



Mid-East Cultures with Common Roots Imply Reconstructed Common Origin Myth

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ABSTRACT

The relation between the most ancient civilizations in the mid-east (aside from obvious political ones) is often understated. However, non-obvious connections can have spiritual implications not easily recognized. This paper surveys the cultures of the five earliest civilizations (Sumerian, Egyptian, Chinese, Hindu, and Hebrew) from a broader perspective for a more unified picture of the past than is at first apparent. Things that might lead to cultural commonality – geographic proximity, trade relations, or political affiliations – can disseminate ideas that are later assimilated into established tradition. However, the degree of linguistic closeness of different groups might also be an indicator of earlier common heritage and tradition that evolved during isolation following migration dispersal with time and distance. Evidence of this common root can hint at a unified base for their origin mythologies. The older unifying background is considered here, and comparisons of their mythic traditions are used to reconstruct a hypothetical “Common Origin Myth”. The outline of the reconstruction is based on Genesis 1: because, that can be reconciled with the modern scientific record, indicating an ancient “common source” possessed historical truth – not “just” symbolic analogy.

Keywords: Intersection of science and mythology; Intersection of ancient history and mythologies; Comparative mythology; Genesis and mid-east origin myths; Sumerian and Egyptian myths; Chinese and Hindu myths.

INTRODUCTION

Before the beginning there was a void. This void was the primeval sea of flowing life-force with no distinguishable variation or identifiable matter. It was murky and dark. It was the motionless fabric of space, eternally unchanging. Time had not yet begun.

Every ancient civilization has its tales of the beginning (mostly accepted as “only mythology”, but which may contain a kernel of truth, simplified for the earliest people who passed it on in oral tradition). No one culture has a complete picture of the beginning. However, the similarities of the different mythologies can hint of relationship among the groups – possibly implying a “Common Origin Myth” that evolved differently in the different cultures.

The concepts of the beginning for five ancient eastern civilizations are compared to identify a possible common kernel to their myths. The cultures examined include: the Sumerians, the Chinese, the Egyptians, the Hebrews, and the Hindu/Aryans. They all possess great antiquity in their written records, and provide origin traditions that appear, on the surface, to be very different in many ways, but with commonality that is not at first apparent.

Common ethnic background or language can easily be seen to imply a commonality in the most basic beliefs in otherwise separated groups. Geographic proximity, or political affiliations also can disseminate ideas, but it can be difficult to separate the earliest tribal heritage from the contact contamination. Identifying a common past can give a basis for a possible “Common Origin Myth” reconstruction whose existence can be supported by the validation of one of the evolved versions (in this case, the Hebrew version). This paper considers first, the linguistic and political relations of the groups to indicate the degree of commonality in their past. Then it compares the origin myths of the groups and reconstructs a possible “Common Origin Myth”.

LINGUISTIC ROOTS AND POLITICAL RELATIONS

It is generally held that as people dispersed in the distant past, they took with them their common language and oral traditions, both of which evolved away from the earliest common forms (though not necessarily rapidly or uniformly). Evidence of this common root is seen in the degree of linguistic closeness of peoples.

The linguistic tree structure reflects the belief in a common single parent language in the most primitive times (Fig. 1). The origin of language is not known, however, it shows some signs of having a common source. This highest level parent language [1] from which the ancient mid-east languages evolved is often referred to as Proto-Eurasian.

