Is Genesis 1 just reworked Babylonian myth?

Murray R. Adamthwaite

The biblical account of creation in Genesis 1 has been regarded as in some way borrowed or adapted from the Babylonian myth of *Enuma elish* ever since Friedrich Delitzsch expounded his theory in 1902. Conservatives have always opposed this general consensus, pointing to the profound differences which outweigh the superficial similarities between the two texts. However, there are other considerations which reveal this common verdict as thoroughly superficial. On examination the alleged 'mythological elements' prove to be illusory, while the procedures of comparison all too often involve circular reasoning. Moreover, comparison of *Enuma elish* with mythologies of other ancient cultures, sometimes having accounts of creation and sometimes not, reveal close similarities with the Babylonian story in both motifs (especially that of divine conflict), and story line, yet by common consent have no possible literary relationship.

On 13th January 1902 the German scholar Friedrich Delitzsch gave an epoch-making lecture before the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft in Berlin entitled '*Babel und Bibel*' (Babylon and Bible), with Kaiser Wilhelm II in attendance.[1] In this lecture he alleged that much of the material in Genesis was merely borrowed from Babylonian mythology, reworked by unknown Hebrew authors during the Babylonian Exile. So began what has become a scholarly tradition, repeated *ad infinitum* to this day, that the Genesis creation story, for example, was merely reworked from the Babylonian *Enuma Elish*, or that the Flood account was merely adapted from the Babylonian *Gilgamesh Epic*. The purpose of these two articles is to answer these oft-repeated allegations in sufficient detail as will prove necessary.

Let us first consider *Enuma Elish*, often misnamed the Babylonian creation story.

The seven tablets of the epic are extant in varying states of preservation: apart from the major portions found in the Great Library of Assurbanipal in Nineveh, fragments have turned up at other sites over the years such that, in all, we have much of the epic, although Tablet V is still fragmentary.[2] Hence difficulties of interpretation remain, and our understanding is thus incomplete.

Outline of the story

Apsu, the freshwater ocean male deity mates with Ti'amat, the saltwater ocean goddess. Their offspring are a host of lesser deities representing various aspects of nature. Apsu becomes irritated with the noise from the offspring and resolves to destroy them (a motif also appearing in the Atrahasis epic, containing a flood story), but he failed, and was killed by Ea the god of wisdom (Tablet I:68–69). Ea in turn fathered the god Marduk. Ti'amat became enraged, and gave birth to a host of dragons to fight Marduk, but Marduk, not intimidated by Ti'amat's threats, gathers the other gods together in a great banquet, and they resolve on war with Ti'amat, with Marduk as their representative. Then a great war ensues, from which Marduk emerges victorious by killing Ti'amat:

> "Face to face they came, Ti'amat and Marduk, sage of the gods …
> He [Marduk] forced in the *imhullu*-wind so that she could not close her lips.
> Fierce winds distended her belly;
> Her insides were constipated and she stretched her mouth wide.
> He shot an arrow which pierced her belly,
> Split her down the middle and slit her heart …" (Tablet IV:93–102).

He first splits Ti'amat's skull open with his mace, and then splits her whole body:

> "With his unsparing mace he smashed her skull,
> Severed the arteries of her blood,
> And made the North wind carry it off as good news" (Tablet IV:130–132).

The upper half he makes into the sky; the lower half into the earth. From this chaos comes order: the Sun, Moon, and stars appear, and the calendar is formed:

> "He sliced her in half like a fish for drying:
> Half of her he put up to roof the sky,
> Drew a bolt across and made a guard hold it.
> Her waters he arranged so they could not escape …" (Tablet IV:137–140).
> "He fashioned stands for the great gods.
> As for the stars, he set up constellations corresponding to them.
> He designated the year and marked out its divisions,
> Apportioned three stars each to the twelve months" (Tablet V:1–4).

