, Meshchersky 1986, No. 76: 214], the Altaic Turks [Anokhin 1924: 18; Ivanovsky 1891: 251; Nikiforov 1915: 241; Potanin 1883, No. 46a: 218–20; Verbitskii 1893: 92–3], the Kumanda [Anokhin 1997: 16–7], the Shor [Khlopina 1978: 71–2; Shtygashev 1894: 7–8], the Tubalar [Radlov 1989: 221], the Khakass [Katanov 1963: 155–6], the Tofa [Rassadin 1996, No. 8: 16], the Buryat [Zolotarev 1964: 266], the Mongols [Potanin 1883, No. 46b: 220–3], the Negidals [Khasanova, Pevnov 2003, No. 1: 51–3] and the Orochon [Avrorin, Lebedeva 1966, No. 49: 195–6] — in other words, across the entire forest and forest-steppe zone of Asia and Eastern Europe. The narrative often follows the narrative of creation, in which a god sends an evil spirit, in the form of a bird, to retrieve the Earth from the bottom of the primeval ocean.¹

The myth of the dog-traitor contains certain 'para-biblical' motifs

¹ A transitional motif — both geographically speaking, and in terms of meaning — between Iranian Zoroastrian concepts of the dog as defender of the human and the North Eurasian concept of the dog-traitor is represented by the Caucasian variant of the dog myth [Ivanovsky 1891: 250]. This is almost identical with the North Eurasian version, but here the dog is understood to have been frozen by an evil spirit and to be quite incapable of saving the human being. God himself, rather than his arch-enemy, gives the dog a warm coat so that in future it can carry out its function of guard without hindrance. Variants of this motif, in which the dog is seen positively, are known in South and South-East Asia. In the mythology of the Kachari, one of the Tibeto-Burman peoples of Assam, the creator god brings humans into being, but does not manage to impart souls to their bodies before it gets dark. That night, the god's brothers destroy what he has made. Then the god creates two dogs, who drive off the destroyers, and in the morning he completes the work that he has begun [Soppitt 1885: 32]. Similar texts have been recorded from the Munda peoples in Eastern India, in particular the Korcu, Santal, Birhor, and Munda proper [Elwin 1949: 16, 19–20, 280–1]. The parallels with Siberian texts are particularly clear if one bears in mind that, at any rate among the Kachari, and to a slightly less obvious extent among the Santal, this whole series of episodes follows the tale about creating earth from the bottom of the sea. The Loda of Halmahera Island (Eastern Indonesia) also had a tale about a pair of dogs who were successful in driving the Devil away from human figures [Baarda 1904, No. 13: 444]. Unlike the very uniform dog-traitor tales from Eastern Europe and Siberia, this series of Asian texts demonstrates many variations. For example, it is a spider, not a dog, that drives away the creator's antagonist in the story recorded among the Munda proper. The Nganasan of Taimyr, who lack the standard Siberian version with the dog-traitor, none the less have a tale about the creator god and the reindeer, who defended the god's creations from the antagonist [Popov 1984: 42–3]. I would suggest that the story about the creator god who modelled the human figures and went away to fetch their souls, the antagonist who came to destroy the figures, and the guard placed to defend the figures, is a widespread Eurasian myth, of which the dog-traitor tale is only one of many later variants.

of Middle-Eastern origin, such as the motif of the hard covering surrounding the entire body of the original man, the remnants of which are the nails on the fingers and toes [Holmberg 1927: 384], and the motif of the berry, which man eats, ending up naked [Lukina 1990: 42, 61–2, 291–3; Vasilevich 1959: 184; Verbitskii 1893: 118]. Even if the most ancient domain where such motifs were disseminated was not limited to the Near East,¹ in Siberia it appears alien, as though accidentally linked with the given context. These facts suggest that the dog myth's plot was laid down at a late stage in these regions; indeed, the myth of the dog-traitor could have been brought already pre-formed to the periphery of its area of distribution (Eastern Europe and the Far East).² Its occurrence is therefore unhelpful to the reconstruction of early beliefs on these territories. However, when it comes to the area where the plot was originally formed, the myth — indirectly testifying to the existence of ideas diametrically opposite to those expressed in the myth — serves as an additional confirmation of the importance accorded to dogs as creatures who see spirits and help souls. 'Para-biblical' motifs would need to have been borrowed from the south, and the area of their putative dissemination does indeed seem to bear this out, including as it does the southern part of Western Siberia, the Altai and Western Mongolia.³

In the Far East the range of 'dog' motifs is slightly poorer than in Central Eurasia. Among the Manchu-Tungus peoples living in the Amur and Maritime (Primorye) regions and the Northeast of China, as among the Manchurians [Gimm 1982: 109], the dog appears as the guardian of the other world and as a creature escorting souls there, while rivers of blood and pus are mentioned separately, and — among the Orochon — dog settlements occur as well. Among the Nanais the soul, as it comes close to its destination, passes through an area '*where one hears the barking of dogs*' [Shimkevich 1896: 16], though it is possible that this is merely a mark of the distance that still needs to be covered before the other world is reached. Material (probably incomplete) related to the Ainu (dog-escort) and the Nivkh (dog village) does not add any new detail. The motif of the river of blood is registered among the Evenks and could belong to all Tungus peoples, but in Eastern Siberia there is no 'otherworldly

¹ The motif of a fruit, herbs, plants, etc., consumed as a means to sexual enlightenment by man's ancestors is found among the Dravidians of India [Elwin 1949: 281–2, 291], and here in a simpler and more logical form than in the Old Testament — the consumption of the fruit does not lead to the recognition by humans that they are naked, but to the emergence of menstruation or of pregnancy.

² It is noteworthy that the myth of the dog-traitor did not reach far northern and eastern regions — Taimyr, Kolyma, Kamchatka and Chukotka.

³ Compare evidence of the penetration of Manichaeism to the Altai, where the Sogdians acted as intermediaries [Kyzlasov 2001].

dog'. Furthermore, the Evenk text in which the river of blood is mentioned belongs to the genre of magic tale and could have been borrowed wholesale with all the motifs already in it. The languages and cultures of the peoples of the Maritime and the Lower Amur regions, on the one hand, and those of South-Siberian Turkic- and Mongol-speaking peoples, on the other, show a variety of parallels, by-passing the Evenks and the Manchurians [Smolyak 1989]. In the light of this fact one cannot exclude the possibility of a comparatively late diffusion of some of the above motifs, where this diffusion is most likely to have taken place from west to east. Thus, while among the Nanais it is the dog that takes the soul into the next world, among the Ulchi, who live near the estuary of the Amur River, instead of the dog, as escorts appear squirrels, foxes, polecats, and special spirits [Smolyak 1980: 228–9].