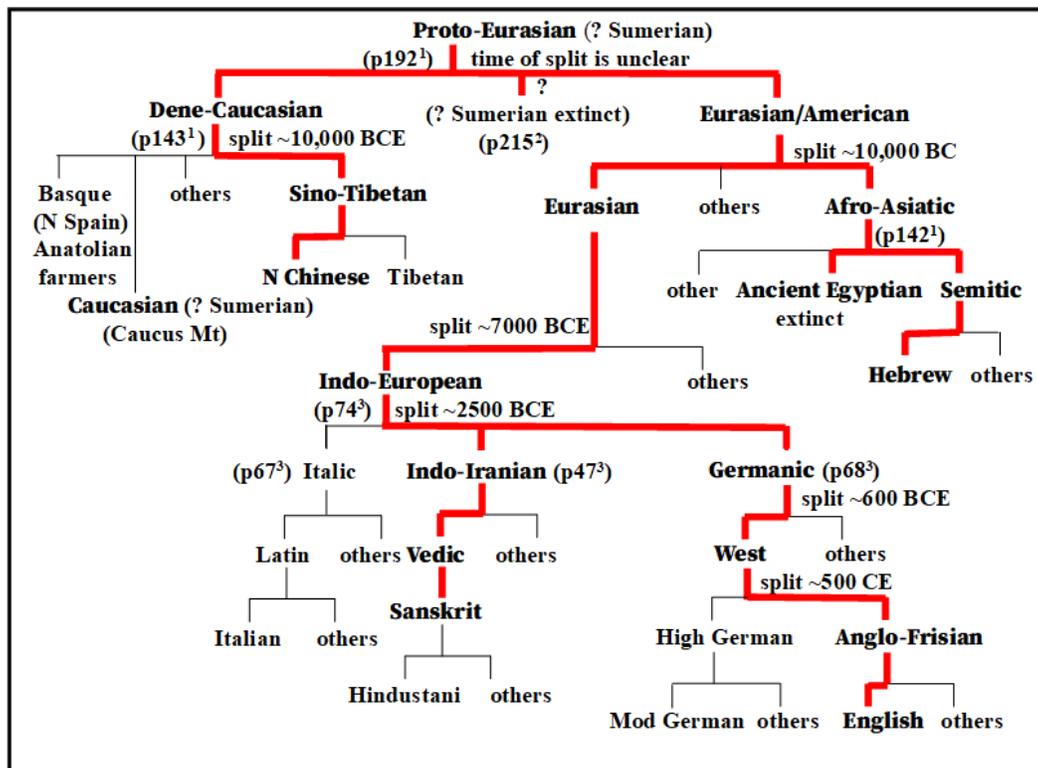


FIG. 1. The language tree is constructed by comparing words and grammar of the languages. The languages of interest are in bold with the divergence from the “original” parent language indicated by the red path. English is included for reference. 1) Ruhlen [1], 2) Cavalli-Sforza [2], and 3) Renfrew [3]

The oldest of the mid-east cultures is recognized as the Sumerians. The origin of their language is unknown. Some identify it with Proto-Eurasian (Fig. 1), others with Caucasian, a language found in the Caucasus Mountains, between the Black and Caspian Seas around modern Turkey. Still others consider the possibility that it is one of the first-derivative sister languages from Proto-Eurasian [2].

The north Chinese language belongs to the Sino-Tibetan family [1]. It evolved from Dene-Caucasian, one of the two first-generation offspring from the original Proto-Eurasian parent language (the time of the split is unknown), and a separately evolved sister-language to Caucasian. Ancient Egyptian belongs to the Afro-Asiatic family spoken in northern Africa, though it is currently extinct. Ancient Hebrew belongs to the Semitic family [1]. It is a close relative to ancient Egyptian, but the time of the split between the two is unknown. Vedic is a later evolution from the Eurasian family (a sister to Afro-Asiatic that produced Hebrew and Egyptian). Both Eurasian and Afro-Asiatic evolved from parallel branches of a higher parent Eurasian/American [3], splitting from each other ~10,000 BCE. Vedic, the youngest of the languages, only appeared ~2,500 BCE.

The Sumerians

The Sumerians were a mixture of Semitic and non-Semitic peoples [4-6]. They populated the mid-east in urban settings between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers from ~4500-1750 BCE to as early as ~7500 BCE in early pre-urban settlements [7].

They possessed the earliest advanced civilizations in the broader region, and had the earliest writing. Their cuneiform writing is recorded on stone tablets dating before ~5300 BCE, detailing financial dealings, recording oral traditions, and documenting lists of kings. The most famous of the lists, "The Kish Chronicle", begins with the god/kings (with fantastic reign-lengths), followed by kings of normal reign-lengths [8] (p. 481-485).

There is evidence that the Sumerians expanded their reign over a massive empire that extended from Egypt to India, northward into Europe, and eastward into China. DeLacouperie [9] noted that Chinese historical documents indicate Sargon I led an invasion from the West into China, bringing the Sumerian culture and writing to the people.

Based on comparisons of the language phonology (pronunciation of sounds), monument inscriptions, myth and king's lists, Waddell [8] hypothesized that the ancient Egyptians and Hindu (Aryans), shared a common royal king-line with the Sumerians (and at least some of the early traditions). He noted the years from Sumerian King Unzi to their recorded flood was 1656 years – the same as for Adam to the biblical Flood. This led him to assume that Adam and King Unzi were the same person, and both floods were the same event, likely connecting Hebrew and Sumerian traditions.