Finally, there is Qingu, Ti'amat's general. Marduk speaks to Ea of his desire to make man, who will wait on the gods so that the latter can rest. Marduk addresses both the Igigi (sky gods) and the Anunnaki (underworld gods), and

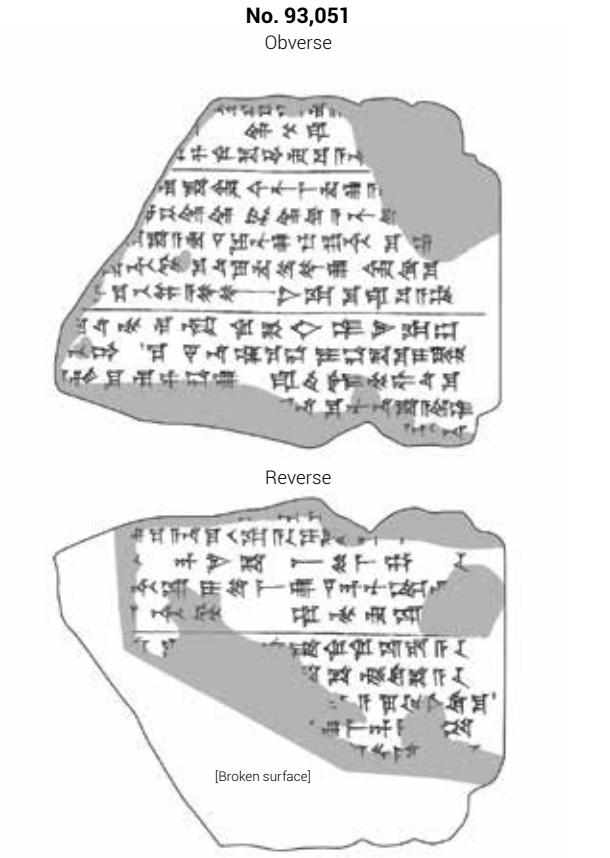

Figure 1. Fragment of *Enuma elish*, Tablet IV, showing lines 42–54 and 85–94. Tablet IV relates how Marduk defeated Ti'amat and then split her body in two, making the sky from one half, and then founded various cult centres.

the Igigi reply that since Qingu started the war, he should therefore pay the penalty.

"The Igigi, the great gods, answered him,
Their lord, Lugal-dimmer-ankia, counsellor of gods,
'It was Qingu who started the war,
He who incited Ti'amat and gathered an army" (Tablet VI:26–29).

Ea therefore slays Qingu, takes his blood and some earth, and makes man:

"They imposed the penalty on him and cut off his blood.
He [Ea?] created mankind from his blood,
Imposed the toil of the gods (on man) and released the gods from it" (Tablet VI:31–33).

Then the Anunnaki toil to create Babylon, and the Esagila, one of the prime temples in Babylon. Finally, Tablet VII relates the fifty names of Marduk in order to exalt the patron deity of Babylon:

"With fifty epithets the great gods
Called his fifty names, making his way supreme" (Tablet VII:143–144).

Observations on *Enuma elish*

Divine conflict

At the outset one might well wonder how in the world anyone could find 'parallels' with Genesis in such a crude and bloodthirsty story, unless the wish be father to the thought. Needless to say, the whole theme of conflict among the gods is entirely absent from Genesis 1 as it stands, while it belongs to the essence of polytheism (as discussed below). However, that has not prevented many critics from trying to find this theme 'underneath' the Genesis narrative in some way, or elsewhere in the Old Testament. Hence some have appealed to Isa.51:9–10 to find the remnants of such an idea:[3]

"Was it not You who cut Rahab in pieces,
Who pierced the dragon?
Was it not You who dried up the sea,
The waters of the great deep;
Who made the depths of the sea a pathway
For the redeemed to cross over?"

It should be readily seen that this passage deals with the historical event of the Exodus, using perhaps the language and superficial motifs of mythology, but without any of the substance. We do similar things in our own culture: several of the names of our calendar months derive from Roman gods, while the days of our week for the most part derive from the Norse gods. No-one thereby suggests that Westerners believe in those deities or their respective mythologies.