Among the motifs encountered both in Southern Siberia and the Far East is that of 'dog settlements', i.e. a special section of the other world designated specifically for dogs. Although this motif is not found in Iran, the idea that lies behind it, namely the special place accorded to dogs as well as humans among all other creatures, is the same in Zoroastrian conceptions. It is possible that a metamorphosis of this motif is represented by images of the realm of special creatures with a human body and a dog's head; images of this kind are widespread across the North-Central Eurasia.¹

Palaeoasian conceptions — both in themselves and in their regional distribution — are more closely connected with Alaskan traditions than with those of the more western areas of Siberia with the Yukaghirs occupying the intermediate position both geographically and considering their ideas. Generally speaking, among the Chukchi, the Koryaks (and possibly the Kamchadal, see Appendix), the Yupic and the Athabaskans of western Alaska (Ingalik) we find motifs of dog settlements in the other world, rivers of tears, dog-helpers, the condition of the good treatment of real-life dogs, and also (among the Koryaks) the motif of food that needs to be thrown to otherworldly dogs in order to pass through to the land of the dead. The motifs recorded among the Tlingits are rivers of tears (uncon-

¹ This motif is recorded in Ancient Greek sources [Stahl 1982: 196–8], in the Eastern Baltic region among the Finns, Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians [Eisen 1919: 234–8; Toivonen 1937: 97–8], in Eastern Europe and Western Siberia among the Mari [Aktorin 1991, No. 116: 178; Toivonen 1937: 99], Nenets [Turutina 2004: 88] and Selkup [Tuchkova 2004: 144], at the Eastern Caucasus among the Mûragin (men transform into dogs at night) [Khanagov 1892: 153], and in Southern Siberia, Central and Eastern Asia among the Khakass [Butanev, Butaneva 2001: 24], the Altaic Turks [Nikiforov 1915: 245–6], the Buryat [Potanin 1883, No. 70: 323; Khangalov 1958–1960, vol. 1: 220, vol. 3, No. 129: 326], the Mongols [Potanin 1883, No. 70: 322–3; 1893, No. 19: 351], the Kirghiz [Abramzon 1971: 360], the Kachin [Elwin 1958, No. 5: 188], and the Chinese [Yuan Ke 1987: 206, 337]. The Chinese localised the country of the 'Dog Zhuns' to the Northwest. Just as with Mongols, Siberian Turks, Kirghiz, Mûragin, and Kachin, only males were considered to be dog-headed, while women had human guise.

nected with the 'otherworldly dog'), the dog-helper and the dog settlement along the path to the human realm of the dead. Among Athabaskan groups outside Alaska, the motif of a 'canine' realm beyond the grave was evidently familiar to the Carrier of British Columbia (a man's soul can accidentally turn down the path designated for dead dogs). Taking into account the incompleteness of data concerning all Athabaskan groups between the Ingalik and the Carrier, it is quite possible that their folklore too contained some canine motifs.

In the western regions of the North American continent further south from the Carrier, the above complex of motifs is not present. If information on the Shoshoni, the Kutenai, and many Californian Indians is defective, this cannot be said about the Salish, the Sahaptin, and the Chinook, whose mythology has been studied very thoroughly. Rivers of ashes, soot and blood again appear in Mesoamerica, or more precisely on the northern periphery of this region — among the eastern Pueblo (Taos) in the South-West of USA. In the area of the Plains there are no dog motifs, with the partial exception of the Crow. In one of their myths, a youth sets off in search of his lost brothers and feeds a dog by a river. The dog in return carries him to the opposite bank [McCleary 1997: 69–71]. Although the world on the other side of the river is not exactly the world beyond the grave, such an association is quite obvious. In general, the range of folkloric motifs of the Crow differs to some extent from other Algonquian and Siouan-speaking groups of the northern Plains. The Crow came to the Plains from the east of the USA and settled there several centuries before other Sioux. However, in eastern USA the motif of the ferryman-dog is not found either.

In North America motifs related to the 'otherworldly dog' are most characteristic of the Woodland, i.e. the Midwest and Eastern USA and Canada. They are familiar among all local Algonquins and Iroquois, as well as Siouan-speaking Winnebago, whose culture abounds in Algonquin borrowings. There is no data on the eastern Sioux (Catawba, Tutelo), while data available on the Muskogee is limited only to the Seminole. Since the Seminole have separated from the Creeks only relatively recently, there is little doubt that the same notions were characteristic of the principal Muskogee group. It seems that these ideas also existed among the Mississippi Natchez. Among the Woodlands Indians the dog appears as the guardian of the other world who can either let the soul of the deceased pass or else destroy it. Here the dog does not appear as someone who ferries the dead across the river, or more generally as a helper of souls. At least among the Cherokee (linguistically Iroquois) and the Delaware (Algonquins) the dog protects the dead along the Milky Way, while among the Hurons and the Seminole (and, perhaps, also among the Natchez) the 'dog's path' on the Milky Way lies next to the path

designated for human souls. If we take into account that in other Woodlands traditions the Milky Way is understood as the path of the dead, and that the information we have on local folklore is incomplete, then it seems unlikely that the association of the dog with the Milky Way was an unusual one here.

Another vast area where the above motifs are distributed in the New World is Nuclear America, i.e. Mesoamerica (as already mentioned), and also the Central Andes, and the territories that spread between the two zones of ancient civilisations. However, here the dog appears as a creature that ferries souls across the river, and almost always on condition that the deceased treated dogs well during his or her lifetime. Among the Lacandons, the Kogi, the Metizos of Northern Columbia (Aritama) and the Peruvian Quechua, the river is in fact the same river of tears or blood that is found in representations of Eurasian peoples and Alaska and that has also been recorded among the Pueblo. At least among the Maya Tzotzil, the dog is believed to be able to drive away an evil spirit if it comes to attack the human soul. The Peruvian Sierra and the adjacent regions of Amazonia (Montaca) is the first area after Alaska where we come across the motif of special dog settlements in the next world. As far as more eastern areas of South America are concerned, some Indians there believe that after a man's death, the soul of his dead dog also goes to the same heavenly realm and continues to serve his master there [Carneiro 1977: 7]. In Brazil there are no representations of a special 'dog realm', or indeed any other motifs connected with the 'otherworldly dog'.