Kramer [5] described the discovery of the language of strange unknown characters that came to be known as Sumerian. The uncertainty in the meanings of words, and the fragmented tablets (some missing from an obvious sequence) leave uncertainty in the meaning of the myths. Hooke [10] noted that any possible connection of the Sumerian stories with other stories in the region based on similar phraseology and concepts is speculative. But the likely contribution to

tradition in the mid-east by the Sumerians, given the far-reaching extent of the empire that carried writing and civilization with it, cannot be totally dismissed.

A unified record of a creation myth has not been unearthed, though fragmented hints of the story do exist [11]. These tablets date to about 2000 BCE, but they are believed to be based on oral tradition much older. Later writings from the first millennium BCE, in Akkadian, contain the Epics of Creation and Gilgamesh that show signs of clearly being borrowed from the earlier Sumerian literature, and several versions of the same story are used to complement one another and fill in a unified creation myth [12]. A unique aspect of the Sumerian creation cosmogony is its reference to the evolutionary development of the earliest state of man as a species – describing his early life before the domestication of animals and farming.

The Egyptians

The Egyptians [4, 6, 7] were non-Semites that populated the Nile River Valley as a single kingdom from ~3100 BCE. Before that there were two independent kingdoms (the Upper and the Lower) back to about the fourth or fifth millennium BCE, and pre-urban settlements as early as ~7500 BCE [2]. The first pharaoh of the United Kingdom of Egypt is identified by tradition as Menes [13], but his identity is uncertain. Modern reconstruction indicates Menes was most likely Narmer or Hor-Aha, though King Scorpion, who predates them, is another possibility [14].

The ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic writing is generally assumed to have been introduced by the Sumerians ~3100 BCE – though it represents an evolution from the original characters. Their writings of the creation are found on papyrus rolls that are dated to the 26th Dynasty (~650 BCE) with oral tradition going back much earlier. A unique aspect of the Egyptian creation account is its description of what appears to be a catastrophic comet impact event.

The Hebrews

The Hebrews [4, 6] were pastoral nomadic Semites who populated the desert areas around Sumer. They were, at some point, integrated into the Sumerian population. Their writings are included in ancient historical and religious texts, one of which is the Old Testament of the Bible that is dated to ~1240 BCE but whose oral tradition goes back to ~4000 BCE based on the biblical genealogies. It describes the historical events and traditions of the Hebrew people, though there is little of the earliest history that can be verified by other sources currently. The unique aspect of the Hebrew creation account is its time table for the flow of creation events from the beginning – a time table that can be calibrated to the scientific record.

According to the accounts, the patriarch Abra(ha)m, with his tribe, left his home (the Sumerian city of Ur) ~2000 BCE and traveled up the Euphrates River to Canaan which was already populated with an agricultural-based society. Later, his grandson Jacob with his tribe emigrated to Egypt. Over time, the Hebrews were forced into slavery and finally were led out of Egypt (the Exodus) by Moses, traditionally around the 13th century BCE – though there is some controversy regarding that date [15]. It was during this time that, by tradition, Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible, but further books were added by other authors as late as ~300 BCE. The later books date to the time of the Monarchs (~1000 BCE), but much editing was done during the Babylonian Exile (~600-530 BCE) [10].

The Hindus

The Hindus [2, 6] (referred to as the Indus civilization) populated the Indus River Valley in the northern Punjab region traditionally from ~2500-1750 BCE. However, recent discoveries [8, 16] indicate dates as early as ~3700 BCE with a pre-Indus population in the region – possibly as early as ~7000 BCE.

Several of the cities appeared fully formed (not built on top of older more primitive settlements) ~2600 BCE, about 600 years after the first Mesopotamian cities emerged. Harappa and Mohenjo Daro are among the oldest. At their peak (~2000 BCE), they were well planned cities with brick homes and gridded streets, comparable in size to modern Memphis in Egypt. The sophisticated water and sewer system (including indoor toilets) were not seen elsewhere in the ancient world until Rome, 1000 years later.

Traditionally, it is believed that the Indus collapse (~1700-1500 BCE) was the result of the Aryan invaders from the north who introduced the Vedic tradition with its caste system. This late date, however, appears to be inconsistent with the accepted Vedic period dates (~2500-1750 BCE). Further, there appears to be no evidence of the invasion at the time of the collapse. There is, however, evidence that the collapse may have been precipitated by major climate disasters.

