

Sunda pre- and proto-historical continuity between Asia and Africa

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# **SUNDA PRE- AND PROTO-HISTORICAL CONTINUITY BETWEEN ASIA AND AFRICA**

**The Oppenheimer–Dick–Read–Tauchmann  
hypothesis as an heuristic device in com-  
parative mythology and cultural history**

**with special emphasis on the Nkoya people  
of Zambia, Africa**

**by Wim van Binsbergen**



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COVER ILLUSTRATIONS: *front cover*: front cover illustration: Big Namba man blowing a conch shell trumpet, Vanuatu, Melanesia, Oceania, 2012 (source: <http://www.traveladventures.org/continents/oceania/mae-big-nambaso2.html>, with thanks); *back cover*: the author contemplating Sunda continuities during fieldwork in Sanda, Bali, Indonesia (2010) (photo Patricia van Binsbergen); *spine*: The Nkoya court musician John Kawayile ceremonially plays the royal xylophone (1977)

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*to the memory of Drs Henny E. van Rijn (1936-2019), biophysicist, ba Manda wa Nesima, my first wife, whose mathematical and natural-science habitus has had a great impact on my scientific outlook, and who bravely and loyally shared the first years of fieldwork that laid the basis for the present book*

*and of the Rev. Councillor Princess Mary Nalishuwa (1941-2018), ba Manda wa Mangala, granddaughter of King Mwene Mutondo Kanyinca, daughter of Mwanashihemi Nalishuwa, Miss Kaoma 1964, my sister, who saw me grow up and struggle to meet her relentless expectations of significant productivity and dignity in the Nkoya context; and who first drew my attention to the extensive Asian elements in 20<sup>th</sup>-c. CE Nkoya life.*

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# Chapter o. Prologue: Music from the East

## Identifying Sunda influence on selected musical instruments in use among the Nkoya people of Zambia in the late 20<sup>th</sup> c. CE

### *o.1. Music from the East? The Sunda Hypothesis*

This is a book about the Sunda Hypothesis, *i.e.* about possible cultural continuities between two regions on either side of the globe: one the one hand the Indo-Pacific region extending into Oceania, on the other hand the western Old World, *i.e.* West Asia, Africa, and Europe. The purpose of this Prologue is to whet the reader's appetite, in the sense that a provisional analysis is presented on the comparative ethnography of musical instruments – suggesting that at least for that limited field of human culture (music), and for a very limited part of Africa (the Nkoya people of Western Zambia, South Central Africa) the Sunda Hypothesis seems to make a lot of sense. After making that initial point, this Prologue will have served its purpose, and we shall continue with rather less entertaining discussions of theoretical, paradigmatic and methodological issues raised by the Sunda Hypothesis – adducing, in the succession of chapters of this – once again – very voluminous book, an attempt to arrive at a balanced assessment of the Sunda Hypothesis – which will mean few yet fairly impressive pros, and many contras, but none too destructive contras.

## o.2. *The Nkoya people and their music*

During the last two decades, much of my research has converged (van Binsbergen 2017a, 2019a) on the question of the extent of *Sunda influence upon the modern cultures of sub-Saharan Africa* – i.e. the impact of the westbound expansion of peoples and cultures and languages from South East Asia to South Asia and Africa, from the Early Holocene (10 ka BP) on (cf. Oppenheimer 1998; Dick-Read 2005; van Binsbergen 2019a). The present chapter is an instalment in that research. Musical instruments are conspicuous man-made objects, whose culturally defined sound qualities, functioning within an established musical and ceremonial tradition, and practicability of handling and storage, impose considerable constraints upon their possible range of variation. When the older, diffusion-orientated anthropology was obsessed with tracing the origin and spread of specific culturally embedded objects, it stands to reason that musical instruments were often proposed as ‘index fossils’ of transregional and transcontinental continuities. In the case of Africa and Asia, the work of Jones (1964) has particularly stressed the xylophone as indicative of westbound Indonesian influence – not only do the instruments show great similarities between sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia, but also is their tuning unexpectedly similar. Later research has further contributed to these findings, e.g. the fact that the oldest attestation of a remotely xylophone-like instrument was in a Bronze Age grave in China dating 2000 BCE (Anonymous, Xylophone). The splendid work by Blench (2012), where lexical patterns are combined with ethnographic distributions and archaeology, has particularly brought our understanding of Asia / Africa continuities in the musical field much further and makes some of my analyses obsolete; in particular, he insists on an independent African origin for the xylophone, whereas on distributional grounds I prefer to see here a Sunda impact. However, what I am after here, at this initial state of my monograph, is merely to demonstrate the plausibility of an argument connection South Central Africa and South East Asia, and that point stands whatever the limitations of my data and analysis.

The interest in the distribution of instruments has been a time-honoured concern of musicologists. Here the name of Curt Sachs has dominated the field. His encyclopaedic compendia on musical instruments, and dance forms, although obsolete in many details, still continue to inspire researchers today. In my approach to musical instruments in the Sunda context I shall particularly rely on the distributional data which he brought together relatively early in his career, in his 1913 book entitled *Real-Lexikon der Musikinstrumente*.

Here a dilemma arises that is familiar in the study of ethnographic distributions in space and time: if one wishes to do justice to all available attestations (and many of these have come within easier reach since the recent digitalisation of academic libraries) one faces the diminishing returns of ever more efforts for ever fewer additional data, which due to different methodologies of collecting and classification may not even be very well comparable. Since my aim in the present chapter is exploratory rather than conclusive, I take the risk of missing out a few additional attestations for the great advantage of using what is patently a reliable source applying the same methodology to all listed cases.



Others with more patience and less pressed for time (I am presently beyond the end of my formal career, and have a few books more to finish before I die) are welcome to improve upon the provisional analysis, with deliberately limited data, which I am presenting here.



Fig. 0.1. The essential elements of the Nkoya royal orchestra: chilimba (xylophone, here of the portable, royal type) and mukupele (hour-glass drum), here in action at the Kazanga Annual Ceremony, 2011

The point of departure in my approach to possibly Sunda phenomena is, as so often, my knowledge of the culture and society of the Nkoya people of Zambia, whose principal ethnographer / historiographer I became in the early 1970s, and who have been at the centre of my scientific and personal interest ever since. The Nkoya have a very rich musical culture (Brown 1984), which from the early 19<sup>th</sup> c. CE onward has also become the standard at the many non-Nkoya royal courts in Western and to a limited extent even Central Zambia, among the Soli and the Sala, where influence of Nkoya royals and elephant hunters has been considerable (van Binsbergen 1992, 2015a: 159 *f.*, and in prep. (c)). I take it that the Nkoya's dominant musical position (which stands in striking contrast to their otherwise low socio-political status as a so-called 'subject tribe' of the Lozi king, who resides 200 km. to the west in what used to be known as Barotseland, now Zambia's Western Province) owes much to the hypothetical fact – painstakingly reconstructed by me over the decades, though – to the effect that the Nkoya kings and their musicians are the heirs to what was once,

less than a millennium ago, a local South-Asian-derived kingdom or set of kingdoms, generally associated with the latterday Lunda culture and political network, and – like Great Zimbabwe and Mapungubwe, much further south in Southern Africa – largely under Buddhist influence (van Binsbergen 2017). Inevitably, Nkoya musical life went through a period of decline in the second half of the twentieth century CE, when the life of many adults had acquired a temporary urban aspect interchangingly with shorter or longer stays in the village; when urban churches began to supplant the rural forms of ritual and entertainment the Nkoya migrants had taken with them to town where they would always remain a small minority; and when even in the villages rural life was less and less articulated by spontaneous musical events marking life-crisis events (puberty rites and funerals), illness (catered for by healing cults), as well as the ceremonial court life of the several royal courts – even when after Independence (1964) these, and their orchestras, came to be state-subsidised. However, Nkoya musical life obtained a new lease of life when the spontaneous, organic musical performance was gradually supplanted by the deliberate, orchestrated performance, mainly in the context of the pan-Nkoya Annual Festival of the Kazanga Cultural Society, which was founded in the early 1980s (van Binsbergen 1992; 1999). The unfortunate flipside of this development is that it reduced the majority of the Nkoya, once competent and self-confident performers in their own right, to passive consumers of performed or recorded Nkoya music.



The picture shows two *mukupeles*, one *chilimba*, while the standing musician plays the ordinary narrow tall drum (*ngoma*). At the time the Nkoya kings no longer possessed kettle drums (*mawoma*). These were confiscated – at the now Kawoma stream (after which the ex-colonial district capital Mankoya was renamed Kaoma in the late 1970s) – in 1860 by the Nguni-speaking Kololo from South Africa who had taken over the Luyana kingdom (as a result of which present-day Lozi is still a Nguni language similar to Ndebele, Zulu and Tswana). Even after the Luyana kingdom's restoration under King Sepopa the *mawoma* had never been returned to the Nkoya kings nor

have they been allowed to be replaced, despite repeated requests on the part of the Nkoya kings. Only in 1994 did the defiant Nkoya king Mwene Mutondo have a kettle drum made once more following the time-honoured pattern, including its most horrific details (van Binsbergen 1999). Amazingly, the detail – without the slightest corroborative Nkoya background – of a king losing his kettle drums which are serving as a palladium of his sovereignty, turns out to have Islamic antecedents: such an event is proverbially associated with the military leader and statesman Almanzor, in Islamic Spain, c. 1000 CE (Lewis 1976: 229; Anonymous, Almanzor; Martínez Díez 2005: 582; Bariani 2003: 233). This humiliating or gratifying event – depending on our standpoint – is enshrined, not so much in Islamic sources but in the triumphant *Estoria de España* (earliest version 13th c. CE), and I am at a loss to explain how it reached Nkoyaland, which was frequented by Swahili Muslim traders around 1900 CE, but where Spanish impact was always minimal.

Fig. 0.2. The royal orchestra of the Nkoya king Mwene Kahare in 1977

We could not discuss all musical instruments among the Nkoya today that have a counterpart in the distribution lists of Sachs. He does adequately document the hourglass drum, the thumb piano, xylophone, grater, and gong – but only touches superficially on the large kettle drums<sup>1</sup> (*mawoma*) which are among a Nkoya king's most cherished paraphernalia must be left out of our present analysis; nor can we take Sachs's lead in regard of the tall, narrow drum (*ngoma*) that constitutes the main instrument outside the royal setting: in healing cults, hunting cults, social gatherings, etc.; and of the *ngoma ntambwe*, the string or friction drum – that was no longer conspicuous in Nkoya life in the second half of the twentieth century CE, but whose mysterious, deep throbbing sound still conjures up archaic mysteries such as once surrounded especially male puberty rites (which the Nkoya abolished effectively in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, thus greatly reducing their similarity with their circumcising neighbours in Western Zambia such as the Luvale, Mbunda, Luchazi and Chokwe; cf. van Binsbergen 1992, 1993a). Finally, Nkoya musical life prominently features further idiophones, which have to be left outside our present analysis, notably rattles made out of the spherical wood-like fruit shell of the *rushaka* snuffbox-tree<sup>2</sup> which is indigenous to the *dambo* wetlands / riverbeds of Nkoyaland. Where such fruits are not available, e.g. in town, a replacement may be improvised from a carefully opened small tin of condensed milk, into which a stick for a handle has been pressed along with a few fruit kernels or very small pebbles. In the informal intimacy of the home also an half-empty matchbox may be used as an idiophone with surprising efficacy. Rhythmic use of idiophones also includes two hand-held short sticks which are clapped together (Fig. 0.4)

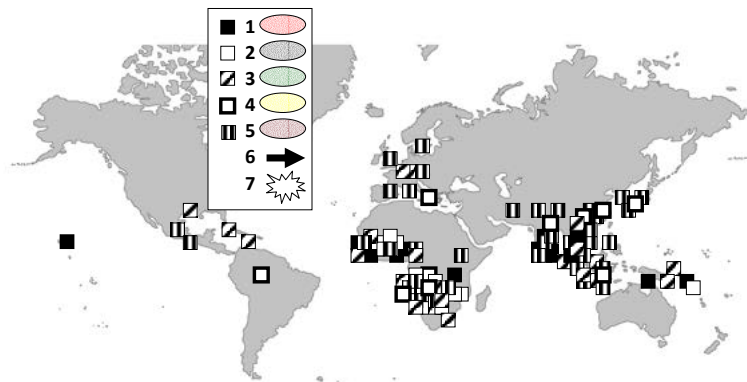
I mapped Sachs's data in a world map, and obtained a number of distributional patterns, which also lend themselves fairly well for the provisional reconstruction of transcontinental interactions.

For the analysis of global distribution data concerning ethnographic / mythological traits, I have gradually developed, in two decades of research in comparative mythology, a specific methodology, whose discussion is outside our present chapter's

<sup>1</sup> Sachs's 1913 does mention kettle drums in South East Asia, e.g. the Thai *klon* (1913: 220), specimens of which I have also seen at the Thai National Museum, Bangkok, 2010, but for a systematic analysis more is required.

<sup>2</sup> *Oncoba spinosa*; van Wyk 2013 – the Nkoya believe that the Zambian capital Lusaka, named after the Sala headman Lusakaas, c. 1900 CE, ultimately derives its name from this fruit.

scope, but which is set out in detail and applied to the global study of head-hunting in chapter 18 below (also cf. van Binsbergen 2014b).



Source: Sachs 1913; legend:

1. *mukupele* / hourglass drum
2. kahandi / thumb piano, zanza
3. chilimba, chijimba / xylophone, marimba
4. rasp, grater
5. ngongi / gong and bell, contentiously conflated for the present purpose
6. proposed transcontinental transmission
7. proposed origin

Fig. 0.3. Global distribution of selected musical instruments as found among the Nkoya people of Zambia



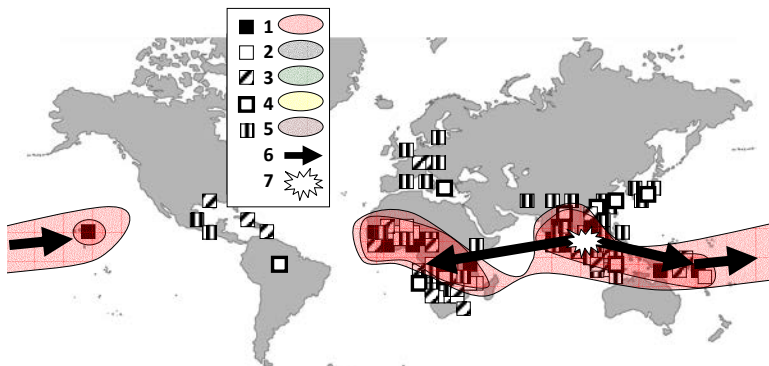
(a)



(a) *Rushaka* rattles from Southern Africa, prepared in three-fold cushioned racks to be worn tied to the lower legs when dancing (author's collection); (b) Nkoya youths using hand-held rattles and clappers at the eve of the funeral of the Nkoya elder Mr Tebulo Shinyama, Kalingalinga informal residential area, Lusaka, Zambia, September 1977

Fig. 0.4. Rattles and clappers

### 0.3. The mukupele hourglass drum



Source and legend: as Fig. 0.3.

Fig. 0.5. Global distribution and proposed historical reconstruction of the *mukupele* hourglass drum

Especially on the basis of the striking similarities between the Nkoya *mukupele* (even though it is double-faced) and the famous Dong Son bronze drums of Vietnam, the proposed historical reconstruction of Fig. 0.5 appears to bring out the transcontinental connections of the *mukupele* adequately. I am satisfied that the Sunda effect is unmistakable in this case.

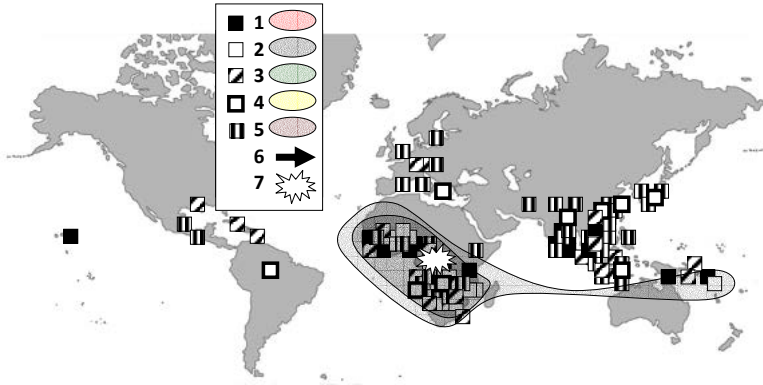
Let us proceed to consider the thumb piano.



Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dong\\_Son\\_drum#/media/File:Tambour-song-daz.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dong_Son_drum#/media/File:Tambour-song-daz.jpg), with thanks  
The similarity with the Nkoya *mukupere* drum (which however is two-sided) goes so far that the small metal eye rings are reproduced in wood on the Nkoya items. Also cf. photographs in Galestin 1941. Willis 1994: 108 suggests a possible Mongolian background for this instrument.

Fig. 0.6. Drum from Sông Đà, Vietnam. Dong Son II culture. Mid-1st millennium BCE. Bronze.

### 0.3. The kahandi thumb piano



Source and legend: as Fig. 0.3.

Fig. 0.7. Global distribution and proposed historical reconstruction of the kahandi thumb piano



Fig. 0.8. A high-quality Nkoya *kahandi*, built c. 1900 CE

Author's collection. For decades, this *kahandi* was a favourite instrument of the royal orchestra of Mwene Kahare. At the king's instigation it was given to me<sup>3</sup> at the conclusion of my first extended spell of rural fieldwork among the Nkoya (1973-1974) by the then leader of the orchestra, who most reluctantly parted with it. The instrument (greatest dimension 18 cm) was locally built before 1900 CE.; it is indistinguishable from the specimens depicted in Smith & Dale 1920 shown in Fig. 0.15 below. Note the resonator (arrow) made out of the paper-like material of a spider's nest. This detail has hidden cosmological associations, since the Western African High God Nyambi, who is also known among the Nkoya, has spider connotations (full references in van Binsbergen 2020d), while a Nkoya popular etymology of Nyambi's name would be 'speaker' (cf. *Ng-amb-ela*, 'Speaker' as political office); the One who Creates through the Spoken Word', from the verb *ku-amba*, 'to speak' (in actual fact, the proper etymology of the name Nyambi is less straight-forward, and probably non-Nigercongo, and may be related to the hypothetical spread of yam (cf. *N-yam-bi?*) cultivation along proposed Sunda lines). The metal thongs of the *kahandi* are wrought from ordinary manufactured carpenter's nails brought to the right shape and pitch. A modern braided nylon string attaches the instrument to its standard sound box, made out of a locally grown pumpkin; the same plant provides the sound boxes of Nkoya xylophones, and containers for fluids. When playing, the *kahandi* hovers over the sound box, at varying distances, thus continually changing the volume and pitch of the sound. The cushioning qualities of a flexible top lining greatly enhances this effect. A few days after the instrument had been given to me, my adoptive younger brother Mr Laxon Shiyowe, of Shumbanyama village, Kazo valley, Kaoma,<sup>4</sup> therefore took the initiative to give the sound box a – hitherto missing – top lining of vegetal fibres, sewn on with the aid of a series of ca. 30 holes burned in the rim of the sound box. I was surprised to find (in an antiques shop at the Vrijdagmarkt, Gendt, Belgium, 2013) a few earthenware pots from the Isle of Lombok, Indonesia, upon which exactly the same technique had been used – admittedly a trait suggestive of Sunda connections.

The distribution pattern of Fig. 0.3 suggests that the thumb piano is an African (Nigercongo-speaking > Bantu-speaking) invention;<sup>5</sup> the Melanesian attestation (Sachs 1913: 429) is probably a red herring: there a prototype is allegedly found in the form of a large nut shell in which triangular tongues have been cut). My 2010 suggestion attributing a Sunda origin to the *kahandi* now seems premature and must be rejected.

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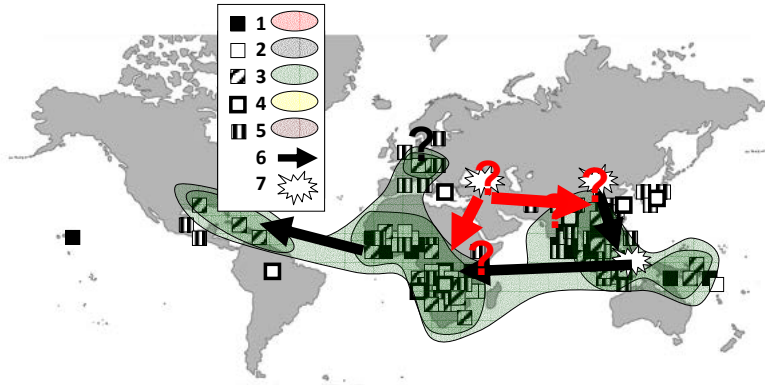
<sup>3</sup> In anticipation of the adoptive status of *Mwanamwene* / royal child, which he would subsequently bestow upon me, allowing me to inherit, at his death in 1993, his royal bow and claim to a considerable stretch of land. On this bow, cf. van Binsbergen 2020a

<sup>4</sup> This person was the protagonist in the case 'The son who made amuck' in one of my first papers on the Nkoya (van Binsbergen 1977). Later, in the mid-1980s, while hunting in the deep forest, he was attacked by an adult lioness, struggled with her and strangled her, after which he had to spend weeks in a shelter at the village outskirts in order to recover under quarantine from the physical and spiritual injuries such a unique, miraculous victory is considered to produce from the Nkoya perspective.

<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, Sachs 1913: 303 mentions a thumb piano (locally called *pokido*) with a human skull as sound box, from the Lokele people on the Aruwimi River (a tributary of the Congo River in North East Congo). This is a part of Africa that appears to be relatively remote, both from the Nkoya and from Sunda influence in Africa. However, below we shall call attention (on genetic grounds, particularly) to two possible East-West corridors of Sunda influence in sub-Saharan Africa: one from Mozambique to Angola, the other more to the north between Tanzania / Kenya and the Western Grassfields of Cameroon, and the Aruwimi River is rather close to the latter corridor,



### 0.5. The chilimba xylophone



Source and legend: as Fig. 0.3.

Fig. 0.9. Global distribution and proposed historical reconstruction of the chilimba xylophone



at nightfall at the Kazo *matapa* wet gardens where king Mwene Kahare Kabambi had temporarily retired for agricultural work

Fig. 0.10. The Nkoya court musician John Kawayile ceremonially plays the royal xylophone (1977)



Source: van Binsbergen 2014c and references cited there

Fig 0.11. Holbein Jr's depiction of an early xylophone in the early 16<sup>th</sup> c. CE

It is difficult to interpret the distribution pattern of Fig. 0.9 in historical terms. However, when so many Chinese things seem to have come from West Asia (a point heatedly argued – and contested – for agricultural implements, writing, astronomy, astrology, the *I Ching* system, even the Chinese language),<sup>6</sup> why not the xylophone? Perhaps it was a West Asian invention and transmitted both to China and to South Central Africa by the same Pelasgian<sup>7</sup> mechan-ism. But such a sequence would be

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<sup>6</sup> The problem is far too big and controversial to be discussed in passing here. I shall have to return to it below. Cf. van Binsbergen 2012a; Leser 1928; by contrast, Needham with Wang Ling, especially vol. I, 1956, stresses the impressive flow of Chinese inventions from the east to the west across Eurasia. Meanwhile, the most adequate answer to the question 'why not the xylophone?' would be: because to the extent to which present-day North Atlantic culture traces its roots to West Asia (via Ancient Greece), affirmation of West Asian impact on China is potentially Eurocentric and hegemonic. In other words, it is an ideological, not an empirical-historical answer.

<sup>7</sup> According to my Pelasgian Hypothesis (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011; van Binsbergen 2014d; in

entirely conjectural – West Asian archaeo-logy has yielded several musical instruments, *e.g.* the famous Lyre of Ur, but so far no proto-xylophone, apparently. My reconstruction takes into account (beyond Sachs's data) the Early Bronze Age Chinese attestation, which was still unknown to Sachs. By and large we are brought to surmise that the African xylophone follows a South East Asian (but perhaps a West Asian) prototype. The one Central European attestation reflects the Early Modern representation of a xylophone by Hans Holbein in his famous set of Death Dance woodcuts. Because in the early 16<sup>th</sup> c. CE it was mainly the Portuguese who had explored the West African coast, we may safely assume that Holbein based his drawing on a West African import – then being in the process of becoming localised into a Central-European cultural environment.

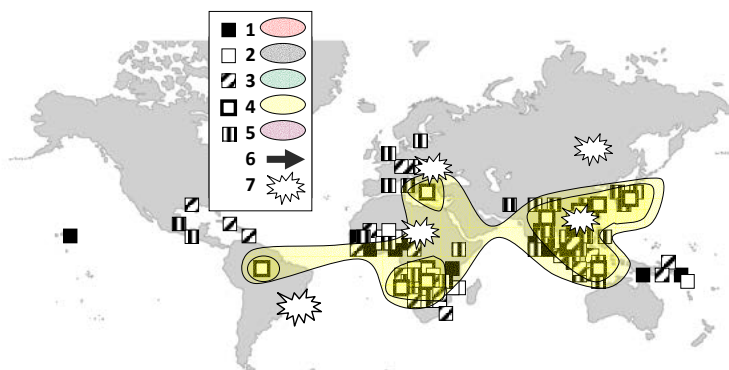
Thus, regardless of unknown possible antecedents of the xylophone in West Asia, also for this instrument we may conclude to a decisive Sunda effect in its African distribution. Such is also suggested by the fact that, at a distance of c. 5000 kms, the balangi xylophones of Sierra Leone (Sachs 1913: 28) are practically indistinguishable from the Nkoya ones – as if both are under the influence of an external prototype. Already in the early 20<sup>th</sup> c. the Africa-Indonesian / Oceanian connection of the xylophone was a moot point (Sachs 1913: 254): it was denied by Ankermann (n.d.) but von Hornbostel (*e.g.* 1933; *cf.* the much discussed von Hornbostel-Sachs classification), like Jones (1964) much later, found that in both continents the tuning was almost identical, and that settled the case.

## o.6. *The grater*

We now turn to the grater. I have loosely indicated several possible geographic origins, for I believe that the distributional pattern suggests the grater to be a very old instrument, which has survived and surfaced in various regions due to a common Palaeolithic origin. Among the Nkoya I have only seen it being used in funerary settings, which also suggests a time-honoured ancestral context.

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prep. (e)) a major cultural package, to be designated Pelasgian – but not to be identified with the speakers of the so-called Pelasgian, Indo-European language as identified by van Windekens (1951, 1960) and Hester 1965 – emerged in West Asia during the Neolithic, spread to the Mediterranean in the Bronze Age and underwent further transformations there, then spread both continentally and transcontinentally in all four directions from the Late Bronze Age onward. One of the conclusions of the present book will be the following. *The distinction between a Pelasgian and a Sunda explanation is not so clear-cut.* Why should West Asia have emerged as an epicentre of cultural renewal in the Late Neolithic, to such an extent that from here an unmistakable initial impetus was exerted on the formation of the Early Dynastic state and civilisation in Egypt (Rice 1990; Moorey 1987)? The invention of agriculture occurred throughout the Extended Fertile Crescent ranging from China to Saharan Africa, and therefore could hardly have been a distinctive feature of West Asia. The invention of metallurgy might have explained why yet West Asia made the difference. However that may be, the time frame coincides with the hypothetical moment of arrival, at the Persian Gulf, of Sunda elements in West Asia (after – still hypothetically – passing along, and possibly fertilising, the Indus Valley), and that in itself could have been an important factor in West Asia's cultural renewal. In that case Oppenheimer (1998) was more right than I was prepared to give him credit for in 2008 (with Isaak). The present book will give him that overdue credit.



Source and legend: as Fig. 0.3.

Fig.0.12. Global distribution and proposed historical reconstruction of the grater



Author's collection; purchased in Lusaka, Zambia, 1972. The instrument (greatest dimension 60 cm) consists of a shaft of palm wood, carefully hollowed out so as to form a sound box; the several dozen parallel grooves along most of the sound box's circumference are played by moving the stick along them with some pressure, which produces a monotonous, rasping sound. When not in use the stick is kept inside the sound box, access to which is provided by a hole at the end (here indicated by an arrow).

Fig. 0.13 A grater from Western Zambia

Although the global distribution of the grater does display the seemingly characteristic Sunda shape (major attestations both in Asia and in Africa), yet for this instrument I find no compelling reason to assume a Sunda effect upon its transcontinental spread.

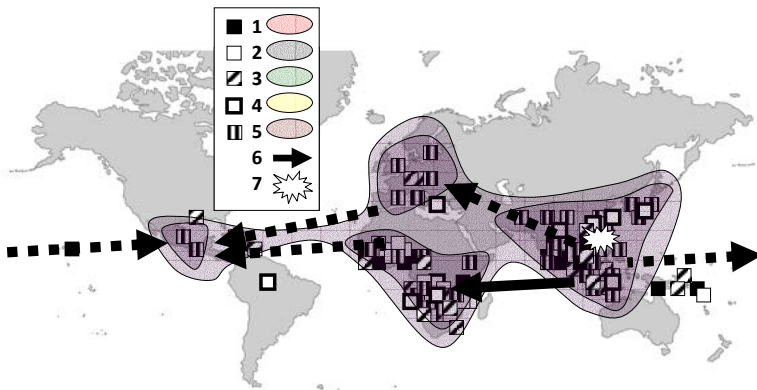
### 0.7. *The ngongi ‘gong / king’s bell’*

We shall finally discuss the *ngongi* or royal bell. Among the Nkoya, the royal bell (*ngongi*, plur. *zingongi* pron. *thingongi*) is among a king’s or head-man’s most cherished possessions, even more so than the other musical instruments. It features in several throne names and praise names (cf. van Binsbergen 1992). Such bells, ideally made locally out of wrought iron the raw material for which used to be mined in the riverbeds in this ferrite-rich part of the African Plateau, are widespread among the kingdoms of the savannahs and denser forests of South Central, Central and West Africa (Vansina 1966, where also the African distribution is mapped but without any suggestion as to transcontinental backgrounds; also cf. Fagan 1961; Westerdijk 1975; Cunnison 1968). Such royal bells are – as far as I know – not attested in Africa prior to Early Modern times with their (attestation-generating!) European expansion, which early on included Christian missions. Metal bells meanwhile have been a prominent part of the religious scenes of both Christianity (since the beginning of the Common Era) and South Asian Hinduism and Buddhism (since, at the latest, the 1<sup>st</sup> mill. BCE). In this light it is not a reproachable sign of underestimating African independent cultural initiative when I postulate a transcontinental origin for the African bells, possibly via the intermediary of Ethiopia, which underwent considerable Buddhist influence in the early Common Era (cf. Budge 1923). The oldest attested form of such bells is Chinese bronze bells from the 商朝 Shang Dynasty (2<sup>nd</sup> mill BCE); these Chinese bells’s possible connection with South Asian forms is outside my competence. Very small metal bells (κουδούνια, according to Villing 2002; the word is not in Liddell *et al.* 1897) were in common use in Ancient Greek religion (Villing 2002, who also provides an excellent bibliographic overview; also cf. Elsworthy 1909–1921, who touches on the notorious, never-silent bell / gong of Dodona, in the wake of Cook 1902 – in fact, metal bells<sup>8</sup> were part of Greek religion since at least the Archaic Period. Metal bells were also attested in Roman religion (Latin: *tinnabula*); their simple shape is reminiscent of the much later African forms. This Western usage, while agreed to reflect East and South Asian impact, predated the moment when Hinduism came in specific contact with the West

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<sup>8</sup> A widespread form, the slit metal sphere, specifically mentioned by Elsworthy, has a wide distribution not only in Europe (notably on farm teams) but also in the Indian Ocean region, where I observed it in Sri Lanka, and purchased specimens. A predominant function generally attributed to it was to chase evil spirits. The spherical bell does not seem to have direct metal representatives in sub-Saharan Africa, but I suppose that the spherical vegetal rattles depicted above are related, maybe in the sense that they have provided a time-honoured vegetal prototype for the metal ones overseas. Such an idea is plausible in the light of the fact that the sound boxes of *tanpurās* – a common Indian string instrument – are preferably made from African calabashes, which are considered superior to the South Asian variety (van Zuijen 2015).

through Greek philosophers travelling east, and especially through Alexander the Great's (late 4<sup>th</sup> c. CE) reaching the Indus and conversing there with Hindu sages. However, I very much doubt whether GraecoRoman bells were at the origin of African royal bells. Admittedly, the Pelasgian 'cross-model' (stipulating long-range diffusion in all four directions from the Mediterranean from the Late Bronze Age on) links the Mediterranean with sub-Saharan Africa (van Binsbergen 2010b; van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011). But Buddhist influence, in particular, reached Ethiopia around the beginning of the Common Era, when pious legends of the infancy of Jesus merged with the well-known *Jataka* legends of Buddha's infancy and earlier incarnations (Aryasūra & Kern 1943; Budge 1923). Ethiopia was also one of the starting points of the expansion and consolidation of the institution of kingship in sub-Saharan Africa (e.g. Wainwright 1949a, 1949b), and the Buddhist influence on sub-Saharan Africa has been gradually recognised in recent years (e.g. van Binsbergen 2017c, 2019a). Against this background I propose that the African bells mainly have a South or East Asian, Buddhist background. This is not to deny the extensive impact which Ancient Egypt has had on the institution of kingship in sub-Saharan Africa (the subject of an extensive but contentious literature; for an introduction see van Binsbergen 2011f and references cited there, as well as my book in prep. (m)); however, from Ancient Egypt no musical instruments are known that are even remotely similar to the royal bells of sub-Saharan Africa – the *sistrum* (a hand-held percussion instrument with movable metal strips as sound producers) is the closest that comes to mind.



Source and legend: as Fig. 0.3.

Fig. 0.14. Global distribution and proposed historical reconstruction of the *ngongi* gong / chief's bell

Another, important reason why king's bells among the Nkoya should preferably be given an Asian background is linguistic. The Nkoya word for 'gong' is certainly not Nigercongo > Bantu > Nkoya in etymology. In Sinotibetan we find (Starostin &

Starostin 1998–2008, ‘Chinese characters’ and ‘Austic etymology’):

<p><b>Proto-Sinotibetan:</b> *jonH (~-ua-, -r, -t), ‘drum, gong’  <b>Burmese:</b> <i>janh</i> to drum.  <b>Kachin:</b> <i>jun<sup>2</sup>-mar<sup>2</sup></i> a gong.</p>
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Source: Starostin & Starostin 1998–2008, ‘Sinotibetan etymology’

Table o.1. Sinotibetan etymology of semantics ‘gong’

but no higher level etymology (Sinotibetan < Sinocaucasian < \*Borean<sup>9</sup>) is presented, and I suspect that the Sinotibetan protoform is best considered a loan from nearby Austroasiatic. For the word *gong* does occur as a protoform in the Katuic and Bahnaric language clusters of Vietnam and immediately adjacent areas:

<p><b>Proto-Austroasiatic:</b> *gɔŋ, ‘gong’  <b>Thai:</b> ghʰoːŋ.C gong  <b>Proto-Katuic:</b> East Katuic *gɔŋ  <b>Proto-Bahnaric:</b> *gɔŋ  <b>Khmer:</b> gɔŋ  <b>Proto-Monic:</b> M kaŋ IV?</p>
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Source: (c) Starostin & Starostin 1998–2008, ‘Sinotibetan etymology’

Table o.2. Austroasiatic (< Austric) etymology of semantics ‘gong’

*This corroborates the impression I had already formed on the basis of the formal correspondences between Vietnamese ancient Dong Son drums and those of the Nkoya: important elements of the Nkoya culture of kingship derive, Sunda fashion, from continental South East Asia, especially Vietnam.* This is also in line with the fact that, in the fields of socio-political organisation and mythology, considerable parallels may be noted between the Nkoya and Austroasiatic speaking parts of South and South East Asia (Leach 1954; van Binsbergen, 2012a, and in prep. (c)).

## o.8. Conclusion: The Sunda Hypothesis as music to our ears



Fig.o.15. Thumb pianos among the Ila (Smith & Dale 1920, II).

<sup>9</sup> \*Borean is the name given by some pioneers of long-range linguistics, Fleming (1991, 2002) and Starostin (Starostin & Starostin 1998–2008), to the highest level of consensual historical-linguistic reconstruction currently available. \*Borean forms a hypothetical language complex supposed to have been spoken in Central to East Asia by the Upper Palaeolithic (c. 25 ka BP). Systematically based on a large number of similarities found in the reconstructed proto-lexica of the world’s major macrophyla (largest units of linguistic classification), over a thousand lexical protoforms have been reconstructed for \*Borean, as a basis for further analysis.

Succinctly, and with the use of only a restricted data set, I have tried to explore the transcontinental continuities of five of the principal musical instruments to be found among the Nkoya people of Western Zambia in the course of the second half of the 20th c. CE. For the grater we could not find a Sunda connection – this seems to be a very ancient instrument, whose Upper Palaeolithic antecedents predate any Sunda expansion. The thumb piano would appear to be an authentically African invention without major Sunda influence. For the hourglass drum, the xylophone, and the gong or bell, however, Sunda effects provide the best explanation for their latterday global distribution.

This very encouraging result of even a cursory exploration of Sunda effects, makes us confident that the long and convoluted trajectory we have ahead of us in this book may well prove to be worth our while.



The bells are played by the king himself, in honour of the arrival of his brother's adopted son, the present author (Njonjolo Royal Establishment, Kaoma, 2011). The eland tail in the king's hands is the royal fly whisk. The blue object is a baseball cap which the king was wearing but has taken off out of respect of the ancestors who are being addressed by playing the bells.

Fig. o.16. The royal bells of the Nkoya king Mwene Kahare





Fig. 0.17. Xylophone player among the Ila (Smith & Dale 1920, II).



# Chapter 1. Introduction

## 1.1. General introduction

The present monograph is devoted to the Sunda Hypothesis, launched by the leading British geneticist / paediatrician Stephen Oppenheimer (1998), and meanwhile expanded and more specifically applied to Africa by the British art historian and retired civil servant Robert Dick-Read (2005), as well as the German Africanist Kurt Tauchmann (2010).

Oppenheimer made two claims:

- (1) there was decisive Indonesian pre-historic cultural influence upon West Asia, Africa and Europe (the *General Sunda Hypothesis*);
- (2) this influence is specifically manifest in the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East and the Bible (the *Special Sunda Hypothesis*).

Largely concurring with Oppenheimer's claim (1) (but against the background of a different theoretical position, and critical of Oppenheimer's archaeology and Frazerianism), the present argument extensively states the positive case in favour of the *General Sunda Hypothesis*, also on the basis of additional African and European material (from comparative mythology, comparative ethnography, ancient history and comparative linguistics) not yet adduced by Oppenheimer. However, my argument is rather critical of the specific application of the Sunda Hypothesis in the field of comparative mythology (Oppenheimer's claim 2). In Part I of this book we shall see that many of the mythical themes for which Oppenheimer claims a unique Sunda origin, are systematically argued to have a much older history elsewhere in the Old World; if this is true, the recourse to the Special Sunda Hypothesis obvi-

ously is scarcely illuminating. Typically, these themes underwent major transformations and innovations, and subsequently spread to Oceania and the western half of the Old World, in the Sunda context, yet multivariate analysis (upon a contents analysis of a representative corpus of Flood myths from all over the world, graciously made available by Marc Isaak)<sup>10</sup> brings out that – *pace* Oppenheimer – the Nuaḥite (Nuaḥ-related) type of Flood myth, centring on ‘The Flood Hero in his ark as an ally of the Supreme God’ (which we take to be exemplary for the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East and of the Bible) originated in that form in West Asia and from there spread worldwide, also to Sundaland. Meanwhile, multivariate analysis demonstrates that the Nuaḥite theme is in itself composite, and some of its components may well be Sunda-derived after all. Far from being the unique, or principal, source of Western, subsequently global, civilisation, as Oppenheimer claims, *Sunda turns out to be a relatively recent recycling context (ca. 7 ka BP,*<sup>11</sup> on a total time scale of 200 ka for Anatomically Modern Humans); even so, in recent millennia the same Sunda complex has been the major source of *non-demic cultural diffusion*<sup>12</sup> all over Oceania; South, East and Southwest Asia; Africa; and parts of Europe. Whilst thus assessing and to a considerable extent vindicating Oppenheimer’s seminal thesis, the argument also offers a succinct presentation of the present author’s ‘Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology, starting from the African continent’ which informs much of the statistical analysis of the Flood-myth data (van Binsbergen 2006a, 2006b, in prep. (k)).

In the process we shall bring to life, and furnish with a time depth of millennia even tens of millennia, the mythemes on which much of our transcontinental analysis is based. This was this book’s original argument, initially written in 2007 as the present Part I. Part II, written in 2020, is much more positive towards Oppenheimer’s leading ideas, and will set the record straight.

The present argument has a rather peculiar history indeed. It was largely conceived in the spring of 2007, and largely written in the Summer and Fall of that year. It is

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. Isaak 2005. My agreement with Mr Isaak has been that he would be listed as a contributing junior author in the first article (van Binsbergen with Isaak 2008) to be published on my quantitative contents analysis of his data., after which I would be free to publish the other results of that analysis, including the present monograph, under my own authorship. This is a fair arrangement, also because apart from the referenced excerpts from Flood myths worldwide Mr Isaak did make no other contributions to my analysis, and does not necessarily identify with my methods, theories, results, and their implications.

<sup>11</sup> BP: Before Present; ka = kiloannum, kiloyear, *i.e.* 1,000 years.

<sup>12</sup> In ways to be further discussed below, *demic diffusion* takes place when cultural items are being spread exclusively as a result of the geographic movements of the population group (*deme*) owning these cultural items; *e.g.* in the early Middle Ages (9th c. CE) Germanic-speaking navigators populated hitherto unpopulated Iceland, and bring their Scandinavian language and culture there. However, most cultural diffusion takes place through a process of intercultural socio-cultural communication, and involves no or very little actual population displacement. Thus, only a few centuries earlier, a handful of missionaries from the British Isles (including my own patron saint St Willibrord) brought Christianity to the Lowlands including Frisia and the Frisian Islands, without leaving any detectable traces upon the population genetics of those regions, in other words, as a plain form of cultural diffusion.

only published now, 13 years later, for a number of reasons, which I must briefly indicate here – not to settle old scores, but to explain to the puzzled reader why a publishable book manuscript by an internationally acclaimed researcher should remain on the shelf for over a decade. I am afraid that to answer this question, some details of my somewhat unusual and erratic academic career are indispensable, and I apologise for any inappropriate indiscretions the following account may be felt to contain.

At Amsterdam University and Amsterdam Free University I was primarily trained as a field-working anthropologist (Cand. 1967, Drs 1971, Dr 1979), *i.e.* as an ethnographer relying on participant observation within the very narrow horizons of space and time as can be worked through fieldwork. Yet the scope of my linguistic training throughout the years of my full-time undergraduate and graduate study; the critical cosmopolitan inspiration towards history and politics as instilled by one of my professors, the Asianist Wim Wertheim (Wertheim 1956, 1964, 1970, 1975, 1977; Anonymous 1971); my specialisation in the anthropology of religion; and the extensive opportunities for oral-history research at my first field-work site, in the highlands of North-western Tunisia (1968, 1970), whose documentary history goes back several millennia (and whose archaeology goes back several more millennia), brought me to become more of a comparativist, of an historian and of a comparative mythologist, than I would ever have become by sheer curricular academic training. In regard of Tunisia, my time scope remained limited to two centuries and my geographic scope to a few valleys and mountain ranges of a total area barely exceeding 10 km<sup>2</sup>, but even then I already touched on state-of-the-art myth analysis (van Binsbergen 1971, 1980, 1985a). After completing my (then absolutely mandatory) seven years of course work, I joined the University of Zambia as an Assistant Lecturer, soon Lecturer, in sociology, in 1971. In my next research, on religious change in Zambia largely focussing on the Nkoya people of that country's Western Province (former Barotseland), I extended my temporal scope to over 500 years (way into precolonial times barely accessible by documentary research) and my geographic scope to the entire South Central Africa (van Binsbergen 1981a, 1992). After returning from Zambia and acting in the Chair of African Sociology at Leiden (1975-1976), I was appointed at the African Studies Centre, Leiden (ASC, since 2015 ASCL), where within a few years, and largely on the strength of international publications and my Manchester Simon professorship (1979-1980), I became one of the two research directors, notably the founding Head of the Department of Political and Historical Studies (1980-1990). Henceforth my research would be largely channeled and funded within the ASC context. After pursuing a sideline into religion and ethnopscychiatry in Guinea Bissau (with fieldwork in 1981, 1982 and 1983), my next major project was to focus on a Botswana boom town (Francistown) as the meeting ground between regional tradition and globalisation. When here I came to concentrate on a regional variety of spirit mediums / diviners / healers (*basangoma*), the fact was driven home to me (van Binsbergen 1991, 2003a: chs 5-8, 2005b, 2012a, 2017a) that their cult – with ramifications all over Southern and South Central Africa – had extensive, traceable roots in South-West, South and East Asia, and resonated with

divination practices in West Africa and in the European Renaissance; the similar transcontinental connotations attached to the *basangoma*'s cultic wearing of leopard skins (van Binsbergen, 2003b, 2004a, in prep. (j)), which hitherto I had mainly encountered as a royal privilege among the Zambia Nkoya (by analogy with other African kingdoms).

While struggling to make sense of this – for an anthropologist – unusual broadening of my research horizons of space and time, I had the great good fortune of being co-opted (1994-1995) to an intensive and highly specialised group of international researchers studying Ancient Mesopotamian religion and magic at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study (NIAS), then at Wassenaar. Here the interdisciplinary inspiration (in such fields as Assyriology, Bible Studies, Egyptology, Iranology, linguistics, comparative mythology, and archaeology) and the incomparable library facilities extended to me during that year, were so overwhelming that the NIAS period was to constitute a watershed in my research career.

In addition to my persisting work at the ASC (the only constant throughout my career), and temporary professorships in anthropology at Manchester (UK), Berlin (Germany) and Durban (South Africa), I was elected President of the Netherlands Association for African Studies (1990-1993), and was appointed professor of the anthropology of ethnicity at the Amsterdam Free University (1990). But already my monodisciplinary interest in anthropology was waning, and the encounter with the *basangoma* (I was initiated into their cult and became a practising *sangoma* in my own right, 1990) had so unsettled the epistemological and hegemonic self-evidences of my North Atlantic scientific habitus that I eagerly welcomed the opportunity of trading my Amsterdam chair in anthropology for one in the Foundations of Intercultural Philosophy at the Philosophical Faculty of the Erasmus University Rotterdam (1998-2006). Here my research and writing, especially in the first few years, came to be preoccupied with relentless reflection on the possibilities and impossibilities of interculturality, on the hegemonic implications and counter-hegemonic strategies of Africanist research, on the fundamental unity of humankind, and on the methods to retrieve modes of thought characteristic of periods and regions far removed from the present-day globalising North Atlantic context. For a number of reasons (considerations of social-science theory and method; philosophical epistemology; and increasing awareness of hegemony within the global politics of knowledge)<sup>13</sup> I became vocally uneasy about the research routines then standard at the ASC. Therefore, with a philosophically-inspired, personal new research agenda, and with middle age approaching – I celebrated my fiftieth birthday in 1997) I felt the need to drastically limit my administrative and my teaching responsibilities, and to concentrate on my academic writing. In 2002, after more than twenty years, I stepped down as one of the administrators of the ASC, which also meant that I largely gave up the freedom to determine my own research and publishing agenda,

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<sup>13</sup> It was in these years that I joined (van Binsbergen 1996, 1997 / 2011) the *Black Athena* debate as initiated by the late lamented British-born Sinologist cum political scientist Martin Gardiner Bernal (1937-2013), then teaching at Cornell University, Ithaca NY, USA (cf. Bernal 1987-2006, 1980, 1997, 2001).

as well as my undisputed access (although invariably governed by strict and extensive application and vetting procedures, of course) to the ASC's research and travelling funds; instead, my (hitherto highly respected, and relatively highly salaried) position became – distastefully, improperly – a bone of contention in the projects, career struggles, stratagems and spoils of my dear ASC colleagues, many of whom had owed their permanent position to my personal efforts on their behalf.

I should have left the ASC at that point, taking my skills, international reputation, experience, contacts, publications, and PhD students elsewhere; instead, I decided to sit out the institutional storms and to make the best of my enduring good health, computer skills, and apparently limitless opportunities for academic writing. This strategy seemed all the more attractive, since in 2003 I made the acquaintance with German-born Michael Witzel, a former Leiden professor who, as a leading Sanskritist (main exponent of a school denying the local Indian origin of the Vedic scriptures that are so constitutive of Hindu identity) at Harvard University, Cambridge MA, USA, was initiating (Witzel 2001, 2012) the revival of comparative mythology – from a jaded, antiquarian ivory tower of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century CE, to an exciting state-of-the-art undertaking where all the stunning discoveries of present-day archaeology, genetics, philology and comparative ethnography could cross-fertilise each other so as to produce a brand-new and detailed synthesis of humankind's remotest past, and its modes of thought, symbolism, worldview and narration. Largely on the basis of Harvard funding, I became an annual participant in Witzel's conferences at Harvard, Europe, and in South and East Asia, and this further enhanced my awareness of Asian patterns and themes in the African material on which I had specialised. In 2006, at Beijing, People Republic of China, I was one of the founding members of the International Association for Comparative Mythology (IACM), and I was on its Board of Directors ever since, stepping down only in 2020. In 2007, the IACM's Annual Meeting was at Edinburgh, Scotland, UK, and (if I may say so) the *pièce de résistance* was a long and heated session in which I presented an outline of Part I of the present monograph, with ample opportunity for the British geneticist Stephen Oppenheimer to defend his views on Sunda impact upon pre- and protohistorical Western Eurasia. Soon after that conference, I expanded my presentation into a book-size draft towards the present book.

However, apart from my then recent and obvious successes<sup>14</sup> at the front of intellectual

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<sup>14</sup> *E.g.* the publication of major books on intercultural philosophy and on objects in globalisation, van Binsbergen 2003a; van Binsbergen & Geschiere 2005; and of a path-breaking and highly acclaimed assessment of the work of a major African intellectual Valentin Mudimbe, van Binsbergen 2005c; my position as Editor-in-Chief of the leading journal *Quest: An African Journal of Philosophy / Revue Africaine de Philosophie*; my supervision of a series of interesting PhDs, including several from Africa and Asia; the honours accorded to me as visiting professor and / or external examiner by prestigious international invitations *e.g.* from the universities of Harvard, Yaounde, Grahamstown, Cape Town, and Kyoto; the prestigious role of key note speaker at the 2005 Leiden international conference on divination (*cf.* Peek & van Beek 2013) and at the Brussels international conference on wisdom expressions (2007), organised by the Royal Academy of Overseas Sciences, and published as a small book and an article; my serving as one of the directors of the International Association for Comparative Mythology, in which capacity I was

production, both in Leiden and in Rotterdam my position was being drastically undermined.