Another text often appealed to in this connection is Psalm 74:14. However, this takes us into the realm of Ugaritic mythology, which is outside the scope of the present discussion.[4] Suffice it to say at this point that with the Ba'al–Yamm conflict in the Ugaritic myths there is no connection with a creation motif at all.[5]

Finally there is the matter of the Hebrew word *t*^{e}*hōm* in Gen.1:2. This has often been alleged to derive from the goddess Ti'amat, and thus is a pointer to the mythological origins of the Genesis narrative, whereby *t*^{e}*hōm* (personalized) battles chaos (also personalized). Once again, this is jumping to conclusions. Akkadian has the common noun *tâmtu* or *tiamtu* (essentially the same word with the same meaning as Hebrew *t*^{e}*hōm*) in addition to the proper name, Ti'amat. However, Ugaritic (North Canaanite)—a Semitic language much closer to Hebrew—also has the same word, *thm,* with the same meaning as in Hebrew, but there is no prominent deity bearing a name of that form in Ugaritic;[6] it is there simply a common noun. Therefore, if one is to seek parallels and derivations, then the stock of common Semitic vocabulary is the place to look,[7] which by its nature is non-personal. For that matter, critics have never explained how the personal name Ti'amat in the Babylonian story has metamorphosed into the common Hebrew noun *t*^{e}*hōm*, when that word in Genesis 1 has no indication of either being or having been personal at all.[8] One suspects that any attempt to provide such an 'explanation' is yet again a case of the wish being father to the thought.[9]

Internal aspects of *Enuma elish*

The next major observation is that this is a political document, setting forth why Babylon is the pre-eminent city in the world with its pre-eminent deity, Marduk, as opposed to Anu or Ea or whomever. As such it constituted part of ritual for the *Akitu* new-year festival which reconfirmed the kingship for the coming year. Genesis 1 on the face of it has no such function, and assertions to the contrary, whereby the 'new-year festival' interpretation becomes in turn the evidence for such, are merely circular reasoning.

Second, it is a theogony rather than a cosmogony; that is, its basic intent is to explain the origin of gods rather than the origin of the universe, which latter is more of an afterthought. Thus the first five tablets (including the fragmentary 5th) deal for the most part with the generation of the gods, their intrigues and fierce battles, but little about creation, save for the small sections in Tablet IV:136–140 and Tablet V:1–6. Only then, in Tablet VI, do we get to the 'creation', relating the origin of man, but even here, as in those previous sections, the emphasis is on appointing sanctuaries for the various gods. All this indicates that creation is really incidental to the main drift of *Enuma elish*—it is not really a 'creation' story at all. Moreover, Stephanie Dalley of Oxford University (now Emeritus), likewise argues that the original story was not a creation story—that element was 'tacked on' later.[10]

Third, this last point raises the issue of a discernible lack of coherence in the myth, which is worth exploring further. First, we can consider Qingu. According to Tablet IV:119–120 he is killed in the inter-necine war, as follows:

> "As for Qingu, who had once been the greatest among them,
> He (Marduk) defeated him and counted him among the dead gods."

For the second line here I propose a more literal translation:

> "He bound him and reckoned him with/consigned him to the dead gods (i.e. in the abode of the dead)."

Dalley has a footnote here, noting that "the precise implication of 'dead gods' is uncertain".[11] However, it would appear to a straightforward reading that Qingu is indeed 'counted or reckoned among' (Akkadian *itti … manû*) the dead at this point, while the Akkadian of the line as a whole would appear to confirm this.[12] How, then, is it that Qingu is put to death only in Tablet VI (as above)?

Then there is the confusion of Marduk and Ea as creators of man, as in Tablet VI:31–33. Dalley believes that the ambiguity could be deliberate.[13] This is indeed possible, but it could also quite plausibly reflect that originally the agent was Ea (Sumerian Enki), but in the later version of the myth (deemed 'canonical') Marduk, having now become pre-eminent, became the agent instead.[14]

The examples could be multiplied, but they are sufficient to indicate that there is an incoherence in the narrative, which Dalley is (rightly) trying to explain, and as such it lends plausibility to the view that the epic is composite, and that the creation elements therein are a later incorporation.