Waddell [8] made the case that the Sumerian empire expansion under Sargon I and his predecessors brought a new level of civilization (and writing) to the area, and the timing of this empire expansion is consistent with the introduction of the Vedic period. The Hindu writings are found in several sacred books – the oldest of which is the Rig Veda [17] written in Sanskrit ~1300 BCE but based on oral tradition much older. Sanskrit is a later evolution of Vedic which the Hindus consider to be the un-corrupted sacred language. A unique aspect of the Hindu cosmogony is what seems to be a reference to the development of complex language in "early man" – the giving of the sacred speech.

The Chinese

The earliest traces of the Chinese culture originated as a collection of settlements along the Yellow River, possibly as early as ~10,000 BCE [6, 18, 19]. By ~4500 BCE, the Hongshan culture had developed in the north, centered around trade (domesticated millet and Jade works from ~8000 BCE). By ~3500 BCE, the Langzhu had developed independently around the Yangtze, trading domesticated rice, laquerware and porcelain from ~7000 BCE. These tribes however do not uniquely constitute the Chinese people.

DeLacouperier [9] and Etienne [20] described the origin of the nucleus of the Chinese as a dozen Bak tribes arriving from the West who reached the Yellow River area already occupied by several races (both aboriginal and previous invaders from the northwest). The Bak brought with them a new level of culture, including writing and their mythic beliefs. Over time, the Bak, who became the elite and kings [21], integrated the former inhabitants of the region into their society. One of the earlier waves of the Bak was led by one who became identified as HuangTi (the legendary Yellow Emperor, the third of the five Legendary Emperors). Shen-nong (identified as Sargon I of Sumer c. 3100 BCE) led one of these waves.

The introduction of writing by the Bak is said to predate HuangTi. The ancient Chinese characters are believed to be evolved versions of the Sumerian characters; and, the giver of the writing is associated with one called Dungi (identified as King Dumuzi of Sumer). However, it is said that in 3322 BCE, Fu-hsi (the first of the Legendary Emperors) developed symbols from a sacred artifact into the eight trigrams of the I Ching [22]. These symbols are believed to pre-date writing in the region. Although the Bak personality was not identified, the event seems to have occurred during the reign of Sumerian King Meskiaggasher (~3400 BCE) who was the legendary son of the sun god Utu.

Tradition says that the historical documents began with the invention of writing, but the creation stories are based on older oral tradition. Among the oldest and most valuable are: (1) the *Classic of Change* (The I Ching dated in some parts to ~800 BC, but with inclusions as recent as ~100 BC); (2) *Questions of Heaven* written about the 4th century BCE [23]; (3) the *Lao Tzu (The Tao Te Ching)* [24], known to have existed already during the time of Confucius ~550 BCE, has no clear date of origin; and, (4) the *Classic of Mountains and Seas* [23] (compiled in the late Chou to early Han periods from ~500-100 BCE, but from earlier source materials). A unique feature of the Taoist writings are their philosophical perspective that is not god-centered as all of the other cultures' myths.

COMPARISON OF THE ANCIENT TRADITIONS

The possibility of reconstructing an integrated picture of the most ancient mythological past of the mid-east area is addressed by comparing the origin myths of the five groups. The political, ethnic, and linguistic connections previously discussed make this assumption not unreasonable.

The idea of comparing mythologies of early cultures is not new. Hooke [10] stated there are several ways to consider what constitutes a myth, and the criteria used to define it can impact the results of any comparison. His definition is one of functionality. That is, myths are the product of human imagination with the goal of transmitting a lesson or describing a condition in the past that was relevant to the life of the community, but the historical truth of the story is irrelevant.

He stated there is evidence of commonality in the most basic myths (at least regionally), and there are two methods of explaining this. One is independent development by the collective group (as in Flood myths in areas prone to disastrous flooding). The second is diffusion. That is, the tale is carried from one Flood-prone region to a non-Flood-prone region (even if the path can no longer be defined).

Parallels between the Hebrew [25] (Genesis 1) creation story and the Mesopotamian and Ugaritic literature are well recognized. [26] concluded that the religions of Egypt and Babylonia formed the background of Judaism, with evidence of Babylonian influence in the earliest chapters of Genesis. But, he cautioned that myths are tales that undergo literary remodeling over time, and for any given myth, it is difficult to distinguish the author's view from the tradition of the historical past – they are all a mixture of older and newer ideas.