Contrary to the gentlemen's agreement that had attended my professorial transition from Amsterdam to Rotterdam, my appointment in the Chair of Foundations of Intercultural Philosophy (*for which I had given up a permanent position at Amsterdam Free University*) was suddenly no longer being extended all the way until my retirement (due in 2012), but (as was admittedly more usual)<sup>15</sup> was terminated after two terms of four years each. In the Netherlands, universities operate on the, internationally somewhat surprising even alarming, principle that a university receives a very substantial subsidy (just under EUR100,000) for every PhD degree successfully conferred. Although I continued to produce PhDs for the Rotterdam philosophy faculty until as late as 2011 (my PhD conferment rights were by law extended by five years after termination of the appointment), and for other universities until 2016, I was made to leave the EUR without the slightest ceremony, let alone the usual valedictory event – which had made my farewell from the Free University Amsterdam in 1998 so memorable.<sup>16</sup>

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(with my colleague Eric Venbrux) convening that body's Second Annual Conference for 2008, -- an event for which we together had secured a very substantial subsidy with the Netherlands Research Foundation, etc. Meanwhile I served, for many years, as an external member on the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Louvain, Belgium; and on the Board for Humanities Research of the main Belgian academic funding agency, the Belgian Research Foundation (FWO) in Brussels. Having served as a senior academic administrator for decades (in which capacity the ASC's survival was publicly admitted to be in considerable part due to me, both in the early 1980s and in the mid-1990s – in ways to be expounded shortly), I have failed to understand (unless by reference to lack of experience, aggravated by blind ambition, delusions of total control, infantile revolt, hurt pride, revenge, and paradigmatic myopia, on the part of my colleagues) how such a record of service could lead to the vicious *Berufsverbote* I was to be subject to in 2007–2010. But I have flattered myself that my institutional fate put me in excellent company: Socrates, Boethius, Bertrand Russell, who also by the end of their career found themselves in peril.

<sup>15</sup> Informally, this breach of trust was to be justified, by the EUR authorities, by reference to the then notorious case of the political scientist and political adventurer Pim Fortuyn, who had exploited his part-time EUR chair to the full for public relation purposes, only to be assassinated in 2002 – which plunged the Netherlands in a profound political crisis from which it has barely recovered in the meantime. Another reason for disenchantment between the EUR leadership and myself was the following: while passionately discharging my graduate teaching in intercultural philosophy, combined with the Editorship of *Quest: An African Journal of Philosophy / Revue Africaine de Philosophie*, I refused to have my philosophical research hijacked by my EUR colleagues' fascination with ICT (not exactly at the centre of the present-day African experience, then not and not even today) and the uncritical self-evidence by which they put the present-day North Atlantic urban, literate and intellectual experience at the centre of philosophical relevance – so that it is only by hegemonic sleight of hand that they could claim to engage in intercultural philosophy. My philosophical testament, *Vicarious Reflections* (van Binsbergen 2015a), especially its first chapter, gives an account of what I there call 'my philosophical adventure' in Rotterdam, and draws up the balance. Of course, my EUR colleagues also had a point: by 2006, I made no secret of having realised that I had nearly exhausted the initial inspiration the EUR philosophical faculty was to give to my ongoing concerns of thought and research; and as my publications and conference participations at the time indicate, I longed for a return to empirical research, and to African realities.

<sup>16</sup> In this connection I must express my posthumous thanks to two sadly missed friends with whom I have worked closely together ever since the 1970s (then in the context of the Amsterdam Working Group on Marxist Anthropology) till their untimely death in recent years: the late lamented Reinie Raatgever and Jos van der Klei, who in the 1990s were my colleagues in the Department of Anthropology, Free University, Amsterdam, and who splendidly organised my valedictory conference there when I departed



In Leiden, meanwhile, my first PhD student the late lamented Gerti Hesselings (defense 1982) had acceded to the position of director of the ASC (1996-2002; she sadly died in 2009). I conspicuously stood by her side as member of the ASC Management Team, but with the accession of her successor I was to land in an isolated and besieged situation. My transcontinental and intercultural-philosophical research was misunderstood as a form of disciplinary and institutional betrayal (even though it was conducted with the explicit permission of the ASC director, who even served on the Board governing my Rotterdam chair), and increasingly frowned upon; an application with the Netherlands Research Foundation for African fieldwork along Sunda lines had been turned down (Spring 2007); and my habitual, vocal criticism of my junior colleagues' methodological and field-work practices less and less appreciated. Frantically seeking for an integrative paradigm that would allow me to reintegrate my thirty years of African ethnography into a coherent transcontinental long-range model towards which all my recent research was prodding me, I focussed on comparative mythology and for several months was totally absorbed in a quantitative, statistical analysis of Flood myths worldwide (selectively treated in the present book, Chapter 10; also cf. van Binsbergen with Isaak 2008; van Binsbergen, in prep. (k)). Due to the availability of the relevant software on personal computer I could constantly work on this without being obliged to come to the office. Meanwhile the ASC research group to which I had continued to belong but which I no longer headed, was due for a new five-years research programme; and although I loyally and intensively contributed to this collective exercise (and won official, written praise for this in my annual assessment), yet only one day after the new programme had been launched by the ASC leadership, things came to a head. I was expelled from the research group, debarred from all research and travelling funds, and prohibited to have any further collaboration whatsoever with any one of my ASC colleagues.

It was in this depressing situation that I wrote and presented my Edinburgh paper, and that this book was drafted. My absolute ostracism at the ASC persisted for a full three years till mid-2010, when Ton Dietz became the new director – which made it possible, for the remaining one and a half years of my formal pre-retirement career, to revive the institutional memory of the contributions I had made, as a researcher, teacher and administrator, to the institution and to African Studies as a whole ever since I had joined the ASC in 1977.<sup>17</sup> My retirement was celebrated with a splendid

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to the chair of Foundations of Intercultural Philosophy in Rotterdam. Unfortunately, the proceedings of that conference never saw the light of day.

<sup>17</sup> In 1981 I published a study of Africanist anthropology in the Netherlands from its very inception (van Binsbergen 1981b, 1982), on which the following *highly subjective* account is partly based. When I became acquainted with the African Studies Centre (ASC) in Leiden in the 1960s, it was a prestigious national-level research institution devoted to full-time social-science and legal research on Africa, without a teaching function, equitably paid by the Netherlands' Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, and Development Co-operation, jointly governed by a board on which most Dutch universities were represented, and headed by one of the internationally most significant Dutch Africanists, Hans Holleman; as a legal anthropologist and a former colonial civil servant in former Southern Rhodesia Holleman had intimately associated with Max Gluckman's Manchester School of social anthropology – one of the

world's innovative centres of that discipline at the time (van Binsbergen 2007h). It was at the ASC that my principal teacher of fieldwork, the late lamented Douwe Jongmans, had found the opportunity to write one of the few standard works on Libya (1964). Soon Holleman – who had several professorships to look after – was to step down as director of the ASC. Under the management of the former New-Guinea civil servant Gerrit W. Grootenhuis as General Secretary, nearly a decade passed during which the ASC had no academic director, and individual research projects (such as the Casamance Project, Senegal, and the Rungwe Project, Tanzania) mushroomed, largely without coming to fruition in the form of internationally significant publications – with a few exceptions, such as the splendid work on Kenyan and Chadian liberation movements by the late lamented Robert Buijtenhuijs; and Bonno Thoden van Velzen's work on Tanzania). In the mid-1970s the South African social anthropologist Adam Kuper had been appointed in John Beattie's Leiden Africanist chair which had also been that of Holleman, and in which I – freshly back from Zambia – was to act (1975-1977) until Kuper's accession. A few years after his accession, Kuper committed (1980) the unthinkable *gaffe* of attacking (not without justification, as seen from the planet Mars) the state of chaos at the ASC precisely at that institution's ministerial board meeting. The survival of the ASC was in jeopardy, and overnight two academic directors of some international stature were appointed, Jan Hoorweg and myself, so as to restore discipline, enforce quality, and to draw up and direct a comprehensive research programme for the next decade. In this we were undoubtedly successful (e.g. van Binsbergen 1981c, 1988b; also Hoorweg managed to build up a flourishing department with significant research on food and nutrition in Africa), and the threat of annihilation was soon removed. But at considerable personal and health costs for the two scientific directors: their assignment was inherently impossible, for Grootenhuis (in himself totally unable to provide the much-needed scientific direction) was to remain centrally in office till his retirement in 1990, and he was simply not prepared to invest sufficient formal institutional power in the two scientific directorships so as to enable them to bring their reluctant colleagues (used as these were to many years of total unaccountability and unlimited resources of time and money) to conformity with the strict and consistent overall research plan. Only in 1990 were the scientific directorships strengthened with an ASC-endowed personal chair. The enemy images and inappropriately *personal* conflicts generated in this period were to mar my life at the ASC throughout the subsequent decades; and made sure that I was prevented at all costs to ever publicly and conspicuously speak or act on behalf of the ASC. At the end of the decade, having written and directed two five-year comprehensive research plans for my Department of Political and Historical Studies, I was allowed – exhausted and disgusted – to spend a beneficial year's fieldwork in Botswana, after which the Department's directorship went into the hands of Buijtenhuijs, who simply prolonged my research plans. Grootenhuis was succeeded – van Binsbergen and Hoorweg apparently being intelligible or rather, as in my case, not interested – by the British historian Stephen Ellis, a Christian political neo-hegemonic idealist without any administrative experience; and like Kuper, a total stranger to Dutch administrative and academic culture. His principal interest was political journalism, and he soon had endeared himself with the then Dutch minister of Development Co-operation, Jan Tromp of similar religio-political and para-intellectual orientation. After decades in which Grootenhuis (whatever his academic limitations), relying on a colonial old-boys network, had dextrously managed to play off interuniversity against ministerial pressures and claims, thus ensuring the continued funding and independence of the ASC regardless of academic performance, Ellis, lacking such national-level resources and subtleties, had no option but to surrender the ASC lock, stock and barrel to Tromp's ministry – in the dual sense of the word. A new crisis developed when, by 1994, Ellis could no longer be tolerated as failing director and was removed from office, but the new directorial candidate, Gerti Hesselning, selected by the Board after a careful procedure, was declared unacceptable to Tromp (by then posing as the ASC's sole overlord!) because there was no integrated research programme nor an organisational structure to implement it. I observed these developments from the sideline, had returned from Botswana – as explained elsewhere in this book – with a radically changed view of Africanist research and of Africa, had become President of the Netherlands Association for African Studies, had acceded to the Amsterdam Free University chair on ethnic studies, had initiated with Peter Geschiere the WOTRO / NWO massive national and international research programme on 'Globalization and the Construction of Communal Identities' (Geschiere *et al.* 1995) and – while the ASC tried to survive the crisis by jumping from one interim manager to the next – I was spending a year (1994-1995) at the Netherlands Institute for Ad-

and expensive international conference instigated by the new director and largely funded by the ASC – on the same themes as my 2007 Edinburgh paper and of the present book. However, although during collateral functions the new director Ton Dietz, and my colleagues Hoorweg and van Beek warmly spoke of my achievements – but without a word on my performance as an ASC administrator during two decades – , among the actual conference participants only one ASC colleague was found, and the editing of the proceedings had, reluctantly and under the burden of aggravating and protracted illness, to be done by myself during my retirement, since nobody else was prepared to undertake it. When the edited manuscript was finally submitted to the ASCL for publication, as repeatedly agreed, in one of their series (after all, it was an ASCL-commissioned product from beginning to end), Dietz's successor as director had it rejected, and ultimately it had to be published as a special issue of *Quest: An African Journal of Philosophy / Revue Africaine de Philosophie*.

Initially, therefore, I derived precious little satisfaction or encouragement from the

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vanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences at Wassenaar, the Netherlands. However, I could easily breach the impasse that had arisen, because I had accommodated part of the WOTRO programma at the ASC, and with minimal cosmetic changes I was able to reshape that section into the first of Tromp's required research groups, after which Hesselings's directorship could take effect. The years in which I had been her most active PhD supervisor, going over every word in her draft chapters month after month after month, had not been in vain, after all. Thus the ASC had been saved a second time; again at considerable cost for myself, for I had to be re-instated as one of the ASC's research directors, and take up a seat in the ASC's new Management Team under Hesselings's lead (cf. van Binsbergen 1998). Hesselings, intellectually unambitious, but herself a lawyer, and married to a professor of media law, Gerard Schuyt, who was a passionate professional administrator, saw it as her calling to overhaul and bring to perfection the legal structure of the ASC, its administrative organisation, constitution, byelaws etc; but she was unable to effectively reinforce the interuniversity structure that had been the institute's foundation over the decades. Of course, the societal position, prestige, and organisation of universities in the Netherlands had dramatically changed in recent decades – and largely for the worse. A powerful alternative had cast its shadow already: *absorption into Leiden University alone* – against which we as ASC management had battled throughout the 1980s. Kuper – disproportionately proud scion of a shallow, self-styled South African anthropological mini-dynasty that had earlier produced Leo Kuper and Hilda Kuper – had only contempt for Dutch African Studies, as was his birthright after all, and he knew from personal research how local-level government works (Richards & Kuper 1971); his 1980 aggressive action had been inspired not so much by ignorance nor transcultural naïvety, but by his realisation how limited his Leiden University resources on African Studies were, hence his desire to capture the nearest and greatest resource in that domain, the Leiden-based but interuniversity ASC. These were the stakes of a chess game that was to be played surreptitiously throughout the next quarter century, when finally under the directorship of Dietz (from Utrecht University, over the decades outsider to the ASC prior to his appointment there, a social geographer without theoretical or epistemological agenda and mainly a professional administrator, again) the annexation by Leiden University was completed. Significantly, the main players in my own conflicts with the ASC from 2007 on, also played leading roles in this administrative transition, and saw themselves rewarded, prematurely, with Leiden professorships at the ASCL. More than most Dutch universities, Leiden is a place of *homines novi*, of cuckoo's young from elsewhere to be hatched there and to be rapidly and effectively socialised to the killer style of highhanded administration and the extermination of rivals and opponents. I once (1975) had almost been such a *homo novus* there, from Amsterdam, but my socialisation to a Leiden-type of administrator had presumably failed – or so I flatter myself – , partly because I did not stay on long enough in the Leiden chair, partly because the ASC was interuniversity. And like the old king in the thicket of the *Golden Bough* (Frazer 1911-1915), I was supplanted, dispatched, accordingly.

warm reception my 2007 Edinburgh paper had had. When a year later it appeared in revised and greatly shortened form in Emily Lyle's journal *Cosmos*, my conflict with the ASC leadership was still raging at full throttle. It was enacted in semi-annual punitive private sessions with the director, where a variety of disciplinary procedures, undefined in the ASC's bylaws, were used to intimidate me – as the only remaining staff member defying the infantile tyranny we were subjected to. Ton Dietz's predecessor was an intellectually pedestrian social geographer with no credentials in the fields of history, statistics, comparative mythology, methodology, or intercultural epistemology; yet, the explicit and repeated threat of dismissal from my job hanging over my head (I had a wife and a handful of children to support, and was only a few years from my pension), with sadistic delusions of power he – evidently feeling that I needed a lesson as to who was boss now – forced me, as if I were his faltering undergraduate student, to go with him over every word of that article in order to ascertain whether it could pass my director's standards of science. A sense of loyalty and tactfulness prevented me from publicly complaining to the ASC Board; but today, with the power of hindsight, I do not see the point any more. Thanks to the excellent, tactful though invisible coaching by my lawyer Donald Pechler I managed to keep my temper down and swallow my pride, all those three years – but the events had poisoned this manuscript for me to such an extent that, for a decade or more, I never returned to it with an eye to integral book publication – rather I cannibalised it in order to use fragments towards some of my many other publications.<sup>18</sup>

As an adolescent my closest friend was the son of a lawyer *cum* minor poet; the latter's main claim to literary fame was a short book of Dutch poetry *Cantuale Ad Usum Fratrum Minorum* (Verdaasdonk 1946). Its best poem begins

*'Dit vers heeft mij mijn laatste kaars gekost'*

[ '(Lacking other sources of light [ due to the World War II German occupation – which my father's brother Chiel van Binsbergen confronted as a resistance hero and martyr ] ) I had to use my last candle in order to write this poem' ]

This line was often on my mind in regard of the present book manuscript. It cost me my last candle of institutional credit and institutional commitment, and I was punished for it by three years of solitary detention on bread and water. Little wonder that I infinitely delayed its publication, yet could not give it up. Also in another respect did

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<sup>18</sup> Another reason why I was reluctant to publish the draft of the present book soon after 2007 is the peculiar fact that, in private correspondence, Oppenheimer, the protagonist of my argument, threatened to take me to court because, in private correspondence, I had called his almost exclusive reliance, for comparative mythology in 1998, on Frazer's 1918 book 'unprofessional'. Had I used the qualification 'unprofessional' in print, and in regard of Oppenheimer's applied medical performance as a paediatrician, or pure scientific performance as a geneticist, he might have had a point. But when a writer with that kind of background tries his hand, for the first time in his career, at comparative mythology, and blindly sails by the compass of an early anthropologist whose name was already a household word in British families from all walks of life by the time Stephen Oppenheimer's parents were born (himself born in 1947, he is my junior by a few weeks) – then 'unprofessional' still seems an appropriate qualification. I realised that here a pathos and affect were at work that were unlikely to be restrained by the standard conventions of open academic debate and criticism. And in 2007, I had already encountered enough threats and intimidation for one year.

this book cost me my last candle: a few hours after I had entered the final corrections into the third round of proofs, I had to be rushed to hospital with pneumonia while also being suspected (wrongly, as it turned out) of having contracted corona.

What was finally lending new urgency and topicality to the present manuscript, is that, after editing the Leiden 2012 valedictory conference, and returning to the manuscript of my provisional report (van Binsbergen, in prep. (g)) on the Sunda-orientated Cameroonian fieldwork of 2016, I realise that that fieldwork implicitly was predicated upon the present 2007 argument, and that it would make my life as an author much easier if the latter argument were made available, at long last.

So here is, as Part I of this book, a still-born baby of my working conditions prevailing at the ASC around 2007. I have updated and greatly expanded the bibliography and greatly rewritten the argument in the light of my growing insight in transcontinental relationships and of my many publications since 2007, and I have added Part II, yet the text of Part I is still recognisable as initially conceived. Of course, over the decades my access to data has increased largely because of the growing digitalisation of the world's university libraries; my methods in handling comparative-mythological data and deriving provisional historical reconstructions from them, have improved; and both conceptually and methodologically I have come to be ever more demanding. Most importantly, my appreciation of Stephen Oppenheimer's Sunda Hypothesis is now much greater than it was in 2007, and the reasons of this appreciation have broadened to take in a far greater slice of comparative mythology, and a considerable additional input from historical linguistics, comparative ethnography, genetics, comparative religion, and history. As a result, the extended table of East-West mythological and ethnographic correspondences, which has been with me ever since 2006 and which I finally decided to work out in the context of finalising the present book, expanded to become almost half a book in its own right, and I have appended the result as Part II to the reworked 2007 book draft. More important even was that nearly a year of further full-time work on this book in 2020 finally opened my eyes to a number of serendipities of prime importance, in the light of which the 2007 draft was merely a Wittgensteinian ladder, to be discarded as soon as it had served. These new insights are duly discussed in the Concluding chapter, and they include

1. the notion (now developed in a brandnew Chapter 14) of a *multicentred, multidirectional global maritime network emerging since the Bronze Age* (which renders the very idea of Sunda in itself rather common-place, and the unidirectional and mono-original assumptions of the original Sunda Hypothesis even obsolete); and
2. the complementarity, even identity, instead of mutually exclusive nature, of the Pelasgian and Sunda model as explanations for much of global cultural history since the Neolithic.

Further delay in publication was caused by the predictable editorial problems of having to coordinate and integrate arguments that were originally over a decade apart in my personal intellectual adventure. Much as I fear that this editorial process has not yet been carried to its full fruition, the fact that with my declining health and increasing age my other book drafts are awaiting final publication, I have preferred, for this book, considerable imperfection over further delay.

A few words are in order at this point about the inveterate and irritating tendency to self-citation, which has taken possession of my scientific texts in the last decade. I do not think this is primarily the sign of a doting senile scholar caught in self-contemplation (although, admittedly,...). My sustained engagement with, and voluminous output in, intercultural philosophy, comparative myth and transcontinental continuities have created the unfortunate situation where, whenever I search the Internet on a topic that interests me, what is returned are often in the first place my own publications. I am a voracious and diligent reader<sup>19</sup> and tend to give full account of my bibliographic sources, so often my own recent work provides a handy first overview of a particular matter under discussion. Often (following the example of Martin Gardiner Bernal, likewise a much-criticised but visionary amateur) I am forced to hark back to very old and obsolete scholarly publications in order to find the empirical data I need, because the topic has failed to kindle any general interest in recent decades. Even so, self-referentiality is considered a defect, and reviewers have every right to chide me for it. As long as they read on so as to absorb and digest my argument and realise its far-reaching implications.

## 1.2 Acknowledgments

Notwithstanding our unpleasantnesses since 2007, I must express my indebtedness to the African Studies Centre, Leiden, for funding both my participation in the 2007 Edinburgh conference, and (from 1977 on) the extensive research on which the present argument is based;<sup>20</sup> to Emily Lyle in her capacity as convenor; to Stephen Oppenheimer not only for the seminal, general Sunda inspiration which triggered my present argument, but also for highly illuminating feed-back both at the conference and in private; to Mark Isaak, without whose painstaking inventory of Flood stories worldwide, and generous collaboration, I could never have undertaken the multivariate statistical analysis on which my argument is partly based; to

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<sup>19</sup> It lies in the nature of transdisciplinary research, like the present book, that in one's search for data from an unfamiliar field (after all, I am just a would-be poet and an Africanist anthropologist, sallying forth in domains of scholarship for which I am poorly prepared and where I have no authority) one initially stumbles on those sources that are most readily available, not on the sources that are the most professional and authoritative. Specialist readers will see that this description certainly does apply to my method in this monograph. I have often used accessible sources, even anonymous ones like in *Wikipedia*, and – whilst honestly and humbly acknowledging my debt to such low-grade sources – usually have allowed these to guide me to more authoritative ones. It was not always necessary, nor (given pressure of time) possible, to look beyond the low-grade sources; e.g. there are excellent recent, specialist studies of the Dead Sea Scrolls, but for a little item like the Essenes' morning prayer to the sun, an obsolete text like the amateur's Edmund Wilson's (a literary essayist, in the first place) sufficed. In the same way I have occasionally used the mythological work of the British poet Robert Graves, whom I admire greatly, even though as a comparative mythologist I am only too well aware of his limitations and blunders.

<sup>20</sup> My decisive first fieldwork among the Nkoya (1972-1974) was self-financed. The ASC financed numerous shorter trips since I joined that institution in 1977. At the ASC I should particularly single out for thanks: the Director (2010-2017) Ton Dietz, for – temporarily – making all the difference; the Conference Officer Marieke van Winden, whose endeavours greatly contributed to the success of the Leiden 2012 valedictory conference whose topic overlapped with that of the present book; the Funding Officer Gitty Petit, also for contributions to the 2012 conference; Wouter van Beek for collaboration on several projects in the field of conferences, publications, and PhD examinations.

Bambang Sugiharto, Department of Philosophy, Parahyangan Catholic University, Bandung, Indonesia, for sharing with me the issues of this book and related research, and for inviting me to present a general discussion of the Sunda Hypothesis (but without the comparative-mythological application) before that department in August 2007 – I have also greatly benefited from the audience's discussion in that connection; to my former PhD student Dr Stephanus Djunatan, a Bandung lecturer, who – decades after I applied myself to Indonesian studies under Wim Wertheim, Carola Vreede-de Stuers, and Hetty Nooy-Palm, among other fields (only to materialise as an Africanist from 1971 onwards) –, created a context (van Binsbergen 2007c, 2010c, 2011h) in which I could gather first-hand experience of Indonesian culture and thus bring – albeit to a minimal extent – the Sunda Hypothesis to life before my very eyes; to my sometime PhD students Pascal Touoyem and Pius Mosima, for cheerfully introducing me to the Sunda-reminiscent societies of Cameroon and ensuring my welcome there; to Michael Witzel, for offering, ever since 2003, a highly stimulating context in which the ideas underlying my current research could come to fruition and receive expert critical feedback; to Steve Farmer, for constantly and with his characteristic grace reminding me of the many pitfalls of long-range research into comparative mythology; to the Nkoya people of western central Zambia (especially their royal chiefs Mwene Kahare – who became my adoptive father – and Mwene Mutondo), who ever since 1972 have been the mainstay of my ethnographic, historical and intercultural-philosophical work, and who by adopting me into their midst have afforded me detailed and convincing perspectives on the practical reality of a Sunda-related community in the heart of Africa – even though it took me a quarter of a century including the NIAS experience before I could begin to see them in this light. Special thanks go to my adoptive elder brother, Mr Dennis Shiyowe, now Mwene Shumbanyama, Kazo Valley, Kaoma, Zambia, for being my guide in Nkoya society, culture and language ever since 1972 (my final book on the Nkoya, in prep (c) is dedicated to him); to my first wife Henny van Rijn and our daughter Nezmja, who bravely and loyally contributed to the fieldwork – Nezmja even forcing me to learn Nkoya because it had become her first language; and to the late lamented Mrs Mary Nalishuwa, who greatly supported my Nkoya research throughout nearly half a century, and deservedly the second person to whom this book is dedicated. I am moreover indebted to the people of Calequisse, Canchungo region, Guinea Bissau (1981, 1982, 1983), and to those of Francistown, Botswana (1988- ), who further introduced me to what now appear to have been vestiges of Sunda cultural and ritual influence in coastal West Africa and in the interior of Southern Africa, respectively; to Yuri Berezkin, for important suggestions and advice; to Fred Woudhuizen, my partner in Sea Peoples research, where many of the issues of the present argument came to the fore; to the Assyriological Study Group on Magic and Religion in the Ancient Near East (Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS), Wassenaar, 1994-1995), for expertly initiating me to many of the themes of the present argument; and to Patricia Saegerman, my sparring partner in daily discussions on this central topic of my research over the past few decades, and my companion on most of the exploratory trips in which, over the past decade, I have sought to gather first-hand information on Sunda contexts in South, South East and East Asia, and in Oceania. In connection with my Nkoya research, I should acknowledge the great and many-sided contributions made by my first wife, the late lamented Henny E. van Rijn (to whom this book is dedicated), and our daughter Nezmja, during the early years of that research endeavour. From the late 1990s my son Vincent has catered for my

ever expanding computer needs, till his own work commitments and changing interests no longer made this feasible. My son Dennis then began to look after my computer needs; he was moreover my cheerful and resourceful companion during the 2016 Cameroonian field-work inspired by the Sunda Hypothesis. My two youngest daughters, Sarah and Hannah, successfully pursuing an artistic / literary path in addition to academic degrees in philosophy or the social sciences, have formed a constant and comforting reminder of the limitations of my own identity as a researcher, and of the splendid alternatives open also to me.

The trans-disciplinary and world-wide orientation of the present book makes for a dazzling abundance of proper names, including the names of authors cited. The following indexes aim to bring order in that chaos, by exhaustively listing all proper names, by offering a simplified encyclopaedic description for many of them, and by indicating cross connections whenever relevant.

That Part I of this book could be drafted at all, in 2007, was largely due to my colleagues Leo de Haan, Mirjam de Bruijn and Dick Foeken, the core of the then ASC leadership, who (at the institution where I had played a leading and constructive role for decades, long before their own appointments there) so graciously created the conditions under which I could work on this topic without the slightest interference from other formal or informal institutional tasks – even if I had wanted otherwise. Regicide is a widespread African tradition, possibly – as we shall note in passing in the present monograph – Sunda-related, and I am flattered that even Africanists who never studied it in person and out in the field, who speak no African languages, and who have no African identity, yet found me – even though merely an adopted Nkoya prince – worthy of that honour. But this is mere vicarious cultural sentiment. What gives me proper reason for profound resentment within North Atlantic culture and academia is that an institution that pretends to be dedicated to high-level, international academic research on Africa, should seek (without tangible, explicit points of conflict or misconduct – so that oedipal aggression, and paradigmatic myopia remain as the only explanations) to destroy my name so radically, after I served that institution, and that field of studies, for forty years as a productive, original, loyal, and internationally (and especially in Africa) respected, member. *That was the most unkindest cut of all...*

Is this then what this massive, belated book is all about: *settling old scores*? I hardly think so. It is about redressing an injustice I have myself inflicted upon Stephen Oppenheimer, back in 2007, for dismissing too quickly and on too narrow grounds his surprisingly illuminating idea of Sunda impact on Western Eurasia. It is about the strengths and weaknesses of a perspective on the world that is truly globalised in the sense that it seeks to be not only world-wide, but also free from the suffocating limitations of hegemonic Eurocentrism and racialism. It is about the aesthetic and existential thrills of developing and applying a coherent perspective that encompasses vast reaches in space and time, and that takes into account humankind's articulation of the challenges and rewards of existence in recognisable stories that never cease to capture and move us. It is about the glories and fulfillments of (at least my personal ideal of) sustained, painstaking, well-informed, responsible yet imaginative scholarship in our digital age, where disciplinary boundaries dissolve under the onslaught of the digitalisation of libraries, but the dangers of amateurish blun-



ders increase exponentially – as no expert reader of this book can fail to notice. It is about the surprisingly rich and convincing world picture that emerges once one takes the reality of African village life (provided it is adequately known, understood, and lived) as one's point of departure, and (like the clichéed space traveller in an Einsteinian curved universe, ever more approaching his point of departure the more she progresses in space and time) such a departure is a home-coming.

And it is, finally, an experiment in the application of a terrifying inkling that came out of another one of my current writing projects, *Sangoma Science* – a finding so devastating that I hardly dare mention it here lest I forfeit whatever claims to scientific scholarship I may still lay claim to. Contrary to naïve common belief, the past is not necessarily fixed and immutable once for all; it is malleable and in flux, *both in the hands of historians and in actual, material fact*, so that formulating a new vision of humankind's transcontinental past, may project itself back into time, and actually, materially, may change the past accordingly – *change the course of history!* This has been, after all, the deepest inspiration of my life-long struggle to make history where before there was none.

Having spend too large a portion of my dwindling allotted time on pummelling this cursed book into more or less presentable shape, I am still not sure that Sunda is actually such a good idea; after all, its built-in unidirectionality, however counter-hegemonic, becomes obsolete once the very Sunda idea itself has led to the discovery of the multcentred, multidirectional global maritime network from the Bronze Age on, yet the related discovery of the intimate links between the Pelasgian and the Sunda model is enough to be thankful to Oppenheimer, Dick-Read and Tauchmann. In this monograph I demonstrate that the Sunda perspective, even if ultimately relinquished in favour of a global maritime network model, casts a unique illuminating light on the one African society I know best – that of the Nkoya of Western Zambia. And whatever the merits and demerits of such a perspective, it may worm itself back in time, and reshape the course of history so as to install, for better or worse, our *Phantom Voyagers* (Dick-Read) to their proper role as powerful correctives of Eurocentric racist delusions of *grandeur*.



**PART I. GENERAL  
DISCUSSION OF THE SUNDA  
HYPOTHESIS**



## Chapter 2. *Eden in the East*, the General Sunda Hypothesis, and the Special Sunda Hypothesis

Can we identify, with any justifiable claim to scientific validity and reliability, the ‘deep history of stories’, across vast stretches of space and time (*i.e.* across continents, and several millennia) – in other words in a long-range perspective?

1. On what kinds of data, and what methodologies, can we call to substantiate such claims?
2. How can we argue the competitive plausibility of rival reconstructions of such ‘deep history of stories’?
3. In global long-range studies, can we become aware of, and avoid, such biases (*e.g.* Eurocentrism, North-Atlanticism, racialism) as reflect our own geopolitical and historical position, *e.g.* as inhabitants of an ephemerally dominant part of the world seeking (with less and less success) to maintain its hegemony over the other continents and their human populations?

These are some of the core questions of comparative mythology today. They are also central to the present monograph, in which I will try to come to terms with one, particularly courageous and inspiring, recent reconstruction of the deep history of stories: Stephen Oppenheimer’s argument in his book *Eden in the East: The Drowned Continent of Southeast Asia* (1998). He seeks to contribute to the already considerable literature on the peopling of South East Asian and Pacific regions. So

far, scholarly attention has focused on Sunda expansion to South East Asia, New Guinea (Austronesian languages are found in North New Guinea as a result of a Sunda-related migration c. 5 to 3.5 ka BP; Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994: 357), Australia (the Carpentarian wave of migration), Oceania and Madagascar. In the earlier millennia of westbound<sup>21</sup> Sunda expansion these nautical skills must have included the sail, but not yet the invention of the outrigger canoe: maritime historians reserve that invention for recent millennia (from 3.5 ka BP onwards; *cf.* Hornell 1920), when the outrigger was used to expand from Melanesia to the eastern and southern part of the Pacific Ocean (Polynesia).

However, Oppenheimer's claims go much further and revolutionarise this field of enquiry.

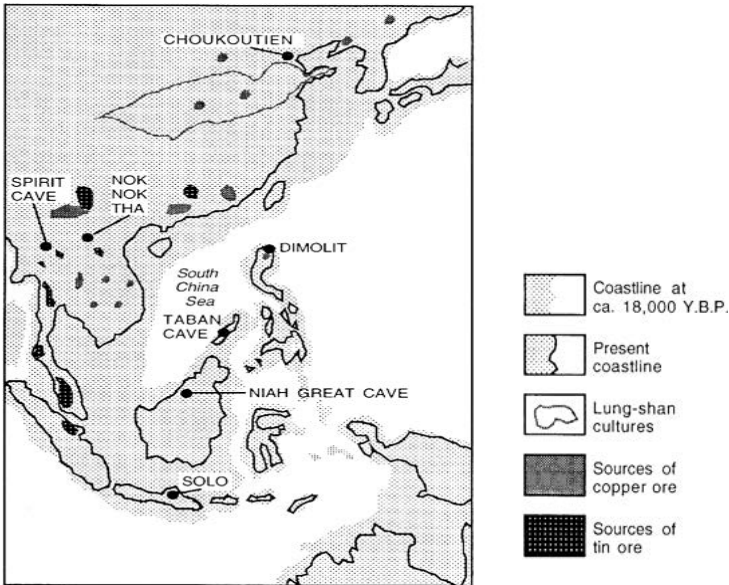


Fig. 2.1. The coastline of South East Asia c. 18 ka BP <sup>22</sup>

In *Eden in the East* Oppenheimer develops at length and (although the book is primarily meant for the general reader) with considerable sophistication two connected theses:

<sup>21</sup> In fact, Oppenheimer claims already eastbound peopling of West Oceania c. 20 ka BP. This could only have been effected with relatively developed maritime skills, although in all probability neither the sail nor the outrigger had been invented by that very early time.

<sup>22</sup> Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994: 207, Fig. 2.4.7 ©; after Glover 1980; Freeman 1980; Thorne 1980.

- (a) *The General Sunda Hypothesis*: In the more recent cultural history of Anatomically Modern Humans, out-migration (7.5 to 5.5 ka BP) from the Sunda plateau (now insular South East Asia, increasingly drowned because of the melting of the polar caps; cf. Fig. 1.1) has been a decisive factor
- (b) *The Special Sunda Hypothesis in the field of comparative mythology*: While eastbound Sunda out-migration populated Oceania, westbound Sunda out-migration had a major impact on South and West Asia, the Ancient Near East and the eastern Mediterranean basin, in that it brought from Sundaland the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East, including those making up the first chapters of *Genesis*: creation, paradise, the Fall of Man, the first murder, the Flood.<sup>23</sup>

My aim in this monograph is to put Oppenheimer's two theses in perspective and argue their continued relevance:

- *of the first thesis, as a candidate for addition to mainstream models of cultural pre- and proto-history at a global scale*
- *of the second thesis, as a claim to be largely rejected yet partly granted, and more in general a timely invitation to further sharpen our theoretical and methodological tools in comparative mythology.*

Oppenheimer's 1998 book was written over two decades ago, and of course his own work and related studies by others have progressed in the meantime. Although that is a source of rejoicing, it is not too relevant in the present context. My primary aim is to argue the continued relevance even of the 1998 book, and to further its (critical) reception within the circles of comparative mythology, where it deserves to have a greater impact than so far despite such shortcomings as my discussion will bring out.

In the background a number of relevant themes should be mentioned:

- (a) After the heyday of *diffusionism in anthropology*, 1850-1925<sup>24</sup> (when lack of a theory of culture allowed scholars to contemplate the worldwide peregrinations of isolated traits without a perspective on local function, meaning, integration and transformation), the dominant paradigm in that discipline has been that of local, and locally integrated, fragmenta-

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<sup>23</sup> My distinction between General and Special Sunda Hypothesis is somewhat helpful, and I will not conceal my admiration for Oppenheimer's contribution; yet the parallel thus created with Einstein's General and Special Theory of Relativity (Einstein 1960), while gratifying, may be rather exaggerated.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. van Binsbergen 2019b, 2019c. Early diffusionists were fascinated with transcontinental continuities of isolated cultural traits, e.g. Tylor 1880, 1882; Clarke 1877; Walbank Buckland 1885; Lane Fox 1875. Half a century later we see a specifically Manchester School of diffusionism (Dawson 1929, Elliot Smith 1919; Perry 1923) – not to be confused with the influential post-structural-functionalist Manchester anthropological school initiated by Max Gluckman in the 1940s. In these diffusionist studies, boats take pride of place here – little wonder, because navigation constituted the principal technology of pre-modern intercontinental contact.

tion of human culture into ethnic groups, nations *etc.*, so that for over fifty years now any long-range perspective has been anathema, despite the neo-diffusionism of recent globalisation studies. Even archaeology, which along with its emphasis on spatial distribution of traits had retained much of a diffusion-minded outlook, after the middle of the 20th century went through a phase when diffusion was anathema and sophisticated, even mathematical models of localising and regionalising process dominated the field (Renfrew 1976). Moreover, the localising structural-functionalist paradigm met with considerable opposition from the universalising, rationalistic paradigm of structuralism as initiated, in anthropology, by Lévi-Strauss, but this – relegating all symbolism to the binary mechanisms supposedly governing the mind of Anatomically Modern Humans, which (by one of the fundamental tenets of anthropology was the same all over the world) was likewise adverse to the notion of diffusion:

‘While Durkheim interpreted totemism as the original human religion, Lévi-Strauss persuasively argued that totemism is a product of human cognition, which has developed independently in North America, Australia and Africa.’ (Layton 2000)<sup>25</sup>

Claiming ‘a deep history of stories’ unfortunately still means going against the grain of mainstream anthropology, even though a cultural historian and folklorist like Ginzburg (1992) still managed to receive international acclaim for his diffusion-orientated, long-range perspective on time-honoured stories of witchcraft and pollution that have circulated in the European countryside for centuries. Not himself a cultural anthropologist, Oppenheimer unflinchingly and refreshingly (though, in his Frazerianism, anachronistically) does just that:

‘...my analysis of folklore links – building on Frazer’s pioneering work – confirms a prehistoric East-West connection and provides a *logical basis for the original meaning* of much Western myth and folklore.’ (Oppenheimer 1998: xiii *f*; my italics).

- (b) The tremendous advances in genetics since the 1980s<sup>26</sup> have afforded us a much more detailed and grounded perceptiveness on the movements and ramifications of Anatomically Modern Humans over the past 200 ka, – and it is Anatomically Modern Humans that we consider the owners of stories *par excellence*. These developments are at the heart of *Eden in the East*:

‘... the new genetic evidence I shall present shows that Polynesian-speaking people began their great Pacific dispersal from Southeast Asia, not China.’ (Op-

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. my recent study of Durkheim, which also pays considerable attention to Lévi-Strauss: van Binsbergen 2018.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Cann *et al.* 1987; Forster 2004; Oppenheimer 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d; Hill *et al.* 2006; and the literature cited there.



penheimer 1998: xiii *f*; my italics; reference is made here to the theory, dominant until recently, according to which the Pacific was populated from Taiwan).

- (c) Scholars' increasing awareness, in the second half of the 20th century, of the distorting influences which hegemony and Eurocentrism exert on the global production of knowledge (*cf.* Said's *Orientalism* debate; Bernal's *Black Athena* debate (1987- ); Mudimbe's *Invention of Africa* (1987); post-colonial theory in the work of Spivak, Bhabha, *etc.* Oppenheimer does not today consciously identify as anti-Eurocentrist, and scarcely seems aware that such an epithet could be meant as an accolade of honour; yet his 1998 stance is implicitly anti-Eurocentrist: in his opinion Sundaland, a South East Asian periphery, is nothing less than *the source of [the elements of] Western civilisation*

'In this book I describe my own exploration and analysis of the evidence for the peoples of the lost continent who fertilised the great cultures not only of the Far East but the Middle and Near East as well [ and, as Oppenheimer stresses elsewhere, substantial parts of Africa - WvB ] over 7000 years ago, and provided Eurasia with its library of folklore. (...) I believe that I am the first to argue for Southeast Asia *as the source of the elements of Western civilisation.*' (Oppenheimer 1998: xiii; my italics).

'But I was not so stunned by these diverse images to miss the common cultural base underlying the Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, Christian and animist societies of Southeast Asia. I began to wonder, then, about the sort of civilisation that had existed before the arrival of Chinese and Indian cultures. Only much later *did I begin to appreciate where the balance of cultural debt [ namely: that Sundaland was the original source - WvB ] lay.*' (Oppenheimer 1998: xi *f*; my italics)

- (d) In comparative mythology, a characteristic recent advance is exemplified in the type of work of Michael Witzel (2001 and 2012):

1. World mythology offers insights, in its own right, into the ancient history of Anatomically Modern Humans, and is thus complementary to genetics, linguistics, archaeology and comparative ethnography.
2. These insights (far from being mere figments of the imagination which we as researchers impose upon the impenetrable mists of deep time; *pace* Farmer 2007) reveal not a fragmented and disorderly chaos of mythical themes, but a sustained process of coherent mythological change assuming global proportions, albeit that a few fundamental phases and cleavages may be discerned in that process.<sup>27</sup>

My own work in progress in comparative mythology is greatly indebted to this approach although it takes some critical distance.

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<sup>27</sup> *E.g.* Witzel's proposal to distinguish between Laurasian and Gondwanan mythologies, much criticised by me as essentialist and potentially racialist.

- (e) *We live by the stories we tell about reality*, and that is the case
1. not only for other people's mythologies and for the clearly narrative elements in our own personal lives,
  2. but also for our products of scholarship – the latter are primarily narratives (*cf.* van Peursen 1992; van Binsbergen 2003a, 2003c, 2009c), albeit narratives subjected (*e.g.* in conferences such as the 2007 Edinburgh one) to systematic methodologies, and public and collective critical scrutiny aimed at the creation of professional intersubjectivity, both within and across disciplines.

In other words, as narratives about reality, our scientific arguments are not inherently untrue, but yet they are (as modern philosophical thought has reminded us, from Kant to Gadamer) inevitably incomplete and distortive *representations* of reality, not to be mistaken for reality itself. And like all narratives, such scientific narratives have their own saving grace, as well as their own dangers. We may try to reach some agreement as to what could make our scientific arguments come a little closer to reality, but the positivistic dream of absolute scientific truth (and of absolute scientific untruth) implied in Farmer's (2007) devastating deconstruction of long-range comparative mythology, is in itself another obsolete and fundamentalist myth and nothing more.

What justifies long-range comparative mythology's claim to being scientific, whilst inevitably being mythical at the same time, is the combination of

- Painstakingly collected empirical evidence (even though this is invariably informed, in part, by our underlying paradigms anyway),
- theory (which is usually predicated, positively or negatively, on the current paradigms of a particularly scientific discipline, and
- a critical reflection on method.

Stephen Oppenheimer's work, precisely because of its scientific qualities, is excellent as a demonstration of these three interlocking concerns of comparative mythology. Therefore it is infinitely better than most work in the Gothic history of claims of intercontinental cultural continuity:

1. Tylor, Frobenius, Elliot Smith, Perry, Baumann, Heyerdahl, *etc.* – as far as once-mainstream diffusionist anthropology is concerned;
2. Afrocentrism and the *Black Athena* thesis,<sup>28</sup> for the (rightly) antiEurocentrist but (wrongly) *monocentrist* variant yet claiming – with varying success – the trappings of modern scholarship. Oppenheimer is not dogmatic about monocentrism, and ultimately suggests a potentially multicentric intercontinental network (to which we shall come back extensively below), yet he does have strong lapses into monocentrism:

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<sup>28</sup> Bernal 1987-; Lefkowitz & MacLean Rogers 1996; van Binsbergen 1997 / 2011a; Berlinerblau 1999.

'My journey told in this book started with a chance comment by an old man in a Stone Age village in Papua New Guinea. It took me from the rather technical considerations of human genes and malaria in that island to a realisation that *dispersals of Southeast Asian coastal cultivators and sailors followed a succession of post-glacial floods, and led to the cultural fertilisation of the rest of Eurasia*. Echoes of this are still detectable in the West in such ancient texts as the Epic of Gilgamesh and the first ten chapters of *Genesis*. Themes from these myths still permeate the whole corpus of literature from ancient to modern. And what remains of Southeast Asia today can only give us a glimpse of the Eden that once was.' (Oppenheimer 1998: 485; my italics)  
[...South East Asia as, no less than ] '*the source of the elements of Western civilisation*' (Oppenheimer 1998: xiii f; my italics)

3. and a whole suffocating and alarmingly proliferating literature on Atlantis, Mu, *etc.* for New Age and its antecedents from Plato; *cf.* Blavatsky, Churchward, Temple, Donelly, *etc.* to which I will come back shortly and to which I feel compelled to make, reluctantly, my own contribution in passing.

I have the greatest admiration for Oppenheimer's *tour de force* in his 1998 book, which largely (though not entirely) steers clear from these unsatisfactory approaches. Of his two main theses

1. I will greatly welcome, and adopt, *one* (the *General Sunda Hypothesis*, for which I will even adduce additional evidence; also *cf.* van Binsbergen 2007e),
2. whilst however partially (and no more than partially) rejecting the other (Oppenheimer's application of the General Sunda Hypothesis to the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East including the first chapters of *Genesis*, which I will designate as the *Special Sunda Hypothesis*),

and such partial rejection again will be based

1. not on my opinionated likes or dislikes, or on some ideological stance that could have brought me to consider the primacy of Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical narratives as sacrosanct (as could be the case if I were a believer in the Judaeo-Christian-Islamic tradition of world religions, or a Eurocentrist – but I am neither),
2. but on painstaking, multivariate statistical analysis
  - a. of the kind that regrettably may carry little weight in the predominantly Humanities context of current comparative mythology,
  - b. but on which also the whole edifice of modern genetics is based – and Oppenheimer is a geneticist
  - c. And which incidentally constitutes a major concrete example (although overlooked by Farmer 2007) of the latter's claim that new tools now allow us to produce better comparative mythology (although even such a tool does not allow us to break entirely out of a vicious circle in the sense that even a science of myth inevitably has mythical aspects).

Nor shall such rejection be total, but mitigated by far more subtle considerations involving East-West parallels, leading finally (in chapter 14) to the conception of a global network that both subsumes and transcends Sunda.



# Chapter 3. The wider intellectual context of the General and Special Sunda Hypotheses

## The requirements of science, and the distorting mirror of New Age phantasms

No scholarly endeavour is produced in a vacuum. Scholarly production usually reflects

- Main currents, debates and dilemmas of ongoing scientific research at the time, and
- Trends in the wider social, cultural, political and ideological climate.

One of the attractions of Oppenheimer's Sunda Hypotheses is that their connection with the wider world of scientific research is strong:

- Oppenheimer is himself a scientist. Having started out as a paediatrician interested in blood types and genetic types associated with resistance against major tropical diseases, he became one of Great Britain's leading geneticists. He brings this specialist knowledge, and the sense for methodological, quantitative research to his Sunda argument.
- He does so in a laudable interdisciplinary manner, even though this means that he has to borrow from disciplines (archaeology, linguistics, comparative mythology,

cultural anthropology) in which he is much less at home than in genetics

Also the place of Oppenheimer's 1998 book in the global politics of knowledge is clearly identifiable: He, at least implicitly, challenges the Eurocentrism that has dominated North Atlantic, and world-wide, science until very recently

- He does so in a way that stresses connections and continuities between cultures, regions and continents, and across stretches of time of several millennia; thus he joins the long-range approach, which – although more and more well established – is still a minority option in the disciplines he borrows from
- Ultimately his approach is predicated on the assumption of the underlying fundamental unity of humankind.<sup>29</sup>

However, if a long-range approach is the dominant paradigm in such fields as archaeology, linguistics, and comparative mythology, cultural anthropology is localising, fragmentising, and in denial of long-ranging connections in space and time, Oppenheimer, and long-range scholars in general, are not the only ones confronting that anthropological paradigm. There is a time-honoured but often submerged trend in popular thought, with (in principle) an excellent intellectual genealogy in classical intellectual texts constitutive of modern thought and scholarship (the *Bible* especially *Genesis 10*; Plato; Herodotus – to mention but a few) that sees the whole cultural history of humankind as one coherent, interconnected process, in which difference is invariably to be resolved in underlying unity both in origin, and in historical destiny, of the subsets of humanity involved. In the North Atlantic region by the end of the 19th c. CE, this submerged trend became manifest and prominent in the movements of Theosophy (Blavatsky) and Anthroposophy (Steiner), when it was enriched with selected and often unidentified borrowings from classical Asian traditions and schools of thought, and re-digested and enriched in the individual phantasms of modern 'prophets' such as Churchward, von Däniken, Gisela von Frankenberg, Velikowsky, Temple, and so many other best-selling names now increasingly known as foundational heroes of the 'New Age' para-scientific movement.

Despite very considerable variation, the works of these authors have a number of traits in common, which deserve spelling out – not because the polemic with New Age idols is particularly interesting or rewarding, but because these traits monstrously bring out, as in a distorting mirror, some of the dangers and pitfalls attending *any* kind of long-range research – however responsible and scholarly its intentions – for connections in cultural history across vast stretches of space and time.