Comparative issues

When we come to direct comparisons of *Enuma elish* and Genesis, several vital points of difference arise:

First, in *Enuma elish* the world and man are emanations from divine substance, i.e. both are of the 'stuff' of gods. There is no creator-creature distinction. Moreover, Marduk is a *fashioner*, not a true creator: notwithstanding assertions to the contrary,[15] creation *ex nihilo* seemed to be beyond the conception of the Babylonians, since the material for creation came from the bodies of gods.[16] Moreover, when Ea or Marduk creates man, he fashions him from the blood of Qingu, but he does not "breathe into the man the breath of life" (cf. Genesis 2:7)—anything corresponding to that is missing from *Enuma elish*. Nor does Marduk make man in his own image.

Second, *Enuma Elish* has no six-days-plus-one format as we find in Genesis 1 (and Exodus 20:11). The seven tablets of the epic are irrelevant; they have nothing to do with days (or long periods either, for that matter). In this respect (among many others) Genesis 1 stands alone and unique in the ancient world.

Third, creation in *Enuma elish* is quite generalized; it lacks the detail of Genesis 1 and 2 in regard to plants, birds, animals, and the emphasis on them reproducing 'after their kind'. It also lacks the perspective of the entire cosmos. Bottéro puts it well:

> "To my knowledge, there is no Mesopotamian cosmogonic myth that deals with the origin of the whole cosmos, as is found in the biblical book of Genesis. Most of the tales are content to fill in only pieces of the puzzle."[17]

The final point here concerns the chronological setting of what we might call 'origins literature' in the Ancient Near East. K.A. Kitchen argues as follows:

> "Nearly all of our principal sources and examples [for primeval history] come from the early 2nd millennium BC (c. 2000–1600 BC). This is true of the Sumerian King List, the Sumerian 'flood story', the epic of Atrahasis, and the major part of Gilgamesh. It was an especially fruitful period for literature in Mesopotamia … . Positively, one can conceive of no more fitting epoch for the original composition in literary form of most of the traditions now found in Genesis 1–11. Negatively, it is worth noticing the changed conditions, different interests, and even unsuitability, of later periods of ancient history."[18]

Kitchen then cites the cuneiform scholar W.G. Lambert:

> "The [Babylonian] exile and the later part of the [Hebrew] monarchy are out of the question … . That the matters spoken of were included in Genesis is proof that they were long established among the Hebrews."[19]

Kitchen concludes:

> "In short, the idea that the Hebrews in captivity in Nebuchadrezzar's Babylon (6th cent. BC) first 'borrowed' the content of early Genesis at that late date is a non-starter."[19]

Leaving aside for the present the validity of the conventional 2nd-millennium chronology (which I do not accept), and that the early records or *tol^{e}doth* underlying Genesis 1–11 go back to the ante-Diluvian patriarchs, otherwise his point still holds: the early 2nd millennium BC (and earlier) is the period for Mesopotamian—and Hebrew—'origins literature', and not later.