Johnson [27] discussed the comparison of the Hebrew story with Egyptian creation traditions. He noted that these comparisons have not been as well received as the Mesopotamian ones. He

presented both the similarities and the differences between four versions of the Egyptian tradition (spanning Old Kingdom, <2600 BCE, to New Kingdom, >1200 BCE), and concluded that Genesis 1 was composed to differentiate the theologies of the two peoples. The likelihood of historical or scientific truth in these stories is not considered as a relevant issue.

Giannini [28] demonstrated that historical or scientific bases for myths is not precluded if one can step out of the conventional linear thinking we are used to in our day-to-day lives, and that we generally associate with the analysis and comparison of even the most ancient myths. Myths need not be considered pure imagination – though scientific knowledge, in the modern sense, was likely not the intent. Considering a dual-time reference-frame system (the “human-time” perspective and the “god/creator-time” perspective), it is possible to reconcile the mid-east (Genesis in particular) creation myths with the modern scientific record without resorting to imagery/symbolism references.

Going beyond the local region of the Nile and the Tigris-Euphrates Rivers Valleys, Dumézil [29] considered the Indo-European myths and rituals. He showed common elements in some myths from the European, the Mediterranean, and the Indus (Vedic) regions – known to share gods and other myths with the Egyptians. This indicates a possible evolutionary path between Vedic and all of the other mid-east cultures (beyond any contamination/mixing resulting from cultural or political interactions).

Witzel [30] considered a broader area that includes Eurasia and pre-Columbian Americas. He noted there is an underlying pattern (a unique story line) dealing with, among other things, the emergence of the universe and world, leading him to the conclusion that there existed a common set of mythologies back to the time of the first human migrations Out of Africa – though the migration path and the original traditions may no longer be identifiable. He noted the difficulty with diffusion in the global context is the lack of any gradual dispersion path from any known reconstructed center, indicating the Jungian theories [31] of deeply encoded archetypal imagery do not appear to be a way to explain similarities in myths on a global scale.

Witzel’s approach has been called “essentially romantic” as it looks for a common source (that he acknowledged likely no longer exists). His comparisons were with myths following a creation narrative that included the origin of the universe, the generation of the gods, the semi-divine heroic era, the emergence of humans, and the origin of royal lines. He observed that 100,000 years ago, myth and ritual apparently reflected the elements in the people’s lives – developed by analogy and comparison.

In this paper, Witzel’s “romantic” approach to comparisons is made only within the five mid-east cultures identified. The comparisons are based on a small sample of selected readings from each of the cultures’ traditions, and are used to produce a reconstructed “Common Origin Myth”. They cover from the beginning of the universe through the appearance of man (the species). The selections are not intended to represent an all-encompassing picture of the traditions of any group. It is recognized that many myths of the same time use anthropomorphic symbolizing to express, by analogy and comparison, the observed environment of the people.

The Reconstruction Framework

It is assumed that differences in the primitive people as they migrated resulted in a common source tradition evolving differently into what is seen in the surviving recorded traditions. Combining the different pictures, focusing on the common elements, has allowed the synthesis of one possible version of an earliest source. This reconstruction is not intended as a comparison of the religious beliefs of the people – initially or as evolved ideas. Further, it is recognized that the same ancient words in the different cultures may have had totally different meanings than as are currently interpreted, but the best interpretation was sought.

The outline for the reconstruction developed is the Hebrew tradition presented in Genesis 1: [25]. The reason for this is twofold. One, the Genesis account is the only one of the five traditions with a clearly defined (quantitative) timeline. The others reflect creation activities in a more or less relative sequence without specified timing. Some use anthropomorphic symbolism for the events, camouflaging their nature. Two, it is proposed that the ancient “common source” possessed historical truth – not “just” symbolic analogy. Because of the quantitative timeline, it was possible to reconcile the Genesis events with the modern scientific record.

There is a measure of credibility to the flow of events as presented in Genesis because of the ability to map the biblical Days to measured and dated geologic and paleontologic events using a Kinematic Relativity (KR) relation [28]. That is, the more likely it is that the Genesis account reflects scientific accuracy, the more likely it is that the “Common Origin Myth” existed. It is recognized that any origin myth was not intended as a science text book for the ancient people (which does not invalidate its truth despite the poetic structure of the myth’s language presentation). Further, there is a complicating factor as to how the earliest people got the information – that is a matter for a different discourse. In the discussion of the reconstruction below, the calibrated BCE dates for the *Eras* were the ones determined by the KR mapping.