In Western and North-Western Amazonia, as in Nuclear America, the dog is considered the helper of suffering souls but does not ferry them across the river. Among the Yanomami of Southern Venezuela there is a river of blood in the realm of the dead, but this is unconnected with the motif of the dog. Guyanese representations are more similar to the Woodlands tradition. Thus, among the Carib (Taulipang subgroup of the Pemon) there again appears the association of the dog with the Milky Way that is typical of the Woodland. Parallels between Guyana and Eastern North America are numerous. As in Guyana, on Haiti the dog appears as the guardian of the world of the dead rather than as someone who helps the soul on its way there. If we look only at the folklore, then this distribution is most easily explained by the early penetration of humans from North to South America via the Antilles. However, there is no archaeological evidence to support such a migration.

Discussion

Since the motif of riding on a dog's back across the river does not exist in the Old World, it is most likely to have emerged independ-

ently in the New World. It is difficult to establish exactly the time of its emergence. Among the many motifs that are common to all of Nuclear America none is connected either with agriculture or with complex forms of social organisation, while the distribution area for some of them spreads beyond the boundaries of this region, in particular to the northwest of North America. Consequently, the diffusion of this complex within Nuclear America could have taken place long before the spread of productive economies and of civilisation. It is interesting that the distribution of the ferryman-dog motif coincides with the area where the haplotype group 'a' (one of five groups characteristic of American dogs) has been found. This was extracted from the dog remains excavated in Mexico, Peru and Bolivia [Leonard et al. 2002: 1615].

Other motifs examined here were likely brought over to Nuclear America from the Old World, insofar as they are also present both in Alaska and Eurasia. How exactly they reached Mesoamerica is unclear. Given the wide presence of the 'river of tears' motif in Alaska and Nuclear America, its absence in the Woodland suggests that folkloric complexes in different parts of the New World had a different Eurasian origin, although it is impossible to link each of them separately to particular Eurasian complexes. One detail from Mesoamerican descriptions of the journey to the other world resembles an episode found in Turkic texts in Southern Siberia. The detail in question is the motif where either the soul of the deceased, or else the hero, while entering the world of the dead, encounters a series of guardians. Among these are not only dogs but also other seemingly innocuous beings, all of which need to be cajoled by offerings consisting of some fairly ordinary objects (e.g. chickens are given grain, women are given sinews for sewing, etc.).

Despite the differences noted above, the ideas that the Indians of the Woodlands, on the one hand, and those of Nuclear America, on the other, had about the otherworldly dog, somehow still seem connected — a fact also supported by archaeology. Indeed, deliberate burials of dogs are found in North America, dating back to the beginning of the Archaic period, approximately 8,500 BP.¹ The earliest burial grounds have been discovered at the Koster site in southern Illinois [Fagan 1995: 362; Schwartz 1997: 103, table 2.1]. Dog burials that date before the first millennium BC are all localised in the Midwest and Eastern USA and Canada. This correlates well with the distribution of folkloric and ethnographic data. From the middle of the first millennium BC such burials also appear in Nuclear America, while they are, as before, absent from Western USA (apart from the Pueblo

¹ Radiocarbon dates are not calibrated. The calendar date for the final phase of the Palaeolithic is earlier than the radiocarbon date by approximately two thousand years.

area) and the Eastern South America. It is astonishing that Schwartz, who systematised the data [Schwartz 1997: 103, table 2.1], did not comment on this pattern of distribution, insisting on her universalist approach in the spirit of Bastian. The first millennium BC is the era of the spread in Central America and Northern and Central Andes of developed agriculture based on the cultivation of Mexican varieties of corn [Bird 1990; Burger, Merwe 1990; Staller 2001; 2003; Staller, Thompson 2002]. The appearance of dog burial-grounds precisely in this area and precisely at this time is significant. Either the above complex of ideas spread to Nuclear America very late, being borrowed from the central and eastern regions of North America (which seems unlikely), or else its modification took place in the first millennium BC, as reflected in the new practice of dog burials.

There is no doubt that the ancestor of the dog was the wolf, not the jackal. Geneticists estimate that the jackal and the wolf separated as species about 1 million years ago, while the dog and the wolf separated approximately 15,000 years ago. They assume that the domestication of the dog mostly likely took place in Eastern, Central and South-Eastern Asia [Savolainen et al. 2000]. Data on independent domestication of the dog in North America [Crockford 2000: 271–85] were not confirmed because the genetic distance between American wolves and Asian dogs proved to be greater than between American and the Asian wolves [Leonard et al. 2002]. Dog remains in Eastern Europe (Yeliseevichi I) have been dated to 17–13,000 B.P. [Sablin, Khlopachev 2002; 2004], and some in Southern Siberia (Verkholskaya Gora near Irkutsk) to approximately 12,500 BP [Abramova 1984: 322; Gromov 1948: 369–72]. The morphological traits alone are rarely sufficient for differentiation of the Paleolithic dog and the wolf, given the frequent hybridisation between both species. For secure identification of the domestic dog, more important are the dog burials in a dwelling discovered in Layer VI of Ushki site, Kamchatka [Dikov 1979: 54–60] and at Ust Belaya settlement at Angara [Krizhevskaya 1978: 75–8; Medvedev et al. 1971: 62–3]. Radiocarbon age of Kamchatka materials is about 10,500 BP.¹ Dog burials dated to 11–12,000 BP are known in the Levant among the Natuf materials [Tchernov 1997]. The very fact of intentional burial makes the identification of such remains as belonging to the wolf implausible.²

The earliest dates for the very first dogs — domestic or in the process of domestication — that have been found in different areas of Europe

¹ This assessment of age is supported by recent studies [Goebel a.o. 2003: 503].