Assumptions yielding unwarranted conclusions

1. The opening line of the epic, *enūma eliš lā nabû šamāmū*: "When the heavens above were not named …", has influenced modern translations of Genesis 1:1 to render with a temporal clause.[20] Thus the *New English Bible* has "In the beginning of creation, when God made heaven and earth …"; the New RSV has the conventional "In the beginning God created" in the text, but gives "when God began to create …" as an alternate rendering in a footnote. The *Good News Bible* gives a similar rendering to the NEB. Apart from the observation that *b^{e}re'shith* is formally indefinite, appeal is made here to the so-called 'hanging construct' in Akkadian, whereby the clause ending with the word in construct introduces a subordinate clause dependent on the main statement.[21] However, this well-known construction in Akkadian does not yield the desired result for the Hebrew at this point: following this line the result would be, "The beginning which God created", which is not what the revisionists want or need. The fact is that the word *re'shith* ('beginning') in this context is inherently definite, and both here and in Isaiah 46:10 denotes an absolute beginning; therefore it does not need a definite article. The only proper way to translate this is, "In the beginning God created … ."[22]
2. The genre of *Enuma elish* has influenced the estimate of the genre of Genesis 1. Because *Enuma elish* is poetry, the argument has been proposed that Genesis 1 is therefore poetry.[23] Indeed, for Henri Frankfort, poetry is of the essence of myth: "it is a form of action, of ritual behaviour, which does not find its fulfilment in the act but must proclaim and elaborate a poetic form of truth".[24] Hence if Genesis has borrowed from *Enuma elish*, the genre must constitute part of the borrowed material. However, this again is circular reasoning: that the Babylonian epic is poetry does not entail that Genesis 1 is; on the contrary, the standard dogma that 'Genesis has borrowed from Babylon' has intervened here as an assumption from the outset, hence the circularity. However, there are several considerations which weigh decisively against this 'poetry' assessment (of Genesis 1): (i) the persistent use of *waw*-consecutives (narrative forms) in Genesis 1 clearly indicates prose; (ii) the genuinely poetic snippets embedded in Genesis 1 and 2 (e.g. 1:27; 2:23) highlight the contrast with the broader creation narrative; (iii) Genesis 1 displays none of the regular features of poetry such as semantic or other parallelism, simple or complex stanzas, or any kind of metre. It is prose, pure and simple. Assertions to the contrary are simply that: assertions and nothing more.
3. More could be said about these various aspects, but I will leave it there. However, there is another side of the story, not often presented in this context with the critical zeal to see everything as 'borrowed from Babylon'. Let us look, therefore, at other ancient mythologies, and their creation motifs where they occur.

Hittite mythology—divine conflict

The Hittite myths have no creation story as such (at least, none so far discovered), but the theme of divine conflict is certainly present, plus the pantheistic notion that gods emanate from natural objects. In the *Song of Ullikummi* the netherworld god Kumarbi is in conflict with the sky deity Tessub, so the former goes to the Cold Spring and impregnates a great rock (!) from which issues Ullikummi, who will eventually threaten Tessub. After a time Ullikummi has grown so tall that he reaches the sky and the temples of Tessub and the heavenly gods. At first Tessub's sister Sauska tries her charms, but when this fails it is full-scale war, which Ullikummi wins. The defeated Tessub now seeks the help of Ea, the god of fresh water, who discerns Ullikummi's weak point, viz. his sure footing on the shoulders of Ubelluri (like the Greek Atlas, who holds up the world). Ea and the primeval gods cut apart heaven and earth and so destroy Ullikummi's sure footing, whereupon Tessub makes conflict again and this time wins.[25]

In this story the heavens with sun and moon already exist; likewise earth with rocks, and fresh and salt waters. What is interesting is the conflict for supremacy among the gods of the pantheon, as also the continuum of gods and nature. If one wants to postulate any sort of comparison between Genesis 1 and this story, there is the motif of dividing heaven and earth (as in Gen.1:6–7), but this is drawing a very long bow indeed: to my knowledge no-one has ever attempted such comparison. What is far more likely is that there are patterns of borrowing from the Babylonian story, especially as, for example, when Ea, common to both myths, battles against Apsu in *Enuma elish*, and in the Hittite epic fights Ullikummi.

Ancient Greece—Hesiod's *Theogony*[26]

This story is of the origins and genealogies of the Greek gods, and the kingship of Zeus over all other gods, and over the cosmos. In the story Ouranos and his consort Gaia attempt to beget gods, but Kronos attacks his father and his blood spills to the earth, from which gods generate. However, more gods

Image: University of Cambridge

Figure 2. Marduk, with a two-horned snake-dragon at his feet (not Ti'amat, as once supposed). From a lapis lazuli cylinder dedicated to Marduk in c 9th BC.

emerge when Kronos throws his father's genitalia into the sea. Then war erupts between Kronos and the Titans, lasting ten years, and finally Zeus takes control of the cosmos. He begets, by Gaia, a series of offspring, over which Zeus eventually becomes pre-eminent.