The Reconstructed Common Source Myth And Commentary

Before the beginning there was a void – a primeval sea of flowing life-force with no distinguishable variation or identifiable matter. It was murky and dark. It was the motionless fabric of space, eternally unchanging. Time had not yet begun.

Then something mysteriously formed in the darkness of the void, something beyond understanding, Raising itself up from out of the state of helpless inertness in the primeval sea that was the fabric of space, it became an existing being. The thing that gave it existence was change – going from being motionless to being continuously in motion.

[Modern cosmology cannot predict the nature of space-time before the Big Bang event that is the beginning of this universe. Thus, this murky dark fabric and the origin of the force that began the change are both mysteries from before the beginning – even to today’s science. It is proposed here that one can view the picture of the pre-Big Bang fabric of space as a 3-D network of strings of potential energy extending infinitely in all directions. Silent and still, there was no manifestation, no matter. Plucking the string brings matter into existence. Vibrations on the string, like standing wave, are seen as solid matter – one possible interpretation of the Chinese concept of motion on the motionless [32] (verse 40).

Once the mysterious One formed, the work of creation began. Thru desire it laid the foundations [of the universe], fixing its rules. Creation began with the Breath. The Breath brought heat and light. Like the wind rustling the sea, it brought motion to the motionless as it separated the unity of tranquil space, bringing light from dark.

First to come into being was the One (force of large matter that fixed the rules the universe). Then came into being the Two (different orientations for the life-force of the fabric of space), then came into being the Three (forces of the smallest matter in nature). This ended era 1.

[The Breath could be viewed as the Big Bang event (BB, 15,000-13,800 BYA, billion years ago as determined by science) which represents the beginning of the universe as we know it. It corresponds to the first creation period of the scared Hindu Kalpa cycle beginning in 14,932,947,087 BCE. As depicted in the Standard Model, it marks the start of the differentiation of matter and energy and the expansion of the universe, and, the beginning of time. It is proposed here that the heat and light represent the transfer of potential energy in the fabric of space to kinetic energy, causing the continuous vibration-motion that is matter. Polarization in the fabric (*the Two*) gave the power to form matter, adhering to the laws of the *Three* forces of nature. This process scientifically was realized within the first 10^{-6} seconds of the Breath. This event, KR mapped to 14,004,100,000 BCE, is identified with the end of biblical Day 1 (*Era 1*).]

Once the Three were created, the ten thousand things, carrying yin and embracing yang (matter of equal and opposite types), were brought into motion out of inert space. They achieve harmony by combining the Three forces. The flowing energy of space separated into an empty expanse in the void (the sky) and matter that formed the heavenly bodies (the stars, sun and Earth). This ended era 2.

[This period could be viewed as a time of separation of the flowing energy when undifferentiated matter/energy in the Universe coalesced into the most elementary particles ($\sim 10^{-6}$ s after the BB). The stars and galaxies began to form (~ 400 million years after the BB). Then the gas and dust in the proto-Solar System began forming the planets (~ 9.2 BYA). The differentiation of the foundation of the young Earth continued to separate into well-defined layers with an upper crust supporting plate tectonics (~ 3 BYA), and the development of an atmosphere. The “Great Oxidation Event” (2.5-2.2 BYA) set the stage for the development of life on Earth. This event, KR mapped to 2,334,000,000 BCE, is identified as the end of biblical Day 2 (*Era 2*).]

On the Earth, dry land separated from the watery sea. A multitude of things were brought into existence things that came into being from things that were born from created things that were named. Vegetation of all kinds filled the earth – seed-bearing plants and fruit trees of every kind. This ended era 3.

[This period is consistent with the cyclic process known as “tectonic pulsing” when a series of super continents formed and broke apart repeatedly – each time with new ocean basins forming, and new plant species evolving ($\sim 1,100$ -750 MYA). By ~ 543 MYA, multi-cellular plants and animals began to flourish. Then the event known as “Polar Wander” (390-380 MYA) saw a shift in the Earth’s rotational axis causing unfavorable conditions for further plant species

development, but at the same time priming the Earth for the development of higher animal life. This event, KR mapped to 389,000,000 BCE, is identified with the end of biblical Day 3 (*Era 3*.)]