² In Levant, completely domesticated dog appears from the Pre-Ceramic Neolithic B [Quinter, Köhler-Rolefson 1997]. Even if the morphological difference between the Natuf dog and the wolf was insignificant, there is no doubt on the existence of Natuf dog's special relations with the man.

and Asia are concentrated inside a rather small interval of time (15–15,500 BP) and chronologically coincide with the period of the initial peopling of the New World. It is possible that it is precisely the presence of dogs, who were able to drag heavy loads as well as serve as a source of live meat, that enabled man to conquer the intra-continental regions of North-Eastern Asia and Beringia, and then allowed his migration southwards along the Mackenzie Corridor between the Laurentide and the Cordilleran ice sheets (see map in [Fagan 1995: 76]). The dog could hardly have been as important to the inhabitants of coastal areas.¹ Consequently, it is more likely that the dog reached America along intra-continental routes (along the valleys of the rivers Yukon and Mackenzie) than along coastal ones (through Southern Alaska). This hypothesis matches the distribution of the above folkloric motifs, which, beyond Alaska, are present in the east of North America but not the west. The striking differences between traditional methods of stone-working in the Eastern South America and those of the North American Clovis, whose ancestors most probably came from Alaska down the Mackenzie Corridor, and the abundance of common motifs in the folklore of Indians of Eastern South America and those living along the Pacific coast of North America [Berezkin 2003: 231, 268], allow us to hypothesise that the first groups of people to reach Brazil entered the New World along the coast of Southern Alaska. The above data on the distribution of the motif of the otherworldly dog (absent or weak in Brazil and the West of North America but abundant in the Woodland) fit well with this picture.

There are no unequivocal finds of dog remains in Clovis sites. This is not surprising if the meat of the dog was not used as food. Human remains belonging to the last phase of the Pleistocene that have so far been discovered in North America are also unconnected with the Clovis industry. However, the material found in the Jaguar Cave in Idaho [Sadek-Kooros et al. 1972] at least confirms the appearance of dogs in the New World at the Terminal Pleistocene. Bones of domesticated dogs are found in this rock shelter, in layers dated approximately around 10,400 and 11,500 BP, though information about artefacts found on this site is contradictory.

Conclusion

It is clear that the image of the dog could only have been integrated into cosmological representations, including ideas about the world beyond the grave, after the domestication of the dog. With all other factors being equal, the 'integration' of the dog into a cosmology

¹ Or at least its economic role was totally different. The dog plays an important role in myths of Pacific people from Indonesia to the Northwestern U.S. but is connected there with completely different motifs and tale-types than in continental regions of both Old and New World.

ought to have been the more intensive, the more important the dog was in the economy of a particular social group (for example, in Zoroastrianism, the high status of the dog was undoubtedly the consequence of its role in the latter's cattle-raising economy). The 'otherworldly dog' is a complex of motifs of Eurasian origin, brought over to America by one or several groups of early migrants, who were most likely to have got there through Central, rather than Southern, Alaska. Though subsequently (possibly quite soon after the first colonization of the New World) the dog spread to all Indian populations, its image as a guardian of the land of the dead, guardian of the soul, has taken an important role in the cosmology of the inhabitants of a limited number of regions — Alaska, the Midwest and Eastern USA and Canada, Nuclear America, Guyana and Montaca. The geography of the distribution of this image is not reducible only to the economic role of the dog in particular societies known to ethnographers, but is also determined by the historical links that different groups colonizing the New World had with their Eurasian ancestors.

Appendix

SOURCES AND THEIR CONTENTS IN BRIEF

If the Amerindian language in which the text was written belongs to a larger linguistic group, then the latter is placed in brackets and in italics.

SOUTHERN, SOUTHWESTERN AND CENTRAL ASIA, AND KAZAKHSTAN

Kalash (Dards). There are seven heavens and a river springs in each of them. The river that springs from the highest (seventh) heaven is of milk. If it overflows its banks the crop-yield will be good. The river that flows from the sixth heaven is of blood and its flooding causes disease, famine and war [Jettmar 1986: 358].

Tibetans. 1) The patron of the Lama religion lived in a palace of skulls standing on a cemetery. In the surrounding area were four lakes: a lake of milk, a lake of gold, a lake of blood and a lake of butter [Sagalaev 1984: 73]. 2) In search of his bride, Erdeni Kharalik comes to the palace of Rakshas; there is a lake of blood in front of it [Potanin 1891: 141–3].

The Rigveda. Two dogs of the God Yama, Zyma and Zabala, track down the souls of the deceased and take them to the land of the dead, which they guard [Elizarenkova 1972: 199, 353].

The Avesta (Vd. XIII). At the Chinvat Bridge, which leads to paradise, the soul is met by a beautiful virgin, accompanied by two

dogs. The dogs guard the bridge and fight off the evil spirits that are pursuing the soul. If a person kills a shepherd-, hunting- or guard-dog in their lifetime, he will not be helped at the Chinvat Bridge. The souls of dead dogs go to springs. There out of a thousand bitches and a thousand male dogs emerge two otters (one female and one male). Whoever kills an otter will cause a terrible drought [Kryukova 1999: 17–20].

Iranian Zoroastrians. 1) The dog, created by Ohrmazd to protect the physical body of Adam from Ahriman, is at the Chinvat Bridge, preventing those who were cruel to dogs to cross over. With its bark it also scares virgins away from the righteous. It also helps Mihr expose demons that try to subject sinners to greater punishment than they deserve [Boyce 1989: 146]. 2) Travel to the other world is described in a late Pāhlavī book: after crossing the Cinvat Bridge, souls reach a river that comes from the tears which men shed from their eyes in unlawful lamentation for the departed [Carnoy 1964: 345].

Turks. The horse of a bey's son steps on a witch's foot. The witch makes the youth fall in love with the cucumber girl. In order to overcome obstacles on his journey to her, the youth needs to praise the cleanliness of the spring from which flow blood and pus, and to drink three handfuls of it [Walker, Uysal 1966, No. 5: 64–71].

Armenians. The father attempts to destroy his son by sending him to visit his dead mother. In the underworld, the youth passes by the shades of sinners who are undergoing torment. The last boundary dividing the youth from his mother is a river with black-, red-, and yellow-striped water [Bunyatov et al. 1900: 97].

Turkmen (Yomud). The soul of the deceased visits its home every Friday; sometimes its path is obstructed by water which consists of the tears of relatives [Demidov 1962: 196].

Kazakhs. The tears of a widow should not fall on the ground, because this will be an additional burden for the deceased. Too many tears and the deceased will endure a 'deluge' [Toleubaev 1991: 94].

Kirgiz. Tears of relatives can turn into a sea barring the deceased's soul's path to paradise [Bayaliev 1972: 71].

SOUTHERN SIBERIA

Tofa. On the way to the land of Erlik-Khan, the deceased has to cross a precipice on a rope as thin as a human hair and to pass through a dog village where dogs end up after their death. If the man has beaten dogs in his lifetime he needs to bring bones with him [Alekseev 1980: 175].