The early Christians were aware of this and other myths and attacked them vociferously.[27] However, the motif of internecine conflict between the gods is a feature of this myth, as also in *Enuma elish*. Apart from the war motif, however, we can discern a number of other parallels between *Enuma elish* and Hesiod:

1. Marduk and Zeus have a number of features in common, especially as Zeus emerges as lord of the cosmos.
2. Kronos is very much a Qingu-like figure, especially in his battles with Ouranos, and as he emerges as lord of the cosmos.
3. Likewise, there are parallels between Ti'amat of *Enuma elish* and Gaia, who stirs up her children—the Titans—against their father.

The Norse mythology[28]

Another myth, which, apart from the understandable features of a cold northern climate, bears some striking parallels to *Enuma elish*, i.e. that from Norse folklore:

In the beginning there was a giant fountain called Hvelgelmer. Water from this source eventually froze into ice, but when the ice began to thaw drops from it sprang to life and Ymer was born. A deep sleep came over him, and from his perspiration came a son and a daughter. More gods emerged from these gods, one of them, Odin, who became chief ruler of the Asa-gods.

Now Ymer and his evil sons resolved on war with the rest of the family of gods, but after a bitter conflict eventually Bure, first of the Asa-gods, was triumphant. When Ymer was dead the other gods laid out his body on a mill, the maids ground it. Stones were smeared with blood, and the flesh-grist was fashioned into earth. From his bones were made the rocks and mountains, while his ice-cold blood became the waters of the sea.

Finally, the gods, having finished shaping the earth, took Ymer's skull and made from it the heavens. The sun and stars came from a god of the south, named Muspel-Heim, who spewed sparks of fire into the empty sky. The gods then assigned to them order and motion to mark time and seasons.

We can see a number of parallels to *Enuma Elish* in this myth, more so than even in Hesiod, as follows:

1. Ti'amat, the goddess of the saltwater ocean, gives birth to a host of lesser deities just as Hvelgelmer, the fountain of water, is the source and origin of a string of various deities.
2. Odin becomes the chief of the Norse pantheon, just as Marduk in the Babylonian myth.
3. The story of creation from the corpse of Ymer bears striking similarity to the fate of Qingu in *Enuma elish*, so much so that one could in theory postulate 'literary borrowing' from the Babylonian to the Norse. However, it is a non-starter: to my knowledge no-one seriously suggests such a dependence; all agree that the Norse mythological lore is *sui generis*. Still less does anyone believe that Genesis 1 depends on the Norse myth.

General conclusions

This survey of ancient mythology is not intended as a mere exercise in cultural anthropology, but seeks to make the point that a simplistic *Enuma elish*–Genesis comparison will not do; one must consider the whole body of evidence. When this is done distinct patterns emerge: pagan, polytheistic mythology moves in the same groove—generation by sexual union, conflict among the gods, continuum of gods and earth substance, and the emergent supremacy of one god among the many.

Nothing of this has anything whatever to do with Genesis 1! The narrative begins with the one true God who is there at the beginning; there is a clear creator–creature distinction; there is a pure and exalted tone about Genesis 1, untainted with the crudities of mythology and showing forth a transcendent God. Hence pagan mythology, in whatever culture, is basically all

of one genre; Genesis is in a very different league, *sui generis*, in contrast to ancient creation myths.

Another important conclusion which should emerge from the survey above is to expose a simple, but common fallacy, i.e. that if B resembles A, therefore B has borrowed from A. Therefore … nothing of the kind! There could be several plausible explanations for the resemblance, literary dependence being only one of them. Yet this fallacy has dominated comparative mythology and religion studies, apparently in the hunt for literary parallels to Genesis—and Christianity generally—in pagan literature and motifs. It is time for this unscientific 'logic' to cease!

Finally, the phenomenon of creation stories seemingly 'tacked on' to stories about the generation and conflict of gods (as Dalley argues) has definite plausibility in the light of the Hittite story, where the natural order is already in place and we have the familiar motif of inter-necine divine conflict. Accepting Genesis 1 as the true and factual creation story would therefore explain how increasingly garbled versions of creation circulated independently in differing forms among various ethnic groups in antiquity, and eventually came to be attached to debased, polytheistic myths at some early stage in the post-Flood era. Meanwhile, Genesis preserves the pristine and pure form of the creation narrative, independent of the grotesque crudities of mythology.