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<sup>29</sup> This theme is very dear to me. I found it to be the indispensable foundation for any intercultural philosophy. Cf. van Binsbergen 2015a: 8f., and 2020c.

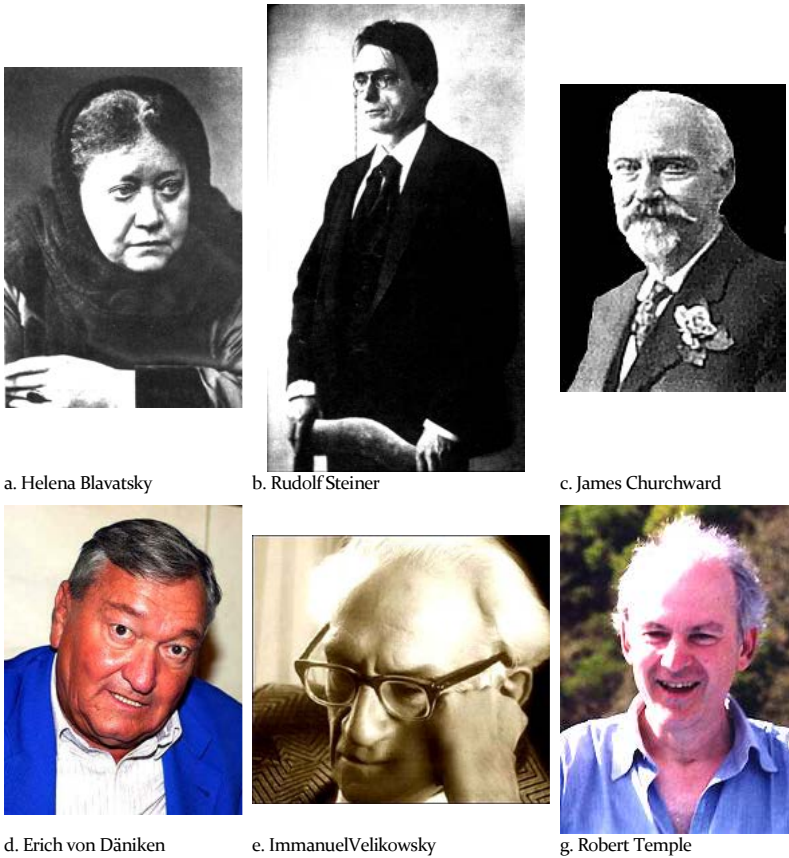


Fig. 3.1. Some New Age heroes proclaiming intercontinental cultural continuities<sup>30</sup>

I have been engaged in such long-range research for three decades, so these dangers emphatically also apply to my own work, however great my abhorrence of New Age rhetorics is.

Long-range approaches go against the dominant anthropological paradigm of the integrated socio-cultural unit considered within narrow temporal and spatial horizons (van Binsbergen 2019a, 2019b). Scientific paradigms are invested with great disciplinary, institutional and personal power, and they tend to be fiercely defended in the face of emerging new paradigms. The New Age para-science in which inter-

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<sup>30</sup> Picture sources are given at the end of this book's bibliography, below.

continental cultural continuities are taken for granted as a matter of established fact and even of belief, are doing a great disservice to serious empirical long-range research in that the New Age productions constantly furnish the paradigmatic opponents of such research with caricatures that apparently confirm the opponents' worst stereotypes as to the ridiculous and futile nature of such research (e.g. Amstelle 2001, partly against my own work). Long-range research can only become widely acceptable to anthropologists if the greatest possible distance from New Age phantasms is maintained. Therefore it is important to spell out the main characteristics of these New Age approaches. Although there can hardly be any misunderstanding on this point, let me state explicitly that the following list of characteristics seeks to describe, *not* Oppenheimer's work nor other serious attempts at long-range scientific research, but a very different kind of texts, namely non-scientific New Age phantasms.

Some of the recurrent traits in the works of these New Age idols are the following (in addition to a general belief in the fundamental unity of the cultural history of humankind – which is of course far from being a 'crackpot' feature):

1. A naïve belief in the essential knowability of the cultural history of humankind, even in great details and in the regard of the remotest past
2. Therefore, a passionate quest for origins
3. In this quest for origins, monocentred approaches (no matter whether they claim an origin from the alleged sunken continents Mu in the Pacific or Atlantis in the Atlantic; from Africa; from Egypt, *etc.*) are invariably preferred over multicentred ones
4. The ostentatious display of appropriated chunks of state-of-the-art natural science and other fields of scholarship, and in general the priggish emulation of an obsolete professorial style
5. Combined however with a shocking disregard of the methods, underlying principles, and epistemologies of modern science
6. One way in which this total disregard for the canons of modern science comes to the fore is the collapsing and expanding of scientific periodisations and time scales *ad libitum* – geological events of tens of millions of years ago may be made contemporaneous to the early history of Anatomically Modern Humans, *etc.*
7. Another manifestation of this total disregard for the canons of modern science is the frequent reliance on self-made etymologies, unsupported by the faintest notion of state-of-the-art comparative and historical linguistics; this allows some of these authors to propose as factual connections the most superficial modern lay renderings of names of persons, ethnic groups, places and institutions from all over the globe
8. In order to make the previous point possible, the emphasis on the fundamental unity of humankind (in itself a perfectly respectable point) is laid to such an absurd extent, to such an extreme, that all *sense of local cultural and linguistic specificity* has to be relinquished for the sake of the



emphasis on long-range connections, in which the same underlying systematics is supposed to make itself felt everywhere and always. Specialist competence in specific languages, cultures and religions is then, of course, no longer required from the analyst – and is characteristically absent among this cluster of writers.

9. Thus the hallmark of this kind of explanation is the radical reduction of historical and cultural complexity to merely:
  - just a few names,
  - a few principles (e.g. a sacred alphabet),
  - a few mechanisms (such as the rising and sinking of continents; the ensuing colonisation of other continents; solar, lunar and other astral lore),
  - a few determining locations, or even just one.
10. As a result, a radical, pedantically hypercritical re-reading and re-classifying of scientifically established documentary and archaeological evidence is the standard technique of this kind of knowledge production.<sup>31</sup>
11. Since these New Age approaches lack a state-of-the-art, theoretically and comparative historiographically informed approach to the emergence, dynamics and collapse of ethnic groups, cultures, states and civilisations, they tend to resort to crude external processes usually of a dramatic and violent nature (volcanic eruptions, cosmic disasters, etc.) in order to explain the course and turns of history
12. To this recourse to dramatic natural events comes the anachronistic recourse to postulated, great advances of science and technology (e.g. the harnessing of electrical power, and technologies of locomotion, from seafaring to astronautics) reminiscent of modern achievements but projected – on the flimsiest of grounds – back into the remote past.
13. As well as the recourse to extraterrestrial intelligent interventions.
14. Politically and ideologically, these New Age idols range from extreme right to extreme left, and from the uncreative bourgeois to the frontiers of artistic *avant garde*. However, their fascination with origins, purity and retrieval of the untainted past often implies a conservative right-wing inclination, which in the hands of some of their epigones may grow to monstrous proportions.

While this may sound familiar as a summing up of the defects of New Age phantasms, this list of defects also contains lessons for more sophisticated approaches. To see

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<sup>31</sup> I am about to complete the text of my forthcoming book *Sangoma Science*, in which these tendencies are nicely illustrated by a lengthy critical discussion of the heretical attempt at rewriting humankind's history along the lines of the ancient Hindu doctrine of aeons / *kalpa* कल्पः: *Forbidden Archaeology* (Cremo & Thompson 1993). However, in that discussion also the saving grace of such para-scientific attempts is acknowledged: they make us aware of the hidden, unfounded assumptions in our own analyses which we claim to be scientific. In fact my book ends in a perspective that is far from being blindly scientific, and that leaves much more room for the malleability and protean nature of history, than academic historians tend to recognise.

interrelations despite the surface manifestations of fragmentation and difference,

- One has to claim historical continuity (hence effectively engage in *some degree of conflation of time scales*, in other words declare the temporal dimension not of absolute but of relative and varying relevance)
- One has to be able to reduce the sheer abundance of fragmented data, so disparate in time and place, through some form of aggregation, simplification, – but if the resulting analysis is to be scientific, such aggregation has to be done according to explicit models, and against the test of intersubjectivity before a competent international forum (de Groot 1968) of specialist colleagues.

This leads us to a few remarkable and generally unwelcome points:

- a. Inevitably, any kind of scientifically responsible long-range endeavour, including the Sunda theses, has precedents and parallels in the most unscientific phantasms; it is enough to replace Sunda by Mu or Atlantic, and this point becomes eminently clear, and alarming
- b. Inevitably, the simplifying reduction
  - that is *per definition* required in any comparison
  - (especially in the domain of cultural data, whose signification is primarily through social processes that are highly specific in space and time)
  - and *a fortiori* in long-range approaches such as the Sunda theses,
  - with all the re-processing and re-classifying of familiar evidence that any long-range approach necessarily entails (for we need to explicitly disengage from previous readings and classifications which were in terms of the dominant, localising, fragmenting paradigm)
  - brings us dangerously close to New Age and similar fantasies, unless the greatest care is taken towards methodological sophistication and specialist critical debate
- c. Once again, the thesis of the *fundamental underlying unity of humankind* is far from a ‘crackpot’ feature (*cf.* van Binsbergen 2015a, 2020c; it is, on the contrary, one of the tenets of scientific anthropology and intercultural philosophy, and one of the main resources available for humankind in order to negotiate the great tensions of today’s full globalisation, as well as the challenges of racialism and of religious fundamentalism. This thesis is of immense socio-political, philosophical and ideological significance. However, its practical application in everyday life, in politics, and in philosophy is far from unproblematic. The rational insistence on unsegmented continuity and underlying identity, with all its Enlightenment implications as a celebration of modernity is often obliquely linked to a power elite in the process of hegemonic domination. The claim of difference is usually informed by the pursuit of liberation. Hence in the post-modern philosophy of difference (Derrida, Lyotard, Deleuze, Foucault) the claim of fundamental unity is in the first place suspect, and needs to be deferred and deconstructed – even

though the same applies, a fortiori, to the claim of fundamental disunity. Yet I have no doubt as to the truth – in an ideal world – of the thesis of the fundamental underlying unity of humankind. However, that thesis can only be argued or contested on the basis of arguments and principles whose province is not, in the first place, that of the empirical sciences.

- d. Long-range approaches in scholarship are predicated on the same thesis of humankind's fundamental unity, and the results of all long-range research can be read as further corroboration of that thesis. By the same token, any long-range analysis based on the 'Out of Africa' model as upheld by state-of-the-art genetics postulates, albeit on reasonable grounds, a monocentred origin of the cultural history of Anatomically Modern Humans. However, in the distorting mirror of New Age phantasm (where the same thesis of the fundamental underlying unity of humankind is usually the guiding line) we are reminded that ethically sound intentions do not in themselves make good science: they are necessary conditions for good science but not sufficient conditions.
- e. The New Age phantasms reflect an attempt to produce superior, revealing and redeeming knowledge, largely through intuition and personal reflection, and without any systematic observance of the intersubjective, accumulative canons of scientific method. In a way, they are simply amateur (para-)science, which is of inferior quality, and obsolete, in a world where science has developed into one of humankind's most impressive, most collective, most massive, and most highly structured achievements (but also, as Foucault points out, today's substitute of religion as society's main legitimating force). However, one may well understand how even good, serious scientists in their own field, once they venture out of their own field and into the terrain of other disciplines, may produce intellectual products that share some of the above characteristics of New Age phantasms. Usually, the specifics one borrows from a discipline not one's own are stale and slightly off the mark – and one needs the personal interaction with the discipline's specialists to weed out the misinterpretations and mis-representations typical of such borrowing. Inevitably, this point also applies to the present argument, however much I have sought exposure to, and criticism from, the various disciplines that I have had to use but in which I am clearly and admittedly not competent. But a discipline is not just a matter of specific facts and theories that one can look up in a handbook and on the Internet, but also a, largely tacit and implicit, general perspective, an internalised way of looking at specific data from an integrated theoretical and operational perspective which each specialist has developed over several decades of intensive public and private exchange with fellow members of his or her discipline.<sup>32</sup> Although most researchers have

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<sup>32</sup> But this also has a disadvantage: researchers working within the mainstream approach of their discipline are likely to develop paradigmatic blinkers, which prevents them from seeing, and recognising the importance, of empirical data that are not in accordance with the mainstream paradigm prevailing at the

been paying lip service to interdisciplinary research for decades, yet it is still a rare experience when members from different disciplines come together to share these unspoken essences of their respective disciplines. As a result, great dangers beset the scholar 'going it alone' (Muhly 1990: 85, speaking of Martin Bernal as a non-classicist and non-Mediterraneanist working outside his original field, which was Chinese modern political history). And in fact we should not be surprised to find in Bernal's work with all its truly incomparable qualities (van Binsbergen 1997a / 2011a) in the field of scholarship and of the anti-Eurocentric politics of knowledge, yet a few of the setbacks identified above as characteristics of the New Age phantasms:

- the quest for origins (Manning 1990: 256)
- the reliance on monocentrism (Egyptocentrism) in the identification of such origins,
- the lack of a sophisticated socio-scientific theory of social and cultural change, and instead a predilection for a cataclysmic ad-hoc explanation of cultural history as moved by natural disasters (the Santorini / Thera eruption).

By the same token, we should not be surprised to find that also Oppenheimer, in the interdisciplinary *tour de force* that was his book *Eden in the East* (1998), occasionally lapses into essentially the same three errors. He identifies *the* origin of Western (and under modern globalisation, increasingly: global) civilisation, he finds that origin primarily, monocentrically, in Sundaland, and explains the spread of Sunda civilising influence over much of the globe by reference to a series of dramatic floodings inundating Sundaland in the course of a few millennia before and after the onset of the Holocene (10 ka BP).

Unfortunately, it appears as if Oppenheimer's guilt through association goes a little further than this. He courts the company of the cranky, the sweeping, the unscientific, the sensational and the popular, and – as his use of a literary agent suggests – the best-selling. Oppenheimer's assertive vindication of Velikowsky's work (which takes up only nine lines of text, as if the case is totally straightforward) appears on p. 7, relegating all Velikowsky's critics (*i.e.* practically the entire disciplines of Ancient History and Egyptology) to the 'establishment' of 'hate'<sup>33</sup> Oppenheimer (1998: 6-7, 30) also has a friendly word for Graham Hancock's *Fingerprints of the God* (1995).

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time. Being an outsider to the discipline of Ancient (Graeco-Roman) History, and lacking such blinkers, was the great advantage of Martin Bernal – but also part of his weakness.

<sup>33</sup> This style of argumentation reminds us unpleasantly of Martin Gardiner Bernal: like Oppenheimer's, his work has great merits, but it is marred, in addition to (a) methodological and factual errors (which, as I have repeatedly argued at least for Bernal, may be forgiven and tacitly corrected in the light of the overall significance of the work), by (b) the tendency to dismiss all criticism, however well founded, as springing merely from the critic's 'special position within the global 'sociology of knowledge', in other words as merely a product of the critic's belonging to a bigotted academic establishment and / or global elite. Needless to point out that both qualifications also eminently fit Bernal himself, and his entire family and milieu of British upper-class millionaires and intellectual giants..

Likewise, Temple's *The Sirius Mystery* (1976) is mentioned approvingly by Oppenheimer (1998: 349) without explicitly distancing himself from Temple's preposterous extraterrestrial interpretation.<sup>34</sup> Further books belonging to the same category and treated kindly by Oppenheimer 1998 include Bauval & Gilbert's *The Orion Mystery* (1994 – in the same vein as Temple's, but which the plausible claim that the famous alignment of the three pyramids at Giza, Egypt emulates the three stars of Orion's Belt – ζ, ε, δ Orionis or Alnilam, Alnitak and Mintaka); Heyerdahl's *The Kon Tiki Expedition* (1950 – 'they must have come from there because – *albeit with massive logistic and material support from the marine of the USA and the latter's client countries* – I can sail from there'; but also Heyerdahl has found some genetics confirmation, see Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994); and – repeatedly cited by Oppenheimer – the *World Atlas of Mysteries*, which Francis Hitching compiled for Book Club Associates, London, 1980 (Oppenheimer 1998: 511 n. 13, 516n. 6, *etc.*). Is this then the kind of book Oppenheimer himself hoped to write with *Eden in the East*? Did he not have a choice because (apart from Frazer 1918) he knows few other scholarly books? Is it that he lacks the taste and the sense of method to tell good science from the sensational, popular mimicry of para-science? Or is it simply that he seeks to catch his net of hypotheses as widely as possible – in a charitable (*cf.* Lepore 1993) awareness that scientifically, collectively underpinned paradigms, while conveying part of the truth, at the same time hide another part, so that unorthodox, unprofessional forms of investigation may sometimes hit upon a genuine insight that the disciplinary paradigm would never be able to produce or accommodate?

In my opinion, both for Bernal and for Oppenheimer these lapses into a less than sophisticated and less than convincing approach, do *not* result in wholesale disqualification of their scholarly stance and of the substance of their painstaking research. But they are a reminder of the dangers of any long-range endeavour including my own – the punishment for the *hubris* inevitably contained in comprehensive and visionary, innovative approaches, such as Bernal's and Oppenheimer's.

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<sup>34</sup> Temple accepts Griaule & Dieterlen's claim (Griaule & Dieterlen 1965; however, *cf.* van Beek 1992) that the Dogon people of Mali, West Africa, have state-of-the-art astronomic knowledge concerning the multiple nature of the star Sirius ( $\alpha$  Canis Majoris), and believes that this knowledge was imparted to terrestrials by extraterrestrials (posing as Cannes and his companions) on the Persian Gulf 5 ka BP. Because of the infinitesimally small angle between even Sirius A and B as seen from Earth, such knowledge cannot possibly derive from naked-eye astronomy, whilst only a spoil-sport would attribute such knowledge to North Atlantic science's penetration to Mali – the German mathematician Bessel laid the foundation for the interpretation of Sirius as a multiple star in 1834, and his suggestion was empirically confirmed in the 1860s. This would give us over seventy years for this astronomical discovery to travel from Germany to Mali, less than 70 km per year, in a time period overlapping with the early decades of the use of motorcars, motorcycles, bicycles, airplanes, trains, telephones and radios – all of which cover 70 km in much less than a day. Interestingly, a European astronomical expedition came very close to Dogonland in the decades between Bessel and Griaule, and this would be the most likely source for the Dogon's astronomical information if that is what it was – it is another common misconception of New Age para-science that statements concerning aspects of reality from all regions and historic periods may always be effortlessly be turned into the kind of scientific statements specialists were making in the North Atlantic region by the 19<sup>th</sup> c. CE. In other words, I am suggesting that Griaule misconstrued a Dogon celestial myth into a modern astronomical statement. Meanwhile – contrary to a Griaule / New Age reading of Dogon mythology, which suggests the existence of a Sirius C – astronomers are still looking in vain for a third companion star.



names given from left to right

Fig.3.2. Stephen Oppenheimer, Wim van Binsbergen and Michael Witzel at the First Annual Meeting of the International Association for Comparative Mythology, Edinburgh, United Kingdom, 2007.

*Therefore, if we opt to try and penetrate (with our long-range search for intercontinental connections, the remote past, and even origins) there where angels fear to tread, a concern with method and criticism needs to take precedence over whatever preliminary findings our quest may seem to yield. It is in this sense that I – a fellow long-ranger – greatly applaud and appreciate Stephen Oppenheimer's courageous*

*Sunda theses, yet I believe that the genuine scientific motivation behind Oppenheimer's work, and the more general ideas (anti-Eurocentrism, the fundamental unity of humankind, the General Sunda Hypothesis, and its Special application to comparative mythology) are best served by constructive but persistent criticism.*

Ten years earlier, I had brought the same perspective to the *Black Athena* debate as initiated by Martin Gardiner Bernal, who in many respects is Oppenheimer's homologue. It is not the most effective way of making friends. I am confident, however, that the present monograph will clear whatever misunderstanding and suspicion may have remained on Oppenheimer's part.





# Chapter 4. Why we need the General Sunda Hypothesis

## Towards a model of Anatomically Modern Humans' cultural history from 200 ka BP to the present

### *4.1. Introduction*

The fact that I was trained in mainstream cultural anthropology at Amsterdam University in the 1960s meant internalising an utterly fragmenting socio-cultural paradigm. This stressed socio-political relations over religion and myth, and presented ethnic groups as closed within a local and presentist horizon, so that the world appeared as a patchwork quilt of essentially autonomous and unrelated 'cultures'. Long-range approaches, of whatever vintage or level of sophistication, only deserved to be ridiculed.

In the course of my main fieldwork projects from 1968 on (popular Islam, Tunisia 1968- ; Christian churches, Zambia, 1972- ; urban-rural relations, kingship and spirit mediumship in Zambia, 1972-; healing cults in Guinea Bissau, 1981- ; urban culture and spirit mediumship, Botswana, 1988- ), and my extensive writings based on such research, I more and more steered away from that oppressive and myopic, localist paradigm. I became a specialist in oral history, African religion and in myth analysis. Finally (1998) I even shifted from anthropology to intercultural philosophy in the

process – not only because of my criticism of neo-classic modern anthropology's stance vis-à-vis long-range approaches, but also on more general epistemological grounds, in which the global politics of knowledge (and my anti-Eurocentrist, anti-hegemonic preferences there) played a major role (van Binsbergen 2003a, 2015a).

Meanwhile I had become more and more of a long-range cultural historian myself (van Binsbergen 1981a, 2007a, 2012a, 2018; van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011), searching for far-reaching connections in ever increasing stretches of space and time, gradually extending into proto-history and prehistory – until my work of the last few years, in search of empirical grounds for my philosophical position stressing the fundamental unity in thought and conceptualisation of present-day humankind, brought me to consider the unfolding of the earliest mythology of Anatomically Modern Humans on the basis of comparative mythology projected onto recent genetics. Earlier stages in this process entailed a painstaking comparative historical study of divination systems (especially geomancy) and board games (especially *mankala*) worldwide; other formal systems such as those underlying the nomenclature of clans and astronomical items worldwide; the worldwide symbolism (and its amazingly converging lexical expressions) of 'speckledness' and scattering as found, especially, in leopard-skin symbolism; and the ethnicity of the Sea Peoples, who destroyed the Hittite empire and seriously threatened Egypt at the end of the Bronze Age, thus creating the conditions for 'the rise of the West' – for the culture of Greece, Carthage and Rome to become dominant, – which it has remained, more or less, till today.<sup>35</sup>

All these projects presented virtually insurmountable problems to me (the reason why some of them are still in the process of publication):

- Not because of any lack of data suggestive of long-range connections – such data turned out to abound if only I could shed the localist paradigm in which I had been educated
- And not only because my mainstream anthropological / Africanist colleagues did not like them (Amselle 2001)
- But mainly because of my personal lack of an overall interpretative framework that could encompass the many long-range strands I began to perceive, and ground them intersubjectively and even interdisciplinarily.

Here I believe I found a satisfactory solution in the combination of two, by now widely accepted, ideas I borrowed from archaeology and genetics:

1. *The distinction*<sup>36</sup> *between*

- *demic diffusion* (where cultural items are carried along by population movements; the idea to link comparative mythology to demic diffusion of specific genetic types was first suggested to me by Villems 2005; it is also fundamental for Witzel 2012),

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<sup>35</sup> Woudhuizen 2006; van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011; cf. van Binsbergen 1997b.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Sokal & Menozzi. 1982; Sokal *et al.* 1991; Ammermann & Cavalli-Sforza 1979; Barbujani *et al.* 1994.

- and (*non-demic, for merely*) *cultural diffusion* (where spread of cultural items is through inter-population communication without specific population movement being implied or required)

The powerful nature of demic diffusion as a model is indicated by the following summary of Barbuji *et al.*'s 1994 argument:

The hypothesis that both genetic and linguistic similarities among Eurasian and North African populations are due to demic diffusion of Neolithic farmers is tested against a wide database of allele frequencies. Demic diffusion of farming and languages from the Near East should have determined clines in areas defined by linguistic criteria; the alternative hypothesis of cultural transmission does not predict clines. Spatial autocorrelation analysis shows significant gradients in three of the four linguistic families supposedly affected by Neolithic demic diffusion; the Afroasiatic family is the exception. Many such gradients are not observed when populations are jointly analyzed, regardless of linguistic classification. This is incompatible with the hypothesis that major cultural transformations in Eurasia (diffusion of related languages and spread of agriculture) took place without major demographic changes. The model of demic diffusion seems therefore to provide a mechanism explaining coevolution of linguistic and biological traits in much of the Old World.'

2. *A perspective I have shared with, among others, Michael Witzel and Yuri Berezkin (in the 2007 Edinburgh conference; also Witzel 2012), and with Richard Villems (2005): The more detailed scenario of the Out-of-Africa movement of Anatomically Modern Humans:*

- a. Emergence and intra-Africa percolation and cultural growth, c. 200-80 ka BP
- b. Out of Africa Exodus to West Asia, c. 80 ka BP
- c. Migration<sup>37</sup> from West Asia further east; due to climatic conditions and Neanderthaloid presence such migration had to remain restricted to a narrow eastbound path along the Indian Ocean coast and which reached Australia / New Guinea, but initially remained largely abortive as far as the population of Asia and other continents is concerned, 80-60 ka BP
- d. Further migration from West Asia to the rest of the world, c. 60 ka BP; possibly cultural exchanges with Neanderthaloids,<sup>38</sup> who due to climatic deterioration (onset of last glacial) and possibly the inroads of Anatomically Modern Humans with greater adaptability, disappeared by 30 ka BP
- e. Non-demic cultural diffusion of African (largely pre-Out of Africa) traits

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<sup>37</sup> My terminology here differs from my earlier usage (van Binsbergen 2006a, 2006b), where I spoke of Route A and Route B or Sally I and Sally II. This was confusing because it insufficiently differentiated between demic and non-demic, cultural diffusion, specifically between the demic expansion and the non-demic cultural diffusion involved when pre-Out of Africa cultural contents of *Pandora's Box* diffused up North and North East as soon as Anatomically Modern Humans had penetrated North of sub-Saharan Africa – which, for Europe at least, was only after 40 ka BP. Under the term 'Pandora's Box' I refer to the package of cultural (including mythological) traits which was developed, circulated and transformed among Anatomically Modern Human inside sub-Saharan Africa between 200 and 80 ka BC, and subsequently spread all over the world through demic diffusion in the course of the Out-of-Africa Exodus.

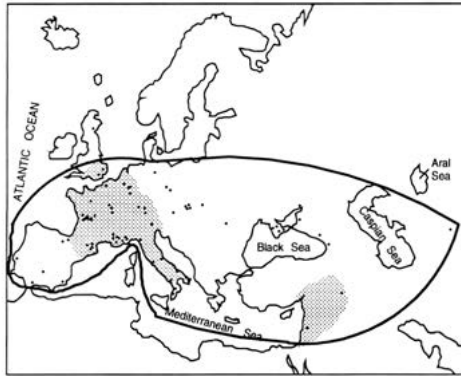
<sup>38</sup> Cf. d'Errico *et al.* 1998a, 1998b; d'Errico *et al.* 2003, which are advocating a re-evaluation of the position of Neanderthals in global cultural history, in the sense of acknowledging their relatively high level of mental and social development. This ties in with my own finding that Neanderthals made a stellar map (van Binsbergen with Lacroix 2000; and, cliching the argument, van Binsbergen 2018: ch. 8).

- up North and North East, into Europe and West and Central Asia, from as soon as Anatomically Modern Humans appeared in the latter regions
- f. Venture into the New World, from Central Asia, no earlier than 30 ka BP
- g. Back-into-Africa movement from Central Asia via West Asia, and skirting Europe, as from c. 15 ka BP.<sup>39</sup>

Since my entire argument is based on this, I will devote a few pages to a summary of that scenario, largely based on the geneticist Forster (2004). Point of departure is the present-day global distribution of mitochondrial DNA Types – the practically indestructible genetic material that passes unaltered from mother to child, and that in this inter-generational transmission is only affected by mutations such as state-of-the-art molecular biology can detect and locate with unprecedented precision.

#### 4.2 *The global migration history of Anatomically Modern Humans (after Forster 2004)*

In a much-cited article, Forster (2004) presented seven maps that sum up the genetic and geographic history of Anatomically Modern Human at the level of mtDNA Types. These could be extended to include Neanderthal distribution.<sup>40</sup> Forster's basic model is to provide the baseline onto which I will below fit the General Sunda model, after an examination of Oppenheimer's 1998 argument and after adducing such further empirical evidence as is available.



Source: Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994: 61; the shaded areas correspond with European and Near Eastern populations – but the significant South Iberian Neanderthal population has been reduced to a few dots; however, *cf.* Arsuaga 2004).

Fig. 4.1. Neanderthal distribution 100-35 ka BP

<sup>39</sup> *Cf.* Hammer *et al.* 1998; Cruciani *et al.* 2002; Semino *et al.* 2002; Maca-Meyer *et al.* 2003; Underhill 2004.

<sup>40</sup> Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994: 61 (their Fig. 2.1.2 reproduced here as Fig. 4.2), after Giacobini and Mallegni 1989 and Vandermeersch 1989.

In regard of approximately the first half of the crucial period from 15 to 2 ka, which Forster 2004 treats as one, I propose to use the concept of the *Proto-Neolithic Extended Fertile Crescent*, to range from the then fertile Sahara to China. Such a concept appears to make mockery of the original concept of the Fertile Crescent, which designated a rather narrow, curved strip of land between Anatolia, Palestine and Iran, where the Neolithic package of pottery, agriculture, and animal husbandry was first situated in the pioneering studies of the first half of the 20th century CE. I introduced the notion of the Extended Fertile Crescent in my first attempts at long-range cultural history a decade ago (van Binsbergen 1997c). At the time my reasons were both counter-hegemonic and intercontinental: the extended concept allowed me to treat Africa (but the argument is also valid for East Asia) as very much part of the continuous intercontinental cultural history of the Old World, instead of falling into the ‘Africa for the Africans’ trap to be discussed in the next paragraph. I realise that the notion of the Extended Fertile Crescent is controversial in that the extended region does not seem to be marked by any specifically characteristic items of material culture and has not been recognised as constituting one contiguous archaeological region in the specialist literature. However, it is in this extended region that a number of more or less independent, successful attempts at plant domestication, animal domestication, and the invention of pottery (not necessary in that order) have taken place from c. 12 ka BP onwards, and that we see the formulation of the NarComs of CITI VI,<sup>41</sup> which have resulted a very considerable mythological and hence cultural unity throughout the Extended Fertile Crescent (see Appendix 1 for ample under-pinning of this claim), and in many respects have been decisive for the subsequent cultural history of Asia, as well as (through the effect of the Back-into-Africa migration) Africa and Europe. The extended region roughly coincides with the area today covered by the linguistic families of Sinotibetan and Afroasiatic. Probably the cradles of Indo-European, and of Khoisan, Nilosaharan and Nigercongo, and even Austric, were also situated within this region.

At various points in the present argument I will have occasion to reiterate (*cf.* my contributions to van Binsbergen 2019a) how – partly out of genuine though vicarious identification with the plight of Africans in the most recent centuries, partly in an attempt at intellectual decolonisation of Africa since the end of colonial rule proper in the 1960s, and partly because of geopolitical processes resulting, ironically, in the increasing economic, military, and constitutional marginalisation of Africa during the subsequent decades – much North Atlantic Africanist research of the past fifty years has been predicated on the geopolitical adage ‘Africa for the Africans’: in cultural history, things African have to be explained by reference to other things African, and not to the outside world. Given the North Atlantic region’s claims to global hegemony (which however have been more and more difficult to maintain in the last ten years, with ever more drastic and embarrassing military and economic means), the inhabitants of the North Atlantic could (after some prodding, in which the *Black Athena*

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<sup>41</sup> On the terms NarCom and CITI see the discussion of my Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology, below.

debate played a major positive part) afford to contemplate the possibility that their European homeland derived its languages, world religions, sources of intellectual history, even its human population, mainly from extra-European sources. However, Africans were widely supposed to be incapable of sustaining a similar truth as far as their own, African continent was concerned – either their suffering at the hands of the outside world, during the past few centuries, was deemed to have been so excessive that at least Africans should be granted the boon of an African past entirely for themselves; from this perspective a claim of massive Asian influence on present cultural and linguistic patterns in Africa would invite accusations of racism.<sup>42</sup>

Not without reason, for part of the ideological underpinning of colonialism in Africa had been the stereotype of Africans as incapable of cultural initiative and innovation, hence necessarily condemned to remain on the passive, receiving side of cultural borrowing from other continents. In the early decades of the twentieth century, the Hamitic Hypothesis – in itself a neutral model identifying one possible mechanism for cultural connections between Asia and Africa, and incidentally one that is perfectly in line with state-of-the-art genetic findings in terms of the Back-into-Africa movement – deteriorated (*cf.* Zachernuk 1994; Sanders 1969) into a racist scenario of culturally barren and incompetent Black Africa being fertilised by the rich initiative of lighter-skinned pastoralists coming in from the Middle East.

Hence Zachernuk (1994) could define ‘the imperialist Hamitic Hypothesis’ as

‘the assertion that Africa’s history had been made *only* by foreigners’ (Zachernuk 1994; italics added – WvB)

The point lies in the word *only*. Who is to deny that European history was *also* made by non-Europeans such as the builders of the Chinese Great Wall (one of the main factors in the Wanderings of the Nations that ended the Roman Empire), Moses, Jesus of Nazareth, Muḥammad, Hannibal, Bolivar, Hirohito, the Americans, Australian and Africans who more or less decisively fought in World Wars I and II? But none would disagree that European history was exclusively made by these non-Europeans. A balanced view of African (or European, or local) history is not one that excludes local initiative, nor one that (like the ‘Africa for the Africans’ perspective) excludes the possibility of any outsider contributions, but one that combines insider

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<sup>42</sup> An example could be Hall (1984: 458, where the allegation of racism is literally made) on Hromník, who published his *IndoAfrica* (1981) at the beginning of the final decade of South African apartheid – but Hromník did mar his meritorious scholarly, largely linguistic argument with devastating asides that justified Hall’s rebuke. Yet it would in principle be less racist to allow Africans full participation in world cultural history (where they would be now classified to be on the passive and receiving side, now on the initiating and giving side), than to confine them paradigmatically to the (utterly imaginary) splendid isolation of the African continent. But however accomplished Hromník’s linguistics may once have been, he displays the typical archaeological credulity that is so often found in super-diffusionist circles, *e.g.* the ease with which he identifies a close connection between hatched patterns in the engravings from Driekopseliland, South Africa, and a well-known seal from Mohenjo-Daro, Indus valley. As we shall see below, the puzzling Indus graphics system has been appropriated for even more sweeping transcontinental appropriations.

and outsider contribution. Since we are dealing here with ideologically charged positions, the risk of misreading and misunderstanding is enormous. It is possible to read the Hamitic Hypothesis as a neutral statement on the possible, yet necessarily limited, contribution of certain pastoralists from the Middle East towards the making of Africa; soon however the Hamitic Hypothesis had declined into an overstatement claiming to identify the one unique factor in the making of Africa, rendering that hypothesis potentially or *de facto* racist.<sup>43</sup> Needless to point out that the same ideological pitfall exists in the case of European cultural history: was the latter uniquely European, starting with the Ancient Greeks? or was it transcontinental, and greatly indebted to Asia and Africa? On the basis of the claims by Oppenheimer, Dick-Read, Tauchmann, and meanwhile also myself as to the *possible, limited contribution of some Sunda-related influence towards the making of Africa as well as towards the cultures of several other continents*, one might maliciously misread the Sunda Hypothesis, and the present book, as a denial of all African initiative and a racist reduction, once more, of African to a state of passive receptivity. But given the anti-racist record on which I can personally pride myself,<sup>44</sup> I believe I can take such a risk, especially since the alternative (reducing Africa and Africans to splendid isolation from global cultural history) to my mind is equivalent to racist exclusion (further cf. van Binsbergen 2019a).

By the same token, my treatment of Sunda contributions towards the emergence or consolidation of the Early Dynastic state in Egypt could be read as a revival of the 'Dynastic Race' hypothesis which haunted Egyptology in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. 'Sunda' is not a race, and (contrary to collective representations and the official terminology prevailing in recently desegregated societies such as the United States of America or The Republic of South Africa) I do not consider *race* a category admissible for polite conversation let alone for scholarly debate. As will become increasingly clear in the course of this book's argument, '*Sunda*' is, in the *model defended in this book, not a localised people, culture, ethnic identity or language. It is a package of fragmented and elected cultural, linguistic and socio-political traits, occasionally and implicitly combined with detectable genetic traits which however are not somatically conspicuous (cf. chapter 5), and circulating in a multcentred and multi-directional intercontinental maritime network which, ultimately, appears to be established by flood victims on their seaborne evacuation from a flooding South East Asia, c. 7 ka BP.* To misread such an argument as a plea for racist essentialism, is, once more, a sign of ill will.

Anyway, according to the Hamitic hypothesis pastoralists from the Middle East

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<sup>43</sup> Peter Mitchell 2005 points out that, although academically discredited, the Hamitic Thesis has yet remained alive in public and media discourse.

<sup>44</sup> As an Afrocentrist, an intercultural philosopher insisting on the fundamental unity of humankind, public spokesman for Nkoya and African identity and dignity, speaker of a handful of African languages, adopted son of an African king, nominated African sub-chief, certified and practising African traditional healer and diviner, recognised exponent of African Philosophy, persistent supervisor of African PhDs, under the name Tatashikanda member of the Nkoya village and family of Shumbayama, etc.

moved into Africa, and in the process, allegedly, they brought to this continent the so-called Hamitic language family, which Friedrich Müller (1876-1888) had identified, naming it after Biblical H̄am son of Nuaḥ (*Genesis* 10); this language family is now generally designated Afroasiatic. The dogged insistence on 'Africa for the Africans' in recent decades can largely be understood as an expression of modern Africanists' justified aversion vis-à-vis the racist overtones the application of the Hamitic Hypothesis had acquired in earlier decades; the obvious diffusion element of the Hamitic Hypothesis must have made it even more repulsive, once structural-functionalism had supplanted diffusionism as the central anthropological paradigm in the 1940s.

However, rival geopolitical myths may exist side by side, and one of the roots of the 'Africa for the Africans' adage was not so much the attempt to avoid racialism, but a downright resorting to racialism. Africans were then considered to have participated so little in global cultural history, and to have made so little of an independent intercontinental contribution there, that they could not possibly have been involved in the generous give and take which other, apparently more mature, creative and initiative-rich, continents had been playing among themselves. From either position there is the tendency to insist on the incomparable otherness of Africa and Africans, and to construct the North Atlantic identity by opposition to the African one. It has almost become a cliché to quote Hegel, one of the founding fathers of contemporary North Atlantic thought, in this connection, yet he did set a trend from which Western thought still has not distanced itself sufficiently:

"Jenes eigentliche Afrika ist, soweit die Geschichte zurückgeht, für den Zusammenhang mit der übrigen Welt verschlossen geblieben; es ist das in sich gedrungene Goldland, das Kinderland, das jenseits des Tages der selbstbewußten Geschichte in die schwarze Farbe der Nacht gehüllt ist. Seine Verschlossenheit liegt nicht nur in seiner tropischen Natur, sondern wesentlich in seiner geographischen Beschaffenheit. (...) Der eigentümlich afrikanische Charakter ist darum schwer zu fassen, weil wir dabei ganz auf das Verzicht leisten müssen, was bei uns in jeder Vorstellung mit unterläuft, die Kategorie der Allgemeinheit. Bei den Negern ist nämlich das Charakterische gerade, daß ihr Bewußtsein noch nicht zur Anschauung irgendeiner festen Objektivität gekommen ist"

How inveterate this idea is, is clear from the fact that nearly one and a half centuries later, at the height of Africa's decolonisation, the Regius Professor of History at Oxford, Trevor-Roper (1963), expressed doubts as to whether Africa belonged to global history, while six years later the Disney Professor of archaeology at Cambridge (one of Colin Renfrew's predecessor), Grahame Clark, declared:

'Africa...had...already lapsed into provincialism during the late Pleistocene. For this time much of the continent remained a kind of cultural museum ...without contributing to the main course of human progress'.<sup>45</sup>

Our present attachment to the geopolitics of continents is very much a construct of the last two centuries, and cannot be essentialised in the face of a technologies of

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<sup>45</sup> Clark 1969: 181; *apud* Shaw 1984; not surprisingly, Shaw is very critical of Clark especially in view of the latter's authoritative position.



locomotion (even those of hunter-gatherers moving on foot) that have always contained the possibility of intercontinental exchanges.

However one-sided, the 'Africa for the Africans' adage has also had an impact on the interpretation of African rock art. As a result, professional ridicule has been meted out, not only to the fantast von Däniken who compulsively sees extraterrestrials and their equipment in a great variety of rock art, but also to the father of professional prehistory, Henri Breuil. With his ideas of trans-continental foreigners in Southern African rock art he is held to be

'responsible for some gross errors that are still encountered today', 'romanticising' in the belief '...that he could identify depictions of Minoans, Phoenicians and other Mediterranean people in southern African rock art.' (Lewis-Williams & Dowson 1987: 6 f.; however, recent genetics research confirms that Breuil was right: Pickrell *et al.* 2014)

The adage of 'Africa for the Africans' has also been applied to African languages, in the sense that many specialists in the field of African languages are inclined to attribute an exclusively African origin to the African language families: Afroasiatic, Nilosaharan, Nigercongo and Khoisan. Yet the 'Back into Africa' migration seems to be one of the constituent factors of Africa's four language families today – in other words, the demic flow from Central and West Asia from the Later Upper Palaeolithic onward suggests a considerable Asian contribution to these languages; hence some authors (Kaiser & Shevoroshkin 1988) have included them under Super- Nostratic *i.e.* an extension even of the super-family, Nostratic, that was proposed by Russian comparative linguists in the 1960s (*cf.* Illich-Svitych 1971 *f.*) and encompassing, not only all linguistic families of the then USSR 'homeland' from Japan, Korea and the Bering Strait to Eastern Europe, but also related families in Europe (Indo-European), Asia (Afroasiatic, Dravidian, Indo-European, Uralic-Yukaghir, Chukchee-Kamchatkan, Eskimo-Aleut, Altaic) and Africa (Afroasiatic). Considering that the cultural history of Anatomically Modern Humans has largely been a process of percolation around Central Asia, with occasional offspins to the periphery of Asia, the New World, Europe, back into Africa, and into Oceania, the model of demic diffusion would be likely to also apply to the emergence and spread of language families – for instance, as in Table 4.3. This would suggest a considerable Asian trajectory in the earliest history of our four African language groups, even though the specific admixture of Asian and Palaeo-African elements towards the present-day linguistic pattern in Africa remains a puzzle. Yet (true to the geopolitical assumption of 'Africa for the Africans'),<sup>46</sup> in the last few decades the tendency among specialists has been to claim an African *Urheimat* for Afroasiatic,<sup>47</sup> and even an enlightened historical linguist like Daniel McCall insisted (1998: 143):

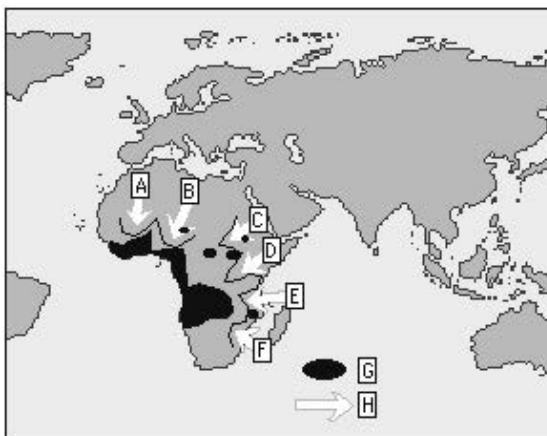
'My prediction is that Africa will turn out to be the cradle of Afroasiatic, though the speakers of Proto-Asiatic were a reflux population from Southwest Asia.'

Forster's (004) series of maps underplay the geographic scope and the relative impact of this 'Back into Africa' migration (*e.g.*, there is no indication of its effect in the Southern half of the African continent, where Nigercongo speakers are now dominant, and where all Khoisan

<sup>46</sup> Criticism of this adage plays an important part in my contributions to the collective work *Rethinking Africa's Transcontinental Continuities* (van Binsbergen 2019a).

<sup>47</sup> *Cf.* Kammerzell 1994: 69 n. 150 where he mentions specialists such as Schenkel, S'jakonov, Ehret, Behrens, Anttila, who allegedly hold the same view; to this can be added Bernal 1980, 2006.

speakers are found, as minorities presumably<sup>48</sup> deriving from a mixture between Africans on the one hand, and on the other hand West Asian ancestors who left for Africa c. 10 ka BP.



A-F, inroads of shamanism; G: 'pristine' centres of figurative art

Fig. 4.2. Frobenius' (1954) 'pristine Africa'

Yet do note the apparent relative stability, from a genetic perspective, of the South-western half of the African continent – despite massive linguistic, cultural and mythological change in the most recent tens of ka, yet that part of Africa seems to have formed a possible basis for Frobenius'<sup>49</sup> (1954) 'pristine Africa', where, according to this controversial German Africanist, in a general east-west movement across the African continent, shamanistic / possession / affliction cults only penetrated very late if at all, and where ancient sculpturing traditions have been retained.

For years I have tended to follow Frobenius in this interpretation, but recently, exploring the amazing potential of the General Sunda Hypothesis, *I have begun to wonder if this south-western half of Africa is not simply the part where Sunda influence is particularly strong* – bringing artistic conventions (in sculpture and music: hunched statuettes and xylophones in a specific Sunda connection) that therefore

<sup>48</sup> This is the claim of Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994; *cf.* Semino *et al.* 2002. However, more recent genetics research has cast doubt on this Asian (part) origin of present-day Khoisan speakers; *cf.* Morris 2002; Pickrell *et al.* 2014; Barbieri *et al.* 2014

<sup>49</sup> Frobenius was the leading German Africanist in the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and a reliable fieldworker although, inevitably, obsolete if judged by the methodological, theoretical and ethical standards of today. His work has been much in discussion in recent years, on the one hand as a founding father of German African Studies from whom a younger generation seeks to take distance (*cf.* Streck 1991, 1995); on the other hand as a major inspirer of the Afrocentrist movement, which many Africanists in the North Atlantic – blind to the hegemonic implications of their own position in the intercontinental politics of knowledge – see as a major threat to their profession and its scientific standards. For more congenial appraisals, *cf.* Haberland 1973; Jahn 1974; Jensen 1948.

do not go back to Pandora's Box, but at best to 7 ka BP and probably much less. However, a Sunda re-interpretation of the cultural pattern of South West Africa is tricky because there are also indications (e.g. van Binsbergen 2010c) to the effect that also some cults of affliction such as the West African voodoo complex are somehow indebted to Sunda. This would render the whole of Frobenius' thesis untenable, since this is based on the distinction between figurative sculpture and (by implication, with an echo of the prohibition on 'carven images' in the Semitic world religions of Judaism and Islam) non-figurative ecstatic cults as mutually exclusive and as having a fundamentally different origin. Anyway, the Sunda Hypothesis was not explicitly part of Frobenius' *Kulturmorphologie*.

If we wish to spell out the analytical power of the combination of

- a. the distinction between demic and non-demic cultural diffusion and
- b. the application of the Out-of-Africa perspective to comparative mythology,

we first need to specify a considerable number of limiting conditions. Such sweeping statements may be true, but only

1. *to the extent (considerable, but never full) to which we may assume cultural diffusion to have been based on demic diffusion, especially in Palaeolithic times*
2. *to the extent to which forms attested in historical times may be projected back into the remote past; i.e. the moot point of the permissibility of the comparative-mythological equivalent of mass comparison as opposed to the comparison of reconstructed proto-forms, in historical linguistics*
3. *to the extent to which the complexity and heterogeneity of myriads of individual mythemes may be aggregated under a few dozen 'Narrative Complexes'*
4. *to the extent (which, in the context of the present argument, I take to be very considerable, but which of course would have to be argued in every individual case) to which face-value similarity between mythical forms may be taken as an indication of a genuine traceable historical association, and not just of independent parallel invention*
5. *to the extent to which the world geographic distribution of mythemes and of ethnographic traits in historical times may be taken as a valid basis for the reconstruction of prehistoric processes*
6. *to the extent to which the world geographic distribution of mythemes and of ethnographic traits in historical times has been established by valid methods of definition, operationalisation, data collection and mapping*
7. *to the extent we have an explanation for long-term retention and transmission of cultural items across tens of ka (e.g. stone tool industries, and the hundreds of Anatomically Modern Humans' cultural universals detected; could initiation cults be the answer? Or environmental determinism? Neurobiology? Or – flat against the very foundations of the social sciences –*

*perhaps a tendency for culture to become somewhat hereditary after tens of ka? ...*

*...to the (admittedly, never full) extent then to which these seven conditions are met, the combination of (1) and (2) allows us to read even present-day world distribution diagrams of ethnographic traits, mythemes, other formal cultural systems*

*as if they were clearly calibrated on a time scale; for instance:*

- if a trait today occurs in very many cultures in all continents, in other words appears to be a cultural universal (e.g. the presence of kinship terminology, string figures, or the mytheme stressing the Earth as the ultimate source of all life), and if we have a convincing argument to exclude modern diffusion as the main factor of spread of this trait (e.g. under the impact of Judaeo-Christian-Islamic proselytising, or modern formal education), then we may postulate that that trait was part of the original cultural package ('Pandora's Box', I termed it) with which Anatomically Modern Humans left Africa 80-60 ka BP
- if a trait occurs in the New World and throughout Eurasia, but only patchily in sub-Saharan Africa and not in Australia and New Guinea, it cannot have been in Pandora's Box, but is likely to be an innovation emerged in Central Asia c. 30 ka BP, and from there to have spread both to the New World (from perhaps 25 ka BP on), and (in the process of the Back-into-Africa migration, from c. 15 ka BP on) to sub-Saharan Africa, in a feedback process that complements, and partly obscures, the original (though not unchanging) contents of Pandora's Box left behind in Africa.

I consider this recourse to population genetics and demic diffusion a considerable improvement in my Aggregative Diachronic Model, as compared to its earliest formulation. originally I sought to estimate time and place of origin of a NarCom by a hermeneutical analysis, which later turned out to converge with mtDNA Types distribution through demic diffusion. Below, in chapter 12, we shall further define the criteria for proceeding from global distribution to tentative global history.