When there fell on them their moment (a heavenly body came out of the sky). Plant-like clouds darkened the sky. The sun could no longer be seen, and the Earth fell cold. When the sky cleared, the sun, moon and stars that had been hidden reappeared again in it. This ended era 4.

[This period describes a dramatic extinction that took place – the famous dinosaur extinction ~65 million years ago. The beginning of Day 4 saw amphibians, reptiles, carnivores and dinosaurs roaming the Earth. Then, a massive impact (~65.7-64.5 MYA) blackened the sky with hydrocarbons and dust for a prolonged period – shutting down photosynthesis and reducing global temperatures to near freezing conditions for decades resulting in the extinction of 60-80% of all land and marine invertebrates. Finally, the atmosphere cleared to reveal the sun and stars again. The sunlight brought life back to the Earth priming it for the development of new land, marine and avian species. This event, KR mapped to 64,800,000 BCE, is identified with the end of biblical Day 4 (*Era 4*.)]

The warm earth then brought forth all kinds of new life. Swarms of living creatures filled the waters, and birds were born that fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky This ended era 5.

[This period is the recovery time after the extinction event. Residual radiation from the extinction period induced the next phase of evolution, producing the first modern birds, fish and marine invertebrates, and early primates (~17-15 MYA). But, during this period, the climate gradually transitioned into the Great Ice Age – a time unfavorable for continued species growth until a brief warming during the “Orbital Eccentricity Maximum” (10.8-10.7 MYA), paving the way for the next phase of evolution in modern mammals. This event, KR mapped to 10,800,000 BCE, is identified with the end of biblical Day 5 (*Era 5*.)]

Then every kind of living creature (cattle, creeping things, and wild beasts) came to be. Finally, the first man was given life, raised from the stuff of the earth – made in the likeness of the mysterious One. This ended era 6.

[During this period, widespread grass-dominated ecosystems developed favoring larger grazing animals like the horse, elk, elephant, and bison, and, wild beasts like the wolves, foxes, and saber-tooth tigers (~10 MYA). Then the primate line split between the apes and pre-man – chimpanzees, gorillas and orangutans (~7-5 MYA), and *Australopithecus* (~3 MYA). The pre-man line continued to evolve until ~1.9-1.6 MYA when wildfires forced *H. Erectus* to leave Africa (the Out of Africa Event 1) forcing the flexibility to adapt to colder environments. This event, KR mapped to 1,800,000 BCE, is identified with the end of biblical Day 6 (*Era 6*.)]

When he first appeared, he wore no garments and ate and drank like the animals, changing with time. Then his eyes were opened, and he began to think differently from the animals. He knew the names of all things and was given a purpose – to tend the earth.

[To complete the picture, modern humans are recognized by ~150,000 years ago. By ~40,000 years ago, complex language is believed to have appeared, and evidence of farming in the Levant

occurs by ~10,000 years ago. As time progressed, the species of Man evolved from an animal-like state at the end of biblical Day 6 (1.8 MYA), before achieving complex language and higher thinking ability and a purpose (into biblical Day 7 when the Creator rested). This is when Man attained intelligence and tended the garden in Genesis 2:. It was here that Man the species becomes man the individual named Adam.]

DISCUSSION

There are three perspectives observed in the origin myths presented here. The origin traditions of the Hindus and Chinese share more mystic writings. They do describe some events in a physical manner, but they spend more time discussing the mysterious beginning of the creator "god". (Technically, the Chinese Tao is not really a god, but it is the source that is analogous to the creator gods of the other traditions). Of the myths considered, these two cultures present more of the feeling of the connection with the One, rather than the step-by-step god-driven actions of creation events as do the other cultures.

The Hebrew, Egyptian and Sumerian traditions, on the other hand, seem more accomplishment oriented, describing creation event-by-event through the creation of mankind. The Sumerian myths, in particular, personify nature as aspects and actions of the gods. The Hebrews, uniquely detail the chronology of events that happened (though not BCE calibrated). Both groups had mystic writings and accomplishment-oriented writings, only a selected few are presented here.