References

1. See the article by Arnold, B.T. and Weisberg, D., A centennial review of Friedrich Delitzsch's '*Babel und Bibel*' lectures, *JBL* **121**(3):441–445, 2002. It is worth noting here that Friedrich Delitzsch was the son of the commentator Franz Delitzsch, who co-authored with C.F. Keil the monumental Keil and Delitzsch Old Testament Commentary, a landmark in conservative scholarship in the 19th century.
2. For an up-to-date critical text with cuneiform and transliteration see Talon, P., *Enūma Eliš*, *SAACT*, vol. iv, University of Helsinki, 2005 (Translation in French), which incorporates all the available textual evidence. This has now superseded the earlier cuneiform text edited by Lambert, W.G. and Parker, S.B., *Enūma Eliš: The Babylonian Epic of Creation*, Suttons, Birmingham, 1974. For a good recent English translation see Dalley, S., *Myths from Mesopotamia*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 233–277, 1988. Dalley's translation is the one cited in this article, except where I offer an alternative.
3. See the thorough discussion of the whole 'divine conflict' motif, and the various OT texts which are alleged to reflect this in Heidel, A., *The Babylonian Genesis*, 2nd edn, University of Chicago, pp. 102–114, 1951.
4. With Herman Gunkel setting the trend in his *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit* (1895), S.H. Hooke in particular promoted in the English-speaking world the notion that the conflict of Yahweh versus a chaos monster was enshrined in the Old Testament, appealing to both Babylonian and Ugaritic mythology. See the response to this in Allis, O.T., *The Old Testament: Its Claims and its Critics*, Presbyterian and Reformed, Nutley, NJ, pp. 358f, 1972.
5. As Tsumura, D.T. notes in *The Earth and the Waters in Genesis 1 and 2: A Linguistic Analysis*, JSOT Supplementary Series 83, Sheffield, p. 49, 1989.
6. Although there is the sea-dragon *thmt* (Gordon, C., *Ugaritic Textbook*, *An Or* 38, Glossary, 2537, p. 497, 1965). However, this involves the feminine form (as also with Ti'amat), whereas the common noun *thm* is the masculine.
7. As argued also by Tsumura, ref. 5, pp. 51–52.
8. Tsumura, ref. 5, pp. 48–49 argues this point quite trenchantly. We can mention here also (as does Tsumura) that *šemeš* ('sun') is employed quite freely as a common noun, without any hint of having been derived and de-personalized from the Babylonian sun-deity Šamaš. Why then, the allegation that the common noun *tᵉhōm* derives from Ti'amat?
9. See for further discussion Heidel, ref. 3, pp. 98–101.
10. Dalley, ref. 2, p. 230. She further remarks that some Amorite deity, rather than Marduk, may have been the original hero of the epic. We should note, also, that Dalley is not arguing from a Christian standpoint, in order to defend Genesis. Instead, she makes her observations from a secular, scholarly viewpoint.
11. Dalley, ref. 2, p. 275, n. 24.
12. The Akkadian reads, *ik-mi-šu-ma it-ti dingiruggê* (DINGIR.UG_5.GA^e) *šu-a-ta im-ni-šu*. The operative term here is *dingiruggê*, a Sumerian loan-word which denotes the primordial gods of the abode of death: DINGIR denoting a god, and UG_5 corresponding to the Akkadian *mâtu*: to die.
13. Dalley, ref. 2, p. 276, n. 35.
14. Marduk was essentially a non-entity in the Mesopotamian pantheon as the 3rd millennium passed into the 2nd. However, beginning with the rise of Hammurapi of Babylon, Marduk assumed increasing eminence. See Bottéro, J., *Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia*, University of Chicago, p. 56, 2001.