### *4.3. An eye-opener: Long-range intercontinental continuities between Africa and North America<sup>50</sup>*

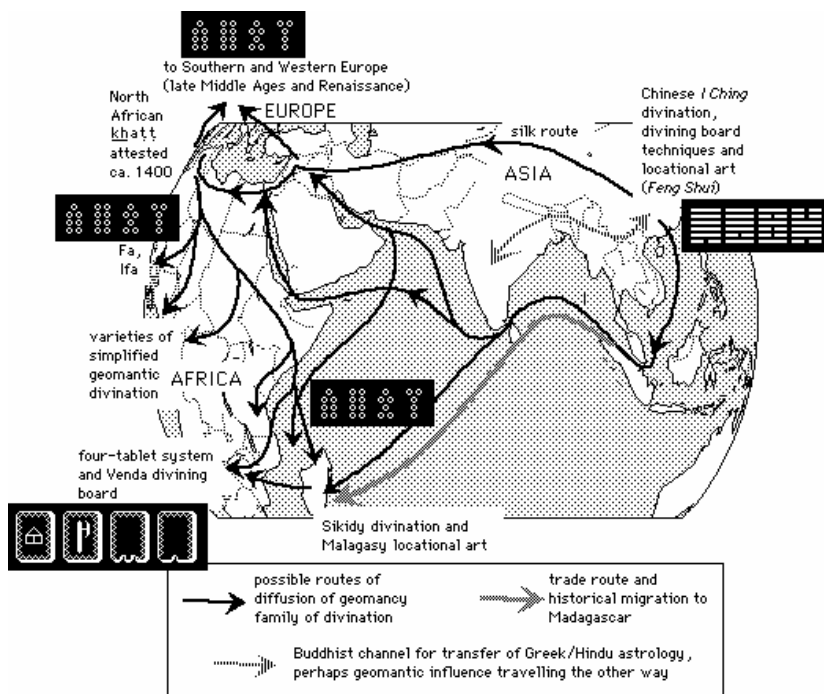
#### *4.3.1. From Old World geomantic divination to the Maya numerals*

Seeking to arrive at global long-range approaches, we cannot limit our data set to just the Old World. In the course of my research into the notational conventions of Old World geomantic divination systems (which I had hitherto exclusively considered in the Old World context of Africa, Asia and Europe) a considerable intercontinental continuity was revealed, all centring on the combination of unbroken and broken lines, or of lines and dots – probably derived from prehistoric counting

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<sup>50</sup> This section is largely based on van Binsbergen 2005a; the same topic has been treated at greater length in van Binsbergen 2012a.

practices (Fig. 4.3). Soon it turned out that intricacies and puzzles of long-range connections attending divination systems are even greater and involve a North American aspect. The dot-line notation of geomancy and the Chinese wisdom oracle book *I Ching* or *Yi Jing* 易經<sup>51</sup> could be argued to have parallels in the Maya (pre-conquest Mexico) numerals. More important, I found close parallels to the wooden Southern African four-tablet oracle in the games and divination sets of North American Indians.



Source: van Binsbergen 1996, 2007 f.

Fig. 4.3. The notational similarities in Old World geomantic divination systems as based on largely non-demic diffusion during the last two millennia .

Of course, counting with pebbles and sticks or rods might easily suggest a notation similar to that of the Maya numerals, and the geomantic symbols,<sup>52</sup> so that in itself

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Legge 1980 / 1910 / 1988; Wilhelm & Cary 1951.

<sup>52</sup> A point first made, at least in the West, by Terrien de Lacouperie 1888, who proposed a Mesopotamian origin for the *Yi Jing* symbolism. Legge (1880-1910 / 1988) would dismiss this claim, as would many later writers. However, the Sinologist Martin Gardiner Bernal (1996, personal communication) admits the

is insufficient ground to conclude to diffusion. But the correspondences are far more complex. I believe that only diffusion from a common source could explain these complex parallels, and following the cues of genetics, linguists, comparative mythology and comparative ethnologists we have already identified that common source as Central Asia ca. 15,000 BP. This would, incidentally, suggest that the prototypes underlying African divination tablets go back tens of thousands of years, and must not be interpreted by some localising structural-functionalist parallelism with other aspects of the Southern African societies in which they are currently found, nor (and this is a moot point) by more recent Trans-Atlantic contacts.

What then are these more complex parallels? Linguists have noted the correspondences between linguistic families in West Asia, East Asia and North America, and proposed the macro-family of (Denē-)Sinocaucasian,<sup>53</sup> as distinct from Nostratic / Eurasiatic. There is a strong case for including language isolates such as Basque, Nahali and Burushaski with Sinocaucasian (Sheveroshkin 1991, 1992; Blažek 1995).<sup>54</sup> Mythologists, comparative ethnologists (e.g. Berezkin 2005a, 2005b) and geneticists have found the same pattern of correspondences in their own respective fields. Strange coincidences occur, e.g. the Amerindian place name rendered in English as ‘Wounded Knee’ (notorious as the site of the 1890 massacre that ended Native American violent resistance against the USA) is a literal translation of the name Heitsi Eibib, the Demiurge / culture hero of the Khoisan, Southern Africa’s marginalised herdsmen and hunter-gatherers.

In these cases we see a well-known ‘law’ of linguistic and cultural diffusion illustrated: *original (‘primitive’) forms are best retained at the periphery.*

#### 4.3.2. From Nkoya girl’s initiation to the Apache sunrise dance

Another reason to contemplate long-range continuities<sup>55</sup> between North America

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possibility of a Eurasiatic even Indo-European, rather than Sinotibetan origin of the *Yi Jing* symbolism, on the basis of the parallel between the *Yi Jing* term for the trigram ☷ ‘Earth’, 坤, *kūn*, and Old Greek χθών *thōn* ‘Earth’ (also cf. van Binsbergen 2012a for an extensive discussion of this etymology); also Barde 1952.

<sup>53</sup> Such as Chinese and other Sinotibetan languages, Caucasian languages; probably the language isolates Basque, Burushaski, Nahali; and the Denē languages of North America, such as Sioux and Apache in the south, and Athapascan-Eyak-Tlingit in the north. Cf. Sheveroshin 1991, 1992; Blažek 1995, 2000.

<sup>54</sup> State-of-the-art long-range linguistics allows for an even higher level of reconstruction: \*Borean (named after the semi-mythological and hardly localisable Hyperboreans of Ancient Greek tradition) is the highest, i.e. oldest level of historical reconstruction that long-range specialist historical linguists are now prepared to acknowledge. It reconstructs a parent language which presumably was spoken in the Upper Palaeolithic, c. 25 ka BP, in Central to South-East Asia. Traces of \*Borean are considered to be detectable in the reconstructed lexicon of nearly all linguistic macrophyla now spoken (Eurasiatic, Afroasiatic, Sinocaucasian, Amerind and Austric), and this is the basis for its reconstruction. Cf. Fleming 1991, 2002; Starostin 1991a; Bengtson & Ruhlen 1994 and Tower of Babel / Starostin & Starostin 1998-2008, ‘Long-range etymology’ and ‘Austic etymology’. For an overview of the \*Borean lexicon, and an application to prehistoric religious reconstruction, see van Binsbergen 2018: Appendix III.

<sup>55</sup> Let us not forget that Old World / New World parallels in formal systems (games, colour symbolism)

and Southern Africa is to be found in the institution of the nubile girl's training and coming-out dance. The intercontinental similarity extends to many details, *e.g.*

- mainly for one girl at a time;
- the training of pubescent girls by non-kin senior women who thus become fictive kin;
- during the entire training period the girl is to be covered from head to feet by a blanket when outside
- the association with sunrise;
- with a special dance to be performed by the girl;
- with a special costume;
- rain associations, *e.g.* rustling metal chips on costume, and rain – although usually a sign of good omen – on this occasion the natural falling of rain<sup>56</sup> is taken as a sign of supernatural rejection of this particular ceremony.

Africanists (Rasing 2001; Ahmed 1996) believe the Bantu-speakers' girl's initiation to go back at least a few thousand years. For Frobenius (1931) this institution was part of the South-Erythraean complex extending all the way to Ancient Mesopotamia, where its traces may be recognised, as they can in the Indus civilisation; this is in principle in line with the idea of a 'Back-into-Africa' migration, although on a different time scale (Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic, whereas Frobenius' frame of reference was rather Neolithic and Bronze Age). Via the spinning-*cum*-warrior goddesses of the Ancient Near East, Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece, Persia, and West Africa (Anahita,<sup>57</sup> Anat, Ashera (Hadley 1989), Neith, Athena,<sup>58</sup> Nyambi, *cf.*

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were among the first topics of early diffusionism (Tylor 1879, 1880, 1896; for colour symbolism of the four directions, *cf.* Frobenius 1929).

<sup>56</sup> We are reminded of the Nkoya taboo that prohibits women to stand in the water while fishing; or Nkoya women's ideal (handed down to later generations during puberty training) of a dry, unlubricated vagina which poses maximum obstacles to male penetration. Is what is surfacing here a trace of the perennial enmity between the Rainbow Serpent and women, occasionally surfacing in ancient myths from Australia to South America? *Cf.* Bahn 1978, and our discussion of the water-orientated cosmology of sub-Saharan Africa, below.

<sup>57</sup> Who, like Egyptian Neith, appears as a goddess of the sacred waters, *cf.* Cumont 1911.

<sup>58</sup> The identification of Athena and Neith, already implied by Herodotus in the fifth century BCE (Herodotus, *Historiae*). For Bernal (1987, 1991, 2001, 2006) this identification was a main reference point in his inspiring anti-Eurocentrist argument concerning the 'Afroasiatic [*i.e.* African and Asian, but since Bernal's main argument is linguistic, inevitably there is interference here with the more common use of Afroasiatic as denoting a language phylum] roots of classical [*i.e.* Ancient Greek] civilisation' Bernal tried to clinch his argument by proposing a specific etymology by which Old Egyptian Neith could become Old Greek Athena. This etymology met with the most devastating criticism (Jasanoff & Nussbaum 1996; Egberts 1997; van Binsbergen 1997a / 201a) and cannot be considered to be up to current standards of historical linguistics. Meanwhile the historical relationship between Neith and Athena is absolutely unmistakable beyond the mere sound resemblance of their names: both are virgin warrior goddesses specialising in the feminine arts of spinning and weaving. Considering the vast geographic range in which such goddesses, with similar names, have been attested from the Bronze Age (from West and South Central Africa to the Aegean and Iran), our best explanation is in terms of a common historical basis, which lies

Anansi), and the lunar mansions named after 'girl' or her occupations (notably: spinning and weaving) in China, Ancient Persia, and Graeco-Roman Antiquity,<sup>59</sup> the 'girl' / 'gal' complex (von Sicard 1968-1969; also cf. Proto-Semitic: \*kall-,<sup>60</sup> 'bride, female in-law, etc.) extends over much of the Old World and part of the New World; it may have been an original part of the Sinocaucasian heritage (the above Apache are Na-Dene-speaking < Sinocaucasian), presumably filtered into Africa through Proto-Khoisan migrations from Central Asia / West Asia – at least according to CavalliSforza *et al.* 1994. Meanwhile my work in progress on comparative mythology suggests this initiatory complex to originate in Africa after all, as part of the 'Out of Africa' package with which Anatomically Modern Humans started on their Exodus 80,000 BP! Such parallels were inconceivable, even inexplicable, until, in the last decades, the 'Out of Africa' model and – more recently even, the 'Back into Africa' model, emerged as the most spectacular results of long-range population genetics.

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1. either in the most recent West Asian CITIs (Contexts of Intensified Transformation and Innovation, see below) whose products were subsequently spread south and west in the context of the Back-into-Africa movement,
  2. or in the Sunda complex, or
  3. in a combination of both, according to the pattern with which the present book's argument makes us familiar – Sunda as a recycling, transformation and redistribution of pre-existing mythological and socio-political themes.

This is precisely what Karst already proposed in 1931:

'Herodot nehmt Entlehnung der griechischen Goetter aus Aegypten an, aber auch an Urverwantschaft ist zu denken' (Karst 1931c: 79). In this monograph we shall repeatedly return to his views. Also cf. van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: chs 2-4; van Binsbergen, in prep. (I).

Joseph Karst was an Alsatian French-German Kartvelianist / Armenologist, and in the Interbellum a major writer on European and circum-Mediterranean ethnicity (Karst 1931a, 1931b, 1931c; cf. van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011; van Binsbergen, in prep. (I)).

<sup>59</sup> One of the obvious findings of naked-eye astronomy (which is humankind's oldest astronomy, going back to at least the Upper Palaeolithic; cf. Rappenglueck 1999) is that every month the Moon travels through the same succession of 28 narrowly defined places in the Heavens, known as lunar mansions / Moon stations / Sanskrit *nakshatra* नक्षत्र / Chinese *sieu*, *xiu* 宿. Regardless of their sometimes sweeping pan-Babylonian and diffusionist claims, valid factual information on virgin-related nomenclature of lunar mansions may be found in the following works: Gundel 1936; Stucken 1913 (who on p. 9 refers to a lunar mansion which is Chinese is called *n[i]u* 女, 'girl, woman', and which, most significantly, is associated with spinning in the Persian context; one does not have to subscribe to Stucken's ingenious theory of the alphabet to welcome these data); Steinschneider 1864; Kelley 1991, 1992, 1995.

<sup>60</sup> Throughout this monograph, the *sans-serif* font Arial (Arial) will be used to mark reconstructed linguistic protoforms and similar words. When expressions were originally in a written language, and its original script is available to me, I prefer to use that out of unenter-hegemonic, counter-Eurocentric respect, even though such isolated words risk to contain errors.



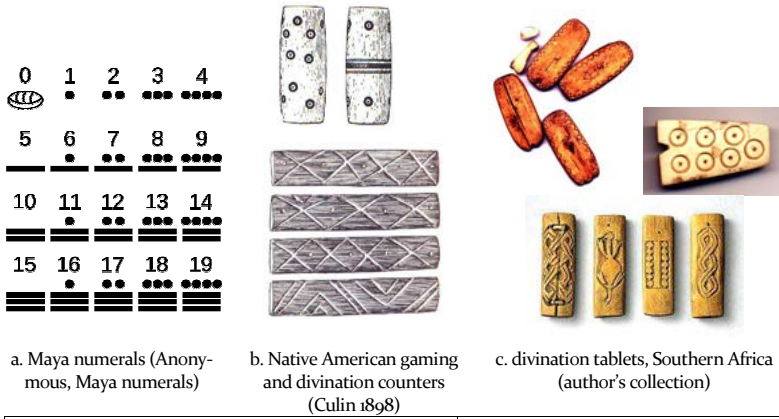


Fig. 4.4. Apparent cultural continuities between North and Central America, and South and South Central Africa

Von Sicard's pioneering with long-range etymologies (mainly based on Bantu and Indo-European) still had to stop short at the conclusion that no convincing Indo-European etymology was available for *girl*. However, meanwhile the worldwide ramification, and hence some additional support for his proposed 'girl / \*gal' initiatory complex, is offered in recent long-range linguistic reconstructions (Illich-Svitych 1971-1984, I: 295; also in Tower of Babel s.v. 'long-range etymologies'), with:

<p>*<b>Borean</b> (approx.: *KVLV (V = any vowel), 'female in-law';  <b>Eurasianic</b>: *kálU;  <b>Afroasiatic</b>: *kal-;  <b>Amerind</b> (misc.): Macro-Panoan *kila 'girl';  <b>African</b> (misc.): Bantu *-káǰǰ 'wife, woman'.</p>
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Table 4.1. Long-range etymology of 'girl'

For a convincing glimpse of North-American / Old World continuities we only have to consult the index of the overview of native North American religions by one of that subject's great specialists, Åke Hulkrantz (1980): numerous topics are listed, from architecture to totemism and urban development. Along the lines indicated in Fig. 4.4, I have also explored such parallels between North America and South Central Africa in my monograph *Before the Presocratics* (2012a). In an afterthought we may add that the King's Jester or Lictor among the Nkoya, *Kayoni ka Mwene* ('The King's Bird'), an eagle-shaped dancing mask that lends splendour and livelihood to collective ceremonies, appears to have parallels, not only in Cameroon (Northern 1984: 158) but also in North America, e.g. in the Iroquois Eagle Dance (Fenton 1953); in both cases an eagle-shaped primal god may underly the dancing expression.

#### 4.3.3. Continuities between the Old World and the New World in comparative mythology: Towards a genetic dating of the CITIs

Also in the field of comparative mythology, an interpretational puzzle is posed by the mythological parallels that so often appear between sub-Saharan Africa, and the New World. Such parallels were stressed by Yuri Berezkin (2006), on the basis of a wealth of very detailed distributional data. Major NarComs to be mentioned in this connection are: The Separation of Heaven and Earth, and their subsequent Re-Connection (NarComs 1 and 2), and the Primal Waters and the Flood (NarCom 11).

With American mtDNA Types A, B, Central and D (which yield, among others, X in the New World), and M1 and R feeding 'Back-into-Africa', we would not be able to pinpoint any genetically marked population to directly connect Central Asia to both the Americas and sub-Saharan Africa, from c. 15 ka BP. The only point where these two streams fully merge genetically / demically, is in N and M, in West Asia c. 80 to 60 ka BP. This makes it possible to place the emergence of NarCom 11 in CITI II, i.e. the first Context of Intensified Transformation and Innovation (CITI) to have emerged in West Asia soon after Anatomically Modern Humans ventured outside Africa. Yet I do not believe that the cultural items of Fig. 3.12 (divination tablets and puberty rites),

given the emphasis on mtDNA Type 2 in much of the world distribution of NarCom 11, I prefer to situate the emergence of NarCom 11 in CITI IV, Central Asia c. 30 ka BP. That means that, if the Back into Africa migration brought Flood myths to West Asia and to Africa, it was because such Flood myths earlier were transmitted, by non-demic cultural transmission, from mtDNA Type B carriers to mtDNA Type M1 and R carriers.

One way of settling this dilemma, is to play down the extent to which the Nigercongo speaking cultures that have been attested in historical times, may have retained 'pre-Out-of-Africa' traits, and instead to stress their continuity with the Extended Fertile Crescent and the 'back-into-Africa' movement. This is the position I have taken. The twenty NarComs (1-20) which I initially distinguished (2005) derived from a corpus of African cosmogonic myths as attested in historical times; I argued that most of these (essentially African) NarComs had emerged during the round through Asia after the Out of Africa Exodus, at specific CITIs which I tentatively identified for each NarCom; only a handful of NarComs could be argued to have been part of the original pre-Out of Africa mythological repertoire, in other words to have been in Pandora's Box. Subsequently, I traced the continuities between the African mythologies (as attested in historical times) and the mythologies of literate Eurasian cultures in much detail (Appendix 2). This brought me to the adage "relatively old genes with relatively modern mythologies." as a characterisation of the sub-Saharan African situation from the perspective of long-range comparative myth analysis (van Binsbergen 2010a: 162).

But, within our present argument, there is a very clear limit to such an explanation: for after all, my analysis is based on a data set of sub-Saharan cosmogonic myths, in which we have argued that some 'pre-Out-of-Africa' elements may be identified, and their subsequent global diffusion and transformation have been traced. Somewhere along the line, these original African mythemes must be acknowledged, and their ramification traced into the rest of the world, including the New World.

Another way out to explain the unmistakable parallels between sub-Saharan Africa and the New World is to take recourse, in addition or instead of overland connections going back tens of millennia, to much more recent maritime connections, – notably such as Oppenheimer's Sundaland theory may provide, if we assume that South East Asian maritime technology, from 7 ka BP onwards, succeeded not only in reaching South Asia and Madagascar (as is uncontested), but also

- a. the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, by extension Europe, as well as circumlittoral Africa, on the one hand (which is an extended version of Oppenheimer's General Sunda Hypothesis, supported in the present argument)
- b. parts of the American Pacific and Atlantic coasts.

However, the problem with this position is that the empirical grounds for (b) are extremely flimsy, whilst both (a) and (b) run into the apparently *insurmountable* difficulty that the Sunda time scale going back to only 7 ka BP appears to be far too short to account for the very wide distribution of the NarComs in question both in sub-Saharan Africa and in the New World.

#### 4.4. *Theoretical considerations*

Before the specific data and implications of such East-West parallels can be fruitfully appreciated, a number of related theoretical themes need to be briefly introduced. That is the purpose of the present section of this argument.

##### 4.4.1. *First the Out-of-Africa Hypothesis, then Back-into-Africa Hypothesis*

In the 1980s we have seen how the genetics based on classic markers (*e.g.* blood groups, skull forms and their measurements) at the macro level was supplanted by one based on molecular analysis, thus rendering obsolete the impressive classic edifice of genetics (whose swan's song has been Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994). Once the human genome had been deciphered, the hypothesis could be formulated of a common origin of Anatomically Modern Humans, in Africa c. 200 ka BP (Cann *et al.* 1997) – in other words, the Out-of-Africa hypothesis, suggesting that after percolating inside the African continent for dozens of millennia, Anatomically Modern Humans began to spread to the other continents from c. 80-60 ka BP (needless to add that other sub-species of humans had already populated other continents ever since the Lower Palaeolithic). Soon geneticists (despite the notoriously big error functions that admittedly attend their statistical analysis) discovered that the Out-of-Africa outbound movement had been followed by a Back-into-Africa counter-movement from Asia, from c. 15 ka BP, and still going on (Hammer 1998; Coia *et al.* 2005; Cruciani 2002; Underhill 2004). Thus Central Asia c. 15 ka BP becomes the spot where Africa, the New World, and Oceania meet! And the same applies to the linguistic macrophyla (Nigercongo, Nilosaharan, Khoisan, Amerind, Austric (> Austroasiatic, Austronesian)).

##### 4.4.2. *An Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology*

Over the past two decades we have witnessed a revival of comparative mythology (throughout the 20th c. CE a somewhat antiquated and suspect subject, haunted by the spirits of certified or apparent ideologists of the extreme right-wing conservatism, such as Jan de Vries, Mircea Eliade, and Georges Dumézil. The most eloquent and comprehensive testimony of this process has been the magnum opus of the main protagonist and instigator of this revival process, the Sanskritist Michael Witzel (2012), who claims to be able to link the unfolding of world mythology to the genetic unfolding and geographic spread of Anatomically Modern Humans. However, while acknowledging the tremendous achievements of Witzel, I have a number of methodological and theoretical objections to that *tour de force* (I hope to set them out in detail in a collection of my papers on comparative mythology now in preparation), which brings me to stick to a far more limited and less documented approach I have authored myself: An Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology was developed by me early on in my activities in the field of comparative mythology (van Binsbergen 2006a, 2006b, 2010a, 2012a), and (being surprisingly, but perhaps as a result of my own myopia, *grosso modo* confirmed with every further step although minor adaptations proved often necessary) it has guided much of my work in this field

in later years. This model initially defined some twenty ‘Narrative Complexes’ (NarComs), in other words distinct fields of closely related mythemes, some of which<sup>61</sup> could be reconstructed (through complex methods set out in my original 2006a publication but outside our present scope) to have been part of an original pre-Out-of-Africa package (‘Pandora’s Box’) and to be subsequently transmitted to Asia, where they spawned or otherwise came to be accompanied by other NarComs, which (in specific ‘Contexts of Intensified Transformation and Innovation’ – CITI –, each associated with the rise of new modes of production and new linguistic (macro-)phyla), greatly further transformed and developed there, prior to their onward transmission to Europe, the New World, Oceania, and back into Africa. Against the background of this Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology, subsequent transcontinental effects of the Pelasgian Expansion and of the Sunda Expansion, both during the last handful of millennia, especially when occurring in combination and interaction, caused a dazzling pattern of the global distribution of transformed Narrative Complexes. Here it is often difficult to attribute to a particular identified historical process (notably Out-of-Africa, Back-into-Africa, Pelasgian, Sunda) the presence of a particular Narrative Complex, or individual mytheme, in a specific, limited context of space and time. The purpose of the present argument is to identify cases in point, and to attempt, after all, to interpret these cases historically.

#### *4.4.2.1. Outline of an ‘Aggregative Diachronic Model Of World Mythology, starting from the African continent’*

On a series of international conferences of the Harvard Round Table / International Association for Comparative Mythology, and in publications based on those exchanges, I have developed an ‘Aggregative, Diachronic Model of World Mythology’ across all continents and over 80 ka. According to my model,

1. a handful of identifiable initial mythological traits in Pandora’s Box in sub-Saharan Africa
2. were taken to Asia – and beyond, even ultimately back into Africa – on the wings of demic diffusion,
3. and on their way underwent very substantial (and to a certain extent, reconstructible) transformations and innovations,
4. proliferating into a few dozen of Narrative Complexes, NarComs (or coherent complexes of mythemes) such as are more or less familiar from comparative mythology

My NarComs were distinguished on the basis of a corpus of African cosmogonic myths

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<sup>61</sup> Notably the following NarComs: 4. The Lightning Bird; 8. The stones (as Earth; under CITI VI revised as the stones as connection between Heaven and Earth); 9. The Moon; 10. The Earth as primary (10 was subsequently revised towards cattle, in the Neolithic); 12. From the Tree (in subsequent CITIs diversified into 12a ‘The world and humanity from the tree’, and 12c ‘the leg child’); 13. The Cosmic / Rainbow Snake; 15. The Spider (subsequent transformed into ‘the feminine arts’ in CITI VI).

attested in historical times – and subsequently projected onto Eurasian (mainly literate) mythologies and their distribution maps, so as to try and identify pre-Out of Africa NarComs if any, and to suggest how, upon that handful of NarComs in Pandora's Box the others may have emerged as transformations and innovations, in the course of an extended world history of mythology which largely coincided with the world history of the spread and diversification of Anatomically Modern Humans.

5. such proliferation especially took place in the context of less than a dozen Contexts of Intensified Transformation and Innovation – CITIs, which are fairly well identified in time and space, and which largely coincide with the contexts in which new modes of production and new (macro-) linguistic families can be argued to have emerged.

<b>(a) distinguished 2005-2006 before embarking on my project of global Flood myth analysis</b>	<b>(b) Added in the context of my global Flood myth analysis</b>
NarCom 1 Separation Heaven Earth	NarCom 21 The White God
NarCom 2 Reconnection Heaven Earth	NarCom 22 Astronomy pole halfling
NarCom 3 What is in Heaven	NarCom 23 Trickster Raven Coyote
NarCom 4 Lightning bird	NarCom 24 Raising the corn spirit
NarCom 5 Mantis	NarCom 25. Cow of Heaven
NarCom 6 Rescue / escape from ogre	NarCom 26 Earth diver
NarCom 7 From the mouth	NarCom 27 Music Orpheus flute reed
NarCom 8 The stones	NarCom 28 Games contests combats
NarCom 9 The Moon	NarCom 29 The four (notably the cardinal directions)
NarCom 10 The Earth	NarCom 30 blood as poison, menstruation
NarCom 11 Primal waters and the Flood	NarCom 31 Tortoise / Turtle
NarCom 12 From the tree	NarCom 32 Separation water land
NarCom 13 Cosmic rainbow snake	NarCom 33 Fragmented monster becomes the world or humankind
NarCom 14 Duality Two children Twins	NarCom 34 Vagina dentata
NarCom 15 Spider and feminine arts	NarCom 35 The Sun
NarCom 16 Shamanism / bones	NarCom 36 Fire
NarCom 17 Spottedness / leopard	NarCom 37 Earthdragon mountain volcan
NarCom 18 Honey bees (honey-)beer	
NarCom 19 Cosmogonic virgin and her lover son	
NarCom 20 Contradictory messengers bring death	

Further analysis suggests that NarCom3 (an analytical construct, like all other NarCom) is an unfortunate contamination of nos. 4 (cf. Rain), 13, and 19. On second thoughts, also NarCom 32 appears to be superfluous beside NarCom 11. And see the discussion on the somewhat superfluous NarCom 35 below.

Table 4.2. Original list of NarComs, and later additions

Contexts of Intensified Transformation and Innovation (CITI)		proposed NarCom (no. and description)	mtDNA Type of AMH group community this Nar-Com)	Proposed trigger (much further reflection needed)	tentative linguistic context
in time	in space				
I. Pre-Out-of-Africa Middle Palaeolithic 80 ka P and earlier	Sub-Saharan Africa	'Pandora's Box': the original mythical package, perhaps containing: 4. The Lightning Bird; <sup>62</sup> 8. The stones (as Earth; under CITI VI revised as the stones as connection between Heaven and Earth); 9. The Moon; 10. The Earth as primary (10 was subsequently revised towards cattle, in the Neolithic); 12. From the Tree (in subsequent CITIs diversified into 12a 'The world and humanity from the tree', and 12c 'the leg child'); 13. The Cosmic / Rainbow Snake; 15. The Spider (subsequent transformed into 'feminine arts' in CITI VI)	L (L1, L2, L3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The emergence of AMHs as a biological mutation?</li> <li>• Africa's soil carrying capacity, even for hunting and collecting, is the lowest in the world, mainly due to geological conditions that predate the appearance of humans by hundreds of millions of years, so it is possible that there was a push out of Africa</li> <li>• The emergence of myth as constitutive of a new type of human community: self-reflective, coherent, communicating, engaging in hunting and collecting, and creating coherence, through the narrative and ritual management of symbols, leading to articulate language</li> </ul> <p>If this last point is plausible, then the earliest phase in the overall process is in itself myth-driven</p>	Proto-Human
II. Middle Palaeolithic, c. 80 ka BP	West Asia, and from there to Australia and New Guinea	5. The Mantis	N and / or M	leaving Africa and venturing into West Asia is likely to have produced new challenges and to have given access to new opportunities; possibly Neanderthaloid influence;	
III. Middle Palaeolithic, c. 40 ka BP	West Asia	6: 'Escape from the Ogre'	N and / or M	cultural and possibly genetic influence from neighbouring Neanderthals, who nonetheless are heading for extinction – possibly at the hands of the Anatomically Modern Humans	pre- <sup>*</sup> Borean

<sup>62</sup> Initially (2006a) I had included the World Egg here, as an obvious product of the Lightning Bird; but later research brought out that the World / Cosmic Egg does not belong to Pandora's Box, see van Binsbergen 2020c.

IV. Upper Palaeolithic, c. 30 ka BP	Central Asia	ii. The Primal Waters and the Flood	B (out of N)	installation of the cosmogony of the Mother / Mistress of the Primal Waters, and the Land	*Borean
V. Upper Palaeolithic, c. 20 ka BP	Central Asia	1. The Separation of Heaven and Earth 16. Shamanism, bones	N (H, A, B)	The Separation of Heaven and Earth as central cosmogonic theme; shamanism associated with naked-eye astronomy (for hunters, later agriculturalists). The shaman's (belief of) travelling along the celestial axis to Underworld and upper world / Heaven, created (the idea of) a politico-religious social hierarchy on which more effective forms of socio-political organisation could be based.	Peripheral and Central branches of *Borean have separated
VI. proto-Neolithic c. 12 ka BP	Extended Fertile Crescent	2. The Re-Connection of Heaven and Earth (after Separation) 19. The Cosmogonic Virgin and her Son / lover 14. Twins	R and M1	Neolithic food production through agriculture and animal husbandry; Neolithic arts and crafts such as pottery, spinning, weaving; male ascendance; complex society, the emergence of writing, the state, organised religion, and science; incipient metallurgy	Eurasian and Afroasiatic separated c
VII. Neolithic or Bronze Age c. 5 ka BP	Extended Fertile Crescent	7. From the Mouth	too recent and too limited in scope to be interpreted in terms of mtDNA Type	Masculinisation and mythical 'hysterical displacement' of procreative functions, from groin to mouth and head – transcendentalism as triggered by writing, the state, organised priesthood, and science	(Proto-)Afroasiatic, Indo-European, Nigercongo (Bantu), Nilosaharan
VIII. Neolithic to Iron Age c. 3 ka BP	Extended Fertile Crescent	14a. Twins, Two Children, Duality		further reflection needed	(Afroasiatic and Indo-European, cf. gender in language)
IX	Indo-Pacific, Oceania	to be identified	to be identified		Austronesian

I have not yet been able to consider the global distribution of the NarComs 21-37 in any detail, nor to reflect on their origin and history.

AMH = Anatomically Modern Humans

NarComs's tentative situation in space and time, the Narrative Complexes proposed to emerge in each CITI (only for NarCom 1 to 20), the mt (= mitochondrial) DNA Types associated with each CITI, possible trigger mechanisms for each CITI, and possible association between each CITI and major linguistic families

Table 4.3. Contexts of Intensified Transformation and Innovation (CITIs) in the history of world mythology among Anatomically Modern Humans

This model constitutes my personal theory of the Deep (or rather, Long-range) History of Stories (*cf.* the title of the 2007 Edinburgh conference). This model is not specifically under critical scrutiny here, but it does set the theoretical and empirical



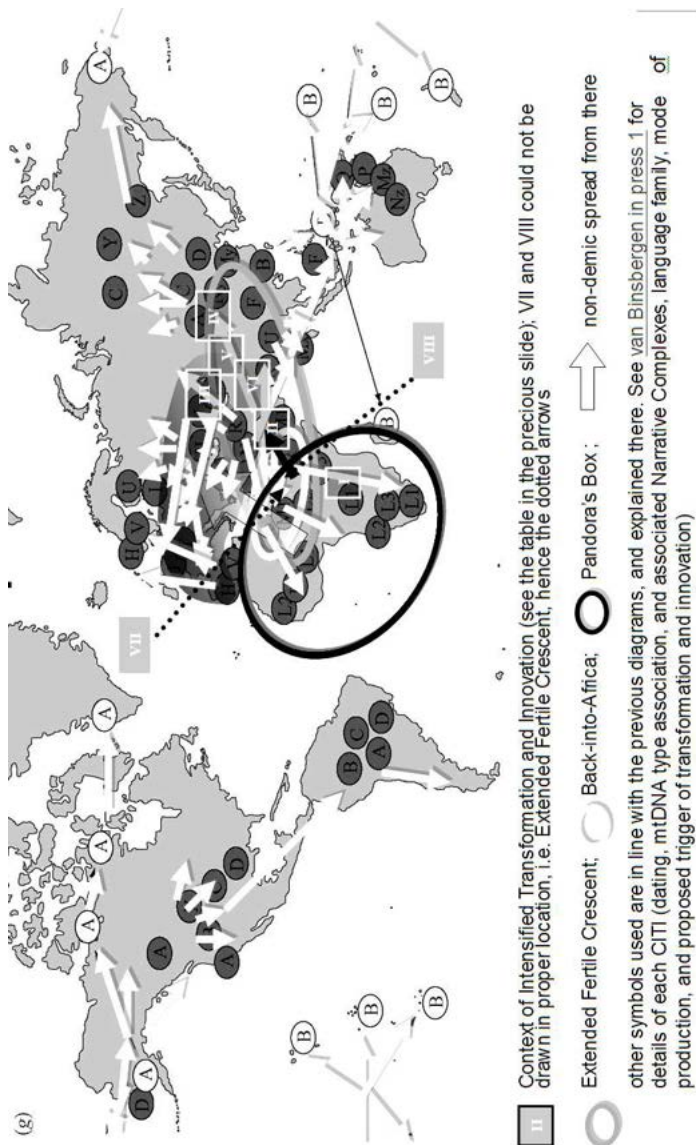


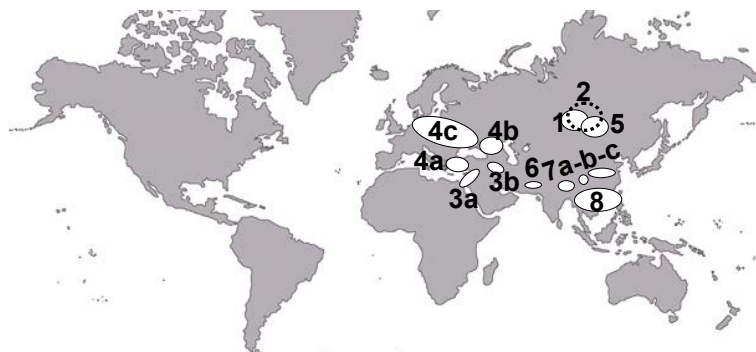
Fig. 4.1. CITIs in Anatomically Modern Humans' history of world mythology (still without Sunda and New World CITIs), projected onto Forster's 2004 overall reconstruction

background to the rest of the present argument. Meanwhile I can only stress its provisional and over-ambitious nature, the huge empirical and methodological difficulties entailed, and its dependence on interdisciplinary borrowing, which almost inevitably lags several decades behind.

And while endorsed by some participants in these conferences, it was also considerably doubted by some, notably on the following counts:

- Some disliked the pride of place given to Africa as the ultimate source of Anatomically Modern Humans' mythologies (criticism made by several Chinese interlocutors, Beijing, 2006; however, although earlier approaches to palaeoanthropology of China suggested an unbroken local continuity between Lower Palaeolithic Peking Man (*Sinanthropus*, at Zhou Kou Dian) and the Neolithic population of China,<sup>63</sup> there is as yet no viable Out-of-China alternative to the Out-of-Africa theory). Others disliked the reliance on demic diffusion and hence on state-of-the-art (but contested) reconstruction models in genetics (criticism made by Michael Witzel, Beijing, 2006; however, I cannot see how comparative mythology is to benefit – as Witzel himself proposes – from recent advances in population genetics without a massive recourse to demic diffusion).

This may also be the place to dwell a bit longer on the reconstructed \*Borean language complex, and on the branches (macrophylla and constituting phylla) of which it is supposed to have disintegrated in the outgoing Upper Palaeolithic. (I call the reader's attention to the cyclical nature of this statement: we have no direct evidence of \*Borean, and our indirect evidence consists entirely of the reconstructions based on the reconstructed protoforms of the constituent (macro-)phylla.) In other words, we are admittedly treading on very thin ice here.



1. \*Borean c. 25 ka BP (location implied in Tower of Babel / Evolution of Human Languages approach and in my Aggregative Diachronic Model)

2. (broken oval) location of mtDNA Type B people 30-20 ka BP (Forster 2004)

3. Nostratic/Eurasiatic (Bomhard 1984; Renfrew 1998; Gray & Atkinson 2003): 3a. Palestine, Kebaran culture of Palestine (18,000-10,500 BCE); 3b. the Zarzian culture of the Zagros mountains (12,400-8500 BCE)

<sup>63</sup> Watson 1964; more recently, the advocates of a regional, multicentred transition to Anatomically Modern Humans could be said to imply the same point: Wolpoff 1989; Thorne & Wolpoff 1992.

4. Indo-European: 4a Anatolian (Renfrew 1987); 4b Kurgan; 4c. Broad Homeland Hypothesis;
5. Uralic Urheimat (Fortescue 1998);
6. Dravidian (Jacques n.d.);
7. a-b-c. Sinotibetan (Jacques n.d.);
8. (highly contested) Austric > Austronesian

Fig. 4.2. Proposed Urheimats (original cradles) of \*Borean and most of the (macro-)phyla into which it has disintegrated

The main macrophyla not treated in Fig. 4.2 are Amerind (miscellaneous), and the African ones with the exception of Afroasiatic, in other words: Khoisan, Nigercongo and Nilosaharan. There is reason<sup>64</sup> to see these, too, as branches of \*Borean, and to situate their emergence *not* (as specialists in African languages prefer) inside Africa notably in the Lake Chad region c. 8 ka BP, but in West, East, South, and particularly Central Asia, in close association with the emergence of Austric and of Amerind.

The following Table succinctly presents the results of an extensive quantitative analysis of \*Borean and of the relationships between the macrophyla into which it has disintegrated. These results will often guide our arguments in the course of this book.

BANTU AS BOREAN (AN EXCERPT FROM VAN BINSBERGEN 2011b: 314 f., cf. in prep. (b) )

My statistical outcomes do suggest an initial bifurcation of the \*Borean-speaking linguistic, cultural and demographic stock, with

1. one, ultimately Peripheral, branch vacating the Central Asian homeland and moving on (being chased? or differentially better equipped with the necessary technology to explore new continents and their own initiative?) to South East Asia, Oceania, the Americas and sub-Saharan Africa, and
2. the other, ultimately Central, branch remaining in the Eurasian homeland, gradually expanding westward to finally occupy most of Eurasia, and the Northern half of Africa.

C A S E	0	5	10	15	20	25	
		+	+	+	+	+	
Bantu	27%	+	+	+	+	+	
Khoisan	4%	+	+	+	+	+	
Amerind	33%	+	+	+	+	+	
Austric	40%	+	+	+	+	I	
Eurasianic	81%	+	+	+	+	I	
Afroasiatic	66%	+	+	+	+	+	
Sino-Caucasian	72%	+	+	+	+	+	
log. time scale A (c = 0.476)	0	5	10	15	20	22.5	25 ka BP
		+	+	+	+	+	+
log. time scale B (c = 0.666)	0	5	10	15	20	22.5	25 ka BP
		+	+	+	+	+	+
uncorrected linear time scale	0	5	10	15	20	25	ka BP
		+	+	+	+	+	+

The logarithmic scale was experimentally determined so as to fit an estimated age for \*Borean of 25 ka (proposed date of the split separating the African-Amerind-Austric macrophyla from the Eurasianic-Afroasiatic-Sinocaucasian macrophyla), and, as a benchmark, the dissociation between Afroasiatic and Eurasianic at 12.5 ka BP (under the

<sup>64</sup> Starostin & Starostin 1998-2008; Kaiser & Shevoroshkin 1988; van Binsberge; van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011.

Natufian hypothesis – cf. Militarev 1996; Militarev 2002; Militarev & Shnirelman 1988; Turner 2008; and references cited there) according to which Afroasiatic emerged in Syro-Palestine in the context of the Mesolithic Natufian culture, c. 14.5 – 11.5 ka BP; and moreover assuming that the middle of the Natufian period marks the dissociation of Eurasian and Afroasiatic). The relative length  $k$  of each scale unit of 2.5 ka is given by:

$$k = 1 / (a+b^q \log(c^*q+d)) = 1 / {}^{10} \log(0.476^*q)$$

where  $q$  is the inversed rank of that scale unit, counting from the origin. Other choices for the parameters (the constants:  $c$ , here 0.476;  $a$  and  $d$ , here 0;  $b$ , here 1; and  $r$ , here 10) would produce a similar logarithmic scale but with lesser or greater acceleration of rate of change towards more recent millennia. The present parameter choice (scale A) gives a greatly accelerated rate of change from the Mesolithic onward. Stipulating a very high rate of acceleration for the most recent millennia, scale A situates the node splitting Austric from the African / Amerind macrophyta at c. 24 ka BP; the node splitting the Eurasian / Afroasiatic from the Sinocaucasian macrophyta at c. 23 ka BP; and the node splitting African macrophyta from Amerind at c. 20 ka BP. These are excessively high dates, which can be brought down by assuming the split between Eurasian and Afroasiatic to have occurred several ka later, and adjusting the parameters accordingly – as in scale B, with which I am more comfortable ( $c = 0.666$ ).

Perhaps there is a simple explanation for the bifurcation between the peripheral branch (African languages, Amerind and Austric) and the central branch (Eurasian / Nostratic, Afroasiatic, and Sinocaucasian) that strikingly emerges from Fig. 3. When we confront these statistical results with the reconstruction of the global history of mtDNA haplo groups (Forster 2004) the peripheral branch appears to derive from mtDNA Type M, the central branch from type N – the linguistic bifurcation then appears to mainly reflect an initial segmentation, already in the Arabian peninsula as early as 60 ka BP, of the second sally ‘Out of Africa’.

Table 4.4. Glottochronological analysis of the disintegration of \*Borean

#### 4.4.3. The nature of mythological diffusion

My own rejection of Witzel’s – in my opinion somewhat essentialising and hegemonic – Laurasian / Gondwana distinction, and instead my insistence, for historical times including the present, on massive mythological, and general cultural, continuity between sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of Eurasia, has constituted a point repeatedly contested between Michael Witzel and myself; e.g. Witzel 2005, 2012; van Binsbergen 2010a); meanwhile, I have argued such continuity in considerable detail for many Narrative Complexes / mythemes in considerable detail (van Binsbergen 2007d).

*Demic diffusion, however important for the world cultural history of Anatomically Modern Humans up to the Neolithic, simply cannot account for the unmistakable and highly complex, possibly intercontinental processes of non-demic cultural diffusion, which upset (‘contaminate’, in Farmer’s apt choice of words – 2005) the neat systematic appellation of demic diffusion, by cutting across such global distribution processes as were specifically and identifiably tied to the spread of the genetic subgroups of Anatomically Modern Humans (e.g. in terms of mtDNA Types – see Forster 2004 and above) across the Earth.*

The last phrase, appropriately *italicised*, finally answers the question as to why I like Oppenheimer’s General Sunda Hypothesis so much:

*Cultural diffusion from South East Asia / Indonesia after the onset of the Holocene (Oppenheimer’s Sunda expansion) turns out to be the single most important factor of relatively recent (proto-Neolithic and later) cultural contamination (through mere cultural, non-demic diffusion), cutting across the predominantly demic diffusion attending the proliferation of world mythology (and other post-Out of Africa cultural traits) in earlier periods up to the Mesolithic.*

So, thanks to Stephen Oppenheimer, we may now provisionally, on the basis of the additional Sunda evidence presented in the preceding pages, add one more major step to the seven major steps recognised above for the cultural history of Anatomically Modern Humans – whilst below (chapter 4) more such evidence will be forthcoming:

1. Emergence and intra-Africa percolation and cultural growth, c. 200-80 ka BP
2. Out of Africa Exodus to West Asia, c. 80 ka BP
3. First sally from West Asia, which due to climatic conditions and Neanderthaloid presence had to remain restricted to a narrow eastbound path along the Indian Ocean coast and which reached Australia / New Guinea, but remained largely abortive as far as the population of Asia and other continents is concerned, 80-60 ka BP
4. Second sally from West Asia to the rest of the world, c. 60 ka BP; possibly cultural exchanges with Neanderthaloids, who due to climatic deterioration (onset of last glacial) and possibly the inroads of Anatomically Modern Humans with greater adaptability, disappeared by 30 ka BP
5. Non-demic cultural diffusion of African (largely pre-Out of Africa) traits up North and North East, into Europe and West and Central Asia, from as soon as Anatomically Modern Humans appeared in the latter regions
6. Venture into the New World, from Central Asia, no earlier than 30 ka BP
7. Back into Africa movement from Central Asia via West Asia, and skirting Europe, as from c. 15 ka BP; to which we now add:
8. Sunda out-migration, c. 7.5-5.5 ka BP.

#### 4.4.4. *Pelasgian Hypothesis and cross model*

When grappling (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011) with the few scraps of cultural information that we have on the enigmatic Sea Peoples of the Late Bronze Age, and seeking to make sense of their unexpected and highly effective military co-operation even if the various ethnic groups involved appeared to hail from quite different regions in the Eastern and Central Mediterranean, I proposed to bring together the various documented aspects of Sea Peoples' culture into one diffuse package, supposed to be distributed over the Eastern and Central Mediterranean, and to have been conducive to the very kind of identification and collaboration that the historical events suggests to have existed between the various heterogeneous groups out of which the Sea Peoples were composed; despite their heterogeneity, there must have been a factor that united them sufficiently so as to destroy the Hittite empire, and effect lasting damage to the Egyptian empire. On the basis of further considerations that are outside our present scope, I formulated the *Pelasgian Hypothesis* (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011; van Binsbergen 201d, 201f, and in prep. (e)) in terms of a major cultural package, to be designated *Pelasgian* – but not to be identified with the speakers of the so-called *Pelasgian language* as identified by van Windekens (1951, 1960) and Hester 1965, I postulated that the *Pelasgian package* emerged in West Asia during the Neolithic, spread to the Mediterranean in the Bronze Age and underwent further transformations there, then spread both continentally and transcontinentally in all four directions ('the cross model') from the Late Bronze Age onward.

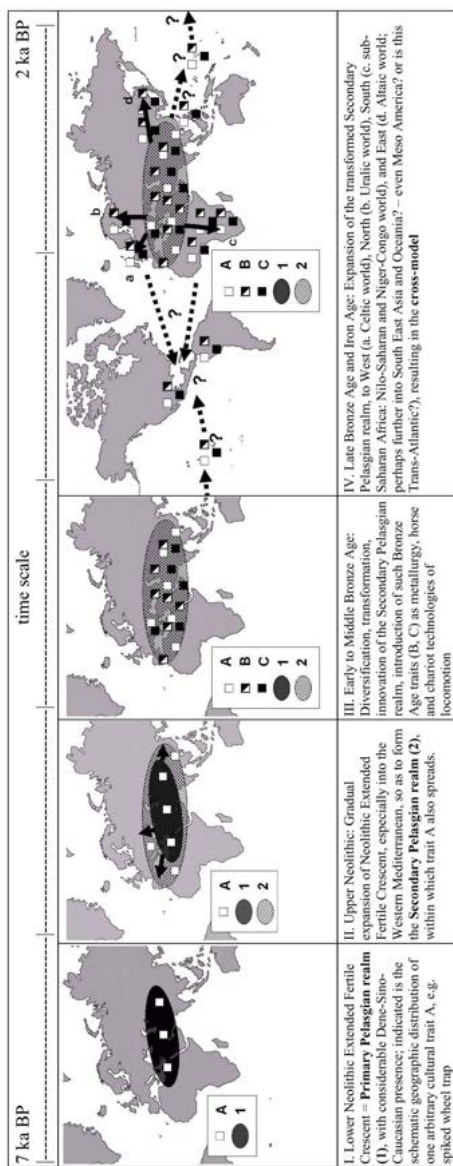


Fig. 4.2. Graphic representation of the Pelasgian Hypothesis

#### 4.4.5. *The merging of the Sunda and Pelasgian perspectives*

The Pelasgian Hypothesis and the Sunda Hypothesis are often complementary, in the sense that the same set of data may be meaningfully interpreted with the one or the other, and often a combination offers the most satisfactory results. If we take seriously the possibility of Sunda penetration into West Asia and further to the west (and the surprising etymological possibilities of interpreting major Mediterranean personal names from the Bronze Age in terms of Proto-Austronesian roots, below (also van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011), offers much food for thought here), we may even consider Sunda to shade over into Pelasgian: some traits that we see emerge in West Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean from the Neolithic onward (such as male genital mutilation, megaliths, the cult of the sea and of boats, the rise of maritime skills, *etc.*) *might be surmised* to have ultimately a Sunda background. Such an interpretation was already suggested (but not insisted upon) in our 2011 study of the Sea Peoples (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011). The list of Pelasgian traits which we then published brings out the fact that the Pelasgian cultural complex was most prominently present in Syro-Palestine and Ancient Egypt – indeed, areas which in Antiquity were recognised to be associated with the Pelasgians, whose non-Olympic religious life amazed the Ancient Greeks of the classical period – even though the city of Athens, and certain Aegean islands, were singled out as particularly partaking of the Pelasgian heritage. This would mean that the central role I have been inclined to assign to West Asia as the epicentre of many Pelasgian traits spreading around the globe, may have to be reinterpreted in the sense that from a Sunda perspective West Asia may only have been the shunting grounds for a more distant impact, upon the western Old World, of Sunda themes.