In the following discussion, the Hebrew tradition comes from *Genesis* [25]. The Egyptian tradition comes from *The History of Creation* myth [13] (p. 1-13). The Sumerian traditions come from two myths: (1) the poem *The Journey of the Water-God to Nippur* [11] (p. 62), and (2) the introduction to the poem *Cattle and Grain* [11] (p. 72). The Hindu traditions include three selections from the *Rig Veda*: (1) *The Creation*, hymn x129 [33] (p. 23); (2) *The Cosmic Heat*, hymn x190 [33] (p. 25); and (3) *The Origin of Sacred Speech*, hymn x71 [17] (p. 61). Finally, the Chinese traditions include verses one, 25, 40 and 42 from the *Tao Te Ching* [34], and three cosmogonic myths [23] (p. 31, 32, 35). The text of these readings have been collected into a supplementary file [35]. The comparison words from the referenced myths are given in italics.

There are common ideas within the groups that show a very direct connection despite the difference in philosophy. They generally identified the universe before the creation. The Sumerians [11] (p. 62) refer to the *water of creation*. The Hebrews [25] (Genesis 1:) describe the universe as *unformed and void, and darkness over ... the water*. The Chinese [23] (p. 31) describe it as *moist-wet and vast empty space*, and [34] (verse 1) *darkness within darkness, the gate to all mystery*. While the Hindus [33] (p. 23) talk of the *deep unfathomable water, and darkness there was at first by darkness hidden*. All indicate a dark, flowing, mass-less state that changed in the beginning of creation.

They all refer to an unknown creator, as the Chinese [34] (verse 25) *something that mysteriously formed*. For Hindus [33] (p. 23), the nature of the *One* and how it came to be is more a question – *who knows for certain?* However, the Egyptian words [13] (p. 1-13) are very explicit that the creator god raised himself out of Nu, the primeval substance.

Creation by pronouncement or decree is common in words like *God said* (Hebrews, [25], Genesis 1:), *which came forth out of my mouth* (Egyptian, [13], p. 1-13), and *creation had been*

decreed and the name of man had been fixed (Sumerian, [11], p. 62). The Hindu words [33] (p. 23) imply creation by *desire* without explicitly speaking the words, but creation is still by will of the creator.

The concept of a powerful expansive force that marked the beginning of time in the Universe is evident in all of the cultures. Words like *a wind from God* (Hebrew, [25], Genesis 1:), *creative force ... fertile power ... the impulse* (Hindu, [33], p. 23), *spit out from myself* (Egyptian, [13], p. 1-13), and *cosmos gave birth to the Breath* (Chinese, [23], p. 35) all indicate this idea.

It is generally indicated that the creator is responsible for putting the lights in the sky, as in the Hindu words [17] (p. 61) *the great creator, then formed in due order sun and moon*, and the Hebrew words (Hebrew, [25], Genesis 1:) *Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky*, while the Sumerians [11] (p. 62) personify the heavenly lights as *creatures of bright countenance*. The Chinese [34] (verse 42) does not specify the lights, but it does say *the Tao begot ... the ten thousand things*. The Egyptian tradition [13] (1-13) indicates the idea as *I am the creator of everything which came into being*, but only they speak directly of a catastrophe where, after being created, the sun and moon were removed (hidden) and then returned – reminiscent of a comet impact and its aftermath.

The creator is generally accepted as being responsible for populating the Earth with plants and animals of all kinds, but most importantly Man. The Chinese [23] (p.35) state the mythical figure *Nu Kua kneaded the yellow Earth*. To the Hebrews [25] (Genesis 2:), *God formed man from the dust of the Earth*, and later in the Garden his *eyes were opened*. The Sumerians [11] (p. 72) refer to the *creation chamber*, and directly address the question of the evolution of man from an animal-like state to a more advanced state as *like mankind when first created, ... ate plants with their mouth like sheep, drank water from the ditch*. But, the Hindus [17] (p. 61) are the only ones to address the giving of speech, *the most pure and perfectly guarded Secret*. One could interpret this to mean the secret of the intelligent thinking man was the ability to verbally express himself in ways the (lower) animals could not.

In conclusion, the five cultures have some differences, but also some striking similarities in their traditions that suggest a common origin (one possibility being the reconstruction presented here). The early close linguistic connection of all (the Hindus are of much later evolution from a cousin to Egyptian and Hebrew) suggests migration as a carrier of the original ideas which later evolved with differences. However, in addition, diffusion through political contact by the Sumerian expansion was likely a mediator among all the groups. Finally, the validation of the Hebrew tradition supports the likelihood of the existence and truth of the “Common Origin Myth”.

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