15. For example, Kramer, S.N., "As for the technique of creation attributed to these deities, our Sumerian philosophers developed a doctrine which became dogma throughout the Near East, the doctrine of the creative power of the divine word." (*The Sumerians*, University of Chicago, p. 115, 1963). However, Kramer's discussions both in this book and in his *History Begins at Sumer* (University of Pennsylvania, 1956) make it clear that he over-zealously sees Sumer as the trendsetter for so much of subsequent Near Eastern thought, including biblical, and in the process glosses over the profound differences between Sumerian and biblical thought. However, Kramer is right in one important respect: he puts early (i.e. creation by *fiat*) what critics have so often put late in their 'evolution of religion' scenario.
16. Cf. Heidel, "it is apparent that for the Babylonians matter was eternal". He then cites Diodorus Siculus (c 1st BC), "The Chaldeans say that the substance of the world is eternal …", *Babylonian Genesis*, Heidel, ref. 3, p. 89.
17. Bottéro, ref. 14, p. 82.
18. Kitchen, K.A., *The Bible in its World*, Paternoster, Carlisle, UK, pp. 34–35, 1977.
19. Lambert, W.G., *J. Theological Studies* **16**:299, 1965; cited also in Kitchen, ref. 18, p. 35. We note here that Lambert passed away in November 2011.
20. See Heidel, ref. 3, p. 95f. Also discussed in Young, E.J., *Studies in Genesis One*, Presbyterian and Reformed, p. 5, n. 9, 1973; Allis, ref. 4, pp. 253f; and my own class notes at University of Melbourne, under Dr D. Broadribb, 1966. Allis cites W.F. Albright as promoting this derivation, although he gives no documentation at this point. However, it is evident that Albright finds in the temporal clause of the opening line of *Enuma elish* "the most obvious and clear cut evidence of ultimate dependence on Mesopotamia in the Old Testament account of creation", in his review of Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis*, *JBL* **LXII**:369, 1943.
21. It occurs when, as a kind of shorthand, the relative particle *ša* ('which') is dropped and the noun in construct state assumes the same function. However, it is not only an Akkadian construction, but occurs also in Hebrew (albeit not as frequently as in Akkadian), as Young notes in ref. 20, p. 3, n.7.
22. For a more thorough discussion of the technical issues involved in Genesis 1:1–3 see Young, ref. 21, pp. 1–14; also Tsumura, ref. 5, chs 3 and 4. The discussion in Wenham, G., Genesis 1 – 15, *Word Biblical Commentary Series*, Waco, TX, pp. 8–10, 1987, also has useful observations.
23. Wenham notes this view as having been proposed on the basis of Near Eastern creation myths, *Enuma elish* in particular, only to reject it: *ibid*, pp. 9–10.
24. Frankfort, H. *et al.*, *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man*, University of Chicago, p. 8, 1946. It should be noted here that this once generally-accepted ritual theory of myth is now under serious challenge, and several alternative theories prevail. See Fontenrose, J., *The Ritual Theory of Myth*, University of California, 1971. However, this does not invalidate the point that mythopoeic literature is poetic.
25. Hoffner, H., *Hittite Myths*, Scholars Press, Atlanta, GA, pp. 55–65, 1990.
26. See Evelyn-White, H.G. tr., *The Theogony of Hesiod*, www.sacred-texts.com/cla/hesiod/theogony.htm, accessed 14 March 2013.
27. For example, Justin Martyr, *Discourse to the Greeks*; III: in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Eerdmans, p. 272, 1967.
28. See, e.g. Ashliman, D.L., *The Norse Creation Myth*, www.pitt.edu/~dash/creation.html, accessed 14 March 2013. A search on the internet will reveal several versions of the Norse myths. Furthermore, a useful catalogue of creation myths from various countries is to be found on: www.archaeolink.com/creation_myths_religious_anthrop.htm, accessed 12 April 2013.

Murray R. Adamthwaite *graduated from Melbourne University in 1997 with a Ph.D. in Near Eastern History and Languages, and serves as sessional lecturer for the Centre for Classics and Archaeology. He also is Tutor in Old Testament with Tyndale College, Hunters Hill, NSW*