Tuva. 1) In order to kill the hero, the Khan sends him to Erlik. On

his way there along a meadow with flowers, over a cliff, and across a boiling sea, the hero needs to make several offerings: he must give two women sinews for sewing, he must hammer two pegs into the ground for two camels, he must throw a piece of meat each to two dogs, and he must give a lasso each to three giants (bogatyrs). Thanks to this all the guardians let the hero pass freely there and back [Potanin 1883, No. 11: 412–6]. 2) The hero sets off to see Erlik-Khan. A black dog runs along a pasture. The hero needs to feed it with a sheep's tail, strangle it, and then stick the dog's tail into its mouth. The camels ask whether they can scratch themselves against either the hero or his horse. They need to be given saddle-cloths. The women ask whether they should pull out sinews from the hero or the horse. They need to be given pre-prepared sinews for sewing. In the land of Erlik the hero encounters the black dog he killed previously. The dog now helps him [Taube 1994, No. 3: 61–9]. 3) When performing acts connected with a funeral one needs to avoid pointing the deceased in directions where lies the Mouth of the Black Dog (Kara Yt Aksy). The latter is associated with the Milky Way, Ursa Major, the Cholbon star etc., changing its location depending on the time of the year. If the deceased falls into the dog's mouth then Kara Yt Aksy has to be fed with meat and given a sheep, a horse etc., otherwise the deceased will drag his relatives with him to the land of the dead [Salomatina 1993: 46–52]. 4) In the land of Erlik there are gorges filled with human blood and lakes of tears [Dyakonova 1976: 280].

Altaic Turks. 1) In Erlik's underworld there is a lake filled with tears of mourners, a red lake filled with the blood of victims of murder and suicide, and of those who accidentally cut themselves and have bled to death. Erlik's palace lies at the joining of nine rivers into a single river of human tears. Across it stretches a bridge made of hair from a horse's mane. If a soul tries to return to the world of the living the bridge collapses and the soul is taken back to Erlik [Anokhin 1924: 3–4; Dyakonova 1976: 278–9]. 2) The hero is sent to Erlik to fetch some vessels and a fur coat. There he sees lakes of human tears and bushes of human hair [Nikiforov 1915: 60]. 3) Two black dogs under a 'seven-jointed' poplar tree guard the way to the world of Erlik (master of the dead) and back [Surazakov 1982: 101].

Shor. When relatives cry, tears that flow from the right eye form the river Kanchul, while those from the left form the river Chashchul. If too many tears are shed the two rivers flood their banks and the soul cannot cross them [Dyrenkova 1940, No. 97, 99: 333, 335].

NORTHERN EURASIA

Finns. The angry barking of Manalan-rakki ('dog of the land of the dead') resembles the Greek Cerberus [Holmberg 1927: 75].

Saami. Man-deer begs his mother to bring a bride to him. The path that leads to him passes through a river of blood, with waves of lungs and rocks of liver. The old man's eldest daughter has difficulty wading across it. She eats the insoles of fat in her mother-in-law's shoes and slaps young deer across the nose. The mother-in-law turns her into stone. The same thing happens with the middle sister. The youngest sister dries out the insoles and the river of blood using powder made of the bark of the alder-tree. She ties a red cloth around the deer's ears [Charnolusky 1962: 84–93].

Mari. The entry to the other world is guarded by dogs, the rules of the dead. In order that he may fend them off, a stick of lime-wood or rowan-wood is placed in the dead man's hand [Kuznetsov 1904: 101; Sebeok, Ingemann 1956: 112]. During the rite in commemoration of the dead, dogs were brought sacrificial food, and at the same time the dead were ceremonially requested to leave once the end of the rite was reached. The dogs' behaviour was observed, and used as the foundation for speculation about how the dead were behaving in the other world [Holmberg 1927: 63].

Chuvash. It was considered that when the dead person was lowered into the grave, his whip would strike a black dog, and it was precisely this blow that would propel him into the other world [A. K. Salmin, MS]. Feeding dogs at the graveyard with food from the funeral repast was deemed equivalent to feasting with the dead, for the deceased were thought to arrive at their funeral riding on the tip of a dog's nose [Salmin 1989: 81].

Komi-Permyaks. A meeting with a dog is '*the first encounter beyond the grave*' [Koroleva 2004].

Nenets. The spring of the world's river is in the south in the '*bog with seven bog-holes*'. Its mouth is in the north at the cold '*sea of the dead*'. In the upper reaches lies the '*sea with bloody water*' and the tree that connects the earth, the heavens and the underworld [Khelimsky 1982: 400].

Nganasans. Only the face of the deceased is washed before burial. The belief is that since many people died in the past, the water with which their face was washed, has formed a deep sea. Across this sea swims a shaman who has transformed himself into a polar bear. The souls of the deceased gather on the cuffs of his dress and travel across with him [Popov 1936: 76].

Selkup. A sea of bloody water is mentioned in descriptions of shamanic travels [Prokofyeva 1961: 58]. Napol'skikh [1992: 12] also names the Selkup among groups familiar with the image of the dog as a guardian of the land of the dead.

Barguzin Evenks. First the father, then the eldest, and then the

middle son set off in search of a wife, but all disappear. An old man helps the youngest son find a good horse. An old woman tells him that his father has been killed by the daughters of Chagan-Kan. On his way to them there is a river of blood with banks of human bones [Voskoboynikov 1973, No. 18: 80–9].

FAR EAST

Manchu. The dog is the guardian of the world of the dead; it leads souls on their way to the Beyond [Gimm 1982: 109].

Nanai. 1) Khado was born from a birch, on a swing and was fed by birds. Kha tries to cut the tree down to fetch the swing, but all his axes break. In a dream Khado tells Kha to go to the river of blood and the river of pus, take some blood and pus from them and cover the tree trunk with it. Having done this, Kha successfully fells the tree [Shternberg 1933: 492–3]. 2) The soul is taken to the other world by a dog [Smolyak 1980: 228].

Udeghe. 1) In the worst part of the other world there flows a red river and there is a black marsh and black cliffs [Arseniev in Bereznitsky 2003: 78]. 2) The shamans take the souls of the dead to the hole in the west and give them over to the mistress of the other world. Her dog guards the entrance and prevents the souls from escaping [Podmaskin 1991: 45, 120].

Orok. 1) The dog protects the soul of the hunter on its way to the other world [Bereznitsky 1999: 104]. 2) The canine other world is situated at the entrance leading to the human other world [Kreinovich 1930: 52].

Nivkh. There is a canine other world, but it is uncertain where exactly it is situated [Kreinovich 1930: 52].

Ainu. The soul reaches a bifurcation on the way to the land of the dead. One path leads to the realm of the gods, the other to the Damp Underworld. The dog leads the soul along one of the two paths [Batchelor 1927: 161].

