The Resurrection of Dumuzi in Light of the Mari Evidence: A New Look

The publication in the 1990s of the Mari letter A.1146, written by an Amorite chief, that testifies to Dumuzi’s annual resurrection, has raised once again the question of the existence of the mythologeme of the dying and rising god in Mesopotamia. While most scholars believe that this text reinforces the old suggestion of Sayce, Frazer, and others from the late 19th and early 20th century (and later in the 1960s), regarding the resurrection of Dumuzi, they did not consider the provenance of this document and its singularity. Together with “Inana’s Descent,” this letter is among the very few items of Old-Babylonian evidence referring to the annual resurrection of Dumuzi, while other contemporaneous and later literary, archival, and calendrical texts, including reworked texts of “Inana’s Descent,” describe Dumuzi as a dying god *par excellence*. Considering this, the present paper suggests a new view on the emergence and disappearing of the mythologeme of the dying and rising god in Mesopotamia, and its origin. The implications of this survey for the Levantine mythologeme of the dying and rising god, documented fragmentarily during the 2nd and 1st millennia BCE and in Late Antiquity, is dealt with as well.

**The Love of Baal for a Cow: Its Background, Dissemination and Development in Ugarit**

The occurrence of the mythologeme of Baal’s love for a cow in at least four differ Ugaritic literary texts – explicitly or implicitly – emphasizes its significance in the Ugaritic mythology in general, and in the mythic image of Baal in particular. Nevertheless, according to the extant texts, this mythologeme is very limited; the Ugaritic Baal is never associated with herds or cows, nor does his cow appear in any other texts, such as god-lists or cultic texts. This stands in contrast to the Mesopotamian moon-god, the mythologeme of whose love for a cow, recorded in incantations, is in accordance with his image in hymns, works, and iconography as a bull or herdsman, having a huge herd of cows. Surprisingly, this Ugaritic mythologeme has garnered only minor attention in scholarly literature. The current paper thus seeks to trace the sources of this mythologeme, examining its dissemination in the Ancient Near East in general and its unique development in Ugarit in particular. An additional section is devoted to the presumed reflections of the Ugaritic/Levantine adaptation of this mythologeme in contemporary and later Mediterranean literature.