

## Horse Sacrifice in Homer: The Indo-European Tradition in the Funeral of Patroclus

Aubrey Crum

*The University of Georgia*

[Aubrey.Crum@uga.edu](mailto:Aubrey.Crum@uga.edu)

### ***Iliad* 23.170-177**

έν δ' ἐτίθει μέλιτος καί ἀλείφατος ἀμφιφορῆας (170)  
 πρὸς λέχεα κλίνων· πίσυρας δ' ἐριαύχενας ἵππους  
 ἐσσυμένως ἐνέβαλλε πυρῆ μεγάλα στεναχίζων.  
 ἐννέα τῷ γε ἄνακτι τραπεζῆες κύνες ἦσαν,  
 καὶ μὲν τῶν ἐνέβαλλε πυρῆ δύο **δειροτομήσας**,  
 δώδεκα δὲ Τρώων μεγαθύμων υἱέας ἐσθλοῦς (175)  
 χαλκῷ δηϊόων· κακὰ δὲ φρεσὶ μήδετο ἔργα·  
 ἐν δὲ πυρὸς μένος ἦκε σιδήρεον ὄφρα νέμοιτο.<sup>1</sup>

And he placed two-handled jars of honey and oil (170)  
 leaning them next to the bier; and he threw four strong-necked horses  
 quickly upon the pyre, groaning loudly.  
 And there were nine table dogs which were the lord's (i.e. Patroclus'),  
 of which he **cut the throat** of two and threw them upon the pyre,  
 so too did he slaughter twelve noble sons of the great-hearted Trojans. (175)  
 with bronze; and he contrived evil works in his mind  
 and he dispatched the iron might of the fire so that it might consume them.<sup>2</sup>

### ***Iliad* 24.804**

ὥς οἱ γ' ἀμφίεπον τάφον Ἑκτορος ἵπποδάμοιο.

Thus they prepared the funeral rite of Hector, tamer of horses.

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<sup>1</sup> Greek texts follow the most recent Oxford text. T.W. Allen, *Homeri Opera/Iliadis*, vols. 1-2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1920).

<sup>2</sup> All Greek translations my own.

### Hittite *Šalliš Waštaiš* Ritual

KUB 30.25 + 39.4 + KBo 41.117

nu SAG.DU<sup>MEŠ</sup> ANŠE.KUR.RA<sup>MEŠ</sup> S[AG.DU]<sup>MEŠ</sup> GU<sub>4</sub><sup>HI.A</sup> *ku-wa-pí wa-ra-a[n-da-at]*

“and, where the heads of **horses** <and> the h[ead]s of oxen were burned...”<sup>3</sup>

### Indic *aśvamedha* ritual

RV I.162.21

ná vá u etán mriyase ná risyasi devam í desi pathíbih sugéhih

You do not die nor are you harmed. You go to the gods along easygoing paths.<sup>4</sup>

Greek *θεράπων* < Hittite *tarpašša/tarpan(alli)* ?

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<sup>3</sup>Transliteration and Translation from Kassian, Korolëv, and Sidel'tsev, *Hittite Funerary Ritual: šalliš waštaiš* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2002), 323.

<sup>4</sup> Transliteration and translation from Stephanie Jamison, *Sacrificed Wife/Sacrificer's Wife: Women, Ritual, and Hospitality in Ancient India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 78.

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