CHUKOTKA, ALASKA AND THE AMERICAN ARCTIC

Chukchi. In the other world is a land of dogs, which is passed by the soul before it reaches the land of the shades. Whoever beats a dog on this earth will be attacked and severely bitten by the dogs there [Bogoras 1902: 636].

Koryak. While the soul rises to the Supreme Being, the deceased and his other soul, or his shadow, depart into the underground world of the shadows, ancient people, people of former times (Peni'nelau). The entrance into this country is guarded by dogs; if a person beat his dog during his life, he will not be admitted. These dog-guardians

may be bribed, however. For this purpose, fish-fins are put into the mittens of the deceased, that they may give them to the dogs that guard the entrance of the world of the shades [Jochelson 1908: 103].¹

Yukaghir. 1) When the dead is carried by his reindeer to the Beyond, the guardian-spirits of dogs wait for him on both sides of the road. If the man has given them bones during his life, the dogs let him go. If he was cruel to them, they attack him, and he never reaches the aim of his voyage. His soul will not be reincarnated into a newly born baby [Kurilov 2005, No. 34: 305]. 2) A river of blood flows in the underworld [Nikolaeva et al. 1989: 155].

Ingalik (Athabaskans). A man is dying. His soul goes down a wide path, from which branch out narrower paths that lead to settlements of souls of various animals. The man first passes the settlement of human souls, then reaches the settlement of dog souls. The latter is a dangerous place, guarded by two dog souls. The man gets into a boat and first crosses a black river that consists of the sweat of the dead. He then crosses a clear river of tears shed by mourners. He is then sent back. He returns to his body and recounts what he has seen [Vanstone 1978: 55–6].

Central Yupik. A young woman has died. Her deceased grandfather takes her to the land of the dead. They arrive in a village where an old woman tries to hit her with a pole and chases her. The grandfather explains that this is a village of dogs. The young woman now understands how dogs suffer when they are being beaten. She arrives at the river of tears shed in mourning. Dry grass and rubbish floats on it and stops in front of the woman forming a bridge. The woman crosses this bridge to the opposite bank where the settlement of the dead is situated [Nelson 1899: 488–90].

Inuit. 1) Labrador. The path to the underworld lies along a long dark passage guarded by a creature (probably a dog) that looks after souls [Hawkes 1916: 153]. 2) Western Greenland. Soul arrives at the house, in front of which a watch is kept by terrible animals, sometimes described as seals, sometimes as dogs. Within the house-passage itself, the soul has to cross an abyss by means of a bridge as narrow as a knife's edge [Rink 1875: 40].

Tlingits. 1) The shaman who first dies and is then resurrected tells of what he has seen in the next world: At a river he shouted for a long time but no one heard him. When he yawned the dead sent a boat to fetch him. The water of the river was bitter — these were tears shed by women [Boas 1895, No. XXV/3: 321–2]. 2) The river on

¹ Among the natives of the Northeastern Siberia which mythology contained similar motifs, [Jochelson 1908: 514] mentions also the Kamchadal, but gives no details for them. See also [Koppers 1930: 374].

the way to the land of the dead is as bitter as bile [Krause 1989: 192]. 3) When those who have died in a war or from an accident reach heaven they end up in the land of the Aurora borealis. In the clouds nearer Earth is the Heaven of Dogs. Here end up souls of sorcerers, of those who committed suicide and of those who killed animals without a purpose. They reside there with the souls of dead dogs. Men who end up there walk on their hands with their legs in the air, while women walk on all fours [De Laguna 1972: 771]. 4) The body of the deceased is brought out of the house through the demolished back wall of the house. A dead dog is thrown in the wake of the deceased. The dog is supposed to protect the soul from animals that attack it on its way to the other world. According to another informant, a live dog is thrown, so that the (evil) spirit that one encounters on the path to the other world does not enter the soul of the man, but that of the dog. If the evil spirit enters the man's soul, the soul will die [Swanton 1908: 430].¹

MID-WEST AND EASTERN USA AND CANADA

Menominee (Algonquins). The soul of the deceased reaches a river across which lies the settlement of the dead. Across the river is a slippery log. A gigantic dog, the leader of all the earthly dogs prevents those who ill-treated dogs and wolves in their lifetime to cross the bridge [Skinner 1913: 86].

Winnebago (Sioux). An old man lives alone with four dogs that hunt for him. He gives three of them sacred powers. The fourth acquires the ability to hunt both in daylight and at night-time, and becomes the Grey Wolf, the patron of men. Its brothers, the Green, the Black and the White Wolf become the patrons of the underworld [Smith 1997: 158–60].

Ojibwa (Algonquins). The deceased goes to the land of successful hunting. At a bifurcation this land is guarded by a large dog; it lets through only those who were good to dogs [Beck, Walters 1977: 206–7]. 2) Souls walk along a dusty road, and come to a river with a log across it. Dogs guard this bridge at both sides, and if the person was cruel to dogs during his lifetime, they throw him into the river [Jones 1919, No. 1: 3–23].

Massachuset or other Algonquins of New England. 'Yet do they hold the immortality of the never-ending soul, that it shall pass to the South-west Elysium... at the portall whereof they say, lies a great Dogge, whose churlish snarling deny a Pax intratibus, to unworthy intruders: Wherefore it is their custom, to bury with them their Bows and Arrows, and good store of the Wampompeage and Mowhacksies; the one to affright the affronting

¹ [Kamensky 1985: 78] reports this but does not explain the rite's meaning.

Cerbens the other to purchase more immense prerogatives in their Paradise [Wood 1634 in Schwartz 1997: 93; in Skinner 1913: 90]

Delaware (*Algonquins*). Dogs guard the log-bridge at the bifurcation of the Milky Way where lies the path to the other world. They push off the bridge the souls of those who ill-treated dogs during their life [Bierhorst 1995, No. 151, 194: 65, 73].

Huron (*Northern Iroquois*). 1) Spirits travel to the other world along the Milky Way. Along an adjacent path, also marked by stars and called the '*path of the dogs*' travel dog souls [Sagart-Theodat in Schwartz 1997: 93]. 2) Souls on the path to the realm of the dead need to cross a river along a log-bridge. The bridge is guarded by a dog who attacks many and throws them into the river where they sink [Mathews 1982: 48].