#### 4.4.6. *The analysis of global distributions through time*

In the last two decades, my sustained work in the field of comparative mythology has brought me to develop a methodology for the conversion of

- (a) a detailed, referenced distribution list of a particular trait, to
- (b) a global distribution map of mythological data, and finally
- (c) into a tentative long-range historical reconstruction.

I have set out this method, and given an elaborate example, in my earlier study of head-hunting (van Binsbergen 2014a), which I am incorporating below as chapter 12, not only because head-hunting is another potential ethnographic East-West parallel, but particularly because a full discussion offers us the opportunity of grappling with important theoretical and methodological issues of historical reconstruction on the basis of the global distributions of mythemes.

#### 4.5. *Introducing the implications of the Special Sunda Hypothesis for comparative mythology*

In the mythological field, Oppenheimer's principal application of the Sunda model is to the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East, which, as we know, were relatively recently (from 3 ka BP on<sup>65</sup> enshrined in the Judaeo-Christian-Islamic tradition (*Genesis* 1-11 and its less extensive Qur'anic counterparts – oldest tangible attestation in manuscripts from the 5th c. CE until the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls from around the beginning of the Common Era); but the first textual and iconographic attestations of these Ancient Near East core mythologies from other Ancient-Near-Eastern sources than the Bible are much older, and date from the second millennium CE.

In the trappings of these world religions, and as a result of the latter's proselytising, these Ancient Near East core mythologies found world-wide distribution especially in the course of the 2nd mill. CE.

So we might be tempted to jump to conclusions (particularly if we are dismissively sceptical of long-large comparative mythology anyway; Farmer 2007), and suggest that all evidence of that cycle, wherever in the world, can be explained away as resulting from recent Judaeo-Christian-Islamic proselytising.

Such a facile argument would

- a. run counter to Oppenheimer's – for it would no longer need the Special Sunda Hypothesis, with its claim that Sundaland and not the Ancient Near East, is the origin of the latter's core mythologies;
- b. it would also do violence to the very extensive world distribution of Flood stories, and of the firm mathematical features of that distribution, as we shall shortly see.

But before we can turn to a detailed consideration of the implications of the Special Sunda Hypothesis for comparative mythology, let us discuss such other evidence as exists for the General Sunda Hypothesis, in addition to Oppenheimer's own arguments.

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<sup>65</sup> Specialists now consider *Genesis* to have received its main redaction in the sixth or seventh century BCE; cf. Soggin 1997 and extensive references there.



# Chapter 5. Evidence from other sources than Oppenheimer supporting the General Sunda Hypothesis: Sunda traits among the Nkoya

## 5.1. *Concurring voices on Sunda-related processes*

Much to our relief, Oppenheimer has not been the only serious scholar to claim a westbound general cultural influence from Sundaland / South East Asia in pre- and proto-historic times.

The nautical historian *Hornell* (1934) already stressed 'Indonesian influences on East African culture', and so did, with very detailed musicological evidence especially on xylophones, the musicologist *Jones* (1964).

*Frobenius* convincingly stressed (1931) the coherence of a 'South-Erythraean' culture area stretching from the Ancient Near East to Zimbabwe and the Indus, but did not perceive a possible Sunda factor there.

Swahili and Malagasy studies<sup>66</sup> have done much to further explore this dimension.

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<sup>66</sup> Cf. Prins 1967; Neville, Chittick & Rotberg 1975; de Vere Allen 1992; Knappert 1970; Middleton 1991; Nurse &

Here the possibility and extent of Indonesian influence not only on Madagascar and the Comoros Isl. but also on mainland East Africa, and even South Central and West Africa, has remained a moot point – with Birkeli and Kent as despised pioneers claiming Indonesian settlement (royal courts, specifically) not just on Madagascar and the Comoros but also and particularly on mainland Africa.<sup>67</sup> In my opinion the royal courts of the Nkoya people of western Central Zambia are a case in point – and it is to these people, whose life and identity I have increasingly shared ever since I started anthropological and historical research among them in 1972, that we shall now turn.

## 5.2. *Towards the recognition of trans-regional cultural continuities involving the Nkoya people of Zambia*

The Nkoya people live dispersed over various districts in Zambia; while their heartland is in Kaoma district under the ‘chiefs’ / kings Mwene Kahare and Mwene Mutondo, other groups are found in Livingstone, Lusaka Rural, Mumbwa. and in the western Zambezi Flood-plain; there are considerable differences in dialect, modes of production, and details of commoner and royal ceremonial culture, between the people of Mwene Kahare (designated Mashasha) in the East of Kaoma district, and those of Mwene Mutondo (designated Nkoya Nawiko) in the West. My own half century of ethnographic and oral-historical research, including extensive and repeated fieldwork, among the Nkoya people and adoption into one of their royal families have yielded me ample information to convince me – albeit only in the last decade and a half, now that my research has come to encompass this kind of long-range problematic – of the extensive Indonesian traits especially attending their kingship.<sup>68</sup>

After more than a quarter of a century of intensive research and publishing, I only began to discern West Asian, South Asian and South East Asian traits in my data from Western Central Zambia in 1998, in response to Martin Bernal’s request to contribute an Africanist piece to his projected collection *Black Athena Writes Back*.<sup>69</sup> However, my short piece frantically grew into a long book draft, provisionally entitled *Global Bee Flight: Sub-Saharan Africa, Ancient Egypt, and the World – Beyond the Black Athena Thesis*, in the process I discovered both the power and the extreme limitations of the *Black Athena* (Egyptocentrist, ultimately Afrocentrist) orthodoxy as a paradigm for long-range intercontinental continuity in cultural history from an Africanist perspective, sadly but predictably I missed the deadline for Bernal’s book, nor had I an alternative paradigm available yet – in many ways the

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Spear 1985; Vérin 1975, 1989, 1990; de Flacourt 1661 / 1903-1920; Ferrand 1891-1902, 1910; Reade 1996; Dahl 1991; Beaujard 1983, 1991; Ellis 1838; Deschamps 1960; Bloch 1986; Valette 1965; Birkeli 1936; Dick-Read 2005; Kent 1970; however cf. Raison-Jourde 1994 for a disclaimer reiterating the standard anti-diffusion paradigm.

<sup>67</sup> Meanwhile, Adelaar (1994) affirms that there were such colonies from Java and the Malay peninsula on Sri Lanka and in East Africa.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. van Binsbergen 1992, 2007c, and in prep. (f).

<sup>69</sup> Published as Bernal 2001.

present argument presents such a paradigm and delivers the intended argument of *Global Bee Flight*. But whatever the ultimate outcome, at the time, back in 1998, such intercontinental connections (even in the simplified and ideological Afrocentrist version of Bernal) were downright unthinkable let alone unspeakable, at least in the North Atlantic Africanist circles of knowledge production to which I belonged institutionally. Here the ruling adage is and was: 'Africa for the Africans'. The unthinkability of extra-African influences on Africa had almost been a foundation dogma of modern, structural-functionalist anthropology. As the prominent anthropologist Seligman wrote in the 1930s:

'hence some part of my paper must be devoted to the routes by which Egyptian influence may have reached the heart of Africa. I need scarcely add that in the present state of our knowledge references to Babylonians, Sumerians, and Hittites, such as are to be found in some otherwise valuable works, seem entirely beside the question.' (Seligman 1934: 8)

All Seligman could consider as possible inroads for Egyptian influence in sub-Saharan Africa is three routes: up the White Nile, up the Blue Nile, and a maritime route along the North African coast up to Senegal, but not any further.<sup>70</sup>

Admittedly, the debate on Indonesian influences on Africa had been waged throughout the 20th century.<sup>71</sup> Yet the geopolitical and presentist presuppositions of the type of Africanist research that has been dominant in the North Atlantic region since the middle of the 20th century, simply constituted a paradigm within which long-range transcontinental themes of cultural history were considered utterly uninteresting, non-existent, even offensive. Where would I find the authoritative statement that would provide the much-needed background for my own, still inadequate and incomplete, reconstructions?

### *5.3. Afrocentric and Egyptocentric approaches towards the explanation of trans-regional cultural continuities involving the Zambian Nkoya, and why these approaches do not satisfy*

In the second half of the 1990s, my research and writing was largely preoccupied with the *Black Athena* thesis and Afrocentricity, and it stands to reason that I first looked there for inspiration in order to explain trans-regional cultural continuities involving the Zambian Nkoya. If Egypt had been able to exert a decisive influence on the Aegean (and by extension on subsequent European, North Atlantic and global culture), chances were that that same Egypt had exerted a similar influence on more or less adjacent parts of the African continent in which it found itself: Nubia, East Africa, West

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<sup>70</sup> Alexander 1988 denied that the Nile Valley was an inroad / corridor into sub-Saharan Africa and called it a 'cul-de-sac' instead; however, the view of the Nile Valley as a corridor has been upheld by Horton 1991: 265, and Adams 1977 / 1984. My distribution maps of the spiked wheel trap (van Binsbergen 2010b) also show very clearly that the Nile Valley is one of the two main venues for the southbound transmission of the Pelasgian heritage, in addition to the Trans-Saharan route starting in the North-eastern Maghreb (modern Tunisia).

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Hornell 1934; Jones 1964; Kent 1970; Chittick & Rotberg 1975.

Africa, and even South Central Africa where Nkoyaland is situated. Alternatively, if Egypt is to be considered a part of Africa (and this idea came only as an afterthought to Bernal's *Black Athena* thesis, when he sought to stress continuity between his own Mediterranean-centred analyses, and the vast body of Afrocentrist literature generated especially in North America in the past two centuries), then African influences will have travelled from sub-Saharan Africa to the rest of the world via Egypt – the mythical narrative patterns and socio-political arrangements which I found among the Nkoya and for which I had begun to see trans-regional, even intercontinental continuities, might well be exponents of original, primal African cultural forms spreading to other continents; according to the Afrocentrist adage (which I greatly supported at the time) initiative in global cultural history was invariable and exclusively the privilege of African societies and of Africans.

No doubt there is extensive continuity between Ancient Egypt and the rest of Africa; cf. many important contributions in O'Connor & Reid 2003, including Wengrow 2003 and (on West Africa and Egypt) Fohinso 2003. Already a century ago, the great Egyptologist Petrie (1914a, 1914b) gave an impressive list of such continuities; however, Shinnie 1971 is highly critical of Petrie's 1914 argument, which inevitably was based on methodologically obsolete and incomplete data. It is worthwhile to summarise Petrie's now obscure article because, even after almost a century, its author's phenomenal knowledge of Egyptian material culture, plus the obvious quality, already, of the available ethnographic literature on Africa, allowed him to identify many details of continuity which still cannot fail to impress us (I have covered the same ground in van Binsbergen 2012j):

A. TREATMENT OF THE BODY.

1. Mummifying
2. Contracted burial
3. Beheading the dead
4. Passage for the spirit<sup>\*a</sup>
5. Vehicle for the spirit
6. Restoration of ability to corpse
7. Recess graves
8. Pole over grave
9. Round-domed graves
10. Domed pit tomb
11. Sloping passage tomb

B. OFFERINGS FOR THE DEAD

12. Beer and flour offerings
13. Cloth offering
14. Offerings at the

grave

15. Killing the offerings
16. Offering chamber above grave
17. Drain to the east<sup>\*b</sup>
18. Men sacrificed at royal funeral
19. Eldest son the family priest
20. The funeral image
21. Tall hats of officials
22. Offering chamber for the image
23. The soul house

C. ROYAL FUNCTIONS

24. The chief as priest
25. The king killed before old age
26. Indirect mention of king's death
27. Sister marriage<sup>\*e</sup>

28. Honour of the royal placenta

29. Importance of leopard's skin

30. Potency of the ox tail
31. Ensign of the saw fish

D. BELIEFS

32. The mundane spirit world
33. Every object has its spirits
34. The ancestral spirit
35. The roads of the future
36. Twins human and animal
37. Ram-headed gods
38. The bull god
39. Totemism and animal clans

40. The sacred sycamore fig tree<sup>\*c</sup>

41. Red cattle sacrificed
42. Animal skulls hung up
43. Divination by objects thrown<sup>\*f</sup>

E. MATERIAL PRODUCTS

44. Red and white pottery
45. Red and black pottery
46. Mud toys<sup>\*d</sup>
47. Wooden head-rests<sup>\*</sup>
48. Wooden hoes
49. Double process spinning
50. Flat ground-loom
51. Mosquito nets
52. Harpoon
53. Drag net
54. Hand net

55. <b>Basket traps</b>	F. LATE INFLUENCE	59. The classical	<b>61. Architectural style</b>
56. Ring snares	FROM EGYPT	patterns	
57. Cone on the head	58. Terracotta Nigerian heads	60. Interwoven patterns	

Whilst relying on his uniquely extensive Egyptological knowledge, Petrie lists only a handful of sources for Africa: Werner 1906; Leonard 1906; Frobenius 1913; Seligman 1911a, 1911b, 1913; Johnston *et al.* 1913; Dennett 1906. Items applicable to the Nkoya in **bold and underlined**; when there is doubt whether an Ancient Egyptian entry applies to the Nkoya, an \* asterisk has been added.

<sup>a</sup>Among the Nkoya, when the owner of a house has died, the back wall opposite the entrance door is breached, and it is via this new passage that the dead body is carried out

<sup>b</sup>This may be a secret part of royal funerary procedure

<sup>c</sup>The standard form of shrine among the Nkoya is a debarked, hence white, forked arboreal branch (*chipanda*), which is also in use among various cults in this region, *e.g.* the *Bituma* healing cult and, a century ago, the prophetic movement of Mupumani (van Binsbergen 1981a). Instead, most villages have next to the headman's house a village shrine (*chanda*, 'the thing outside') consisting of a sacred shrub. The forked branch has a remarkable place in comparative religion: as a symbol incorporating the transition from trinity to duality to unity (*cf.* Graves 1988 182), it features widely in sub-Saharan Africa (van Binsbergen 1981a: ch. 3) even though the round ancestral pole, rudimentarily carved with human features, occurs with similar frequency in Africa, and has applications not only in the Nkoya *kara* (*cf.* Fig. 5b) but even as far afield as New Guinea and the Yenisei region, Siberia. The forked branch is specifically singled out in South Dravidian (Proto-Nilgiri: \**kavā*; Starostin & Starostin 1998-2008: 'South Dravidian etymology') but not specifically as a shrine. Such forked branches have widely played a role in head-hunting as stands for the resulting trophies. The forked branch also features in North America as a traditional shrine, especially with solar connotations (Hultkrantz 1980).

<sup>d</sup>As a result of several waves of witchcraft eradication movements in the region since the 1920s, Nkoya villages are now remarkably devoid of man-made traditional artefacts – all of which may have invited suspicions of sorcery. On comparative grounds it is likely that mud toys and wooden head rests once belonged to the repertoire of Nkoya material culture.

<sup>e</sup>Since the kinship system is classificatory, every Nkoya male has dozens of sisters (*bampanda*), even though only a few of these would be his actual biological siblings. An incest taboo rests on all these sisters. Sister marriage (*i.e.* with a classificatory sister who is a parallel cousin to whatever degree) is prohibited but occurs occasionally when the spouses are determined lovers (*cf.* van Binsbergen 1979) Royal sister marriage does not occur, but – like in the, also otherwise similar, Celtic world as depicted in the Arthurian legends – it is an indispensable part of the enthronisation rite of every king (*Mwene*) to have sexual intercourse with a sister on the eve of the event. This has been recognised as a common trait among the Bantu-speaking peoples (de Heusch 1958).

<sup>f</sup>Cleromantic divination does exist (van Binsbergen 2012a) in Barotseland, to which Nkoyaland belongs, but I have personally not encountered it among the Nkoya since the early 1970s; instead, principal forms are: trance divination (through dancing on sacred music; the contemplation of a mirroring fluid's surface in a container; friction divination with an axe handle; or hunting which, if successful, conveys the ancestors's consent with a choice to be made.

Entry 31, on the saw fish, is enigmatic; I suppose that the cat fish (*n<sup>r</sup>*) is meant – which features in the name *N<sup>r</sup>*-Mr as one the First-Dynasty kings.

Table 5.1. Flinders Petrie on African-Egyptian continuities, with special application to the Zambian Nkoya

### 5.3.1. Further on Egyptian / Nkoya continuities

I have written (van Binsbergen 2010a) at some length on the continuities between Nkoya mythology and the civilisations of the Old World, including Ancient Egypt. It is interesting to note that the above Table 5.1. corroborates such continuities in all domains of life as specified in the Table: funerary practices (A, B), royal functions (C), beliefs (D), material products (E), and 'late influence' (F). Out of the 61 Ancient Egyptian traits listed, more than 20 apply without hesitation to the modern Nkoya, together with more than half a dozen of more doubtful cases. The details of funerary royal practices are secret among the Nkoya (as they probably were secret among the Ancient Egyptians).

Despite my being adopted into a Nkoya royal family, yet in the course of my nearly half a century of association I have only have first-hand information – and then still incomplete – on one royal burial (1993), that of my adoptive father Mwene Kahare Kabambi, when my close adoptive kin from the village of Shumbanyama (who are among the original owners of the Kahare name, cf. van Binsbergen 1992) acted as royal gravediggers. By and large, the Nkoya funerary practices as listed in Table 5.1 are strongly reminiscent of the Ancient Egyptian ones, although the latter's elaboration in massive stone architecture (temples, graves, pyramids) is absent among the Nkoya. No soul house was spotted by me in Nkoyaland in the 1970s or later, but the concept is widespread among neighbouring peoples throughout South Central Africa. Also in the domain of royal functions, such continuity is manifest.

The only royal functions listed by Petrie for the Ancient Egyptians but not replicated among the Nkoya are: the honours extended to the *royal placenta* (there is a major cultural and social-organisational difference to be appreciated here: the Nkoya king is chosen from among a rather wide and rather unpredictable pool of matrilineal and patrilineal kinsmen, Nkoya kingship is therefore not – barring modern exceptions – directly inherited from father to son, so when a child is born one never knows if it will live to become king); and the ensign of the *saw fish* (even if a cat fish is meant) has – to the best of my knowledge – no equivalents in the kingship domain of the (entirely landlocked) Nkoya – as it seems too have among some other Bantu-speaking peoples much further to the North.

For the rest Nkoya royal practices are strongly reminiscent of those of Ancient Egypt: the Nkoya king is the privileged wearer of leopard skins, wields an eland tail (though not an ox tail) for fly whisker as a sign of royal status, is supposed to be killed by his royal council when he begins to show signs of senility (especially impotence), while ritual intercourse with a (classificatory) sister is a central, mandatory part of the inthronisation ritual.



cf. van Binsbergen, Wim M.J., 2011, Chief Mwene Mutondo blesses the new crops at the 2011 Kazanga ceremony, Kaoma, Zambia, at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTesGNCsB\\_o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTesGNCsB_o)

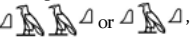
Fig. 5.1. During the Kazanga Annual Ceremony, 2011, King Mwene Mutondo blesses that year's crops at the temporary royal shrine (*kara*) erected for that occasion



Fig. 5.2. The royal shrine (*kara*) erected at the Shikombwe Royal Establishment of King Mwene Mutondo, 1992.


In the originally 19<sup>th</sup> c. CE Kazanga ritual (revived in a bricolaged way in the modern Kazanga annual festival) the king acts as priest mediating between the nation and the spirits of the land for the sake of fertility. Impersonating life force and solar power, nothing could embarrass the king more than death – much like the *Kahanim* religious leaders in Judaism, he is forbidden to go to funerals of others, and his own death can never be mentioned directly, not even when it has actually occurred and funerary preparations must be made. In the belief domain, ancestral spirits and the veneration of twins, among the Nkoya, are continuous with other Bantu-speaking peoples. Totemism and animal clans are well developed (cf. van Binsbergen 2012a: ch. 2). The standard village shrine among the Nkoya consists of a living shrub. Alternatively, a vertical forked branch is used, as mentioned above. The main shrine at the royal capital of Mwene Kahare is a pole in whose top a buffalo skull is suspended (Fig. 5.6.a).<sup>72 73</sup> In the material sphere Egyptian / Nkoya continuities are not overwhelming, and here the influence of globalising commoditification in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century CE – in combination with the iconoclastic effects of witchcraft eradication movements in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. CE – has been devastating; yet we may note as doubtful possibilities mud toys, wooden head rests (available among adjacent peoples), iron fish harpoon of local manufacture, basket traps especially for fishing, and (in ways that are strongly reminiscent of Ancient Egypt, although not mentioned by Petrie) the reliance on reed as a universal building material. In the architectural field, we admitted few continuities considering the massive stone architecture of the Ancient Egyptians whereas the 20<sup>th</sup>.c. CE Nkoya largely build with arboreal material and loam; yet the booth constructed for the annual Kazanga festival of the Nkoya are amazingly similar to those used for the Ancient Egyptian *heb sed* festival, frequently depicted on funerary walls and enshrined in an hiero-

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<sup>72</sup> By contrast, the royal capital of the other royal chief of the present-day Nkoya core land, Mwene Mutondo, is a small thatched miniature hut (van Binsbergen 1992; and Fig. 5.2 above), containing a few round, rudimentarily carved ancestral poles as well of specimens of unprocessed iron ore (*wutale*) as mined from the local rivers. The generic name for such a royal shrine is *kara*, and it is intimately connected with the king's claiming monopoly of the performance of male genital mutilation (*mukanda*). *Mukanda* was more or less customary among the Nkoya, and especially so in royal families, until the turn of the 20th c. CE, when it fell in practically total disuse, for reasons I have explored elsewhere (van Binsbergen 1992, 1993a). While quite a few Ancient Egyptian concepts and mythical figures can be demonstrated to have penetrated, in more or less recognisable form, to present-day Nkoya life (such as the royal titulatur 'She of the Reed and the Bee' and 'The Two Ladies', and the idea of humans as 'tears of the god'; van Binsbergen 2010a, 2010f, 2010g), the *kara* seems to be one of the few Ancient Egyptian words to survive intact in the Nkoya language:  <sup>q33</sup>, 'Primal Hill' (the first land to emerge from the primordial Flood). (Hannig 2000: 1374; Irwin 1982); the Egyptian enditic particle *ʒ* has the phonetic value a, ə, ar, al). I do not subscribe to the Diopian claim – alarmingly popular among today's African intellectual and religious elites – according to which all of sub-Saharan Africa's culture derives from Ancient Egypt; however, the above mythological parallels are unmistakable, and the southward spread of the Pelasgian cross model, carried by selected Sea Peoples after their defeat in Egypt at the end of the Bronze Age, provided a ready mechanism for such diffusion.

<sup>73</sup> Given the likelihood that South Asian influences were introduced among the Nkoya on the basis of a Chola / Tamil background, there is a possible parallel here with the Tamil custom erecting such a buffalo shrine against the evil eye, Chitty 1992: 129.



glyphic sign of its own:  *h 3b sd*. An impression such reed booths at Kazanga may be gathered from Fig. 4.4d.

Considering the presence of unmistakably Egyptian (and Mesopotamian) elements in Nkoya mythology (van Binsbergen 2010a), the very long period elapsed between the flourishing of the Ancient Egyptian civilisation and the present (even at the rate of 1 km / year could such traits travel all the way down the African continent in the mean time), the many contemporary reports on Egyptian explorations into the African interior for gold, skins, slaves, dwarves, incense, *etc.*, and the actual finding of an Egyptian statuette in the Congo basin not far from Nkoyaland (Breuil 1951), I am inclined to attribute the presence of these Egyptian parallels among the Nkoya in the first place to downright North-South borrowing; however, we cannot rule out the possibility that, for many of these corresponding trait, Egyptians and Nkoya drew from a shared source – a substrate of African or West Asian / Pelasgian traits available since the Neolithic; or even a substrate of Sunda traits.

Leaving the possible Sunda dimension aside for a moment, this serves to introduce the more general question raised by the data in Table 5.1: *whether such correspondences are due*

- a. to the influence of Ancient Egyptian culture on the rest of Africa, or reversely,
- b. to the fact that Ancient Egypt simply, as another African society, was a product of sub-Saharan Africa.

Since this question was most cogently put by the Egyptologist Fairman (1965), I propose to call this *Fairman's dilemma*; more recently, Keita has posed the same question in slightly different terms (Keita 1981; also cf. O'Connor & Reid 2003). Comparative professional thinking among Egyptologists and archaeologists in the last few decades has tended to (b)<sup>74</sup> and has thus converged with Diopian and other forms of Afrocentrist thought.<sup>75</sup> A new phase has entered in this debate, now that the Afrocentrist point of view is taken more and more seriously in Egyptological circles (e.g. Ndigi 1997, and in general the scholarly journal *Cahiers Caribéens d'Égyptologie*).<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Hoffman 1979; Celenko 1996; O'Connor 1994; Davies 1991; Hassan 1995

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Diop 1962, 1979, 1981; cf. Fauvelle 1996, 2000, Lam 1989; Noguera 1976; Bernal 1987, 1991, 2001, 2006; Obenga 1992; Van Sertima 1995. In fact, however, the well-known Egyptologist E.A. Wallis Budge of a century ago (cheap reprints of whose obsolete books have earned him lasting authority among amateurs dabbling in Egyptology to this day) already championed the Afrocentrist view of Egypt a century ago in great detail (e.g. his *Osiris I-II*), alternating accounts (often with racist overtones, as was almost inevitable at the heyday of colonialism and imperialism) of African religious beliefs and practices such as Budge had painstakingly gleaned from the then available literature, by the insistent and elaborate argument that the venerated Ancient Egyptians should in the first place be understood as Africans.

<sup>76</sup> Ndigi (1997) cites a number of famous early Egyptologists supporting the same idea, e.g. K. Meinhof, J. Capart, R. Cotteville-Giraudet, H.P. Blok (who from Egyptologist developed into a Bantuist, and whose granddaughter was a critical contributor to the *Black Athena* debate: Blok 1997 / 201), F. Daumas.

However, in all fairness we must admit that, given the fact that Ancient Egypt was a major cosmopolitan power for three millennia, and that its trading and military contact extended far South into the Sudan and beyond, it is simply inevitable that Ancient Egypt, once established as such, exerted a strong cultural influence all over the Northern half of the African continent. The literature supporting the latter view is too voluminous to do justice to here.<sup>77</sup>

Meanwhile Fairman's dilemma takes on a rather different aspect when viewed from the perspective of

1. further advances in Egyptian and West Asian archaeology and linguistics
2. state-of-the-art population genetics, especially the 'Back-into-Africa' movement discussed above., and
3. from my Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology.

Much as recent scholarship has stressed the sub-Saharan contribution to the making of Ancient Egypt, the West Asian contribution has long been recognised to have been at least equally important:<sup>78</sup> writing, iconography, cylinder seals, temple architecture, objects marking temple foundations, royal funerary human sacrifice (Emery 1961; Rice 1990; Wilkinson 2001) are among the more conspicuous items of archaeologically attested material culture testifying to Egypt's indebtedness to Sumer. From the proto-Neolithic onward, the more recent Centres of Intensified Transformation and Innovation of mythology – in other words, the laboratories for the articulation and innovation of worldview – were situated in West Asia, or along what I have called the Extended Fertile Crescent, from the fertile Sahara to China.

In combination, the points 1 to 3 allow us to see Egypt's apparent indebtedness to Sumer as more than just a case of one local culture (Sumer) influencing, even triggering, another. The cultural and genetic makeup of sub-Saharan Africa in recent times was largely determined by the combination of 'ancient genes' (the L<sub>1</sub>, L<sub>2</sub> and L<sub>3</sub> mtDNA Types, dating from before the Out-of-Africa Exodus, to which more recent, Asia-originating clades were added through the Back-into-Africa movement) and 'recent myths': notably, the mythology that had developed in the more recent CITIs in West Asia, and that was now entering Africa, where it was superimposed upon,

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<sup>77</sup> A few glimpses: Wainwright, a professional Egyptologist, sees an Egyptian influence in West African cultures (Wainwright 1949a), and proposes that Meroe was the station through which Egyptian metalurgy passed to Bunyoro (whereas in neighbouring East African groups such technology had rather Swahili [ perhaps Sunda? – WvB ] connotations (Wainwright 1954). Incidentally, Wainwright (1949b) sees an Ethiopian, specifically Galla, hand in the founding of Great Zimbabwe, but that is not the point here. Meyerowitz 1960 on Ghana; Seligman 1934 especially with reference to the Nilotic societies of the Sudan; Breuil 1951 reports on an Egyptian statuette excavated in Congo; Schmidl 1928 traces Egyptian basketry techniques in Africa in much detail; Lucas 1970, on continuities between Egyptian and West African religion; Lam 1993 traces the widespread Peul / Fulani pastoralists to Egypt, as if the wholesale paradigmatic rejection of the Hamitic Hypothesis never took place.

<sup>78</sup> Rice 1990; Ray 1996; Kantor 1952; Moorey 1987; Blackman 1924; and references cited there.

and to a considerable extent eclipsed, the pre-Out of Africa mythology and its meantime local developments. The point is that Ancient Egypt, and sub-Saharan Africa, participated jointly in this feedback movement; it even had an impact on South and West Europe.

A corollary to this observation revolves on the cultural affinities of the Egyptian Delta and of Lower Egypt in general. Clearly, Upper Egypt has much of the sub-Saharan African continuity which Bernallian and other Afrocentrist through would make us expect: Williams 1986, 1987, argues convincingly that essential elements in the royal symbolism of Early Dynastic Egypt were already available many centuries before in Nubia: the royal bark, the tall conical crown that ended up as Upper Egypt's white crown, and the *srh* or palace façade as a royal emblem.

However, the Delta has a rather different signature: its cult of Neith, the bee and honey connotations of both Neith and of the kingship of Lower Egypt, affinities in trade and material culture, the Libyan connotations of its population and of Neith<sup>79</sup> (which however were to find their way into the royal symbolism of united Egypt), and its language which in some respects displays not Afroasiatic but Indo-European affinities (Kammerzell 1994; Ray 1992), – all this bears witness of continuity with West Asia / Anatolia, rather than with Nubia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Kammerzell sets out to analyse leopard symbolism in Ancient Egypt and sees continuity, not with Upper Egypt or with sub-Saharan Africa, but with the Palaeo-Levantine leopard symbolism in Anatolian Çatal Hüyük, which for decades was the standard example of an early Neolithic culture – before recent excavation brought to light Anatolian Neolithic cultures that were several millennia older, likewise with the leopard prominent in their iconography (Landesmuseum 2007); and before, recently, some doubt was cast on the integrity of Mellaart as Çatal Hüyük's principal excavator.<sup>80</sup>

Among the possible Indo-European elements in the Delta we might also mention the theonym *3kr*, 'the Earth god' (Kaplony 1963: I, 615). An obvious Indo-European etymology could be given for this word.

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<sup>79</sup> Cf. Kaplony 1963: I, 534: *Nt-thnw-k3*, 'Die libysche Neith ist ihr Ka(?)'. The bee theme has also Anatolian parallels in that in the Hittite *Telepinu / Telebinu Epic* it is a bee which saves the world; in the Eastern and Central Mediterranean basin, priestesses and priests were known as *Melissai*, 'bees'; the bee was recognised as one of the Great Goddess' animal attributes in the works of Marija Gimbutas and her followers.

<sup>80</sup> The 2019 volume of TAAANTA addresses these allegations of Mellaart's lack of integrity, but finds that at least in regard of the deliberate forging of significant texts (now lost except in illustration) Mellaart needs to be exculpated because his technical knowledge of the Luwian language in question cannot possibly have been so perfect that he could foresee features found in that document but only recently corroborated from other finds.

<p><b>Proto-IE:</b> *ag'r-o-, 'field' (cf. Pokorny 1959-69: I, 37)  <b>Old Indian:</b> ájra- m. 'field, plain'  <b>Armenian:</b> art 'Acker'  <b>Old Greek:</b> agrô-s m. 'Feld, Acker'  <b>Germanic:</b> *akr-a- m., *akr-ôn- f.: e.g. <b>Gothic:</b> akr-s m. (a) 'field'; <b>Old Norse:</b> akr m. 'Acker; Korn, Ackerfrucht', ekra f. 'Ackerland'; <b>Old English:</b> äcer (äcyr), -es m. 'a field, land, sown land'; <b>Dutch:</b> akker m. .  <b>Latin:</b> ager, -rī m. 'Acker, Feld'  <b>Other Italic:</b> Umbrian ager 'ager'</p>
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(c) Tower of Babel, 'Indo-European etymology):

Table 5.2. Possible Indo-European etymology of Ancient Egyptian ʒkr, 'the Earth god'

The Proto-Indo-European root cannot be traced back to \*Borean. However, somewhat predictably, there may be a superficial resonance with Proto-Austriac \*rVj 'field'; which seems to be grist for the Sunda mill.

<p><b>Proto-Austriac:</b> *rVj 'field';  <b>Proto-Austroasiatic:</b> *rɛ / *rj 'field';  <b>Proto-Thai:</b> raj.B &lt; *rai. (...)</p>
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(c) Tower of Babel, 'Austriac etymology' (adapted)

Table 5.3. Austriac etymology of 'field'

Yet, preferably, there is also a valid Afroasiatic etymology:

<p><b>Proto-Afroasiatic:</b> *kwr (Chadic, Cushitic) ~  <b>Semitic:</b> *ʔkr 1, *ʔa/ikkār- 2: <b>Proto-Semitic:</b> *ʔkr 1, *ʔa/ikkār- 2 'to cultivate 1, laborer 2'  <b>Number:</b> 1946  <b>Akkadian:</b> ikkaru, inkaru (Nuzi) 'plowman, farm laborer; farmer, small farmer; plow animal (Nuzi)' Old Akkadian on (Chicago Assyrian Dictionary <i>i</i>, 49; von Soden 1959-1981: 368; according to both sources, from Sumerian engar, which is hardly so in view of the comparative data)  <b>Hebrew:</b> ʔikkār 'agricultural worker without land' (Gesenius 1915 47 = HAL)  <b>Syrian Aramaic:</b> ʔakkārā 'agricola', ʔkr 'arravit, agrum coluit' (Brockelmann 1951-1954, 20)  <b>Mandaic Aramaic:</b> AKR 'to plow, dig, cultivate' (Drower &amp; Macuc 1963: 18 [= DM] ), ʕkara 'peasant, husbandman, tiller of soil' (Drower &amp; Macuc 1963: 349)  <b>Arabic:</b> ʔakr- 'action de creuser la terre, une fosse; action de laborer la terre', ʔakkār- 'qui creuse la terre, fossoyeur; labourneur' (BK 1, 42), ʔkr 'labourer (le sol), le creuser' (Belot 1929, 11)  <b>Amharic:</b> akkārā 'to renew the land by plowing and sowing' (Leslau 1979: 593)  <b>Gurage:</b> Chaha t-akārā, Enn. Gyeto t-ākārā, End. t-ākārā 'to build a house and cultivate the field around it for the first time' (Leslau 1979: 593); cf. Leslau 1993.  <b>Notes:</b> The Hebrew and Amharic forms and, probably, Arabic ʔakkār- may eventually be Akkadian loanwords, in which case the Mandaic and Arabic verbs should be analyzed as an exceptional instance of an "artificial" reverse primary verb derivation from an agent noun *ʔi/akkār- derived, in its turn, from Semitic *ʔkr 'to cultivate, plough' preserved in Amharic and Gurage  <b>Egyptian:</b> *ʔkr 'Earth-god'  <b>Western Chadic:</b> *kura-mi- 'hoe', *kwr 'to reap', *kVwīr- 'sickle'  <b>Central Chadic:</b> *kwr ~ *kwr 'to hoe', *kawira-(mi)- 'hoe'  <b>South Cushitic:</b> *kur- 'to cultivate'  <b>Notes:</b> Likely related to *kiry- ~ *kVw/ʔVr- 'garden, cultivated field' (Akkadian, Chadic West, Egyptian)</p>
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(c) Tower of Babel, 'Austroasiatic etymology' (adapted)

Table 5.4. The Afroasiatic etymology of 'cultivation'

As is clear from the extensive corpus of Early-Dynastic Egyptian hieroglyphic documents, the *nsw-bit*<sup>81</sup> title was already fully standard by the 2<sup>nd</sup> dynasty (Kap-lony 1963: I, 527, 528).

There is another side to the presumably Indo-European etymology of Ancient Egyptian *bit* as a dominant and persistent element of Egyptian royal titlature: this belongs to the Eurasiatic / Nostratic realm in the narrower sense (without such elements of Super-Nostratic as Nigercongo and Nilosaharan), and is a further indication that it was not just the cultural contributions from sub-Saharan Africa that led to dynastic Egypt, but that the latter was a combined product of both African and Eurasian contributions. Working with a different conception of Nostratic / Eurasiatic than their Eastern European colleagues, notably including Afroasiatic in Nostratic as a daughter phylum and not leaving it out as a sister phylum, Bomhard & Kern's<sup>82</sup> listings allow us to determine that there are very few animal species that have been so symbolically and culturally central that they have converging, cognate names throughout the Nostratic realm and hence in Proto-Nostratic: the bee, the falcon, the partridge and the eagle; of these, the bee and the falcon are highly conspicuous as divine and royal animals in Ancient Egypt and among the Nkoya, the partridge in North Africa (where it survives in saintly legends, cf. van Binsbergen 1980, 1985a; but also see below, my discussion of Perdix [ Partridge ] / Talos, Daedalus' kinsman and victim; while the eagle is symbolically and religiously important throughout the Old and the New World; below we will encounter that bird in connection with cosmogonic myths. In Africa the eagle (especially the fish eagle, *Haliaeetus vocifer*), although widespread, is not very conspicuous as a symbolically charged animal, but it appears sporadically in the royal symbolism of South Central Africa: the Nkoya have an Eagle clan, and their creation myth lists an eagle as Creator or Demiurge (van Binsbergen 1992, 2012a); there are the famous huge eagle stone sculptures of Ancient Zimbabwe; and the fish eagle appears in Nigerian and Congolese art.<sup>83</sup> Considering the prominence of eagle symbolism in Indonesia, where the divine eagle Garuda plays a central role as the mount of Vishnu and in its own right, one might hypothesise that the African cases of eagle symbolism could have a Sunda background, especially since they are all in the Sunda track. But the case is very weak.

There are many signs of cultural, linguistic and religious continuity between the Egyptian Delta and the Levant in the Early Bronze Age. Some of these are set out by Karst:

‘...Abart von Musur, Misur (= Ägypten), war einst der Name aller nordöstlichen Küstengebiete des arabisch-ägyptischen Busens und bezeichnete ausserdem noch das östliche Kilikien. Und wenn Retnu oder Rtnu die ägyptoide Bezeichnung von Sudostjudäa, Peräa, Coelesyrien und Nordostsyrien war, so müssen ursprünglich dort auch Misraimiten gewohnt haben. Die Josephstämme Ephraim und Manasse haben nach unserer Vermutung in ihren Namen, die Westen—Osten bedeuten, eine Reminiszenz an das vorsemitische Ae-

<sup>81</sup> I.e.  *n-sw-bit* ‘She of the Sedge / Reed – [and ] the Bee’.

<sup>82</sup> Bomhard & Kerns 1994; Bomhard 1984.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Jacobson-Widding 1992; Ben-Amos 1973; de Craemer *et al.* 1976.

gyptertum Palaestinas bewahrt. Manasse = aegypt. koptisch manesha, manshai, maensai (majnshai), Osten, Orient.<sup>84</sup> Ephraim = albanisch mbreme, Abend#. Haimonia, der vorgriechische Name Thessaliens, das ursprünglich von einem grossen Binnensee bedeckt war, ist = aegypt. koptisch hoeim, hoimi, haime, plur. hime, hmaie,, Überschwemmung, Sintflut". Kilikisch Syennesis als Königstitel: koptisch ju-en-jise „Oberherr" Sis und Mesis in Kilikien: koptisch cisse, jisi „Höhe, Berggrucken". Makedonia haengt zusammen mit ägyptisch mahet „regio septentrionalis". Kephta oder Kefte, die aegyptische Bezeichnung für Kilikien, Kappadokien, ist vermutlich Kurzname eines \*Ai-kephta, Hay-kephta oder \*Aia-kephta: das waere die authentische Originalbezeichnung eines kilikisch-kappadokisch-kolchischen Aegyptos, das durch Herodots Bericht gewahrleistete asiano-pontische Aegypten. Mesopotamien erscheint uns unter demselben Gesichtswinkel einer urspruenglich aegyptischen Besiedelung, entstellt aus Medzur (Misur, Mysor)paddan. Dieses Medzur-Paddan ist synonym von Aram-paddan. Also wird vermutlich das spätere Aramaea in praehistorischer Zeit den Namen Medzur (Musuri, Mysur) getragen haben. Vgl. auch die armenische Tiefebene Basorapedon (Vaspurakan). Eine einstige Erstreckung der Wohnsitze der Protoaegypter bis ins pontische Nordwestkleinasien hinein wird auch dadurch als kategorische Voraussetzung geboten, dass das aegyptische Glossar mit dem Karthwelisch-Iberischen vieles gemeinschaftlich hat. Wir verweisen auf die diesbeueglichen Forschungen von Nikolai Marr und konstatieren, dass jeder Kenner und objektive Vergleicher beider Sprachen einen intimen glossarischen Konnex zwischen Aegyptisch und Karthwelo-Iberisch oder Suedkaukasisch anzunehmen genotigt ist. Ueber ein asiatisches oder nordliches Aegypten handelt [Moreau de Jonnes 1873:] 53-78. — Über kuschitische Kolonien in den pontisch-thrakisch-anatolischen Gebieten vgl. denselben, *ibid.*, Kap. II: Les Colonies Couchites, pg. 79 f. Wichtig ist unter diesem Gesichtspunkte, dass es in grauer Vorzeit als Pendant zum afrikanischen Libyen eine pontischasiatisch-turanische "Libya" gab. Das älteste Turaniervolk, wie es sich noch in der iranischen Heldensage (*Schahnameh*) spiegelt, ist identisch dem biblischen Kainvolk; Kain—Kainan weist auf das pontisch-libyische Amazonengeschlecht (Weibervolk, armenisch kanani "Frauen") hin, unter denen wir Hamiten verstehen müssen. Die Prototuraniener oder Kainiten waren entschieden Hamiten. Noch ein so vorsichtiger Ethnograph wie Friedrich Müller glaubte daher die Urheimat der Hamiten in Nordiran bzw. Medien ansetzen zu müssen.' Karst 1931b: 58 f.

In the Delta in the Early Dynastic period, Neith occupies an important place. Her temple in the North Western Delta is depicted on a famous first-dynasty wooden label from Abydos, and many names of queens and ladies-in-waiting recorded in Upper Egypt are theophoric on Neith, as if (Emery 1961; van Binsbergen, in prep. (m)) the ritual blessing of this Lower Egyptian goddess, and marital ties with her priestesses, were essential for the legitimation of the Southern dynasty – or rather (given the constant war between the Southerners and the Delta with its Libyan and Levantine connotations) as if, in ways we were subsequently to see all over the Mediterranean from the Bronze Age onward (*cf.* Gellner 1969; van Binsbergen 1971 and in prep. (h)), the Neith cult and its central shrine, as a pacifist element of conflict regulation and reconciliation with divine sanction, was a central force of mediation in the process that was soon to be known as the Unification of Upper and Lower Egypt.

If we accept the hypothesis of a 'Pelagian', Sunda-influenced ethnic and cultural

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<sup>84</sup> [original footnote in Karst: ] Auch das lydische Kleinasien wird einst Maian-asi(a), Menuasia (Maionia + Asia) geheissen haben. Daraus machten die Griechen ihr Μετων Ασία= Asia Minor. Wenn nun aber das lydisch-kleinasiatische Binnenland aegyptischerseits der "Osten, Orient" benannt worden ist, so muessen aegyptoider Hamiten in der Aegaeis und an der jonisch-lelegischen Kueste Kleinasiens angesiedelt gewesen sein.

substrate in the Mediterranean and Pontic region in Neolithic times, then Neith with her bee-related priesthood appears as nicely continuous with the other bee-associated priesthoods all over the Eastern Mediterranean, as signs of a primal local cult of the land (also cf. the cults of Tammuz, Moloḥ, Zalmoxis, Beelzebub, Kybele, the Pelasgian cult of Dodona in Northern Greece; Karst 1931b: 67–68) which invading rulers, such as those of Early-Dynastic Upper Egypt, could not afford to ignore because such cults constitutes the only institutional base to afford them local legitimacy. Having intensively studied North African shrine cults since the late 1960s, I recognise here a pattern that has also considerable and illuminating applicability in the pre-colonial history of South Central Africa throughout the second millennium CE (van Binsbergen 1981a: ch. 3 and 4).

Another example illuminating socio-political conditions in Early Dynastic Egypt, is Queen *Mryt-Nt*, daughter, spouse, and mother of kings. Although there is little doubt as to the female gender of *Mryt-Nt*, the feminine ending –t in the first part of her name is not always written (Kaplony 1963: I, 493 f.), so that the name out of context could be attributed to a male person. There is an interesting parallel here with oral traditions about Nkoya royals. Contrary to Afroasiatic (which, with Indo-European and Khoisan, is one of the few language families to distinguish gender), there are no syntactic means in the Nkoya language to identify a person's gender, hence traditions about royals could refer to persons of either sex, unless the context explicitly declares them to perform activities uniquely reserved to one gender (but even a verb like *ku-bereka*, 'to produce, to give birth', is used for both mother and father). Since over the last two centuries nearly all their ruling kings have been males, modern informants and commentators among the Nkoya are inclined to project the male gender back into the past, and it is only by painstaking close reading and cross comparison of traditions that it gradually turns out that before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, female kings predominate (van Binsbergen 1992). So I have argued for the Nkoya in late pre-colonial times, in a process of the formation and consolidation of states, a *masculinisation process* which later turned out to have considerable parallels in the Early Dynastic Egypt (c. 5 ka BP) and throughout the Ancient World (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011). I believe the parallel mainly springs from parallel structural features of the political situation. However, certain motifs in Nkoya oral traditions (as considered in van Binsbergen 2010a) are so strikingly similar to traits reported from Ancient Egyptian Early Dynastic texts that one begins to contemplate an actual, historical link. Diffusion from Egypt has been my hypothesis to explain these correspondences, but the General Sunda Hypothesis suggests an alternative: perhaps both Egypt, and the Nkoya kingship, drew from the same intercontinental inspiration mediated through Sunda expansion. Incidentally, also Egyptologists are given to the tendency to read male gender even when a female gender may be indicated, e.g. Kaplony 1963: I, 509:

'Msn(t)-Nt: St 1Q OMRO Nr. 51; Personal Name -. "Neith ist meine Harpuniererin". msnt ist kaum als "Spinnerin" (OMRO) zu verstehen (zu man "spinnen" vgl. Junker, Giza V, 42), Zur Vorstellung vgl:- CT [ *Coffin Texts* ] VI 221n. Bei dieser Männerstele [apart from the reference to a weapon usually wielded by men there is no textual or archaeological indication of the stele owner's gender; Neith is the female goddess associated with bow and arrow ] kann sich msnt

nicht auf den Namensträger beziehen. Vielleicht gehört das t der Femininendung zu Nt (Msn-Nt "Harpunier der Neith").' [here Kaplony no doubt thinks of Neith as female hippopotamus].

But having thus helped to underpin the Egyptian Early Dynasty in a manner that suggests (along with architectural and epigraphic manifestations, a careful gender balance, we soon see a marked shift towards male dominance both politically and religiously. Theophoric Neith names for royal women abound in the first dynasty. One of them is the much-debated Htp-Nt,<sup>85</sup> There is even an aristocrat or royal – the kingship which Emery 1961 wanted to generously bestow on her was contested by Kaplony – with the name of *Hr-Nt* 'the Horus Neith'. Mry-k3, the highest state official during the reign of one of the 1<sup>st</sup>-dynasty kings, could boast several official titles including hm-ntr-Nt, 'prophet of Neith'; this title again testifies to the central place of Neith in that early period, and to the religio-political prominence of women then: throughout the Old Kingdom, no persons of male gender have been known to carry the title of prophet of Neith (it is usually interpreted as 'head of the harem of weaving women'), which also suggests that the highly-placed *Mry-k3* was a woman.<sup>86</sup> The theophoric name *Nb(t)-k3-Nt* 'Neith is the Mistress of my k3' (Kaplony 1963: I, 538) reminds Kaplony of what Leclant 1953 wrote about an ivory tablet found in Heluan,

'...sa gravure, très fine, représente un personnage assis sur un trône, derrière lequel se dresse le signe de Neith: devant, légende.'

Another such tablet, so eloquent as to the dynastic significance of Neith, was found at Heluan with the name of Htp-Nt.

But already in the Third Dynasty Djoser's queen is merely called, *Htp-hr-nbty*, 'In peace is the Horus the Two Lords', where the last two male elements are derived from the then solidly established royal titlature. Neith is pushed to the background in favour of male gods: Horus, Set, Osiris already, Ptaḥ, and from the 5<sup>th</sup> dynasty on Re<sup>c</sup>; only rarely will she appear in later texts in all her splendour as the primal goddess of the waters, of creation, and of the sky (which she threatens to let collapse in order to win the upperhand in the trial of Horus and Set),<sup>87</sup> and she is reduced to a funerary guardian goddess, which is how we find her back in the New Kingdom tomb of Tut<sup>c</sup>-anḥ-Amun. In the process Neith herself may take on masculine traits. A glimpse of the masculinisation of female Neith to male Osiris may be seen, for instance, in *Pyramid Text* 42c:

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<sup>85</sup> Cf. Kaplony 1963: I, 590 f.; Petrie (1900-1901) sees Htp-Nt as the queen of the presumable founder of the first dynasty ḥ ('Aha); Newberry and Wilkinson as the queen of Nṛ-Mr; Helck as two different women notably the wife of Rḥty and a regentess-queen. Kaplony believes there are indications to consider Htp-Nt the queen of ḥ and the mother of T3j although not of ḥ's son Sḥty. The scholars' difficulty of determining the female gender of certain Early-Dynastic figures apparently dissimulated in the ancient sources (Newberry & Wainwright 1914: 154; Sethe 1905: 29, 47) has a most remarkable parallel in Nkoya oral history (van Binsbergen 1992b: 83f.).