Iroquois (*Northern*, group not specified). '*The region of pure spirits the Five Nations call Eskanane... There is a gloomy, fathomless gulf over which all good and brave spirits pass with safety... When suicides approach this gulf..., down they fall with horrid shrieks. In this dark and dreary gulf... resides a great dog... infected with the itch... The guilty inhabitants of this miserable region all catch this disease... Idiots and dogs go into the same gulf, but have a more comfortable apartment*' [Beauchamp 1922: 158–9].

Shawnee (*Algoquins*). There are motifs of obstacles of water and the dog-guardian on the path to the land of the dead [Gayton 1935: 274; Skinner 1913: 86].

Cherokee (*Southern Iroquois*). Sirius and Antares are two dog-stars located opposite one another where the Milky Way meets the horizon. They cannot be seen simultaneously. The soul crosses a stream on a thin pole. Villains fall off, while the rest continue to travel first eastwards then westwards. At the passage by the bifurcation of the road one must feed well the first dog. Continuing further, the soul meets the second dog and also needs to feed it. If the soul carries too little food the second dog will remain unfed and the soul will forever wander between the two dogs [Stansbury 1906: 362–3].

Seminole (*Muskogee*). The Creator of Breath blows into the sky making the Milky Way appear. This is the path of the soul. The souls of good men travel along it to a city on the western horizon. Dogs and probably other animals go along the '*path of the dogs*'. These two paths converge and meet at the heavenly city. Previously dogs were killed so that they would escort their masters [Greenlee 1945: 138–9].

Chickasaw (*Muskogee*), **Natchez**. The Milky Way is the path of dogs [Greenlee 1945: 139].

SOUTHWESTERN USA

Taos (*Tanoan*). The husband buries his wife and follows her to the other world. They cross four rivers. The first is of water, the second of ashes, the third of soot and the fourth of blood. The living can drink only from the first. The husband succeeds in bringing his wife back [Parsons 1940, No. 6: 23–8].

MEXICO

Huichol (*Uto-Aztecs*). The soul follows a path and reaches a bifurcation. On the right awaits a hungry dog, a crow chased away from a cornfield, and an opossum who checks whether the deceased has ever eaten opossum meat [Berrin 1978: 17]. The soul throws the dog five tortillas. While the dog is eating, the soul manages to get past, otherwise the dog would have bitten it [Furst 1967: 69].

Cora (State of Colima, *Uto-Aztecs*). Running away from the flood, people head towards the mountains following the trail of the dog. After the flood the dog hides in a large lake where it is visited by the souls of the dead on their way to their final abode [Suarez de Cepeda in Winning 1974: 43].

Aztecs (*Uto-Aztecs*, sixteenth century). 'And when the four years had ended, thereupon [the dead one] went to the nine lands of the dead [where] lay a broad river; there the dogs carried one across. It was said that whosoever came walking [to the bank] looked over the dogs; when one recognized his master, thereupon he came to throw into the water in order to carry his master across; hence the natives took pains to keep the dogs' [Sahagún 1952: 42].

Nahua (*Uto-Aztecs*, twentieth century). Three or four small tortillas are placed in the grave. The deceased is supposed to give it to the black dog, which carries it across on its back to the other world. A stick is placed on the right of the body. It is to be used in the land of the dead to chase away pestering dogs [Madsen 1960: 210].

Metis of Central Mexico. Dogs help the dead cross the river if these have treated them well in their lifetime. The black or sandy-coloured dog approaches of its own accord and takes the deceased across the river, while the white one needs to be begged [Horcasitas, Ford 1979: 13; Parsons 1936: 499].

Totonac. After the first rising of the Morning Star and then of the Sun, the ancestors die. The dog takes their souls to the Sun, which judges them. The good are told to go back and settle on Earth again [Münch 1993: 37–40].

Popoluca (*Mixe-Zoqueans*), **Nahuatl** (*Uto-Aztecs*) of Eastern Veracruz. The souls of the dead need to cut across a river of blood [Münch 1983: 154].

Mixe (Mixe-Zoquean). The soul of the deceased throws tortillas to the dog to be allowed to get past [Villa 1955: 120].

Huastec (Maya). Dogs accompany the soul to the other world and provide assistance along the way. For this reason people must treat their dogs well (in practice people are cruel to them) [Ariel da Vidas 2002: 536].

Lacandon (Maya). The soul arrives at the river of tears shed by relatives, gives the bone to the dog, grain to chickens and hair to lice. If during his lifetime the man has been good to his dog, the dog will take him across a river swarming with crocodiles [Boremanse 1986: 74, 83].

Quiche (Maya). Brothers Hun-Hunahpú and Vucub-Hunahpú are invited to the underworld to play ball. While going down there they cross a river of blood and a river of pus, but do not drink from them. The same episode takes place with the journey to the underworld by the sons of Hun-Hunahpú [Tedlock 1995: 105–7, 131–8].

Tzotzil (Maya). 1) The wife dies and the husband goes after her. He crosses a lake with the help of a black dog. He returns after three days and dies [Gossen 1974, No. 78: 293; 2]. 2) The dead cross the river with the help of a black dog [Guiteras-Holmes 1961: 143]. 3) If a person has been good to dogs during his life, a black dog ferries his soul across the hot river. When an evil spirit (*pujuk*) comes to take the soul of a man, the dog suggests to him that he should count hairs on its tail before dawn. If the dog's master has been good to him, the dog jerks its tail and the *pujuk* loses count [Pérez López 1996: 111–27].

Otomi (Otomanguean). 1) A clay dog is placed in the coffin. It will take the soul across the river [Galinier 1990: 210]. 2) A tortilla is placed with the deceased. It is meant for the dog that the soul meets on its way to the next world [Garibay 1957: 218].

Zapotec (Otomanguean). If a man treats dogs well in his lifetime, the black dog will take his soul across the river [Parsons 1936: 152–3].

Mixtec (Otomanguean). The black dog transports souls to the land of the dead [Cruz 1946: 205].

Mazatec (Otomanguean). 1) After its master's death the dog helps him cross the river to the land of the dead. People need to be good towards dogs. They must throw food for the dog onto the ground rather than let it feed out of their hand [Incháustegi 1977: 158]. 2) The black dog awaits the soul by the river in order to ferry it across to the opposite bank [Villa 1955: 120].

CENTRAL AMERICA

Jicaque. 1) Tomam [a deity] lives on the eastern sky where four suns and four moons shine. In order to get there the shaman flies to the east across the sea of the colour of blood. This is where the dead go [Chapman 1992: 138]. 2) On the way to the land of the dead the soul approaches a river. The dog says that since the master fed it well in his lifetime, he can grab on to its tail and be taken across to the opposite bank [Chapman 1992: 237].