<sup>86</sup> If a woman, one would have expected Mryt-k3, with -t, but see previous footnote. In fact, the form with -t also occurs, see Kaplony 1963: I, 505, § 9, and bottom of the page.

<sup>87</sup> Neith's threat echoes repeatedly in Celtic oaths uttered in Asia Minor and elsewhere during the Iron Age: 'or else let the sky collapse'; Rolleston 1994.



B11: Osiris Neith nimm den Schenkel des Seth entgegen, den Horus ausgelöst hat; Götliches Vierfachgewebe (jfd)

B12: Unmöglich, dass Neith den Höchsten von seinem Thron gerissen (fd) haben sollte, denn Neith ist der vierte<sup>88</sup> jener vier (*fdw*) Götter, die aus dem Scheitel des Geb hervorgegangen sind. (*Pyramid Text* \*1579 Nt9, Faulkner 1969: 81, §2268c-d; Kammerzell 1994).

It is the more recent West Asian CITIs that gave both sub-Saharan Africa, and Ancient Egypt, their elaborate cultural and ritual forms to conceptualise the Separation of Heaven and Earth and especially, their subsequent Re-Connection, through the concept of the Demiurge, the kingship, shamanism, imitation mountains in stone, other erect artefacts, the duality of genders and twins, the royal siblings as exponents par excellence of such duality, *etc.*

The point is not whether sub-Saharan Africa borrowed from Ancient Egypt, or the other way around, but that both participated, in, and were largely created by, the overall Back-into-Africa movement, where cultural and genetic materials originally hailing from Africa but having made the round of Asia, being innovated and transformed over a period of 50 ka, were finally returned to Africa. There is no denying that sometimes, in certain respects, sub-Saharan African cultures made a clearly detectable specific contribution to Ancient Egypt; and the other way around; but these were mere local and regional ripples in a process in which Ancient Egypt and sub-Saharan Africa were engaged jointly. In this respect, for instance, 'The Sacred Anthill [in sub-Saharan Africa] and the Cult of the Primordial Mount [in Egypt]' (Irwin 1982) are not just typologically comparable, but inherently, structurally identical – both are attempts to adapt an image hailing from an earlier, Asian-located CITI (the Cosmogony of the Separation of Water and Land) to the later cosmology of the Separation of Heaven and Earth, with the mount and the anthill both as devices of Re-connection. and therefore as embodiments of divine, celestial life force.

It thus appears as if Ancient Egypt was the product of two major influences, one African and one West Asian, and as if much of the cosmology, mythology and religion of Egypt must be understood, not as an application of Neolithic African themes but of West Asian themes that (whilst ultimately, at the time of the Out-of-Africa Exodus, 60 ka BP, originating in Africa) had been intensively transformed and innovated in their journey along the various CITIs before materialising in Egypt some 6 or 5 ka BP. Therefore, neither an Egyptocentric nor an Afrocentric would be a convincing answer to the transregional connections involving the Nkoya people of South Central Africa. If so much of what had made Egypt into Egypt, had recent Asian and not recent African antecedents, it no longer makes sense to see the Nkoya, in so far as their trans-regional affinities are concerned, as a repository of very ancient, primal themes which happened to be diffused from the African interior to Egypt, Mesopotamia, and South Asia, even Ancient Greece and Ancient Ireland. On the contrary, much of the movement had to be from these well-known centres of civilisation, towards the African interior including the Nkoya, and not the

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<sup>88</sup> *fd-nw* – an instance, according to Kammerzell, of the punning so characteristic of Egyptian texts.

other way around. The 'Back-into-Africa' model,<sup>89</sup> which only appeared in the literature in the early 2000s, provides part of the solution for the dilemmas of the Nkoya trans-regional situation, but not the entire solution. The time scale was not very convincing: how could a cultural movement extending over a considerable part of the Old World over as many as 15 ka, produce (despite the certainty of cultural drift *i.e.* uncoordinated local innovations and transformations) fairly detailed cultural affinities between places as far apart as Ireland, Egypt, Sumer, India, and Zambia? And how did these affinities install themselves in Nkoyaland in the first place – could *demic diffusion*, however powerful a concept to understand the first tens of ka of the adventure of Anatomically Modern Humans outside Africa, be trusted to work with such accuracy, with such powers of unaltered cultural transmission and retention? Or was, in addition to the unmistakable and powerful explanatory factor of the Back-into-Africa model, another factor at play whose identification however ran against all the available, rival models for long-range cultural history and which therefore we had such great difficulty of identifying?

Was the proposed *Pelasgian* expansion really a process of demic diffusion? Or were other factors at work as well? It is at this point that Oppenheimer's 1998 book has been so very welcome to me – a godsend to make sense of puzzles in which I had been entangled for decades. Could the solution be as simple as the idea of Sunda-related mariners touching on Ireland, Egypt, Sumer, India, and traversing the Mozambican-Angolan corridor overland so as to leave their cultural traces among the Nkoya of Zambia and neighbouring peoples?

As far as Egypt is concerned, one obvious hurdle to take with the hypothesis of some Sunda influence upon the emergence of the dynastic state c. 3,100 BCE, is that this seems to revive the notion of a Dynastic Race, which haunted Egyptology in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. W.B. Emery writing c. 1960 (1961: 20 *f.*) was still clearly sympathetic to the notion of Early Dynastic Egypt being a creation of incoming strangers who were somatically conspicuous, in the obsolete words of that time 'a dynastic race'. Admitting that the notion was no longer popular he wrote

'Modern scholars have tended to ignore the possibility of conquest and immigration...'. (Emery 1961: 20 *f.*)

However, the emphasis on models of localisation and internal dynamics, and away from grand schemes of spatial displacement and replacement, would only grow stronger in the 1970s and 1980s (*cf.* Hoffman 1979: 291-293), and a relapse into the Dynastic Race hypothesis would be unacceptable today. Fortunately, this is not what I am proposing with the suggestion of some Sunda influence on the emergence of dynastic Egypt, but we need to be much deeper into this book's argument before I can set out the details of my view.

Let us first see how illuminating the Sunda Hypothesis is for an understanding of the socio-cultural life of the Nkoya.

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<sup>89</sup> *Cf.* Hammer *et al.* 1998; Cruciani *et al.* 2002; Coia *et al.* 2005; Underhill 2004.

#### 5.4. Sunda connotations of the Nkoya, their neighbours in South Central Africa, and elsewhere in Africa

Above I already implied a few Nkoya traits that could be indicative of Sunda influence. Still we have far from exhausted the extent to which the Nkoya situation is illuminating for an understanding of the complexities of cross- and transcontinental cultural processes in the last handful of millennia. The following traits found among the Nkoya suggests Sunda connotations *that for each individual trait could be wholly accidental*, yet the overall picture is very suggestive of a positive link between Sundaland and Nkoyaland.

1. The mutually complementary and reinforcing, yet rivalling moiety-like structure between the kingships of Mutondo and Kahare, among the central Nkoya, may be an expression of duality as a fundamental socio-political Sunda trait.<sup>90</sup> And there is another expression of duality, which seems to address the very heart of Nkoya society: it is as if the society which we can reconstruct for the period just before the onset of colonial rule in 1900 was internally divided between the egalitarian, pacifist, reciprocity- and production-orientated culture of the villages, and the hierarchical, violent, exploitative and parasitical culture of the royal courts. (van Binsbergen 2003d)

For anthropologists, such a situation is reminiscent of a classic and famous study in political anthropology: Leach's *Political Systems of Highland Burma* (1954), in which the political actors are described as situationally shifting from an idiom of egalitarianism to an idiom of aristocratic hierarchy. The Burma context is all the more interesting because it is situated in continental South East Asia and may well have Sunda antecedents. Is such a 'kaleidoscopic' political system as found among the Nkoya and – although very differently – in Burma / Myanmar, an entirely local product, or must it be seen in a more dynamic, historical and interregional perspective, as a response to incorporation processes, specifically, to the introduction of an alien, hierarchical and violent, political order by an aristocratic elite? The question is interesting, for if we assume that the Nkoya state is an alien element imported under Sunda influence, and with identifiable Sunda traits, we would like to know when and where the original Sunda prototype arose, and under what circumstances. We agree that the Sunda '*Phantom Voyagers*' (Dick-Read) were Proto-Indonesians, potentially very different from today's inhabitants of the Indonesian archipelago.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> With this theme we touch on some of the classic topics of structuralist anthropology (Lévi-Strauss 1977a): if such duality could be argued to be a universal product of the human mind and therefore not amenable to a diffusion argument, it would be nonsense to claim duality as a Sunda trait. However, it is clear that some cultures lay far more stress on duality than others in their cosmology and socio-political symbolism; that many Indonesian societies have such cultures (cf. Kruyt 1973; Blust 1980; Boeke 1930) and that it cannot be ruled out that some of the cultures that do are historically connection through diffusion.

<sup>91</sup> Here a tricky, analytically deceptive politico-ideological mechanism needs to be appreciated (cf. van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: chas 2-4): identical names suggest identical essences, creating unlimited

More recently, Indonesian historians, have engaged in a debate<sup>92</sup> on the imported and recent nature of the state in the Indonesian archipelago. Used as they are to traditions and models of pre-colonial tribal statelessness (based on reciprocity and equilibrium):

'So persistently has each step towards stronger states in the archipelago arisen from trading ports, with external aid and inspiration, that one is inclined to seek the indigenous political dynamic in a genius for managing without states'. (Reid 1997: 80-1, *apud* Henley 2004)

The suggestion is that states could only emerge, in Indonesia, in the context of proto-globalisation, *i.e.* the incorporation of local communities into overseas networks of trade and extraction. Such states were very much in evidence in the late 1st millennium CE and throughout the second millennium, in South East Asia, and this seems to set the framework, both institutionally and time-wise, for the kind of Sunda expansion of which the Nkoya states could have been the result. We note that such a dating is much more recent than the relatively long period, 7 ka, which Oppenheimer attaches to his General Sunda model.

2. A royal xylophone orchestra as central sign of identity (see above, Prologue) and other Sunda-related musical instruments much in evidence.
3. Royal names like Mangala<sup>93</sup> and Shikanda / Skanda<sup>94</sup> which lack a

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possibilities for ideological sleight-of-hand. At the invitation of the Parahyangan [ Roman Catholic ] University at Bandung, Java, Indonesia, in 2007 I delivered a seminar on the Sunda Hypothesis. The occasion was well-attended, having attracted aristocrats and ethnic activists of the Sunda ethnic group and language cluster – a sizeable population of over 20 million in West Java. My work for decades as a reluctant ethnic activist on behalf of the downtrodden but militant Nkoya minority of Western Zambia had eminently prepared me for what happened also in that Indonesian context, in many respects so very different. Although I made it very clear (but in English) that my term 'Sunda' designated the Indonesian sub-continent as a whole in Early Holocene times, a handful of millennia BP, from the audience's enthusiastic response and questions it was manifest that they had understood my argument as a welcome plea to restore the regional West-Javanese Sunda identity to its legendary former glory, a millennium ago. The parallels reached an amazing extent when, in token of the audience's appreciation, I was presented with some printed material: like among the present-day Nkoya, the printing and selling of calendars in their own language, depicting notables from their midst and presenting the names of days, months and festivals in the proper traditional form, was an important strategy to generate income for their ethnic association and propagate its objectives.

<sup>92</sup> Henley 2004, referring to the work of B. W. Andaya 1993; L. Y. Andaya 1993; Reid 1997, 1998; Schulte Nordholt 2002; Scott 1998.

<sup>93</sup> We must be careful on this point. Given the other South Asian connotations at the Kahare court, there is every reason to reach for a South Asian origin of the name Mangala, too. However, Mangala is also the name of the creation god in Southern Mali (Colleyn 1982), and in general there is a remarkable continuity between West and South Central Africa in the field of kingship.

<sup>94</sup> Discussing royals in early Sri Lankan Tamil history, Chitty 1992: 5 mentions a queen Alli Arasani, likewise called Sittirankandei and Sittiraregei, who married Arjuna, *i.e.* one of the Pandava princes known from the great epic *The Mahabharata*; she held court at a place which is at present known by the name of Koodramalle. By a very long shot, Sittirankandei might be identical with the legendary Nkoya queen Shikanda (< \*Si[ttiran]kand[ei]). Such South Asian connotations might also explain the presence of a

Bantu etymology and are effectively South or South East Asian: Mangala = 'planet Mars', 'Tuesday' (French *mardi!*), and Shikanda / Skanda,<sup>95</sup> the trickster and war god, is the divine protagonist in core texts of Hinduism: the *Skanda Purana* and the *Mahabharata*. The prominence of the name Shikanda is all the more remarkable in the light of the fact that the theonym Skanda is generally considered (*cf.* Harrigan n.d.; Gopala Pillai n.d.) to derive from Iskander / Alexander, the legendary hero of an epic cycle inspired by the life of Alexander the Great and found all over the Asian part of the postulated Sunda trajectory (Lombard 1993).<sup>96</sup>

4. In historical traditions the kingship is emphatically associated with metallurgy (van Binsbergen 1992)
5. The name Kale (Smith & Dale 1920; as a Gypsy name widespread in Eurasia and meaning 'Black one') / Kahale for a major Nkoya dynasty.<sup>97</sup>

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central reference to the war chariot, Arjuna's epical standpoint, in the form of the forked carriage pole (*gabhasti-*; de Vries 1958, s.v. 'gaffel'; a likely etymology of the Nkoya royal name Kapesh) that joins it to its traction horses, in a South Central African *tsetse*-infested location where before the advent of British colonial rule (1900 CE) horses and chariots must have been totally unknown. Horses and chariots however, did make inroads into sub-Saharan Africa from the 2nd mill. BCE on: they abounded in New-Kingdom Egypt, left archaeological traces in the Nile Valley in the form of the so-called X-group, were frequently depicted in rock art along the Trans-Saharan caravan routes, and have played a major role in West African history.

<sup>95</sup> Bantu (at least, Nkoya) phonology does not allow a plosive and a fricative consonant to succeed each other without a vowel being interposed, and frequently changes *-s-* to *-ʃ-* in loan words; this allows us to interpret the Nkoya name Shikanda as derived from the South Asian (and by extension from the beginning of the Common Era, South East Asian) Hindu theonym Skanda.

<sup>96</sup> In fact this case of Indian royal names only scratches the surface of the many South Asian reminiscences among the 20th-c. CE Nkoya. I will give one extensive example. One of the gravest and allegedly most powerful forms of sorcery among the Nkoya is the *chilombo*, 'the human snake' (also reported for the Kaonde the Nkoya's northern neighbours; Melland 1967 / 1923; Bernard 2009: 196, 369). The perpetrator secretly goes to the river and digs a small hole in the river bank; when raw chicken eggs are regularly poured into that hole, the *chilombo* will manifest itself there as a snake with a human face; it will rapidly grow bigger, demanding ever more food especially meat, and finally extending its demands to a close junior kinsperson of the perpetrator; this relative is to be named by the perpetrator, and will be killed and spiritually eaten by the *chilombo*, as a result of which the perpetrator gains unrivalled powers to magically harm his or her enemies – aided by the *chilombo* familiar. A closely parallel form of sorcery, but involving not a snake but a polecat, exists in the practices around the Bajang spirit familiar in South East Asia (Cotterell 1989: 188). (In Southern Africa, the polecat appears in a far more positive sense as a manifestation of Nkosazana: the bow-wielding Princess of the Sky (Callaway 1970 / 1885: 226; Bernard 2009: 226), apparently continuous with Neith and Anahita (and Artemis? and Tefnut?) in the Ancient Mediterranean). What unites the two animal species involved, snake and polecat, is that both stand out as speckled, and thus share in the subaltern, evil connotations globally attending speckledness since times immemorial (*cf.* van Binsbergen 2003b, 2003c, 2004a, 2004b, 2018: Appendix III, in prep. (j)). Incidentally, the cults of the *chilombo* and of the polecat are reminiscent of literate sorcery and alchemical traditions of South Asia, the world of Graeco-Roman Late Antiquity, and of Early Modern Western Europe, and it is not unthinkable that here lies their actual origin.

<sup>97</sup> As we have seen, for the past two centuries most Nkoya kings have been male, but there is a submerged

Further evidence of South Asian influence in the Nkoya region, although not directly of Sunda / Austric influence, is the Indo-Aryan etymology (*\*gabhasti-*, ‘forked carriage pole, hand’ – de Vries 1958 s.v. ‘gaffel’) for the name of the mythical king Kapeshe<sup>98</sup> who, according to Nkoya oral tradition (cf. van Binsbergen 1992), sought to build a Tower into Heaven out of forked branches (Fig. 5.9.e). As stressed by the Austronesian specialist Adelaar (1994), there is no direct influence from India upon the languages of Madagascar, where such influence appears always indirectly, via Indonesian languages. Since Madagascar can serve as a model for Indonesian-African relations in general, it is likely that in Old Indian lexical element *\*gabhasti-*, too, found its way into Nkoyaland via Indonesia. The Gypsy association should not surprise us, for Gypsies (with the typical combination of metallurgy and musical specialty we also find in the Kahare / Kale case) have been attested and subjected to ethnographic research in other parts of Africa, notably Sudan (Streck 1991, 1995).


6. For the kingship i.e. its incumbent dynasties, extensive traditions – shared by many other dynasties in South Central Africa – of a remote though unspecified origin in the east (‘the land of Kola’).

#### 5.4.1. Digression: Kola as a transregional toponym and ethnonym

The ethnonym / toponym of Kola displays many of the challenges which transcontinental study including the Sunda Hypothesis entails. I will therefore interrupt the numbered series of my argument on possible Sunda traits among the Zambian Nkoya for a comparative analysis which has been at the back of my mind ever since I found that in the Nkoya oral traditions, origin is claimed from ‘a distant Northern land’,<sup>99</sup> Kola.

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tradition of them being predominantly female in earlier centuries (van Binsbergen 1992). Although now the name of male kings, Kahare is locally considered to be initially a woman’s name – even though this clashes with the tradition of the first Kahare arriving in the region as a stranger king bedecked with an invaluable shell ornament, whose exotic xylophone orchestra enamoured a local female chieftain. Of course, mythical gender attributions could be a latter-day comment (from today’s perspective of male dominance) upon unequal political relations in the remote past, and need not reflect the actual gender of the protagonists in such relations – if these were not already entirely mythical in the first place. Considering the occurrence of matriliney in some Indonesian societies during historical times, female kings might also be identified as a potential Sunda trait, but I hesitate on this point, in view of the bilateral nature of Nkoya kinship today, and the strongly patrilineal nature of the kinship system of their neighbours, the *Lozi* / *Barotse*, who also display Sunda traits.

<sup>98</sup> Also an Ancient Egyptian etymology is possible:  Gardiner 1994 no.F23, ḥpš, ‘foreleg of ox’ (also the constellation *mšḥtjw Ursa Major* – the constellation’s brightest stars form exactly the outline of the hieroglyphic); which – at least visually – essentially conveys the same sense of a zigzag movement as a rival, Hebrew etymology, קפס קפס, ‘capering movement of a fleeing deer’; I owe the latter information to my brother, the Hebraeist Peter Broers.

<sup>99</sup> This characterisation makes ‘Kola’ comparable with the legendary land *Zembla* in Nabokov’s 1962 masterpiece *Pale Fire*.

In my extensive theoretical discussion of ancient toponyms (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: chs 2-3; especially Table 2.1, p. 43), I have argued (inspired by Karst 1931a) that many ancient toponyms have multiple referents, and particularly have an eastern and a western application. With Havila, Iberia, Africa (!), and Punt, Kola is one of the examples. There I list the following multiple referents for Kola:

- West Asia specifically the Northern Caucasus (*cf.* Colchis, the Ancient name for West Asian Georgia east of the Black Sea) and the marchlands of Northeastern Turkey (Edwards 1988; Bedrosian 2019);
- Lower Congo (Jaeger 1974: 8) and by extension the region of the Congo-Zambezi watershed – often considered the Nkoya homeland (*cf.* van Binsbergen 1992);
- extreme North-western Russia (Rees & Williams 1997); and
- South Asia: here Kola is the region / ethnic group where the Munda language is spoken, as a branch of Austroasiatic (< Austric; *cf.* Kloss & McConnell 1989: 889); and I refer to the further discussion and references in van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: Section 4.4.

However, as Table 5.5 shows, even many more attestations of Kola are at our disposal, as mapped in Fig. 5.3.

Perhaps the wide distribution of the toponym Kola may be attributed to the existence of a \*Borean root \*Borean CVLV 'steppe, valley, meadow', with reflexes in Sinocaucasian and Eurasiatic; Proto-Indo-European: \*sel- (*cf.* also \*st[e]- 2725), along with cognate proto-forms in Altaic, Uralic, and Dravidian derives from Eurasiatic: \*CoIV, 'steppe, valley, meadow'. As discussed in my Durkheim-centred argument on the prehistory of the sacred (van Binsbergen 2018: ch. 9), the Eurasiatic reflex only acquires sacred semantics in Proto-Northdravidian: \*cal-a 'grove, sacred grove' (Burrow & Emenau 1970: 2891); perhaps *cf.* Proto-Bantu -caka (7, LH), thicket, undergrowth, 5.1 (Meeussen 1980 and n.d.), also as -càkà 'thicket', 260 (Guthrie 1967 and n.d.), Nkoya *lishaka*, 'forest'.

Alternatively, and more likely, a \*Borean etymology for Kola, and hence an explanation for its near ubiquity in the Old World, may be found in \*Borean \*KVLV. In the reconstruction of \*Borean roots the specific values for the vowels cannot be determined. As a result, we have many multiple reconstructed lexical items with the same overall format KV<sub>m</sub>LV<sub>n</sub>. For \*Borean KVLV over thirty consonantal synonyms each with a different meaning have been reconstructed (Starostin & Starostin 1998-2008, 'Long-range etymology'). Of these the following are topographically or ethnographically relevant: 'walk, roam, ford; to rise, raise; dwelling; pond; valley; vessel; bend; stone, rock; long, far'. By and large, the semantic results are similar to those for \*Borean CVLV.

Although there is plenty of evidence to attach Nigercongo, especially Bantu, languages to the general, nearly global pattern of \*Borean and its derivatives (van Binsbergen in prep. (b)), yet in the case of Kola the proto-lexicons of these languages (Meeussen 1980 and n.d.; Guthrie 1967 and n.d.) do not seem to offer an obvious etymon for Kola – the

word appears to originate outside the Nigercongo linguistic macrophylum prevailing in the African regions where Kola is found.

Following Hrozný's disreputable yet visionary synthesis *Ancient History of Western Asia, India and Crete* (1951), we may detect the toponym Kola as Ancient Egyptian *Kode*:

The name of the peninsula Kathiavar, lying south of Sindh, also seems to reveal its Hittite and Indo-European origin. It is reminiscent of the name Kataonia, Kizvata, found in Asia Minor, being derived from the more original \*Katvatna, \*Kitvatna (cf. A.O. [ *Archiv Orientalny* ] 7, 162, note 5). It appears in some of the Egyptian inscriptions in the form of *Kode*, meaning probably the same region which the Hittites expressed in the Babylonian ideograph *mâtum shaplîtum*, meaning the Low(er) country which should be sought south of the Hittite Empire. Beyond doubt, this name is related to the Indo-European adverb *kata*, meaning along, downwards, and it seems to me, that analogically even the Indian Kathiavar originally denoted a country lying down the stream of the river Indus, i.e. downwards, that is south of Sindh'. (Hrozný 1951: 196)

Perhaps (but see three pages down) the same Eurasiatic root is also to be found in the European-coined / East Asian toponym Korea, where the Korean branch of Altaic is being spoken – a language phylum extending from West Asia to Japan, and testifying to the unity of the Eurasian Steppe belt partly as a result of the increased transregional communication through the invention of horse riding and especially the spoked chariot, c. 2000 BCE in Kazakhstan, halfway the West-East trajectory. (Diagram 28.17, pp. 382 f., in van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen depicts the gradual diffusion of the chariot across the Old World; the surprising abundance of Scythianreminiscent traits among the Nkoya – cf. van Binsbergen 2010a – makes it conceivable that the toponym Kola entered Nkoya tradition from some East Central Asian, Altaic source --- possibly as a result of Korean seafaring in the 2nd millennium CE, or as a form of cultural diffusion triggered – perhaps via the intermediary of the Tamils of South India and Sri Lanka – by the political and religious (Islamic) pressure exerted by the Mongoloid Moghul dynasty upon India in the mid-2nd millennium CE.)

Beyond these rather transparent etymologies, there is \*Borean  $KV_mLV_n$ , one of whose meanings is 'vessel'. Pokorny's authoritative etymological dictionary of Indo-European (Pokorny 1959-1969 WP II, 590 f., I 165, II 536 f.) presents as form No. 1722 (s)kel-1, with a basic meaning 'to cut'; since the s- element is often dropped the reflexes of this Proto-Indo-European form may come close to our Kola toponym, perhaps with an implication of 'container', 'parcel, demarcated piece'. Moreover the Sanskrit lexical item *kola*, 'pig' (which conjures up – the pig being one of the avatars of the South Asian primal god Vishnu – Vishnuism as a widespread variety of Hindu religion and an antagonist of Šivaism). This connection is well worth pursuing, in the first place because there are ample indications of a considerable Indian cultural, musical, political and perhaps even population presence in South Central and Southern Africa around the year 1000 CE; in the second place because the Nkoya kings, claimed to hail 'from the land of Kola', according to the official Nkoya mythical court traditions at an early stage of their history resided at the court of Mwaat Yaamv ('Lord Death') in South Congo, a ruler keen on imposing (as if he were a Muslim or Jew) male genital mutilation ('circumcision'); in this capital the Nkoya kings were reputedly accommodated at the pig sties (apparently the general abhor-



rence of pork was not so firmly established in the region as suggested by today's common practice among Bantu-speaking peoples). The Nkoya pig association suggests once more a remote echo from Moghul Islamic expansion – in line with the fact that, according to the main Nkoya account of their history, *Likota lya Bankoya* (Shimunika / van Binsbergen 1988, 1992), the Nkoya emerged as a distinct ethnic group as a result of a war resisting the Mwaat Yaamv's imposition of male genital mutilation (van Binsbergen 1992, 1993a, in prep. (c); and below, chapter 13, the section on genital mutilation; also cf. Crowley 1982).

Moreover, mention may be made of the highly destructive Sanni ('Illness') Kola / Kora demon of Sri Lanka (Anonymous, 'Sanni Yakuma'; Wirz 1954; perhaps a slight indication of a Sunda background of cults of affliction in South Central Africa?), in whose name perhaps the Eurasian root *kole*, 'to fear, tremble' may be detected (cf. Nkoya *ku-kola*, *ku-kora*, 'to be ill?') – for which reflexes are listed in Altaic: (\*koʔ)le) and (more relevant) Dravidian (\*kul-).<sup>100</sup>

In the original Vedic language, *kola* / *kolo* / *kol:ō* / *kolea* appears to designate (Anonymous, 'Language of the civilizations') the 'tiger' (also 'furnace', 'burning charcoal', and 'foetus', 'breast') – which in African transpositions of Indian ritual prescriptions becomes another variegated-skin predator, the leopard, and corroborates continuity between the South Central and Southern African royal and priestly association of the leopard-skin, and distant South Asian templates (van Binsbergen 2003a: ch. 8).

Karst (1931a: 241) claims that, in the light of more general onomastic parallels between Southeast(ern) Asia and the Caucasus (cf. Gomer / Khmer, Maionia = Lydia and Mon), the Georgian ethnonym Gurg-, Gurg?-, Grus < \*qeru?, may be associated with South Asian Kurukh, Koroi, Kurru, Kora in the Dravidian region – which would make the West Asian and South Asian forms cognate or identical. Kola is also the name of a cluster of Burmese immigrants entering Cambodia in the late 19th c. CE (Anonymous, 'Pailin'). Kola (probably with the basic meaning 'people' – many ethnonyms worldwide have that semantics; Karst *ibidem*) is particularly in use as the name of the highly pigmented, pre-Aryan population of South India. It is also an ethnonym frequently used in Bengal, Northeastern India (Dalton 1872: index; Reclus 1891 speaks in this connection of Kolarians). Perhaps part of the mystery surrounding the South Asian connections of South Central African kingdoms may be illuminated if we accept the suggestions by Crooke and by Frazer (1909-1921 in Hastings, 'Dravidians (North India / South India)', who see the Dravidians as Kshatriya who (upon the Muslim invasion into the peninsula?) became outcasts, perhaps to the extent of sailing away from the South Indian peninsula altogether; one subgroup are the Kurs (cf. Kola?), who communicate with evil spirits and display shamanistic traits. In a more specifically Buddhist context, Koliya is the name of a republican clan living in Kola trees, and matrilaterally and affinally related to the

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<sup>100</sup> Starostin & Starostin 1998-2008, Nostratic etymology, database 'nostret'.

Buddha, who reconciled them when they were quarreling over irrigation rights (Anonymous, 'Canda Pajjota'). In this connection it is remarkable that the fire worshipper Kashyapa (does he return in Nkoya myths as Kapeshe? cf. Hopkins 1915; Goudriaan 1965; van Binsbergen ) initially an opponent and later a staunch follower of the Buddha, should appear in a context also mentioning Shravasti as the capital of Kola, where Kashyapa (or Buddha) lived and wished to build a temple for the Buddhist fraternity (Musaeus-Higgins 2000: 246). It is also possible that another Kashyapa from South Asian legendary accounts features in Nkoya mythologies: the ruler of Sigiriya, Central Sri Lanka, whose principal rival and enemy sought refuge with the Chola Tamil rulers of South India before luring Kashyapa out of his impenetrable mountain fortress, giving battle to him in the plain, and defeating him (van Binsbergen 2016) Kola is also the name of a city built by King Rama's 32 sons (Law 1943: 110); while another city is called Kola-Pattana, on the Coromandel coast (Law 1943: 204). Many of these semantics return in Monier-Williams 1899, s.v. kola.

Karst (1931a: 538) also reminds us of a similar Sanskrit root, *kula*, 'gens, people', which may well be relevant in the present context – given the widespread principle (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: chs 2-4) that toponyms become ethnonyms and vice versa. Mahathera's Pali dictionary (cf. Rhys & Stede 1921) (on which also Malalasekera 1960 is based) lists *kola* as the lexical item denoting 'hog [ pig ]', but also as the *jujube* fruit – the origin also of the Western designation cola for the fruit (object of ceremonious social exchange in West Africa, where it is a symbol of Heaven and Earth hence a divination token (Nassau 1904; Busse 1906; Anonymous, 2012, 'Le Culte des crânes') and the popular soft drink *Coca Cola* made on its basis. The word need however not have a South Asian origin: Harper (2001) considers it originally West Africa, and cites Temne (cf. Schlenker 1864: 103) and Mandingo variants in support. However, Gilmore (1895) list for Pali 'pig' *sukharo*, not *kola*. In Chinese Buddhism, Kola is the name of one of the four principal schools – it is based on doctrines from India translated by Hsuan Tsang (Hays 2008 / 2011).

This discursive discussion may be summarised in the following Table 5.5, which is mapped in Fig. 5.3.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. West Asia specifically the Northern Caucasus (cf. Colchis, the Ancient name for West Asian Georgia east of the Black Sea) and the marchlands of North-eastern Turkey (Edwards 1988; Bedrosian 2019) | watershed   | 6. Kataonia, Kizvata, found in Asia Minor,  |
| 2. Lower Congo   | 4. North-western Russia (river, bay, town, and peninsula)   | 7. Kode (Ancient Egyptian) = 6 (cf. Schulman 1962; Breasted 1906: vol II; Holmes 1971; Dothan & Dothan 1992.) |
| 3. Congo-Zambezi   | 5. South Asia (Kola is there the region where / the ethnic group among the Munda language is spoken, as a branch of Austric; cf. Kloss & McConnell 1989: 889) | 8. Low(er) country which should be sought south of the Hittite Empire. = 6                                    |
|  |   | 9. Sri Lanka  |

10. West Asian Gurg-, Gurg?-, Grus < \*qeru?, may be associated with South Asian Kurukh, Koroï, Kurru, Kora in the Dravidian region
11. cluster of Burmese immigrants entering Cambodia in the late 19th c. CE (Anonymous, 'Pailin').
12. highly pigmented, pre-Aryan population of South India
13. Bengal
14. Kurs, pagan ritual specialists of the Ganges valley
15. Koliya, a republican clan living in Kola trees and matrilaterally and affinally related to the Buddha,
16. Shravasti (NE India), the capital of Kola,
17. Sigiriya, Kashyapa, and the Chola Tamil rulers of South India#
18. Kola city built by King Rama's 32 sons (Law 1943: 110) (near Nepal)
19. Kola-Pattana, a city on the Coromandel coast [ around Madras ]
20. one of the four principal schools in Chinese Buddhism – based on doctrines from India translated by Hsuan Tsang
21. Kola, Polish aristocratic family
22. Kola Norwegians, Norwegian settlers along the coastline
23. Kola people, Gabonese Pygmies
24. Kula people (Asia) of Cambodia and Thailand
25. Gyele people, Cameroonian Pygmies, cf. 23
26. Kola, alternative name of Kula, a village in East Azerbaijan Province, Iran
27. Kola (historical region), part of the Georgian Tao-Klarjeti principalities, the contemporary Turkish district Göle
28. Kola Island [sv], one of the Aru Islands of Indonesia, with its language Kola
29. Kola, a village in Mali, West Africa
30. Kola, Manitoba, Canada
31. Kola, Hooghly, census town in West Bengal, India

Sources: in addition to the sources indicated with the individual items, also: Anonymous, 'Kola'.

Table 5.5. Global distribution of Kola as a toponym and ethnonym

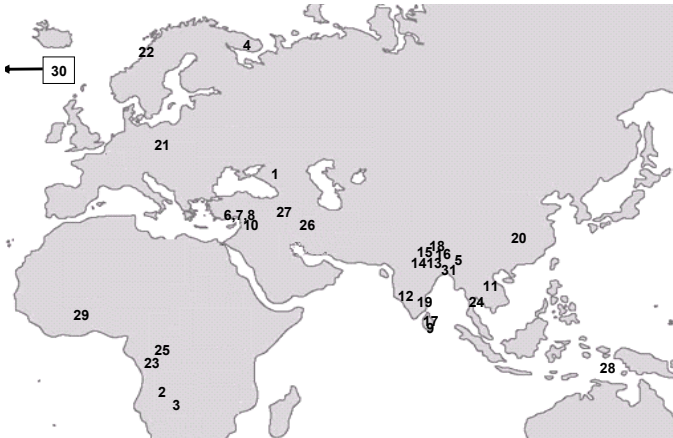


Fig. 5.3. Mapping the global (in fact largely Old World) distribution of Kola as a toponym and ethnonym

In South Korea, Korea as a whole is referred to as *Hanguk* (한국, [ha.nguk], lit. 'country of the *Han*'). The name references *Samhan*, referring to the Three Kingdoms of Korea, not the ancient confederacies in the southern Korean Peninsula. (...) Although written in Hanja as 韓, 幹, or 刊, this *Han* has no relation to the Chinese place names or peoples who used those characters but was a phonetic transcription (Old Chinese: \**Gar*, Middle Chinese *Han* (...) or *Gan*) of a native Korean word that seems to have had the meaning "big" or "great", particularly in reference to leaders. It has been tentatively linked with the title *khan* used by the nomads of Manchuria and Central Asia.

In North Korea, China, Vietnam and Japan, Korea as a whole is referred to as (조선, *Joseon*, [tɔsʰɔn], (朝鮮), *Jūsīn*, *Cháoxiǎn*, (朝鮮), *Chōsen*, *Triều Tiên* (朝鮮) lit. "[land of the] Morning Calm"). "Great Joseon" was the name of the kingdom ruled by the Joseon dynasty from 1393 until their declaration of the short-lived Great Korean Empire in 1897. King Taejo had named them for the earlier Kojoseon (고조선), who ruled northern Korea from its legendary prehistory until their conquest in 108 BC by China's Han Empire. This *go* is the Hanja 古 and simply means "ancient" or "old"; it is a modern usage to distinguish the ancient Joseon from the later dynasty. *Joseon* itself is the modern Korean pronunciation of the Hanja 朝鮮 but it is unclear whether this was a transcription of a native Korean name (Old Chinese \**Tʃrjawser*, Middle Chinese *Trjewsjen* (...)) or a partial translation into Chinese of the Korean capital *Asadal* (아사달), (...) whose meaning has been reconstructed as "Morning Land" or "Mountain". (Anonymous, 'Korea', q.v. for the original references here omitted and replaced by (...))

I have omitted from the analysis: the Korana or Kora, a subdivision of the pastoralist Khoe people in Southern Africa; Ethiopian Kola Tembien, one of the 36 administrative sub-divisions in the Tigray Region of Ethiopia – for here the element Kola simply means 'Lower', and is not an authentic proper name. For the above reasons I have also decided to omit Korea from this list, although at face value it may seem to be an obvious candidate for Kola as a distant Northern land from the South Central African perspective. The Koreans were great seafarers, familiar with the shape of the African coast from quite early in the second mill. CE, as is evidenced from the famous Kangnido map also depicted in the present book see below, Fig. 14.2. However, clearly behind the modern West Eurasian conventionalised designation Korea / Corea original local expressions hide which would be very difficult to relate to the form Kola:

"Korea" is the modern spelling of "Corea", a name attested in English as early as 1614. (...) Korea was transliterated as *Cauli* in The Travels of Marco Polo, (...) of the Chinese 高麗 (Middle Chinese *Kawlej*, (...) modern *Gāoli*). This was the Hanja for the Korean kingdom of Goryeo (Hangul: 고려; Hanja: 高麗; MR: *Koryŏ*), which ruled most of the Korean peninsula during Marco Polo's time. Korea's introduction to the West resulted from trade and contact with merchants from Arabic lands, (...) with some records dating back as far as the 9th century. (...) Goryeo's name was a continuation of Goguryeo (Koguryŏ) the northernmost of the Three Kingdoms of Korea, which was officially known as Goryeo beginning in the 5th century. (...) The original name was a combination of the adjective *go* ("high, lofty") with the name of a local Yemaek tribe, whose original name is thought to have been either \**Guru* (溝樓, "walled city," inferred from some toponyms in Chinese historical documents) or \**Gauri* (가우리, "center"). With expanding British and American trade following the opening of Korea in the late 19th century, the spelling "Korea" appeared and gradually grew in popularity (...); its use in transcribing East Asian languages avoids the issues caused by the separate hard and soft Cs existing in English vocabulary derived from the Romance languages. The name Korea is now commonly used in English contexts by both North and South Korea.

**DISCUSSION:** Composed of two simple syllables, we must accept that the name Kola may have

been produced worldwide in numerous unrelated events of language history. It would be extremely naive and blinkered to claim one common history and origin for all the entries in the preceding Table and Figure.<sup>101</sup> Yet I am confident that, against the background of the \*Borean and Nostratic Hypotheses and the general, consistent success of their application (of which my own work offers many examples; cf. van Binsbergen 2018; van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011), it is safe to assume that there is a substrate of continuity, despite the admitted existence of several cases (marked by an oval in Fig. 5.4 below) that cannot be meaningfully interpreted as making part of that continuity and that therefore must remain isolated.

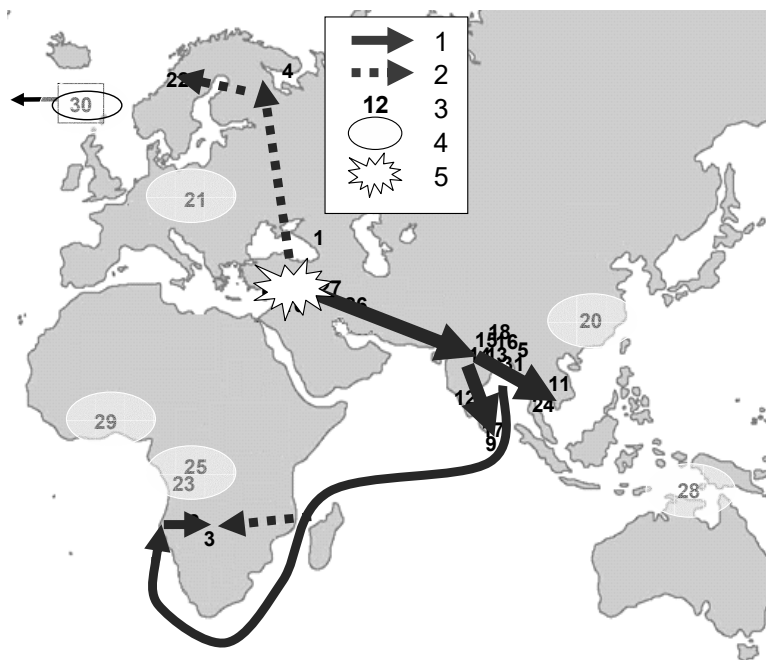
Overlooking the Old World distribution as a whole, against the background of what decades of long-range linguistic have offered in the way of transcontinental historical reconstruction, I am inclined to situate the emergence of the toponym / ethnonym Kola in West Asia, from where (in the bedding of Indo-European, Dravidian, Uralic) it spread (as an attenuated cross-model effect of Pelasgian transmission) sporadically to Northern Europe (the White Sea region), and particularly to South Asia, clustering in the Ganges valley and the Gulf of Bengal – and onward to the Southern end of the Indian peninsula, and to South East Asia.

The attestations in West Central and South Central Africa are unlikely to be due to overland transmission, for that (like in the case of the spiked-wheel trap) would have left several more intermediate attestations on the African continent. I see the Southernmost African attestations as dependent upon the Gulf of Bengal, via maritime transmission – a straightforward Sunda effect, in other words. In terms of comparative ethnography especially in the realm of kingship I am inclined to opt for an eastbound overland transmission from the Atlantic coast (Angola) to the continental heartland. *However, there are also genetic indications for a west-bound overland spread to the interior*, along one of the two apparent East-West corridors to be noted there on genetic grounds.

The attestations in Mali and (as names of Pygmy groups) further South I consider mere chance effects of the simple two-syllable word *kola*, unrelated to this fairly coherent historical process – and the same may apply to the Indonesian Alur Islands, Chinese Buddhism (although there the links with the North Indian heartland of Kola nomenclature may actually be demonstrable), and Canada. The analysis is an example of how on the basis of relatively rich geographic distributional data in combination with powerful heuristic models (the Pelasgian and Sunda Hypotheses) broad transcontinental processes may be identified with some (albeit limited) plausibility.

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<sup>101</sup> Although the issue never came up during my several decades of oral historical research among the Nkoya people of Zambia (cf. van Binsbergen 1992 and in prep. (c)), I have often wondered whether their ethnic name, claimed to derive from the forested area, designated 'Nkoya', near the Zambezi-Kabompo confluence in Northwestern Zambia, was not in fact a local variant of the name Kola. The basic meaning 'valley' is well in accordance with this suggestion, which may also find phonological support. By analogy, we note that in Gabon and Cameroon, moreover, we have the Kola / Koya Pygmies, who speak variants of Bantu languages close to those of the surrounding populations of standard height, such as the Basaa, Beti, and Ewondo. A few thousand kilometers separate them from the Zambian Nkoya, and these languages are quite different from modern Nkoya, and not mutually intelligible with the latter. The Nkoya language is much closer to today's Venda (n. South Africa), Botswana's Fwe and Yeyi, and Mbwela spoken in Angola. Even so I found that my Nkoya allowed me to have rudimentary conversations with native speakers of the Bakwerri language, West Cameroon.



1. proposed diffusion; 2. as 1 but more uncertain; 3. data point in Table 5.5 above; 4. data point not amenable to systematic analysis in terms of transcontinental transmission and the Sunda Hypothesis; 5. proposed epicentre of the emergence of the name Kola

Fig. 5.4. Attempted historical analysis of the global distribution data on Kola as a toponym and ethnonym

Considering the concentration, in Fig. 5.4, of data points and vectors in continental South East Asia, from the Bay of Calcutta to Malaysia, and the other indications to the same effect we shall encounter throughout this monograph (e.g. the political parallels with Highland Burma; the iconographic parallels with Buddhist sculpture from Angkor Wat, etc.) , I suggest that it is here that we should situate the legendary Kola of Nkoya traditions. We may now conclude our digression and return to the numbered series in the argument.

#### 5.4.2. Sunda connotations of the Zambian Nkoya (continued)

7. Many details of an ornate ceremonial royal court culture (squatting hunching and clapping, only the king deserves to sit, Fig. 5.9, 5.10; foundation human sacrifices<sup>102</sup> (now hardly ever practised) for royal

<sup>102</sup> On the point of Nkoya human sacrifice, there is a potential continuity to be appreciated, both with

drums, royal fence and palace building; pointed poles for royal fence, as a royal privilege; the spatial details of the palace layout; annual court festival, *etc.*

8. Already above I indicated that the details of royal burial among the Nkoya constitute an hereditary secret of the grave-diggers family, who in themselves form a junior royal clan once – up to the late 19<sup>th</sup> c. CE – in control of the Kahare royal title (van Binsbergen 1992). I am in the fortunate, though challenging, position of having strong adoptive ties with both sides. Let us take the risk of some overlap with the preceding discussions, and inspect the *public* evidence of a more or less elaborate ‘death industry’ (*cf.* Thoden van Velzen & van Wetering 1988) surrounding Nkoya royals – and we have to remember that this is a fairly extensive category of people, given the flexible rules of succession and the fact that many village headmanships are in fact in the hands of royal title-holders who are more or less closely related to the incumbents of the handful of actual, state-recognised royal ‘chieftaincies’. Before the imposition of British colonial rule (1900), the death of the incumbent king or queen meant that that ruler’s capital would be abandoned; the successor would construct a new capital, often scores of kilometres away from the old site, which became a place of grave-keepers. Typically, royal burial is next to a stream, under a large earthen mount, roughly prismatic or pyramidal in shape, and measuring about 10 by 7 meters on the ground with a height of about 2 metres. Royal burial is in the hands of a few hereditary grave-diggers, who – as original owners of the land – constitute an initially senior (though usurped, hence now junior) royal branch, and who also hold senior positions in the royal council and as honorary drummers (of much higher status than the ordinary members of the royal orchestra) for the annual royal dance at the Kazanga royal festival. The details of royal grave architecture greatly differ from ordinary graves and constitute the royal grave-diggers’ secret; all I can say here is that the royal grave consists of a narrow vertical pit up to three metres deep, ending in a narrow horizontal tunnel leading to a much wider cavity right under the centre of the prospective mount. The dead king is buried in a seated position, on a simple throne, holding a sapling of the royal Tree of Life<sup>103</sup> in his

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Ancient Egypt (see below), and with European recent prehistory, where the famous Gundestrup Cauldron may be read as depicting the immolation of humans for ritual purpose. The vessel itself may have served to collect their blood (according to the general prehistorian Kühn 1955). However, other readings, with more specialist affinity with the Celtic and Nordic worldview in Europe around the turn of the Common Era, would rather read the images as accounts of deification through immersion (*cf.* Best *et al.* 1991; Kaul 2011). Vessels, specifically cauldrons, play an important role in Nkoya mythology (van Binsbergen 2010a) as they do in Ancient Mongolian and Celtic myth and royal practice. In the ancient Nkoya annual ritual of Kazanga, slaves were sacrificed and oral traditions report on gullies along which their blood was to stream into the Earth in order to fertilise it – but no mention is made of vessels meant to collect their blood. Given the South Asian traces in Nkoya life, one might also turn to India for parallels in the field of human sacrifice, *e.g.* Campbell 1864; Wilson 1852.

<sup>103</sup> The *muyombo* tree, *Sclerocarya birrea* (Mingochi 1998; Turner 1964, 1967; the *marula* tree of South Central Africa and adjacent regions – a tree species related to the mango, cashew, pistachio and sumac: ‘*Sclerocarya*

right hand; this will ultimately protrude from the mount and grow into a mighty tree marking the grave. The king's seat and / or left hand are traditionally resting on the occiputs of at least two slaves killed for the purpose, in reminiscence of a funerary custom also recorded for Oceania (notably the Marquesas – Ions 1980: 294);<sup>104</sup> under modern conditions, these occiputs have been replaced by the rounded tops of anthills – as they have in the ritual marking the initiation of a new village site, which in many respects is the reverse of royal burial. Traditionally, other members of the royal household were to join the king in his grave, and until today sudden deaths among one or two such functionaries tend to coincide with the demise of an incumbent king.<sup>105</sup> These funerary customs confirm the cosmological position of the king as the Demiurge-like agent on whom the fertility of the land depends in the most literal sense – hence his title in Si-Luyana (the court language of the neighbouring Barotse, virtually indistinguishable from the Nkoya language):

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*birrea*), or else the *mutondo* tree (wild teak, *Pterocarpus angolensis* (cf. Boggomsbaai 2004), which according to local praisenames (see *Likota Iya Bankoya*) gave its local name to the Western Nkoya royal title, Mwene Mutondo – although as I point out in this monograph also an astronomical reading is possible, as Morning Star. Although both trees have more or less sacred connotations for the Nkoya, appearing in praise names and being the focus of village rites and kingship rites, yet it might be rather far-fetched to consider them local African transpositions of the *bodhi* tree so venerated in Buddhism – even though forked poles (natural or manufactured ones) play a conspicuous role in Theravada Buddhism as supports for sagging branches of sacred trees (van Binsbergen 2020k: 7), and even in a context where royal children are called by South Asian names, where the king behaves, if not like a Buddhist, then at least like a Hindu Brahman who can only dispense food but never accept food, etc. Meanwhile Proto-Bantu offers another perspective on the root *-tondo*: its basic Bantu semantics would be 'Morning Star', and although this scarcely explains the tree name, it may be illuminating in a context of kingship (the relationship between the Kahare and Mutondo kingships has developed into something of a moiety system, where Kahare would then play the role of 'Evening Star', for which however I cannot offer a Nkoya lexical item nor a locally attested conscious interpretation among the Nkoya (in public discourse, the Kahare kingship is consciously associated with the Sun, not with the Evening Star). A prominent legendary personality in the context of the Mutondo kingship is Manenga, who also occurs in other mythical contexts from South Central Africa (e.g. Isaak 2006), and further research might explore if she has morning-star connotations – she occurs in myths similar to those involving Hera (when testing Jason whether he will carry her across a water), with Evening Star connotations. We have noted an Indian bias in Nkoya royal names, but that is scarcely going to help us out on this point, for Sanskrit *Sitala*, 'Morning Star', has no obvious Nkoya applications (cf. Nkoya *litala* / *jitala* / *litara*, 'house'). Waldman, in an unpublished Honours Dissertation with the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa, 1989 (cited by Bernard 2009: 304), points out that the novice in Khoekhoe female puberty rites (not unlike those of North American Na-Dene speakers) is symbolically equalled with the Morning-star – although among the Nkoya, solar and rain motifs dominate in these rites.

<sup>104</sup> Perhaps we need not go as far as the Marquesas, French Polynesia, Oceania, to encounter parallels to this Nkoya custom. Bernal (1987: 577 n. 53) reports on the iconography of the Middle Kingdom pharaoh Sesostris:

'He is often depicted with his feet placed on two heads symbolizing the foreign enemies of Egypt, the Negroes and the Syrians' (cf. Spiegelberg 1927: 25).

Using the search term 'pharaoh trampling enemies' on *Google Images* (<http://www.google.com>), numerous parallels, involving numerous other Pharaohs, may be found in Egyptian iconography, beginning with the *Nr-Mr Tablet*. However, what is involved in the Egyptian case is a living and triumphant king, not a dead one. Given their death industry, Ancient Egyptian burials have been well studied, but if there is a parallel case involving the pharaoh's feet resting on two immolated slaves, it has eluded me.

<sup>105</sup> For South Central African and Ancient Egyptian parallels, cf. Declé 1898; Budge 1973: 226 n. 8.



*litunga*, 'land' (Gluckman 1951). But beyond this regional cosmological meaning, these funerary customs conjure up continuity with royal funerary practices in West Africa, Ancient Egypt (the example *par excellence* of a society in the grips of a death industry, with interesting parallels to the Nkoya situation in royal burial architecture and site layout, and with funerary human sacrifice in the First Dynasty; cf. Emery 1961; Wilkinson 2001), Ancient Mesopotamia (especially the royal graves of Ur; cf. Woolley 1955, 1982), and China under the Shang 商朝 and Zhou 周朝 dynasties (second half second through most of the first millennium BCE – Allen 1991: 3); and, on a more modest scale, they also remind us of the existence of a 'death industry' in many littoral West African societies (and their Trans-Atlantic Maroon counterparts; cf. Thoden van Velzen & van Wetering 1988), death, burial (often with an elaborate and creative coffin industry – and sometimes with 'second burial' of the defleshed bones),<sup>106</sup> inquest, the divination practices associated with the latter,<sup>107</sup> the ritual disposal or withdrawal from social circulation of a deceased's possessions should he or she be found out to have been a witch, the ceremonial re-circulation of a sorcery-free / cleansed inheritance, compensatory kinship payments and the reaffirmation of the bereaved's new social roles, – together resulting in an institutional setting where death is undeniably the culmination of social life. Considering that all these societies were situated on or near the proposed Sunda trajectory, we may be justified to suggest this 'funerary industry' to be another possible Sunda trait.

9. There is a marked tradition of *regicide* among the Nkoya.<sup>108</sup> Oral traditions (van Binsbergen 1992) report for several kings that they

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<sup>106</sup> Analogies in burial customs of the Western Grassfields (specifically Bamileke; my fieldnotes) and various Indonesian locations (cf. Hutchinson & Aragon 2002) suggest that also 'second burial' may be a Sunda trait which has spread to this part of West Africa. Among the Nkoya, however, no trace of it has been revealed to me. What is more important, the custom of the 'secondary burial' is so widespread and so old (already attested in the Middle Palaeolithic) that its distribution scarcely agrees with a Sunda interpretation; cf. Anonymous, 'Secondary burial'.

<sup>107</sup> Especially bier divination, when entranced (possibly drugged) bier bearers with their movements answer questions posed to the dead body on the bier, and may point out – among the surviving members of the local community – the witch who is supposed to be responsible for the death. Cf. Rattray (1923, 1927) on Ghana, and several further references in the literature, both from West Africa and the New World: Bastide 1968; Bouché-Leclercq 1879; Crevaux 1884; Delafosse 1912; Herskovits 1953; Holas 1952; Thomas 1962; Wiedemann 1909; author's fieldnotes from the Manjacos, Guinea Bissau, 1983. We need not reach for Sunda influence to create a context for such practices: for the Late Period, they were described for Ancient Egypt (Bouché-Leclercq 1879: I, 188), involving however not dead bodies carried around on biers, but divine statues carried in procession (as is still customary in the Mediterranean region and in Hindu India, and Latin America).

<sup>108</sup> Despite the possibility that such *regicide* is a Sunda trait, we cannot rule out that among the Nkoya the more immediate background of the institution of *regicide* is in Ancient Egypt (cf. Murray 1914; Moret 1927-1932) – and that it is a Pelasgian trait, perhaps ultimately influenced by Sunda. With Frazer's *The Golden Bough* (1911-1915) that institution, with Frazer's initial focus on Central Italy, became one of the icons of early anthropology, frequently commented upon in later studies such as Adler (1982), Simonse (1990), de Heusch (1994), Gluckman (1954), Smith (1969), Swanton (1906), Wood (1982), Wittgenstein (1967), etc.

were murdered, but by the projection of modern constitutional, Christian and human-rights considerations this is usually rationalised by reference to ill-rule and other failures on the part of the victim; some personal field observations from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century CE suggest that the practice continues to the present day. Moreover, one of the institutions of Nkoya court culture (although no longer strictly observed in practice) is that the queens' task is to test the king's life force as manifest in sexual performance – impotence must be reported to the senior court officials, who arrange for the king to be killed and thus replaced.



Kuba / Bushongo *ndop* sculpture: King Shamba, British Museum London / Parrinder 1967: 121; note the *mankala* board and the stave of office



Kuba / Bushongo *ndop* sculpture (author's collection); note the copper neck ring, the conical coiffure and the serene facial expression reminiscent of Buddhist representational conventions



Ancestral image, Nias Isl. (West of Sumatra), Royal Tropical Institute Amsterdam / Schnitger 1991; note the two hand-held staves, and the diadem which follows a very widely distributed type, from Mwene Kahare in Zambia to Tut-<sup>c</sup>antj-Amun in New Kingdom Egypt and Samo-yed shamans



two of three dozens of gigantic sculptured heads of celestial guardians at the City of Angkor, Cambodia, early 2<sup>nd</sup> mill. CE, The Angkor temples' © 2004 Dave Parker; the coiffure follows an iconographic prototype for the Buddha; the reduction to a conical shape is especially noticeable in the Angkor Wat context of 12th c. Cambodia

Fig. 5.5. Congo sculpture and Sunda parallels

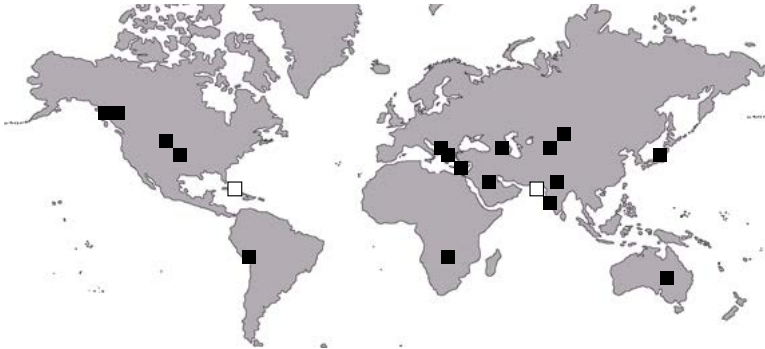
The custom does not stand on its own. Oral traditions claim that the Nkoya dynasties (whose family language is still Lunda, as distinct from local Nkoya) originate in the Musumba empire of the Lunda king Mwaat Yaamv on the Lualaba river in Southern Congo, from whom they allegedly broke away because of disrespectful treatment and a conflict over male genital mutilation. Now the title Mwaat Yaamv means 'Lord of Death', and besides several other connotations (extreme violence practiced in his name, and sym-

bolistic associations with the realm of the dead and with sorcery) his title invokes the peculiar succession procedure customary at his court: at the end of his term of office, the king – not unlike present-day academic practices in the Netherlands – is torn apart by his councillors. By analogy with such cosmogonic mythical beings as P'an Ku, Ymir, Tiamat, Leviathan, from all over Eurasia, and the Hainuwele complex (see below), where annihilation is a condition for the future nutritional bliss of humankind, it is as if such Lunda regicide revives cosmogony. I am inclined to consider this regicide as a possible Sunda trait for a number of reasons (none too compelling): as sculptural styles indicate (Fig. 5.5) there is a slight suggestion of Sunda influence in Southern and Central Congo, which forms the North Western part of the Mozambican-Angolan corridor for which Sunda influence could be argued on a number of genetic and ethnographic counts; and the regicide institution is also highly conspicuous in the Mediterranean, as another arguably Sunda-influenced region.

10. Another possibly Sunda-related funerary trait among the Nkoya appears to be that *shaving the head is a sign of mourning*, a practice also found in Southern Madagascar (Middleton 1994);<sup>109</sup> as a normal coiffure also outside times of bereavement, the shaven head (but leaving one tuft of hair in the middle) was the practice in Ancient Egypt (especially for priests and children), among the Turks of historical times, and among the Scythian-like Argippaeans from the Altai (Herodotus, *Historiae*, IV 23; Los 1969: 50; Cuno 1871: 86; hence traces of such shaving also near the Tarim Basin, Mallory & Mair 2000). At commoner deaths in the villages this practice is not generally observed, but when the king dies, it is obligatory for all his people to shave their head, under severe sanctions in case of non-compliance (*Likota Iya Bankoya* records such an occasion for the beginning of the 20th century, when apparently the custom was so alien to the Nkoya commoners that they had to be threatened with the death penalty in order to make them comply, van Binsbergen 1992). The pattern makes sense, if viewed as a home ('Sunda') custom of immigrant kings who seek to impose, without too much success, their own custom upon subjects that are culturally alien to them.

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<sup>109</sup> This one example does not entirely exhaust possible Malagasy parallels in Nkoya culture. The Nkoya courtiers' infatuation with the fermented honey drink mead / *mbote* is another case in point – it echoes Beaujard's various ethnographic discussions of Madagascar (1983, 1985, 1991). When among Malagasy Christians Jesus of Nazareth is often called *Andriamanitra* (in Merina dialect: "Perfumed Lord"), this recalls – perhaps with an underlying Indian common source for both – one of the most enigmatic passages in the Nkoya collection of oral history, *Likota Iya Bankoya*, where a king's ornate praisename occurs 'the snuffbox of Nyambi's son'. However, I believe that Nkoya kingship owes, directly, more to the Atlantic west coast of Africa than directly to the Indian-Ocean east coast, so one is not surprised that Malagasy parallels are only few, after all.



white symbol: classification as 'West Indian' ambiguous

Fig. 5.6. Provisional global distribution of the trait 'mandatory general hair cutting at the ruler's death'

It is remarkable that this practice should be explicitly prohibited by the laws of Ancient Israel (*Leviticus* 21:5; *Deuteronomy* 14: 1, where the prohibition is specifically applied to a funerary context) as if it were a sign of identity among an anterior local population from which the Israelites wanted to distinguish themselves by all means – although often failing to do so, and adopting their hosts's traits such as the Ba'al cult on heights. Since we have seen that the Levant is well in the proposed Sunda trajectory, we might assume that also here shaving of heads might have been a Sunda trait, even though it may long have ceased to be recognised as such and may simply have passed as a local Canaanite or Egyptian<sup>110</sup> trait in the Late Bronze Age, when the Israelite laws were conceived. If it was a Sunda trait, and if (as I suggest) male genital mutilation is one too, then it is remarkable that the Hebrews adopted the latter while rejecting the former. But the whole idea may be a red herring, for a provisional global mapping (with additional data points gleaned from Hastings 1909-1921, Index volume, s.v. 'haircutting [at death king]') reveals neither a Sunda nor a Pelasgian distribution (Fig. 5.6)

11-12. Various indications of a *Sun cult*: A newborn baby is presented to the rising Sun; so is the heir in the name-inheriting ceremony (*ushwana*) and the novice adult woman at the end of her puberty rites (*kutembwisha kank'anga*); the king is the Sun, and is ceremonially greeted by day but emphatically not by night. Similar traits among the neighbouring Lozi / Barotse (Mutumba Mainga 1972) and, indeed, among the Ancient Egyptians (Stricker 1963-1989); also the Essenes, in many ways presursors of Christianity in Ancient Palestine around the turn of the Common Era, knew a morning prayer to the Sun (Wilson 1955: 37, 42).<sup>111</sup>

<sup>110</sup> The standard coiffure of Egyptian male children was a shaven head with one protruding tuft of hair. The child Horus is often depicted in this way. Egyptian priests, especially those of Osiris, were required to shave their heads. Shaving the natural head hair and instead wearing wigs was in fact general practice among the Egyptian population – as for women in ultra-orthodox Judaism during the Common Era.

<sup>111</sup> Further evidence of a solar cult in Western Zambia is found in Jalla 1903. Mackintosh 1922: 367f. claims that

Below we shall encounter further instances, *e.g.* in the context of Hinduism (*Institutes of Vishnu* 1988: 114). Yet before we rush to the conclusion that such a Sun cult is Sunda-related (also *cf.* my book in prep. (a) on Sun cults and the work of Grafton Elliot Smith), we must consider at least two alternative explanations for the existence of a Sun cult among the Nkoya / Barotse and in Ancient Egypt:

- a. such a Sun cult is an Asian trait which reached both Egypt, and Nkoyaland, in the course of the Back-into-Africa movement
- b. such a Sun cult has its origin in Egypt, and from there spread to Nkoyaland.

In order to highlight the significance of the proposal that the Sun cult may well be a Sunda trait, some further discussion is in order. The Sun has a NarCom in its own right, which I foolishly introduced as NarCom 35 on the basis of the sample of Flood myths worldwide; yet in many ways this seems a mistake. In the first place there was already a slot provided for the Sun in my earlier list of NarComs, namely as one item in the triad covered by NarCom 3: 'What is in Heaven': Rain, Lightning, and the Rainbow / Sun / Adversary. The latter approach, dictated by my analysis of African cosmogonic myth attested in historical times, reflected more general African attitudes to the Sun: at least throughout Bantu-speaking Africa, the Sun is the Adversary, who chases the real celestial benefactor, Rain. Rain may be accompanied by Lightning. Also in Southern Madagascar in a megalithic context the Sun appears as a killer force, which destroys the stones' life as soon as they are standing above ground (Middleton 1994). When we have a positive Sun cult, as among the Nkoya and Barotse (*cf.* Mainga 1972), we have a reversal of the Adversary to become (an epiphany of) the Supreme God. The cult

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after having caused the High God and his wife to retreat to Heaven – the Spider who was instrumental in granting them access to Heaven along its web has subsequently destroyed it so humans could not follow the divine pair – the morning prayer came to express regret over the loss of this vital connection:


'But every morning, when the Sun rises, Kamonou cries, 'Here is our king ; he has come.' And lie salutes the Sun and prays. He salutes him also at night when the Sun sets. And he salutes and prays to Nasilele. Nyambe's wife, especially when the new Moon rises.''' And again, when Kamonou goes to hunt, or when he has a dream, or when he is ill, he prays to Nyambe and offers him water or something else in a gourd, and on that day he does not work. And when a man dies, they bury him with his eyes to the east, so that he can go straight to Nyambe. If it is a woman, she is buried with her head to the sunset, so that she can go to Nasilele, the wife of Nyambe.'

Perhaps as a result of an unconscious North Atlantic bias, in these early mission accounts of the historic religion of Western Zambia the High God appears as male, and has a wife. The languages of Western Zambia, however, have no syntactic gender, and the High God Nyambi often appears with feminine or bisexual features. A well-known myth circulating by the Nkoya firesides in the 1970s was that of Mr Moon, whose four wives, explicitly reflecting the four lunar phases (and perhaps also Islamic polygamous practice?), loved, killed, buried and revived him every month. Being obviously complementary, Sun against this background may be surmised to be female – although not Moon's wife.

of a female Sun has been attested for Crete in Minoan times,<sup>112</sup> and the possible extension of such a cult to North Western Europe (in German, the gender of *Sonne* is feminine) and, presumably as a result of a process of masculinisation, to Egypt. The Egyptian solar complex becomes especially dominant during the Fifth Dynasty (ca. 2500-2350 BCE), when King Niuserrē build the solar temple complex at Abu Ghurab. However, the concept of the Sun traversing the sky in its solar boat (a notion which Egypt shares with Sumer – another possible argument for shared antecedents in a postulated Sunda Sun cult) is already present in First Dynasty Egypt: One of the oldest attestations of this cosmological concept is to be found on an ivory comb bearing the *serekh* (palace emblem) of king *Dt*, ‘Serpent’, the third incumbent of the kingship in the First Dynasty (Petrie 1925). The Sun cult was to remain dominant in Ancient Egypt throughout its history.<sup>113</sup> Besides Egypt, we find the winged solar disk as a dominant royal symbol elsewhere in the Ancient Near East, notably among the Hittites,<sup>114</sup> Assyrians<sup>115</sup> and Achaemenid Iranians.<sup>116</sup> Despite the fact that the Sun in general has fundamentally different connotations in sub-Saharan Africa, yet on occasion the Ancient Near Eastern / Egyptian solar notion also seems to have penetrated far south, as is clear from the occasional occurrence of the emblem of winged solar disks there among the Igbo people (Jeffreys 1951). I take it that this positive approach to the Sun is a foreign trait in sub-Saharan Africa (whose inhabitants customarily shun the Sun, and for excellent reasons – it causes discomfort in the short term, and skin cancer in the long run), and that the Egyptian and further Ancient Near Eastern usage cannot have recent roots in sub-Saharan Africa. Is it possible that the solar cult is another Sunda trait? Of course, the Igbo are situated at the Bight of Benin, where we have noted a concentration of Sunda connotations – the Igbo trait may not derive from the Ancient Near East / Egypt, but from Sunda.

- 13 Various indications of a *Moon cult*; the central insignia of royal office are a leopard skin (associated with the subaltern, nocturnal, speckled luminary: the Moon), and a flat, round, spiralled *Conus* shell ornament (*mpande*) also my-

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<sup>112</sup> Goodison 1988, 1989; cf. Bernal 1991. Note that the Cretan so-called ‘horns of consecration’ may be an indication of Sun worship and (by a well-established Egyptian iconographic tradition of real-life depiction of hieroglyphics) may derive from , Gardiner no. N27; determinative in 30, ‘horizon’; cf. Banou 2008; Powell 1977.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. David 1980; Bonnet s.v. ‘Sonne’, ‘Sonnenaug’, ‘Re’; Assmann 1995; Kadry 1986; Edel 1961, 1963, 1964.

<sup>114</sup> Cf. Gurney 1952; Dussaud 1945; Alexander 1977; Hellenkemper & Wagner. 1977; Ward 1894.

<sup>115</sup> Smith 1990; Wittkower 1938-1939.

<sup>116</sup> Roes 1954; Wittkower 1938-1939.

thologically<sup>117</sup> associated with the Moon; such royal shell ornaments are found throughout the Mozambique-Angola apparent Sunda corridor; deriving from the Indian Ocean, they are also common-place in parts of New Guinea and Oceania. Below, we shall encounter indications from elsewhere among the presumable Sunda trajectory that a Moon cult is associated with Sunda influence, *e.g.* when we discuss the islands Baḥrayn, Ceylon and Madagascar, and the connotations of the Talos mythical character in connection with Crete.

- 14 Signs of a royal buffalo cult (Fig.5.3.a): Among the Toradja of Sulawesi,<sup>118</sup> Indonesia (a group supposed to have contributed significantly to westward Sunda expansion), buffalo horns as drinking vessels, and shrines consisting of buffalo horns, are strictly reserved to the aristocracy (Barley 1989; Schnitger 1939). A similar restriction attends buffalo horns as drinking vessels among the Bamileke of the Western Grassfields of Cameroon.<sup>119</sup> Here (perhaps in the absence of buffaloes) some kings show an infatuated attachment to miniature cattle which is treated as pets. By the same token, the Kahare dynasty, western Central Zambia, with several other unmistakable Sunda reminiscences as set out throughout this chapter, have as a regionally unique feature a dynastic shrine consisting of a horned buffalo cranium raised on a debarked pole (van Binsbergen 1981a). Moreover, the Nkoya kings insist on maintaining a personal

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<sup>117</sup> As we have seen, one of the principal myths of the Nkoya is that of King Kapes̄h ka Mununga Mpanda, who build a tower out of forked branches (*mpanda*) in order to steal the Moon from Heaven as a royal pendant to be worn by her or his child. The myth has been retold numerous times, also by Frobenius. With good reason, Frazer (1918) considered the Moon a symbol of rebirth *par excellence*, and this is how also Oppenheimer (1998) interprets this type of myth. However, the use of the circular bottoms of *Conus* shells as ornaments is – as a likely demonstration of Sunda influence – widespread from the Indo-Pacific to sub-Saharan Africa, and often the explicit local symbolism is not lunar, but solar (*e.g.* Gelfand 1952, speaking of the *ndoro = mpande* among the Shona of Zimbabwe). While in the Graeco-Roman classic tradition it is Selene (Moon!), Hera / Juno and Artemis / Diana who carry the Moon on their heads, in South and South East Asia, it is the primal god Śiva who dons the Moon as an ornament upon his forehead (Wormser 1942: 82), so – while admitting the possibility of Western Graeco-Roman influence, most pronounced and recognised in the Gandhara scultural tradition dating from the turn of the Common Era – Śiva could be the ultimate referent of the myth of Kapes̄h ka Mununga Mpande. Śiva is a White God, by implication a god of creation, and thus part of a widespread complex (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: 136 *f.*) that also included Nuah before the latter was demoted to a Flood Hero obedient to his High God.

<sup>118</sup> The literature on the Toradja is extensive, and includes among other publications: Adriani & Kruijt 1950-1951; Barley 1989; Bigalke 2005; Downs 1956; Hollan & Wellenkamp 1996; Kotilainen 1992; Koubi 1982; Kruyt 189; Needham 1976; Nooy-Palm 1979, 1986; Tsintjilonis 2000; van der Veen 1965, 1979; Waterson 1989; Volkman, 1980; Zerner 1981. The more general theme of bovine cults in South and South East Asia is explored by Brighenti 2003, 2005.

<sup>119</sup> Barley is one of the very few anthropologists who have done extensive anthropological fieldwork both in Cameroon and in Indonesia; however, he does not volunteer any observations concerning cultural continuity let alone borrowing between the two ethnographic situations (Barley 1989), perhaps due to the fact that the site of his Cameroonian research was not the impressive kingdoms of the Western Grassfields (where Sunda elements appear to be conspicuous; *cf.* van Binsbergen 2006c, in prep. (g), but segmentary groups peripheral to these kingdoms; or perhaps due to the fact that any suggestion of long-range cultural affinities is, as ‘diffusionism’, anathema in the kind of social anthropology that has been dominant in Britain since the 1930s

herd of cattle, even though their fly-infested areas make a very unsuitable environment for livestock. However, a few *caveats* are needed on this point:

- (a) Historically, the Kahare aristocracy's ritual drinking vessels, however, are not buffalo horns but the occiputs (skull tops) of slain enemies, which situates them, certainly, in a train of rich transcontinental continuities especially focusing on Eurasia,<sup>120</sup> and could have Sunda connotations in so far as the occiputs imply head-hunting (see chapter 12, below).
- (b) Buffalo craniums raised on poles feature as symbols of family or group identity in South East Asia from Taiwan to Australia (*cf.* Mitsopoulou n.d.), and might well turn out to be a Sunda trait. The symbolism of buffaloes and of bovines in general is much older than Sunda, to which Oppenheimer attributes a dating of no more than 7 ka BP. Bovines (most probably undomesticated) are very conspicuous in the pictorial art of Upper Palaeolithic Europe.<sup>121</sup> In the Anatolian Neolithic (which recent finds have extended to c. 12 ka BP – Landesmuseum 2007) the emergence of agriculture goes hand in hand with emphatic and numerous display of bovine horns and crania, particularly as modelled in clay – a famous case is Çatal Hüyük (7th mill BCE) as excavated by Mellaart in the 1960s (Mellaart 1967);<sup>122</sup> only by stretching the imagination (and particularly the dating) to breaking point could one suspect any Sunda influence in this connection. It is quite possible that the retention and expansion of the bovine cult in the Mediterranean (*e.g.* the double horns on the battlements of the Knossos palace, Crete;<sup>123</sup> the bull jumping cult there; and *taurumachy* in Spain, the Rhône delta and wide surroundings – Liguria<sup>124</sup>) was to some extent fur-

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<sup>120</sup> For an extensive literature I mention the attestation of the practice in the Upper Palaeolithic Grotta Guattari, Italy (Sergi 1939; Blanc 1938- 1939; Holleman 1998: 64).

<sup>121</sup> Bisons make up as much as 15% of the very numerous representations in Franco-Cantabrian Upper Palaeolithic rock art (after Leroi-Gourhan 1974 *apud* Ruez-Nieto 1999-2000). The cave of Tuc d'Audoubert (Ariège, France) even contains an array of three-dimensional clay images of bisons (Bégouen & Breuil 1958).

<sup>122</sup> See the above footnote on the contested authenticity of some of Mellaart's findings.

<sup>123</sup> However, as we have seen these could also be read as an Egyptian hieroglyphic 'Sun over mountains', Gardiner no. N27 .

<sup>124</sup> The suggestion that Liguria may be among the places in the Ancient Mediterranean to be touched by Sunda influence, is based on two admittedly slight points: the Ligurians were reputed to be head-hunters, and their language, while largely unknown, undeciphered, and unclassified, is considered by the relevant specialists (d'Arbois de Jubainville, Kretschmer, Krahe, Pokorny) as a pre-Indo-European substrate. Apparent affinities with Sardinia would point (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011) in the direction of Sinocaucasian rather than Austric. The range of Ligurian words at my disposal allows us to see continuity with the global etymology of complex of speckled / leopard semantics (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011) but how to explain the apparently Ligurian place names on -asco, -asca, -usco, -osco, -osca as well




thered by Sunda influence: in the final chapters of this book we will see how 'Sunda' was not so much a context for original invention but for the recycling, transformation and further circulation of existing cultural material. Since the early Neolithic domestication of cattle (a multcentred affair to which Africa made its own independent contribution), cattle have been a general Old World feature, and any symbolism associated with this animal species, as indeed the lexical item designating the species, is likely to have a long-range distribution based not so much on maritime travel and trade, but on overland movement and communications spanning the whole of the Old World. We scarcely need Sunda in this connection. So the above suggestion of Toradja-Grassfields continuity of buffalo horn symbolism must be treated with the greatest caution.

15. Historical association with *raiding and trading*
16. Historical association with *head-hunting* (in the 19th century, the Nkoya king and his courtiers drank from the occiputs of their slain enemies – Westbeech apud Samson 1972); also see the extensive discussion of head-hunting in chapter 12 below.;
17. Historical association with *slavery*: Nkoya kings were certainly involved in the interior capillaries of the transcontinental *slave trade* at least in the course of the 19th c. CE, possibly earlier; of longer local standing was the status of slaves / captives / debtors who were indentured to a local headman or king for failure of debts (usually incurred in the context of manslaughter) to be paid. Such slaves played a regrettable role as human sacrifices in the context of Nkoya royal ceremonies, foundation sacrifices for royal capitals and their fences, kettle-drums, etc. Even though slavery was formally abolished from Barotseland in the early 20th c. CE, nearly a century later there was still a keen awareness, in Nkoya villages, as to which families were of slave descent – in other words, had no residential alternatives, no kin to legitimately return to), and insulting remarks to that effect could still readily drive a person to suicidal despair.
18. Royal monopoly over *circumcision / male genital mutilation* (now locally extinct among the Nkoya; for the rich history of this institution among the latter, cf. van Binsbergen 1992, 1993a, and chapter 13, below)
- 18a. Great symbolic emphasis on *reed and reed matting* (Fig. 5.9). Both in Ancient Egypt (earliest temple architecture persisting in later ornamental


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as -inco, -inca (Anonymous, Ligurian (Ancient))? Perhaps Proto-Austrian: \*CVk 'to look for, ask' (< \*Borean \*CVKV, 'to see, to know') may be invoked here, marking (with – probably irrelevant – parallels in the toponymy of South Central Africa) communities where immigrants have asked, and received, settlement rights, or places marked by a significant view (e.g. out onto the sea, or high-rising cliffs and hillocks such as have been commonly used as acropolis / hilltop fortifications, or men's assemblies, all over the Mediterranean region).

patterns (Emery 1961: 223 *f.*), the royal titlature,  *nswt-bit*, ‘She of the Reed and the Bee’, and reed-mat burials; *cf.* Goneim 1956: Plate 8, between pp. 80 and 81) and among the Nkoya (mythical apical ancestress Katete, ‘Reed Person’;<sup>125</sup> reed fence and mat as central ancestral place; King Kahare posing in style – Fig. 5.9.d – holding a rolled reed mat in reminiscence of how his people left the Zambezi Flood plain carrying reed mats – containing ancestral relics?<sup>126</sup> *etc.*) there is a reed complex constitutive of central historical identity. Also *cf.* van Binsbergen 1992 and 2007c.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>125</sup> The Nkoya collection of oral history, *Likota Iya Bankoya*, tells us how during the war which Mwaat Yaamv waged on the Nkoya kings in order to re-instate male genital mutilation (*Mukanda*), a royal princess Katete (‘Reed Person’) hid in a reed mat and so eluded her Lunda / Humbu persecutors. Amazingly, a similar escape through hiding in a reed mat is told of the hero Radin in Northern Borneo, Malaysia / Indonesia (Cotterell 1989). Radin’s persecutor turned out to be a hornbill, which is a widely represented sacred bird (probably a creator god in bird shape) in South East Asia, but also in West Africa especially in Guinea Bissau – which I take as a sign of Sunda impact. Is Katete hiding in a reed mat a transformation of Eve hiding from God after the Fall (*Genesis* 3)?

<sup>126</sup> The tradition cited by Mwene Kahare is puzzling. Although the Nkoya language is virtually indistinguishable from the Luyana language spoken at the Lozi court in the Zambezi Flood Plain (Givon 1971), there is no dominant tradition, publicly circulating among the Nkoya, to the effect that the Nkoya hailed from the Flood Plain – instead of from the Lunda imperial capital Musumba, or from the ‘distant northern land’ Kola. Trained as a traditional healer / diviner as a young man, Rev. J.M. Shimunika (*cf.* van Binsbergen 1992) was the first Christian pastor among the Nkoya, first translator of the Bible into Nkoya, and compiler of the collection of oral histories *Likota Iya Bankoya*. Under his hands, many Biblical elements slipped into the format and contents of Nkoya oral history, and in this light Mwene Kahare’s account may be considered to be contaminated with the Biblical account of the Ancient Israelites leaving the land of the Nile (*cf.* Zambezi) carrying the body of Joseph, Jacob’s son and once Viceroy of Egypt; *Genesis* 50: 26; *Exodus* 13: 19. The oscillating movement between authentic local traditions and contaminating external written texts in colonial and post-colonial circulation is a central feature of oral history in post-colonial Africa, making for tantalising complications (Janzen 1085; van Binsbergen 1992).

<sup>127</sup> Cunnison 1968, speaking of the Kazembe Lunda of Luapula, North-eastern Zambia, also reports on reed fencing around royal graves. Meanwhile, such communality of the reed theme alone is totally insufficient to connect the Nkoya direct with Ancient Egypt. Reed origins of the world or of humanity are also claimed by mythologies as far apart as Zululand (Colenso 1855; Callaway 1970 / 1885) and Japan. In Ancient Egypt, the Delta-situated reed thicket of Chemmis /  *ḥt-bit* was the birth place of Ḥorus as well as of the ‘Two Royal Children’; but also of the South Asian war god Skanda (with considerable Nkoya relevance because of the Nkoya name Shikanda, after whom also the present writer was named *Tatashikanda*) it was said that he is *Saravanabhava* (‘born in a thicket of reeds’). When the Dutch early Egyptologist Holwerda (1925; *cf.* Romein & Romein-Verschoor 1934: vol. IV) turned to Dutch prehistory, he found the abundant evidence of reed architecture in the latter context reason to think of transcontinental borrowing from Egypt – but his observations might have applied equally to Çatal Huyuk (Anatolian Pre-Pottery Neolithic A / B), or to the Pontic region, or to Indonesian villages, or Nkoya villages for that matter. The following passage from *Nihongi*, one of the two Japanese mythological classics (the other being *Kojiki*) sounds almost literally as a Nkoya tradition transposed to Japanese protagonists (*cf.* the Nkoya oral collection *Likota Iya Bankoya*):

‘After this Amaterasu no Oho-kami united Yorodzu-hata Toyo-aki-tsu-hime, the younger sister of Omohi-kane no Kami to Masa-ya-a-katsu-katsu-no-haya-hi no Ama no Oshi-ho-mimi no Mikoto, and making her his consort, caused them to descend to the Central Land of Reed-Plains.’ (Aston 1896: 76)

Like Mongolian, Japanese is an Altaic language, and already a decade ago I pointed out unexpected, apparently Mongolian strands in Nkoya mythology (2010) – as well as Uralic elements in Ancient

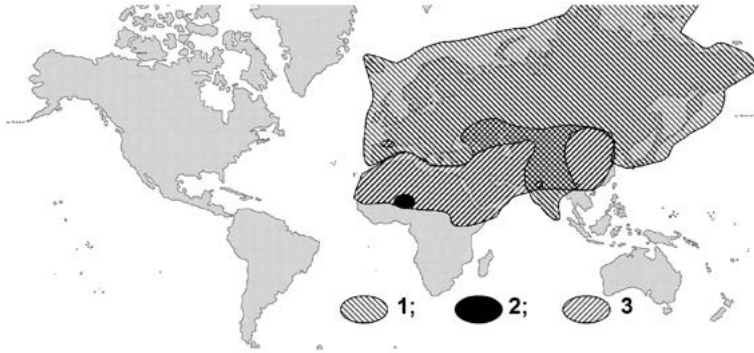
- 19 Premarital and extramarital license of women of royal descent<sup>128</sup>
- 20 Great symbolic and social emphasis on mead (honey-beer), especially in royal and aristocratic circles, in parallel with Madagascar (Beaujard 1994), the Celtic peoples (whose affinity with the Nkoya we have seen above), the South Asian mythical theme of Varuni / Mada, and the Egyptian bee complex – all of these could be argued to be in the proposed Sunda trajectory. However, the Sunda connection is not the only possible link here. When the Eastern Nkoya are called Mashasha, it is – according to my Nkoya informants – in reference to their predilection for alcoholic drink, which suggests an underlying Proto-Afroasiatic root \*maS, ‘to be drunk’ – with continental northern, rather than transcontinental eastern implications; although, given collateral indications of Dravidian influence in the Nkoya context, also Proto-Southdravidian could be involved: \*mats-‘furious, enraged; lust’ (Starostin & Starostin 1998-2008).
- 21 In addition to their military prowess and hunting skills, and their connotations of sorcery, royals are reputed to possess particular magic skills

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Egypt (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011). I do not wish to propose direct unidirectional borrowing here; towards the end of this book we shall find a more adequate explanatory model in the notion of a worldwide maritime network that, in existence since the Early Bronze Age, is both multicentred and multidirectional, so that cultural contents, and genes, may travel back and forth in whatever direction.

<sup>128</sup> Also see the discussion of this trait in Asia in: Sankalia 1960. When in a footnote below, in connection with menstruation, I shall briefly discuss aspects of Nkoya sexuality (more extensively treated in van Binsbergen 2003a: ch. 3), I shall point out a number of contradictions which in part may be explained by reference to the hypothetical grafting of Sunda / Pelasgian traits upon a time-honoured sub-Saharan African substrate, the latter granting considerable status and freedom to women. However, the contradictions ascerbate when we realise that the relative sexual freedom of Nkoya royal women (no fidelity is expected from them, nor permission from or submission to male authority, they may have intercourse and produce children with occasional partners of slave status, and such offspring is not necessarily debarred from ascending to the throne) may on the one hand have Sunda connotations (a point made by Kurt Tauchmann in personal communication, and still compatible with images (however empirically justified or not) of modern South East Asian female initiative in sexual matters as globally circulating in the media and in *belles lettres*. Yet on the other hand non-royal Nkoya women do not enjoy a similar freedom. The custom reported for Kaonde prepubescent girls in the early 20<sup>th</sup> c. CE, of setting out collectively in order to find available adult men with whom they can freely have intercourse in the forest (Melland 1967 / 1923) does not seem to have had a Nkoya counterpart, even though Kaonde and Nkoya are geographically and culturally close. Submissiveness, sexual servitude, and ostentatious respect towards males are deeply instilled during Nkoya girls’ puberty training. Pre-marital sexual intercourse with a young girl, while far from rare, is actionable as theft (from the adult male – father, uncle, brother – who is the girl’s guardian but very rarely her sexual partner). Practically a Nkoya commoner woman is under great social and moral pressure to give in to male advances, so if unwilling she has to resort to ruse. Yet the Nkoya system of human rights (van Binsbergen 2010) is in principle amazingly woman-friendly and enlightened: every act of intercourse needs the woman’s explicit verbal consent or else is actionable in court as rape, even if committed within wedlock. Nkoya sexuality is so much overlaid with cross-cutting influences from intra- and transcontinental distant places, the modern state, Christian churches, the HIV / AIDS pandemic, changing conceptions of royalty, authority, purity, pollution, spirituality, and parenthood, changing conditions of public health, that without a prolonged research project specifically on this topic one cannot hope to unravel and historically understand the attending contradictions.

(*malele*) that allow them to engage in shape-shifting, instantaneous locomotion across great distances, and bilocality – apparently exotic traits in the South Central African cultural environment, but not unknown from South Asian and South East Asian mythical contexts, as the characteristics of gods, heroes, sanges, and princes. .



1. shell, shellfish; 2. bark, empty shell of seed, skin; 3. bark, skin, leather;

source: Tower of Babel, 'Long-range etymologies, full references' – with detailed specific references there

Fig. 5.7. Present Old-World distribution of the two basic meanings of the reflexes of \*Borean \*KVNKV, 'shell, bark'

- 22 Like their kings and royal courts, the Nkoya people also consider their 'cults of affliction' to be of alien origin, travelling through the interior of South Central Africa from east to west, 'like wind' (*mpepo*), and spreading in fact on the wings of pre-colonial long-distance trade. These are healing cults, venerating not the ancestors of a localised kin group who supposedly guard over the group's internal morality and sociability, but non-ancestral spirits, who strike their hosts with illness not in punishment for moral offences but simply to force them to acknowledge the spirit's presence and to seek healing by joining that spirit's cult. This is a common pattern in East and Central Africa.<sup>129</sup> There are numerous converging indications to suggest that this spirit complex derives from the Indian Ocean coast, in Africa. Ultimately it may have had a South, South East, or East Asian origin,<sup>130</sup> although Ed Alpers in a famous article (1984: 681*f*) stressed

<sup>129</sup> Dupré 2001; van Binsbergen 1981; Janzen 1992.

<sup>130</sup> Since not morally-censured, deliberate action, but a-moral accident, 'wind', is the key aetiological concept in these cults, it may be relevant in this connection that *strong wind* is considered, in Southern Africa, as a manifestation of the *Cosmic Water Snake* (Bernard 2009, which she names on p. 381 as *Inkosi ya Manzi*, 'Lord of the Waters'). Since the (likewise semi-aquatic) Rainbow Serpent has been a presence in global mythology since at least Middle Palaeolithic times (*cf.* van Binsbergen 2018: *passim*, see that book's index), it is risky to be more specific in space and time in this connection. Yet in the light of the indications,

the link between Zanzibar cults of affliction, the *zar* (a cult of affliction in Egypt and the Sudan; cf. Seligman 1914; Kennedy 1967; Boddy 1989), and the Muslim and Ethiopian slave trade, in other words, stressed West Asian over South East Asian connections in connection with cults of affliction. Also cf. Safa 1988, where specifically the 'wind' semantics is stressed which is also so important in the cults of affliction of South Central Africa. Throughout the Muslim world, from Morocco and Senegal, and from Tunisia (where I studied such cults intensively) and Hausaland, Nigeria, to Thailand and (as attested in my personal short local fieldwork) to Sri Lanka and Indonesia, superficially Islamised possession cults (often dominated by equine and fire symbolism) have amazing similarity, which however may be attributed to the existence of a global maritime network since the Bronze Age, rather than to restricted diffusion from one identifiable epicentre – let alone Sunda diffusion.

- 23 Among the remoter neighbours of the Nkoya, the Gwembe Tonga, still in the postulated Sunda path, we find (but this is admittedly a very far shot indeed) the puzzling ethnonym *Bene-Kokalia* (Colson 1960), without a clear Bantu etymology, but reminiscent of the legendary Sicilian king Cocalus who according to Ancient Greek myth offered shelter to Daedalus when the latter fled his master Minos.

Cocalus appears as a mythical culture hero on Sicily after the destruction of the Cyclops (Iustinus, *Epitome*, IV.2,2). When Daedalus flies for Minos, Cocalus receives the former at Camicus in Sicily (Pausanias, *Descriptio Graeciae*, VII.4.6). Also Minos in pursuit of Daedalus is received there, but is then killed in his bath by Cocalus' daughters.<sup>131</sup> In the mythical accounts, Cocalus lets an ant draw a thread through the convolutions of a sea-shell (Greek: κόχλος), and thus gets the upper hand of Minos. In line with the common structure of such myths, the shell narrative is to contain an aetiological explanation of the name Cocalus, and this is also how Graves (1964) sees it, who interprets the Sicilian king's name as 'spiral shell'. Remarkably, 'threading' returns as the meaning of a possible Austric etymology of Osiris

Cocalus could be linked to Proto-Austric: \*kVj, 'crab, shell'; Proto- Aus-

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throughout the present monograph, for a Chinese presence in sub-Saharan Africa in the 1st and 2nd mill CE, one is tempted to suggest a link between the regional Cosmic Water Snake, and the Chinese Cosmic Dragon, 龍 *Long*, who however is essentially auspicious. Another one of its manifestations is the Plumed Serpent, of Southern African (Bernard 2009: 203 f.) and Meso-American attestation. It would not be too far-fetched to link this complex to that of the unilateral Mwendanjangula, to which we are referring several times in this monograph. A strong suggestion of an Asian / Buddhist origin exists for the Bituma cult among the Nkoya (van Binsbergen 1981, 2017a: 394n), featuring a vertical pole forked at the top, white-clad officials, with the Moon and the white waterlily / lotus occupying a central place. Thus, from the context of the Nepali Dumi / Kuranti language, we derive the lexical item naksö-sele, 'white clad shaman who officiates at major healing ceremonies and at funerals of those who have died in an inauspicious manner'.

<sup>131</sup> Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, 1, 15; Diodorus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, 4, 78 f.; Sophocles, Κακίαι; Aristophanes, Κώκαλος.

troasiatic: \*kVj ‘crab, prawn’, cf. Proto-Thai: \*kɛːC shell.<sup>132</sup> However, inspection of Fig. 5.7 will prevent us from jumping to conclusions as to an Austric etymology of the name Cocalus.

As Fig. 5.7 indicates, the \*Borean root \*KVNKV (V = unspecified vowel), ‘shell, bark’, has an amazingly continuous distribution throughout the Old World except most of sub-Saharan Africa. The basic meaning ‘shell, shell-fish’ has been retained throughout the Northern (Eurasian / Nostratic) part of the distribution area; the basis meaning ‘bark, skin, leather’ throughout the Southern (Sinocaucasian and Afroasiatic) part of the distribution area, except for the extension of the Nostratic realm on the Indian subcontinent (Indo-European, Dravidian). Predictably, Sinoaucasian, Burushaski, and Basque, as belonging to the [Dene-]Sinocaucasian *super-family*, constitute intrusions of the ‘Southern’ meaning into the Northern half of the distribution. That the Northern and the Southern part of the Old World have each retained one specific side of the more complex semantic field of \*Borean \*KVNKV, is in line with the hesitation on the part of East European linguists (e.g. Illich-Svitych, Dolgopolsky, Starostin, Blažek) to include Afroasiatic as Nostratic / Eurasianic; instead, the two language (macro-)families appear in a collateral relationship, as sisters, rather than mother and daughter. Note the peculiar position of Western Chadic, which, although in the extreme southern periphery of the Afroasiatic realm, yet is the one subgroup to retain most (although not all) of the semantic field implied in \*Borean \*KVNKV; probably Western Chadic is an example of the general rule that archaic forms are best retained in the periphery of archaeological, ethnographic and linguistic distributions. Although the Austric realm is clearly continuous – both phonologically and semantically – with the Northern half of the distribution, the distribution smashes our hopes of attributing an Austric etymology to the name Cocalus: even if it can be argued to mean ‘spiral shell’, such a name could have sprung from anywhere in the Northern half of the Old World, from Lisboa to the Bering Strait; by far the largest part of this immense distribution area is landlocked and absolutely outside any proposed Sunda trajectory.

Here we hit upon a recurrent problem in the interpretation of ethnographic and linguistic phenomena in Sunda / Austric terms: *the apparent association between any such phenomena A, and Sunda culture B, may be genuine, but often it must be attributed to a shared common ancestral source (in the Cocalus case: the \*Borean parent language), which makes the association between A and B collateral instead of genetic.* Rarely will it be possible to conclude to a genetic Sunda relationship on the basis of this kind of data. However, sometimes we do get lucky, for instance when considering the following etymological set:

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<sup>132</sup> Or, alternatively, and semantically far less attractive, to Proto-Austric: \*kVk (V = unspecified vowel), e.g. Proto-Thai: \*kok, ‘reed’.

\***Borean** (approx.): \*HVNV 'blood, breath'  
**Eurasianic**: \*HwinV  
**Sinocaucasian**: \*hwěʔnV  
**Austric**:  
     **Proto-Austroasiatic** \*C-ha:m,  
     **Munda Kar.** eñam 'blood' (Peiros 1989: 127)

(c) Tower of Babel, 'Long-range etymology', adapted

Table 5.6. Proposing an Austric etymology for Greek *haima*, 'blood'

The etymology of Greek *haima*, αἷμα, 'blood', has received much attention. Bernal has been particularly pleased with his proposal to derive it from an Afroasiatic etymon, and found approval for this from the prominent Afroasiaticist Astour. However, once more we note the disadvantageous effects of Bernal's myopic self-limitation to the eastern Mediterranean: for this turns out to be one of the cases when we can argue the presence of Austric linguistic influence in the Mediterranean realm. Both in Eurasianic (with, again, a Nostratic distribution extending all over the Northern half of the Old World; and now including Afroasiatic, where we find, for instance, the well-known Ancient Egyptian <sup>c</sup>ankh / ḫnḫ 'live'), and in Sinocaucasian, the original *-n-* of the \*Borean parent word is retained, except in Austric, where it becomes *-m-*. That same *-m-* is conspicuous in Greek *haima*, as, probably, a tell-tale sign of Sunda / Austric influence.

- 24 The Nkoya's eastern neighbours, the Ila (Smith & Dale 1920), are in many respects indistinguishable from the Mashasha. The Ila may be regarded as a Sunda-associated people, with salient traits such as head-hunting and large clay-reinforced coiffures with Melanesian parallels (*cf.* Blackwood 1935).
- 25 A tricky domain to look for Sunda / Nkoya continuities is that of *language*. Even if one has a reasonable command of the Nkoya language, one would need to draw from vast linguistic resources in a large number of the languages from South, South East and East Asia and the Indo-Pacific region, in order to be able to systematically and convincingly trace lexical parallels. In truth, such linguistic evidence is scarcely to be found by systematic research – one stumbles upon it. The lexical continuity in the naming of king's bells, as set out in the Prologue to this monograph, is a plausible case in point; so is perhaps the Nkoya word *kuta* for 'shelter, court', *cf.* Malay *kota*, 'city'. In the course of decades, with the widening of my knowledge of Asian languages and of digital resources in this field, I managed to add a few more items to my list of Nkoya / Sunda linguistic continuities. The Nkoya expression for 'darling', *mbayi*, is a case in point: it has no obvious Bantu etymology, but corresponds both phonologically and semantically to the word for 'brother' (both elder brother and younger brother) in Sanskrit and in most of the Sanskrit-associated languages of South Asia. A particularity propping up this finding is that among the Nkoya (whose language lacks gender), no closer bond between humans may

be imagined than that between siblings,<sup>133</sup> so that lovers, fully conscious of the incest prohibition (which in a classificatory system of kinship terminology like that of the Nkoya defines not just a handful, but many scores of people of the same generation to be forbidden sexual partners), prefer to play on these implications and fondly call each other '(younger) brother' or '(younger) sister' – employing for this purpose either the formal kinship term, or the word *mbayi*.<sup>134</sup> To further complicate the apparent pattern of transcontinental continuity I may add that the same lovers' play on implied incest and on primal kinship terms is found in Old Egyptian (e.g. Vandenberg 1979: 98), and even in the Biblical *Song of Songs* (4:9-10):

'Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!<sup>135</sup>

Further South Asian words that appear to have found their way into the Nkoya language include राज्ञी (*rajni*, 'queen, princess', cf. *Nkoya jihana*. As we shall see shortly, the name of Shihoka's envious sister Likambi fittingly means 'ladle' in Sanskrit (Monier-Williams 1899: 204): she covets the wooden utensils made by her brother's people. Another possibly transcontinental word is Sanskrit *kaka*, 'uncle' (although the sources on this point are confusing), cf. Nkoya *nkaka*, 'grandparent'. In Proto-Southdravidian we encounter the root \*kanḍ- / \*gaḍḍ- 'bulbous root', cf. the favourite Nkoya staple *kandoro* which comes in small bulbs. Another echo from Sri Lanka may be the designation of the Nkoya hourglass drum as *mukupele*, cf. Sinhalese *mahabera*, 'big drum'.

While there are few Nkoya words that suggest a direct South East Asian /

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<sup>133</sup> A condition also conspicuous from the Ancient Mediterranean, hence Ancient Egyptian, Hittite etc. royal sibling marriage, the fundamental plot for numerous Greek tragedies and myths; and perhaps even the preference for marriage with the Father's Brother's Daughter up to modern times (for a full analysis, see van Binsbergen 1971).