Miskito (Misumalpan). The dog takes the soul of the deceased across the river in a boat, rowing with an oar [Conzemius 1932: 155].

Rama (Chibcha). On their way to the land of the dead, the souls need to cross water, after which they encounter a Giant Dog. The souls of the bad sink or are gobbled up by the dog, while the souls of the good pass through unharmed [Conzemius 1927: 323].

Talamanca — Cabecar and/or Bribri (Chibcha). After death the dog ferries the soul across the river [Nordenskiöld 1938: 445].

Cuna (Chibcha). The shaman walks across the bridge over a lake of blood, falls and turns up on the opposite bank. His escort explains that this is the blood of his wife, which he battered. The same happens while crossing the next lake, only the blood there is his son's. The message is that one must not beat one's wife and children [Chapin 1989: 144].

ANTILLES

Taino (Arawak). A dog-doorman sits at the end of the lake, guarding the entrance and exit of the land of the dead [Pané in Schwartz 1997: 97–8].

COLUMBIA AND VENEZUELA

Kogi (Chibcha). The deceased arrives at the first river and gives his/her jaw-bone to the dog in order to be taken across. The deceased then arrives at the river of tears shed by relatives and waits for it to dry out. At the third river the deceased's mother helps her son or daughter get across if the child behaved well towards her [Reichel-Dolmatoff 1984: 66; 1985, No. 19: 153].

Yukpa (Caribs). 1) On the other side of the river or lake a large dog awaits the soul. It refuses to transport those who were cruel to dogs. Other animals can also be used as ferrymen, but they need to be treated well [Villamañán 1982, No. 2, 4: 19–20]. 2) A young woman follows her dead beloved to the other world. They arrive at a river. A dog swims towards them from the opposite bank. It tells the man to hold onto its ear, while the woman swims on her own alongside it. Without the dog's help the dead cannot cross the river. Those who

treated their dogs badly have to wait a long time by the river [Wilbert 1974, No. 6: 82].

Metis of Northern Columbia, Aritama region (descendants of the Kogi, the Chimila and/or the Yukpa). The black dog ferries the deceased across the river of tears. The white dog takes him across the river of milk and the black dog again across the river of blood. Dogs help only those who have treated them well [G. Reichel-Dolmatoff, A. Reichel-Dolmatoff 1961: 380].

Yanomami (*Yanomamo*). The moon consists of two halves divided by the river of blood which flows through three lakes. When Poré [a deity] shakes the tree, the souls, having rejuvenated in the lake of blood, drop from the sky as a rain of blood. When it passes through the clouds, blood turns into rain [Becher 1974: 1, 64, 68, 214].

GUYANA

*Calica*¹ (*Caribs*). 1) The deceased first goes to Grandfather-Toad and then to Grandfather-Dog. To each he tells whether he has killed toads and dogs respectively. Having escaped evil thoughts he arrives in the settlement of gods [Goeje 1943, No. a12, c29: 12, 84]. 2) A large dog guards the river across which souls need to pass [Ahlbrinck in Magaca 1987].

Taulipang (*Caribs*). The deceased travel along the Milky Way. Dogs kill the souls of those who treated them badly in their lifetime. 2) The Master of Dogs meets the souls of the deceased [Koch-Grünberg 1923: 173].

Locono (*Arawak*). Rising into heaven, the soul of the deceased meets the mother-dog. She asks whether the deceased has been good to dogs in his lifetime. If he has, the dog runs off wagging its tale, while the mother gives him food and drink. If he has not, the dog attacks him [Goeje 1943, No. a10: 11].

WESTERN AND NORTHWESTERN AMAZONIA

Shuar (*Jivaro*). The dog carries water in its ears in order to freshen its master's soul, burning in the fire of the volcano. The dog of a bad master merely fans the flames [Pelizzaro 1993: 95].

Letuama (*Eastern Tucanoans*). The dog meets the deceased in the other world. If the deceased has been good to it during his lifetime, it gives him good food, but if he has been bad, it gives him excrement [Palma 1984: 175].

¹ Calica in Surinam, but Carica in Guiana.

CENTRAL ANDES

Quechua-Huanca. A dog is placed inside the grave by the legs of the deceased. On its way to the other world the soul travels through a land without water. The dog brings water to the soul, carrying it in its ears [Villanes Cairo 1978: 64].

Quechua, Peru, Central Sierra. The souls of the dead cross the river over a narrow bridge made of hair. They are helped across [*los han de pasar*] by black dogs that are specially bred and then killed [Arriaga 1910 [1621]: 41].

Quechua, Cuzco department. There lived a young woman whose head would fly off during the night. This happened to those who looked for sexual adventures. One day, upon its return, the head found the door shut. It then attached itself to the shoulders of a passer-by, while the woman's headless body died. The young woman's dog recognised its mistress's head on the shoulders of the passer-by and ferried him across the River of Blood where the head jumped onto the girl's own body. The dog started to drink from the river of blood and (having dried it out?) carried the man back to the world of the living [Allen 1988: 61].

Quechua, Ayacucho department. The soul of a newly dead person sets on a journey westward through a town of dogs, and across a river, the Map'a Mayo ('River of Filth'), sometimes crossed on the back of a black dog [Gose in Bolton 2002: 391–2].

Aymara, Potosi Department. 1) Black dogs ferry the souls of the deceased across the river [Bastien 1989: 81]. 2) '*During the ocho dias ritual son of my host suggested killing the dead woman black dog to accompany the soul on its journey*' [Bolton 2002: 392].

MONTACA

Urarina. A man gets to the village of the Dog-spirits. They give him bones to eat, because he has to understand how dogs feel themselves when people give them only bones. The man gnaws the bone, and turns into dog. Dog-spirits attack him but he runs away (probably turning back into a man) [Bartholomew 1995: 234].

Ashaninka (Arawak). The dog serves as a ferryman to the dead [Roe 1982: 338]. 2) Having endured tortures in the underworld, those who broke sexual taboos rise into the mountains holding onto the dog's tail [Weiss 1975: 438].

Machiguenga (Arawak). The dead are looked after by their master — a large dog [Baer 1984: 231].

Shipibo (Pano). After death three souls leave the body. One goes to a large lake where it meets the Master of Dogs in the Dog Village.

If during his lifetime the man treated his dogs badly and fed them only bones, the Master of Dogs similarly offers the soul only bones without meat [Roe in Schwartz 1997: 97].

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