<sup>134</sup> My Dutch-language literary short story, 'God prustt maar wat aan bij het scheppen', in my collection *Zusters Dochters* (1984), is a vivid evocation of this aspect of Nkoya life in recent decades. My inspiration to explore the transcontinental ramifications of the word *mbayi* came from M.M. Kaye's captivating transcontinental novel *The Far Pavilions* (1978). It evokes, among many other striking details, the Indian custom of a young girl turning her childhood boyfriend into her 'bracelet partner' by the gift of a bracelet; the custom still existed among the Nkoya in the 1970s, in regard of locally-made bracelets of ivory.

<sup>135</sup> Incidentally, the much-discussed enigmatic expression in the *Song of Songs*, 15-6

'I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. Look not upon me, because I am black, because the Sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept.'

while easily explained away as a reference to a girl's sun tan because of a manual labour in the fields under Mediterranean climatic conditions, takes on a different, ethnic connotation in the light of my insistence, elsewhere in this monography, on the presence of Proto-Bantu speakers in Syro-Palestine in the Late Bronze Age. The reference to somatic variation in pigmentation among the speaker's siblings may be read as an indication of trans-gene-pool hybridisation in previous generations, as is common among somatically diverse populations e.g. in the Caribbean region.



Austronesian provenance (in the Prologue we have encountered one in the designation of the kings' bells / gongs), the Nkoya name *Kazanga* for the annual harvest festival is a serious candidate: the Javanese harvest festival is called *Kasangga* (Wormser 1942: 76).



source: <http://www.old-picture.com/american-adventure/Mashukulumbwe-Rhodesia-headgear-Kafue.htm>

Fig. 5.8. Ila villagers next to an elephant skull at the camp of an American explorer, North Western Rhodesia (modern Zambia), beginning of the 20th century

### 5.5. *Primal cults of the land, and the kingship*

Culturally, ecologically and linguistically the Ila are closely related to their Eastern and Southern neighbours, the Tonga peoples (including the Gwembe Tonga). Although I suspect a considerable Sunda influence in the origin of the Ila,<sup>136</sup> the mainstream pre-colonial history of both the Ila and the Tonga is that they are the descendants of pastoralists moving in from a North Eastern direction so perhaps ultimately at home in East Africa. Contrary to the Ila and the Nkoya, the Tonga are acephalous – up to the imposition of colonial rule (1900), their only leaders were the keepers of rain shrines, with little political power and no military power. Often these shrine systems exert an

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<sup>136</sup> The Zambia National Archives contain (file no. KSF 3/1) an item entitled 'A paper on the origin of the Baila, A Suggestion - to accompany Annual report on Namwala subdistrict, 1917-18'. As an administrative text, the author remains unspecified, but it is possibly Hall, J.G., District Officer Namwala, at the time; or G.H. Nicholls, Collector, Baluba sub-district, *cf.* Nicholls 1906. The paper is based on rich regional oral sources, but does not venture, of course, into transcontinental speculations, which were unpopular at the time as they are today.

influence on the ritual circulation of people and goods over a radius of several hundreds of kilometres. Such shrine systems, and the associated ritual leadership characterised by pacifism, negotiation, and a ritual link with the land, are known from all over Africa (famous examples have been described by Evans-Pritchard (1940) for the Nuer in Southern Sudan, Fortes (1945, 1949) for the Tallensi of Northern Ghana, and Gellner (1969) for the High Atlas, Morocco); one can see very similar systems along the Northern and Southern shores of the Mediterranean, with extensions into the proto-historical cultures of Celtic and Germanic peoples, whilst there are also Asian parallels – and even in the High Andes of South America (Sallnow 1987). Ultimately based in a cult of the local land, it is counter-intuitive if we were to propose an alien, and seaborne, Sunda background for such regional cults, and the segmentary socio-political organisation for which they provide a modicum of supra-local organisation. On the contrary, I see such cults of the land as an elaboration of NarCom 10 'The Earth as primary', which I believe (on distributional ground) can be demonstrated to be part of Pandora's Box. Such cults of the land, with notions of sanctuary, the polluting effect on the land, its crops, animals, and people, of incest, murder and sorcery, and the cleansing powers of shrine priest (examples of which can be found both in the Bible, among the Nuer, and in the Ancient Greek narratives of Orestes, of Heracles and Neleus, and of Peleus and Acastus)<sup>137</sup> are for me the principal signs of the effect which I listed in section 3.1 above as

*'Non-demic cultural diffusion of African (largely pre-Out of Africa) traits up North and North East, into Europe and West and Central Asia, from as soon as Anatomically Modern Humans appeared in the latter regions.'*

From *pre-Out-of-Africa* sub-Saharan Africa, and without first making the round through West and Central Asia, and the Extended Fertile Crescent, along the various Intensified Contexts of Innovation and Transformation, these truly primal cults of the land spread to

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<sup>137</sup> Orestes killed his mother Clytemnestra in revenge of his mother murdering his father Agamemnon, and he was persecuted by the Fates until finally discharged by the Athenian Areopagus court (Aeschylus, *Eumenides* – the scene has much in common with the story of Hōrus having to account for his legitimate (though unusual: the conception was allegedly posthumous when Isis resuscitated the drowned Osiris' penis) birth before the court of the gods for his attacks on Set, the murderer of his father Osiris – until finally Hōrus was discharged when – as we have already seen in passing above – Neith suddenly revealed her ancient, supreme powers and threatened to let the sky drop if Hōrus was not acquitted; the story has a Celtic flavour in that the Ancient Celts are reported, on two occasions nearly a millennium apart, to fear the falling of the sky, and to swear by that dreaded event (Rolleston 1994). From the fate of various cleansing priests in Greek mythology one does get the impression of individuals who had to pay for their ritual status by considerable social vulnerability – much like their modern counterparts at the other shore of the Mediterranean: shrine guardians in the context of rural popular Islam (Gellner 1969; van Binsbergen 1971, in prep. (h)). Neleus, son of Poseidon and Tyro, was a (land) priest who refused to cleanse Heracles of a blood debt, and when Neleus refused he was killed by Heracles with all his sons with the exception of Nestor, who lived through the Trojan war. Peleus, father of Achilles, was purified of the murder of Eurytion by Acastus; the latter's wife sought in vain to win Peleus' love, accused him of rape (cf. Potifar's wife, *Genesis* 39), and sought to deliver him to murderous Centaurs, after which he dismembered her. The story also has parallels with that of Aristaëus and Eurydice; and Hippolytus and Phaedra. At one level of analysis, this reads as if the confrontation of the primordial Earth cult with a newer religious dispensation (not particularly of Sunda origin), bringing male sky deities.

the Mediterranean and deeply into Europe and Asia, perhaps even into the New World (which means that this effect must have reached Central Asia well before the onset of the Holocene, so as not to miss the latest overland migration to the New World, unless their presence there is a case – rare according to the paradigm prevailing in the present book – of parallel invention.) Sunda operates in a totally different time frame, and mainly along maritime routes, whereas the spread of these cults of the land penetrates deeply into the interior of the continental land masses involved.

Yet, in the course of this monograph and especially in the later chapters, we will repeatedly observe how Sunda has a way of recycling, transforming and redistributing the cultural (including mythological) achievements of earlier periods and of other regions. In the case of the Nkoya,<sup>138</sup> the model of shrine cults supposed to cater for the local community's ecological needs, and to mete out punishment in case the land is polluted by sorcery, incest and murder, has been entirely recast (van Binsbergen 1981a: chs 3-4) *in royal terms*: the only regional shrines now in existence among the Nkoya there are king's burial places, recorded in local traditions, often marked by trees or poles, and often administered by a junior royal lineage of shrine-keepers. A similar situation obtains elsewhere in South Central Africa where there are well-developed forms of kingship, partly, I would suggest, under Sunda influence.

The question now is: did Sunda influence only bring the recasting in royal terms of a pre-existing local shrine cult, or did it, in some parts of Africa such as Tongaland, South Zambia, also contribute towards the underlying format of the shrine cults itself? In other words, did the Sunda influence help to recast a pre-existing local Earth cult into a shrine cult venerating, not so much the land, but – by a vertical shift which I have learned to associate with the more recent CITs, the Extended Fertile Crescent and the Back-into-Africa movement – *rain*, as a celestial and not a terrestrial element? Despite occasional field exposure in the early 1970s, and my association, in the 1970s-1980s, with prominent Tonga specialists such as Colson and Lancaster, my knowledge of Tonga societies is too limited to attempt a positive answer to this question – therefore we would need an ethnographically wellinformed, itemised inspection of Tonga society along the lines of my above discussion of the Nkoya. So we leave the Tonga shrines for the time being. However, for two other African contexts where indications of Sunda influence are much more conspicuous: along the Bight of Benin, along the Upper Guinea coast, and for the Mediterranean Bronze and Iron Ages, – all three of them being settings in which regional cults are at the heart of the religious system – I would be inclined to presume a Sunda hand, not only in the royal courts imposing a limited, fragmented and often short-lived socio-political order, but also in the shrines that, over far larger distances, are far more successful in creating and maintaining a coherent religio-political order.

On the other hand, there is a close similarity between especially the Western Nkoya court culture and that of their Western neighbours, the Lozi / Barotse / Luyi; here, a sacred boat (Nalikwanda; Fig. 5.6.c) is the central emblem of kingship – somehow like in Ancient Egypt, and perhaps not because of the diffusion of Ancient Egyptian kingship and culture (although there is little doubt that such diffusion took place to a considerable extent) but because of a shared

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<sup>138</sup> And many other societies in South Central Africa; van Binsbergen 1981.

background in Sunda connections. Already the nautic historian James Hornell, writing in the second quarter of the twentieth century CE, stressed the continuity between Indonesian and (especially East) African boat types. Among the Nkoya themselves this trait cannot be, or can no longer be, conspicuous because they now inhabit the plateau between the Zambezi and the Kafue rivers, where the streams are hardly navigable except for very small dugout canoes; the legendary Nkoya king Shihoka Nalinanga, however, allegedly living at the Maniinga or the Dongwe / Zongwe River,<sup>139</sup> is reputed to have taken great pride in boats, and these artefacts were among the bones of contention between him and his sorceress sister Likambi Mangi<sup>140</sup> – who, incidentally, as all female royals among the Nkoya, is considered to be true heir to the throne, reducing her brother to an usurper (van Binsbergen 1992). Ships adorned with a bird's head on the prow, were, for instance, depicted on Vietnamese / Hanoi bronze drums, along with depictions of people (Galestin 1941: 177; also cf. Li 1986.). And such ships are also known from the Late Bronze Age Sea Peoples.

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<sup>139</sup> In view of the abundance of Ancient Egyptian elements in Nkoya kingship and mythology, as we shall encounter in the course of this monograph, and of the transformation which has endowed obvious references to the Ancient Near East including Egypt with a temporal and spatial apparent factuality as if dealing with the few most recent centuries in South Central Africa (van Binsbergen 2010a), we are tempted to read for these rivers, the name of the Nile River, and for Kola, the names of Egypt (called Kema, or Tawy, in Ancient Egyptian). But as is typical for myths, semantic associations are utilised *kaleidoscopically*, unpredictably oscillating between totally different sets of spatial and temporal references.

<sup>140</sup> Likambi Mangi is one of the most enigmatic characters in Nkoya mythology. As a woman, her legitimate right to the kingship and her resentment of her brother's appropriating that power and its attending privileges, are relatively straightforward. But why should she, and her brother, echo some of the basic themes in Celtic mythology? Is the cattle that Shihoka raids, normal terrestrial cattle, or is the siblings' association with the rivers an indication that (like in the Heracles and Geryon myths) this is *Underworld* cattle – rivers in South Central and Southern Africa being the gateways to the Underworld and the dwelling places of the ancestors? Of the artefacts that inspire Likambi's envy are specifically listed boats and wooden dishes. Significantly, her name means 'ladle' in Sanskrit (Monier-Williams 1899: 204) – a fitting complement to the dishes she coveted. However, the Proto-Bantu root *ku-kamba* (Meeussen 1980 and n.d.) means 'to seize', perhaps in evocation of the possessions Likambi wanted for herself. Is Likambi not simply a water nymph or mermaid (cf. Mami Wata) of the Lorelei kind, pernicious to men, and longing for a wooden *comb* more than anything else? By comparison, Bernard (2009: 216) speaks of the *njuzu* (Shona mermaid) which is the object of the *mashave* cults of affliction in Zimbabwe, and which is supposed to be White and to have pale long hair. On the Mami Wata cult in Africa. cf. Drewal 1988. Meanwhile, contemporary Nkoya informants have difficulty understanding the epithet Mange. In modern Nkoya, *mangi* are 'eggs', but that clearly does not apply. They translate Mange as 'sorceress', but it appears to be a '*harpax legomenon*', without any additional Nkoya context known to me. Must we reach for Proto-Altaiic: \**mangga* (~-o) 'big, strong' (Starostin & Starostin, 1998-2008, 'Altaic etymology', with reflexes in Tungus-Manchu and Japanese? By analogy with the Ancient Egyptian primal goddess Tefnut, Likambi (whose brother's name Shihoka na Linanga may be interpreted as 'Snake Child of Drought') has the connotations of humidity / nebulosity; however, that analogy seems better applied to another early personage in Nkoya mythology, Mashiku, 'Coldness'.



a. Horned buffalo craniums adorn the ancestral shrine of the Nkoya king Mwene Kahare Kabambi, Njonjolo, Kaoma district, Zambia, 1973



b. The Nkoya king Mwene Kabulwebulwe at the Kazanga festival, Kaoma district, Zambia, 2003; note the reed ceremonial architecture



c. The Barotse / Lozi / Lozi royal barge, the *Nalikwanda*, during the Kuomboka royal ceremony, Barotseland, Zambia, 1958; Handbook to the Reederation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1958, at <http://www.nrzam.org.uk/FedHbk/fedHbk.html>



d. Mwene Kahare Kabambi poses in style on his throne seat in his palace at Njonjolo 1977; he holds a rolled reed mat in order to proclaim the Mashasha identity of his division of the Nkoya people



e. Kapesh Kamumunga-mpanda, 'The "Kapesh" made of Forked Poles', features centrally among the Nkoya myths of kingship; cf. van Binsbergen 1992.



f. The royal orchestra of the Nkoya king Mwene Kahare Kabambi, Njonjolo, Kaoma district, Zambia, 1977 ; see above, Prologue



g. At a name-inheriting (*ushwana*) ceremony, Njonjolo, Kaoma district, Zambia, 1973, the candidate finds herself inside the ancestral sacred reed fence (*shitetete*), where she takes upon her back a child of the deceased relative whose name she has just inherited



h. Surrounded by his courtiers, the Nkoya king Mwene Kahare Kubama II is the only person allowed to sit on a chair, in a temporary, reed-made royal enclosure at the Kazanga festival, Shishonjo, Kaoma district, Zambia, 1994

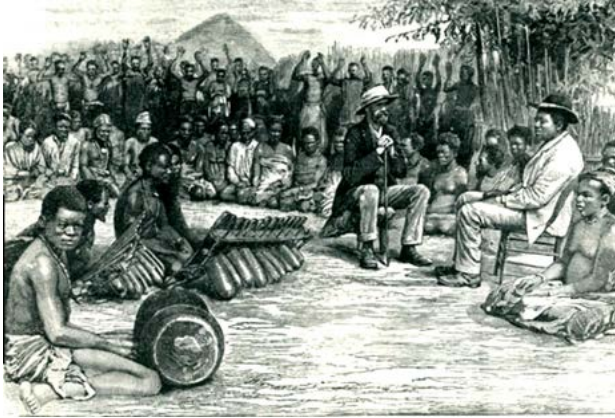
Fig. 5.9. Scenes from ceremonial life in Western Zambia

The Nkoya etiquette according to which only the king is allowed to sit on a seat, while all others must sit on the ground, resonates not only with widespread Western Zambian custom, but even may well be a transcontinental Pelasgian trait, as the following pictures suggest:



The author presents a copy of his book *Tears of Rain* (1992) to the king of the eastern Nkoya. The king (centre) is the only person allowed to sit on a chair, in this case the ceremonial throne that has been brought out from the palace, whose shadow is visible right below. All other persons present (including courtiers and headmen) sit on the ground, which the exception of the government-paid court constable, who adopts a modern standing position of respect. Note the court musician (foreground left) and his xylophone. During field trips to Indonesia (Java and Bali; e.g. van Binsbergen 2007c) I found that the layout of royal capitals, seating arrangements and the emphasis on reed were highly reminiscent of Nkoyaland.

Fig. 5.10. A present-day ceremonial occasion at the court of Mwene Kahare Kabambi, Njonjolo, Kaoma, 1992



[https://www.google.com/search?safe=off&biw=1536&bih=747&tbn=isch&sa=1&ei=AfpNXMmvN4HYwQKLb6AAg&q=lozi+colonial+chiefs&oq=lozi+colonial+chiefs&gs\\_l=img\\_3...167414.167924.168871...o.o.0.60.214.4.....1...1.gws-wiz-img.7KRrHON-90#imgrc=qEh4tHtgmkUw2M](https://www.google.com/search?safe=off&biw=1536&bih=747&tbn=isch&sa=1&ei=AfpNXMmvN4HYwQKLb6AAg&q=lozi+colonial+chiefs&oq=lozi+colonial+chiefs&gs_l=img_3...167414.167924.168871...o.o.0.60.214.4.....1...1.gws-wiz-img.7KRrHON-90#imgrc=qEh4tHtgmkUw2M;); with thanks

Often such book illustrations in travelogues were drawn by draftsmen in the metropolitan country after directions of the author; this was for instance the case with the patently unreliable illustrations embellishing Emile Holub's books (cf. van Binsbergen 2014 = video holub). However, the minute detail in which the musical instruments are rendered, in perfect agreement with instruments in use during the 1970s, as well as the physical likeness of the king, convince me that this illustration was made after a photograph taken on the spot.

Fig. 5.11. King Lubosi Lewanika and Mr Frank E. Lochner (on behalf of the British South Africa Company) negotiating a treaty, at Lealui, Barotseland, 1890.



Source: Beyer & Knee 2007: 201

Fig. 5.12. Kyrgyzstan elders, Central Asia, during a public ceremony

The suggestion that the Nkoya, Ila and Lozi, and particularly their royal courts, may have Sunda connotations, finds some circumstantial support from the fact that several groups in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Zambia and immediate surroundings (notably the Katanga / Copperbelt and the Feira district, Mozambique) are generally recognised to constitute

cultural, ethnic and linguistic enclaves whose population, or at least whose chiefs, have come from the east, sometimes as far as the Indian Ocean coast (Brelsford 1965). The percolation, in the interior of South Central Africa, of Swahili and Umbundu traders from Indian Ocean and Atlantic Ocean coast was a common feature in the late 19th century (van Binsbergen 1992 and references cited there), and given their time-honoured technology of locomotion (caravans of pedestrians, carrying the leaders in ‘sedans’) there is no reason why the same would not have been the case centuries earlier. These are long-distance traders plugged into an intercontinental maritime network which is likely to have had Sunda aspects and to be partly manned by Indonesians until Early Modern times. In Nkoya oral traditions, much is made of the arrival of the stranger king<sup>141</sup> with his enchanting musical band of xylophones. A few hundred kilometres to the southeast, in today’s Zimbabwe, through much of the second millennium CE, major states with considerable Islamic influence were the hubs linking intercontinental trade in local gold, cattle and slaves against foreign textiles and ceramics; there is consensus that much of the

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<sup>141</sup> According to some Nkoya oral traditions (van Binsbergen 1988, 1992), the first Kahare arrived among the Nkoya people – wherever they were dwelling at the time, and regardless of whether they were already called by that ethnonym – as a stranger from afar (from the Lunda capital Musumba, in southern Congo, according to some; from the ‘distant northern land’ Kola – to which a separate discussion has been devoted above – according to others). He allegedly stood out by his possession of royal insignia such as the spiralled circular *mpande Conus* shell ornament, the *chilimba* xylophone, and (mainly implied) the knowledge of metallurgy; the latter was expressed by his association – and that of the other South Central African kings, and *a fortiori* Zambian kings – with the royal bell, and other iron objects such as a bow stands and an executioner’s axe (one specimen still finds itself among the regalia; cf. Fig. 12.5). As a stranger, Kahare has the connotations both of

- (a) the blacksmith (as a magically endowed outsider; cf. Blažek n.d.; van Beek 2019, and extensive references there) – thus at a par with the Graeco-Roman god Hephaestus / Vulcan (cf. van Binsbergen in prep. (d), and the Nordic mythical smith Wieland, and
- (b) of the Gypsy (as the outsider expert in music and metal-working). Significantly, Kahare has the nickname Kale (also among the Ila, cf. Smith & Dale 1920), which may be analysed into *ka-Le*, ‘human (singular) of the Le- (creation) clan’, but also is identical to the widespread term for Gypsy *throughout the Old World*, *Kale*, and usually taken to mean ‘Black One’ – but not in Nkoya nor in the macrophylum to which the latter belongs, Nigercongo.

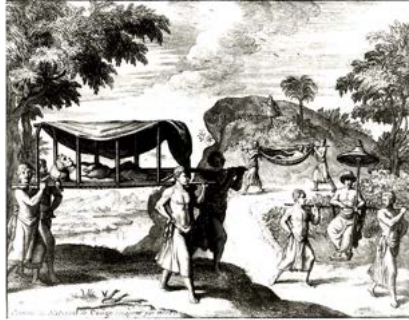
Although I have written on the Nkoya clan system repeatedly and in considerable detail (van Binsbergen 1992, 2012a), one of its features has eluded me until now: the extent to which its nomenclature is determined by *punning* (as is the case in many naming systems throughout space and time, and especially conspicuous in Ancient Egypt; cf. Gardiner 1947). A peculiarity of the Nkoya clan system is that its units are connected not only by an aetiology interpretable in terms of a (once nearly globally distributed) cosmology of cyclical element transformation (van Binsbergen 2012a), but that *in these binary relationships a third factor is introduced as a catalyst*. This peculiarity is otherwise mainly reserved for Chinese cosmology in historical times, hence constitutes a fairly convincing indication of Chinese influence upon South Central Africa in the 1st or 2nd mill. CE. Three such Nkoya clans are those of the Bee / Honey, Smoke, and Firewood. In Proto-Bantu their relationship appears in a new light (Guthrie 1967 and n.d.):

-yókè 9/10 bee 2156  
 -yókè 14 honey 2157  
 -yóki 3 smoke 2158

as if the clan names derive not from a pre-established worldview, but from the punning made possible by the accidental resemblances of the (Proto-)Bantu words. Note that in modern Nkoya, the word for ‘smoke’ is not a reflex of *yóki*, but instead *wishe* is used.



gold available in Indonesia in that period, came from South Central Africa (Beach 1980), while that of Egypt, also also locally mined, largely came both from both Sumatra (Indonesia) and Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe, xylophones are less in evidence, but thumb pianos (*mbira*; their Nkoya name is *kahandi*) are, and very much so.



a. A royal orchestra, Kingdom of Congo, late 17th c. CE ; also at: [https://nl.pinterest.com/pin/338262621981776541/?nic\\_v2=1a61nEFnu](https://nl.pinterest.com/pin/338262621981776541/?nic_v2=1a61nEFnu)

b. Sedan / litter travel, Congo, late 16th c. CE



c. The University College, London (United Kingdom) gamelan orchestra from West Java: xylophones, gongs and drums; also at: [https://id.pinterest.com/pin/167196204886254550/?nic\\_v2=1a61nEFnu](https://id.pinterest.com/pin/167196204886254550/?nic_v2=1a61nEFnu)

Fig. 5.13. Some Sunda-African continuities

The Nkoya are conveniently situated in the Mozambique / Angola corridor which I have come to consider as a major inroad of Sunda influence in Africa; and this corridor region (much of the northern upper part of which is taken up by the Lunda empire from the 16th c. CE on – the Nkoya kings are peripheral and contested vassals of this

empire) is, in terms of probable Sunda influence, only comparable with

1. the Swahili coast,
2. the Western Grassfields, Cameroon
3. and the Upper Guinea Coast (Bijagos, Felupes, Manjacos *etc.*).<sup>142</sup>

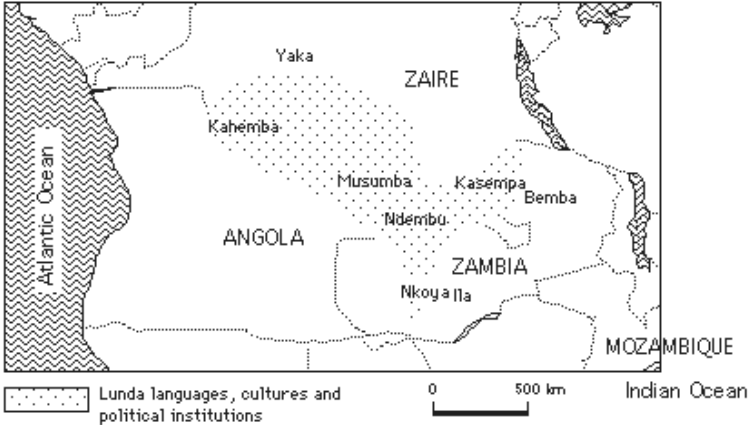


Fig. 5.14. Proposed extent of the Lunda empire in South Central Africa (16th-19th c. CE)

These are also the African regions where

1. a cult of divine kingship might be indebted to Sunda influence – although this could also be taken as probably a much more widespread and ancient trait of the Back-into-Africa movement combined with Ancient Egyptian influence;
2. and where – possibly (but see below) also as a Sunda trait – and (contrary to Frazer's (1918: 328) widely accepted denial of the occurrence of Flood myths in Africa) Flood and Tower myths do occur.
3. And one could think of other possibly Sunda-related traits, such as:
  - a. nautical skills (sail and outrigger; *cf.* Hornell 1934; Dick-Read 2005);<sup>143</sup>

<sup>142</sup> I have done fieldwork on the Upper Guinea Coast (among the Manjaco people of Guinea Bissau, during four months in 1983, after preparatory visits in 1981 and 1982), and have some field experience (September 2006, April-May 2015) in the Western Grassfields, Cameroon; my insular Indian Ocean experience has so far been limited to a few weeks' stay at the Comoros Islands, and a similar period in the Andaman Islands, although I have repeatedly visited the Indian-Ocean coasts of India and Thailand.

<sup>143</sup> As we have seen repeatedly, Karst emphasised the enigmatic nature of the emergence of nautical skills in the Levant, and considered it a reason to propose a West-East return migration, back into West Asia, of Basquoids from the Iberian peninsula whose ultimate origin however lay in the Caucasian regions of West Asia ('Iberia of the East'). His work is hardly read any more and he is largely (but wrongly) considered an antiquarian crackpot (*cf.* van Binsbergen, in prep. (I)). Reconsidered from a Sunda perspective one might go one step further than Karst, and hypothesise Sunda nautical skills to have been diffused to Europe either

- b. pre-marital sexual freedom of women especially royals (Frobenius 1931; cf. Herodotus, *Historiae*, 1, 199 on sacred prostitution in the eastern Mediterranean – which is also be an area given to seafaring and possibly under Sunda influence);
- c. throwing-sticks and boomerangs (however, probably not Sundarelated; see below, chapter 13);
- d. hunched statuettes (Lommel 1976; see below Fig. 13.7);
- e. cults of affliction (which an extensive literature sees as invading South Central Africa from the east, and which do have a considerable distribution in the Indian Ocean region ( e.g. Alpers 1984, Giles 1989, Larsen 1998, Kramer 1993; van Binsbergen 1981a, 2003: ch. 8) – below we shall sporadically consider the question whether they could be Sundaderived);
- f. male and perhaps female genital mutilation (see below, chapter 13);
- g. head-hunting (see below, chapter 12),
- h. and megalithic practices (see chapter 13, below).

Inevitably, several of these items may not on further scrutiny stand out as Sunda-related, and all, anyway, conjure up an antiquated, hegemonic and diffusionist ethnology dangerously close to Elliot Smith and Perry. But these authors did not invent these traits, and much of these traits' distribution was already in evidence nearly a century ago, when they wrote.

## 5.6. Dick-Read's contribution

A substantial harvest of Sunda traits in Africa is to be derived from a humble little book by Robert Dick-Read, *The Phantom Voyagers: Evidence of Indonesian Settlement in Africa in Ancient Times* (2005). The book was written at the end of a long life filled with personal, practical exposure to Africa, in which, over the decades, Dick-Read's search for Indonesian-African links could mature to considerable fruition. His stance is admittedly non-academic, many slight imperfections of bibliography and coverage mar the final result, and (since these imperfections could easily have been mended with the assistance of a professional scientific editor) unnecessarily reduce the authority of the book's mes-

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(a) from the east via the Indus Valley, the Persian Gulf or the Red Sea, or (very unlikely) overland; or

(b) from the west, by a detour around Africa, and then approaching via the Pillars of Hercules (Strait of Gibraltar), or the Atlantic coasts of the Iberian Peninsula.

Regrettably, as yet we seem to lack all archaeological, linguistic, comparative-mythological or comparative anthropological evidence for such scenarios (apart from the sheer presence of nautical skills in themselves). At the background is, of course, the struggle over unicentric or multicentric origins of such major cultural inventions as the sail and the sailing boat. Karst implicitly sided with the unicentrists, but especially in the field of seafaring the abundance of global evidence and the sheer antiquity of the invention (at least 50 ka BP, according to the authoritative work of Bednarik, to whom we shall return below, forces us to a prudent multicentrist or agnostic attitude.

sage. A sympathetic reviewer, my Leiden colleague the late lamented Stephen Ellis (specialist on Madagascar history) felt he could go no further than recommend the book to his professional colleagues' charity (Ellis 2005) – but I think the book's value is greater than that.

Dick-Read does no less than present, both from the South East Asian side and from the African side, a coherent empirical case for extensive and sustained Sunda influence on Africa. Relying on secondary historical sources, and on ethnographic and iconographic materials, his emphasis is on the last two millennia. While this precludes discussion of some of the most fascinating potentially Sunda themes (the mythologies of West Asia; the rise of the Bantu linguistic (sub-)family), it does have the positive result that Dick-Read's Indonesians (scarcely still *Proto-Indonesians* by that time), thought to be expanding into Africa, from the elusive phantom actors rightly alluded to in that book's title, become fairly visible, concrete, human beings of flesh and blood, with self-given and imposed ethnic names attached to them, as well as artefacts, customs, habitats. This is a considerable achievement, that shows the author's erudition and careful handling of complex data.

In the process, Dick-Read has occasion (Dick-Read 2005: 66) to formulate what he considers the central conundrum of Africa-Indonesian studies: *why did so few academics dare to look outside the confines of Africa in order to solve some of the major puzzles of African history – why did so few touch on Indonesian-African connections, and why have those who did (e.g. Kent, Jones, Hutton) been so mercilessly ridiculed, ignored or excluded by the academic establishment?* Considering the history of the present book, I cannot help sympathising with that question. Dick-Read seeks to vindicate those who share his cause, and his glimpses on the history of ideas make instructive reading in North Atlantic hegemonic knowledge construction, and in the power of paradigms in the social and historical sciences. Dick-Read himself does not attempt to provide a systematic answer to his question, but obviously, the answer lies in a combination of

1. a North Atlantic hegemonic geopolitical stance (reducing both Africa and South East Asia to initiative-less passive extras on the, supposedly or actually, European-dominated stage of world cultural history), with
2. the localist and presentist orientation of Africanist anthropology under the classic (post 1930s) structural-functionalist paradigm, that stressed extensive local fieldwork and could only be dismissive of diffusion – not just because the latter was theoretically barren, or because the localist and presentist limitations of extended fieldwork do not yield the kind of profound comparative and interdisciplinary knowledge needed for serious work on diffusion, but also because it was the principal *previous* paradigm to be supplanted by structural functionalism.

Dick-Read convinces us that, on the Indonesian side, there has been, for several millennia (as especially the work of Sopher (1965) has demonstrated) an abundance of Sea Peoples (*Orang Laut*, in the national Indonesian language) eligible for westbound Sunda expansion. Their maritime technology, trading and raiding patterns are no longer a

secret. Prominent among these have been the Bajau or Bajo, – an ethnico-professional category,<sup>144</sup> traces of which can be found throughout the Indonesian archipelago. Others are the Bugis, Mandar, and Makassarese – all mainly with Sulawesi original connotations, which they share with the Toradja highlighted above.

Coming to the African side, Dick-Read presents a convincing case to the effect that there was in fact long-standing Indonesian settlement on the East African coast from Lamu southward – the Zanj people of Arabic historical record (Dick-Read 2005: 68 *f.*), to whom the Swahili people have owed much of their origin. Thus he takes the position (with Kent and Birkeli – with whom I concur) that Sunda kingdoms arose on the East African coast prior to the massive Sunda colonisation of Madagascar.<sup>145</sup> He argues that, for several millennia, much of the gold of Zimbabwe must have gone into the hands of Javanese and Sumatran princes (Dick-Read 2005: 87 *f.*). Extensive continuities are noted in the field of maritime technology (notably: outrigger designs), musical instruments, architecture, and the iconography of some of the most brilliant products of African sculpture: the Ife bronzes – whose prototypes are argued<sup>146</sup> to have been Buddhist, notably the Indonesian Borobodur devotional shrine. In the field of architecture, the key reference is Great Zimbabwe, with potential prototypes from all over the proposed Sunda intercontinental maritime network;<sup>147</sup> yet here, again, the vicarious identity-boosting North Atlantic champions of the ‘Africa for the Africans’ adage have been keen to deny even the possibility of any trans-regional let alone intercontinental antecedents for Great Zimbabwe, ever since the days of Caton-Thompson (1931),<sup>148</sup> even though already the earliest excavations at the site, and her own subsequent work, yielded a plethora of South and East Asian trade goods.

As his references carefully indicate, most of Dick-Read’s arguments are not originally his but have been presented by academic writers in past decades – to little avail: they did not manage to penetrate main-stream cultural history and anthropology. For

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<sup>144</sup> On professional and ecological specialisation as a basis for ethnic classification, see Barth 1969.

<sup>145</sup> One often sees the peopling of Madagascar from South East Asia dated as occurring in the very beginning of the Common Era. Such dating is probably far too long. Dahl attributes the migration to the 5th century CE; Adelaar (1994) prefers the 6th to 13th century CE.

<sup>146</sup> Convincingly so, to my mind. Already in the early 1990s I was struck by the similarities between Kuba / Bushong royal sculpture from Congo, and South East Asian Buddhist sculpture, although I lacked the ‘Sunda / Lunda’ (!) frame of reference to make sense of such an impression yet.

<sup>147</sup> Numerous are the parallels to the Great Zimbabwe structure and particular its massive conical tower, that have been adduced in the international literature ever since its first scholarly discussion by Bent 1892. From Phoenicia, and Sardinia’s *noraghi* watchtowers, to Madagascar, South East Asian *stupas*, and the famous Cheomseongdae astronomical observatory in Korea (Fig. 5-15), these are all situated in the proposed Sunda path. We must not rush to conclusions, but on the other hand it would be absurd to allow a suspect geopolitical ideology to censure out the very thought of intercontinental connections in such a case. On detailed archaeological / comparative-religion grounds, I have established that at the site of Great Zimbabwe, Sivaite Hindu elements prevail (van Binsbergen 2017).

<sup>148</sup> Summers (1963) stressed how, despite all its qualities as state-of-the-art archaeology, Caton-Thompson (1931) was eclipsed by Frobenius 1931, published at the same time but with a strongly diffusionist orientation.

instance, the Buddhist argument has been advanced for Great Zimbabwe (Hornell has stressed its *stupa*-like aspect),<sup>149</sup> and others have been struck by the similarity between East and South Central African sculptural styles, and South / South East Asian ones.



[https://www.tripadvisor.com/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g297888-d2476679-i198192202-Cheomseongdae\\_Observatory-Gyeongju\\_Gyeongangbuk\\_do.html](https://www.tripadvisor.com/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g297888-d2476679-i198192202-Cheomseongdae_Observatory-Gyeongju_Gyeongangbuk_do.html), with thanks

Fig. 5.15. The Cheomseongdae Observatory in Korea (built ca. 640 CE)

Dick-Read's book is full of little gems, such as

- The discussion of maize in the West African context (not, Dick-Read argues, imported from America after Columbus, but diffused from America to Oceania and from there probably brought to West Africa on the wings of Sunda expansion);<sup>150</sup> yet, on the basis of the strange continuity between Central American, West African, and Mediterranean Demiurges / dying and rising vegetarian gods and the attending crops,<sup>151</sup> I would be inclined to consider a direct pre-Columbian

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<sup>149</sup> *Stupa* is the generic name given to high-rising towers and other embellishments in Buddhist architecture. Like so many other real and mythical high-rising constructions erected (in reality, or mythically) in Eurasia during the last half dozen millennia, including the Tower of Babel (*Genesis* 11), the Egyptian pyramids and obelisks, etc. they are an application of NarCom 2: an active way in which humans seek to Re-connect Heaven and Earth.

<sup>150</sup> Dick-Read 2005: 173; he discusses the relevant work by Jeffreys 1971, 1975, but had no access yet to the more critical contributions by Mundkur 1980). Also cf. Staller *et al.* 2009.

<sup>151</sup> Dying and rising vegetation gods, and the related idea of the world emerging from the decomposing body of a (often giant) primal god such as the Chinese 盤古 P'an-Ku, is an important theme in comparative

Trans-Atlantic link, as the most westerly extension of the Bronze Age intercontinental maritime network that we may postulate as, among other factors, a result of Sunda)

- The history of cowries (for which a similar detour via Cape of Good Hope to West Africa is suggested<sup>152</sup> – for although the *Cypraea* family of molluscs is admittedly indigenous to the African coastal waters including the Mediterranean, the small (max. 25 mm) *Cypraea moneta*, i.e. cowry, can only be found in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific (von Salvini-Plawen 1973; McCarthy 1996).
- Unexpected continuities between Cameroonian and South East Asian musical instruments (Dick-Read 2005: 138, 133, and for the double bells p. 135; also the Buea, Cameroon find of a Constantinian Roman coin.

What emerges between the lines is *the special position that the Bight of Benin occupies in the whole of the hypothetical Sunda expansion*: far away from the major Mediterranean- and Arab-orientated trade routes, and (in the case of the most powerful state involved, Ile-Ife) strongly resisting Islamisation right up to the 19th century, one would not expect cultural items with foreign connotations (bronzecraft, geomantic divination, cowries) to have travelled along such Islam- dominated routes if they were to end up in West Africa. Unless one would attribute a major role here to European Trans-Atlantic merchants (which would only account for the cowries), the obvious alternative is to suppose special Sunda influence upon the Bight of Benin, directly from Madagascar and / or Southern Africa. This model would provide the answer, finally, to one of the great puzzles in African divination studies: the close similarities between Yoruba and Venda divination boards / vessels, and between West African *Ifa* divination and Malagasy *sikidy* divination (as well as the Southern African *hakata* divination). Of course, there are genetic and linguistic indications to be considered in this connection, but Dick-Read does not enter into a discussion of those – which is his main weakness. Below (and in van Binsbergen 2019c) I try to make up for that omission.

What is particularly interesting is that Dick-Read argues (2005: 162) pre-colonial continuity of the African trade networks of the Indian and the Atlantic ocean – giving the example of cowries (cf. Jackson 1917; Jeffreys 1938), and of a Roman coin from the times of Constantine (300 CE), found near Buea, Cameroon, but which could only have landed there from the Indian Ocean, where given the extent of Roman trade<sup>153</sup> such coins had a wide distribution. That navigation around Cape of Good Hope took place in Antiquity has already been suggested by the Phoenician Hanno's much-debated

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mythology, and one to which we shall return in this book. In the wake of the writings of the mid-20th c. CE anthropologist Jensen this theme is often designated after an Indonesian type goddess Hainuwele, cf. Hatt 1951. For North America, the type was already described by the pioneer Americanist Schoolcraft in 1856.

<sup>152</sup> Dick-Read 2005: 187 f.; cf. Hromník 1981: 73 f.; Johnson 1970; Jeffreys 1942.

<sup>153</sup> On the coin: Bovill 1958: 41n; also cf. Law 1967. Also see the famous *Periplus* navigation manual – which Dowall's research (1964) allowed us to date at 110 CE; Schoff 1912; Casson 1989. An impressive document on Arabian navigation on the Indian Ocean towards Indian and China during the Tang dynasty is the *‘Akhhbar as-Sin wa’l-Hind* (237 H. / 851 CE, cf. Sulayman al-Tajir & Abu Zayd al-Sirafi, tr. Sauvaget 1948).

report on (what appears to have been) the circumnavigation of Africa c. 600 BCE (Lacroix 1993).

Throughout the 20th century, Sinologists and Africanists in East and West have collaborated to develop a coherent picture of the extensive contacts between China and the East African coast.<sup>154</sup> Schwarz (1938), who probably (*cf.* Chittick 1975) grossly exaggerates with his statement to the effect that

'Millions of Chinese must have swarmed over East Africa between 900 and 1200' (Schwarz 1938: 181)

Also Forke's (1904) extensive study of possible Chinese contacts in the Red Sea region in the Bronze Age was still dismissed as mere fantasy by Chittick (1975). However, in more recent years, Chinese scholars (but *cf.* Fuchs 1953, Mills 1954, in the West) have brought to light convincing evidence that, to East Asian mariners after the T'ang 唐朝 dynasty, the outline of the South African coast had few secrets (Li Anshan 2000; Depiction 2005).



;Bent 1892: frontispiece. The bowl's rim shows a pattern reminiscent of a zodiac – in a way that has close parallels in Chinese divination vessels of the late 1<sup>st</sup> mill. CE; *cf.* Walters 1989: 80

Fig. 5.16. A wooden divining bowl found in the late 1880s near Great Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe, Africa.

And a nearly equally convincing case can be made for Chinese navigation bowls having been turned into African divination apparatus, both in South Africa (Venda)

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<sup>154</sup> Chang Hsing-lang 1930; Duyvendak 1938, 1949; Filesi 1972; Winters 1979; Snow 1988; Li Anshan 2000; Lin Bin 2005; Davidson 1959, 1970; Wheatley 1975a, 1975b; Schwarz 1938; Fripp 1940, 1941; Hirth 1909.



and on the Bight of Benin, at some time in the course of the second millennium of the common era.<sup>155</sup> There are more examples in the domain of divination. Hook (1975: 22 f.) tells us of a South African diviner-healer who showed intimate knowledge of various aspects of Taoist divination and number symbolism, apparently without ever having set a foot outside Africa, nor having had direct contact with local Taoists. Further, it is amazing that the Chinese expression *chi tso* 箕坐, ‘sitting winnowing-basket fashion, i.e. with one’s legs stretched out’ (cf. Harper 1985) also exactly conveys the (otherwise exceptional) stance clients of cleromantic / geomantic divination are to assume in Southern Africa. There is nothing in the shape of a winnowing basket that suggests a particular mode of sitting. It may be used while the person wielding it is sitting with his (more typically her) legs stretched out, although this would require the place to be fairly windy; winnowing in a standing position is usually a better strategy: because of friction with the soil, the power of the wind decreases the lower one gets. The winnowing basket is a standard divining apparatus in China, however, and it is likely that the client sits through the session with legs stretched out— exactly like in Southern Africa. It is remarkable that the series of figurines used in Central and Southern African basket divination do display an exceptional affinity with Chinese systems of animal symbolism, e.g. the 12-years zodiac (van Binsbergen 2002 / in prep. (n) ).<sup>156</sup>

<sup>155</sup> Cf. van Binsbergen 2005; illustrations of such Venda bowls are available with Bent 1885 / 1892; Canby 1980: 31; and Nettleton n.d., cf. 1984, 2001. The Nigerian counterparts are to be found in: Frobenius 1923, 1954; Skinner 1980. A transcontinental discussion for western Eurasia is already given by the South African classicist Davis (1955).

<sup>156</sup> Having had reason to suspect Chinese cultural influence upon the Upper Guinea Coast (notably among the Manjacos; cf. van Binsbergen 2017a: 287 f.) and upon the Bamileke of the Western Grassfields, Cameroon (van Binsbergen in prep. (g)), and having gathered some spotty knowledge of Chinese history, religion, and writing in the context of my research in the global history of geomantic divination systems since 1989, and my repeated visits to China, I did spot, during recent decades, traits in South Central and Southern Africa that, on second thought, seemed indicative of Chinese influence. I list them here without being able to elaborate:

(a) FROM THE SANGOMA CULT, BOTSWANA

1. During my private conversations with Mr Sinombe, the High Priest of the Mwali shrine at Nata, Botswana, in 1991, he declared that the donations to his shrine were to be forwarded, via the Mwali cult’s headquarters in the Matopos, Zimbabwe, to China, in order to lessen the plight of the elderly people there, who, allegedly, under communism were no longer respected. This reference to China came as a surprise, for the Chinese were inconspicuous in Botswana at the time – their unstoppable advance to take over the African retail trade had scarcely begun; but we are reminded of another oddity, reported by Hook (1975: 22 f.) and briefly discussed a few pages up, when a South African diviner turned out to have unexpected knowledge of Taoist symbolism. Mr Sinombe was born in Ilaland, Zambia, and received his formal training at a Roman Catholic Minor Seminary in Southern Zimbabwe, where his powers as a healer and herbalist first manifested themselves – ultimately he would be the president of the Kwame Lingwane Traditional Association of Botswana, the state-recognised professional organisation of traditional healers (of which I myself am also a life member). To the best of my knowledge (cf. van Binsbergen 2003a: chs 5-8), there is nothing in Mr Sinombe’s early biography to make him particularly China-orientated.
2. The black robes, staffs, and the prostrate position as expression of respect, bring up reminiscences of Taoist priest and sages (cf. Needham with Wang Ling 1956).
3. During the full period of his training, the *twaza sangoma*-novice is not allowed to eat intestines

Such apparent or real Chinese-African contacts are not in themselves evidence of specific Sunda influence in the sense of the penetration of a specific South East Asian culture and language well-defined in place and time, but they are certainly 'Sunda' in the sense that is emerging as a result of the present argument: *an intercontinental, multidirectional and multicentred system along which fragmented and selected cultural, mythological and linguistic (especially onomastic) elements travel (and are transformed and innovated) – in principle coming from, and going to, any point along the network, including China.* We shall come back below (chapter 14) to the most important features of such a network: that it is multicentred and multidirectional, hence (contrary to the suggestion that emanates from the one-direction arrows at our diagrams of historical reconstruction) stipulates not one-way borrowing, but two-way mutual influence and exchange. The apparent or real Chinese-African contacts bear witness of the existence of the (probably Sunda-initiated) maritime network ranging from East Asia to Scandinavia via the Indian Ocean, Cape of Good Hope, and the Atlantic Ocean, and in operation since the Early Bronze Age. They are a convincing form of proto-globalisation, based on an ancient nautical technology, yet much comparable, in fluidity and non-locality, to what has been studied in recent decades as globalisation brought about by new technologies of information and communication – computers, satellites, cell phones and airplanes.

*Meanwhile the inspection of demonstrable socio-cultural traits in South East, East and South Asia as a clue to Sunda influence upon Western Eurasia raises a point that only late in my preoccupation with Sunda registered with me to its full extent, and that therefore could have received more explicit attention in this book's argument. Part of the Sunda Hypothesis is that the maritime carriers of Sunda genes as well as linguistic and cultural traits were on the run for the flood inundating their homeland in South East Asia; we have so far assumed that Sunda traits would have to have remained detectable in present-day South East Asia. On second thoughts this is a fairly naïve assumption. The postulated Sunda outmigration is supposed to have taken place mainly before the emergence of the Indus Valley cultures, Sumer, Ancient Egypt – which are proposed*

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nor eggs, since he or she is himself or herself an unborn child from the inside of the womb; when at initiation the first meal containing intestines is fed to the new *sangoma*, this is done by a high-ranking member of the cult, and she uses chop sticks to handle the meat – at total variance with ordinary eating customs in Botswana / Southern Africa (author's fieldnotes)

- (b) FROM THE NKOYA AND THE WIDER LUNDA REALM, ZAMBIA AND ADJACENT REGIONS
1. Nkoya and their neighbours especially the circumcising Luvale, Luchazi, Chokwe, Mbunda, eat dogs
  2. The great, Buddhist-orientated empires that we are led to reconstruct for Southern and South Central Africa for the 1st and early second mill CE (Lunda, Great Zimbabwe, Mapungubwe) predominantly show signs of South Asian and South East Asian influence, but there are diffuse indications of a Chinese presence, e.g. the intricate, catalyst-orientated details of the clan system of the Nkoya (van Binsbergen 2012a); moreover, the ceremonial iron ware of South Central African kings, especially their bells, appears to have prototypes in 商朝 Shang bronze-ware of the 2nd mill BCE. Also ceremonial swords and halberds that have constituted regalia all along the African Atlantic coast, suggest Chinese prototypes. Elsewhere I have discussed indications of prehistoric Chinese influence among the Manjacos of Guinea Bissau and the Bamileke of Cameroon.

*destinations of Sunda impact. However, whereas we can today rather fairly reliably reconstruct the languages of Ancient Egypt, Sumer and the Indus by the Early and Middle Bronze Age, this knowledge is entirely due to scholarly research of the last two centuries, before which no reliable data were available for Egypt, and Sumer and the Indus were even totally forgotten. When the British held sway in India, less than two centuries ago, the prior existence of Buddhism on Indian soil, and the birth place of the Buddha just across the modern Nepalese border, had likewise gone into oblivion, across a time interval of scarcely two millennia (Allen 2002). Minoan civilisation had to be rediscovered from scratch scarcely a century ago, across a time interval of barely three millennia (Evans 1921-1964). The largely Basque background of the North Sea populations of the British Isles and the Netherlands could only be reconstructed by state-of-the-art molecular genetics research (Oppenheimer 2006). When a decade ago I prepared to conduct Sunda-orientated fieldwork in Madagascar, the doyen of Malagasy ethnography, my old friend Maurice Bloch, asserted me that I ought not to expect to run into a great deal of explicit and manifestly Indonesian traits. What I am saying is that, precisely if the Sunda Hypothesis cuts wood (and the present book asserts that it does!), we must not cherish the illusion of finding recognisable, present-day Indonesian traits at postulated Sunda destinations in the western Old World; nor finding identifiable and convincing West Eurasian traits, alleged to be due to Sunda, in present-day South East Asia. The Proto-Indonesian Sunda people may have fled without leaving manifest genetic, cultural and linguistic traces in their former homeland – where after the dramatic rise of the sea level hence massive flooding or previously inhabited sites, and after half a dozen millennia, such traces would have become immersed or otherwise unrecognisable by cultural and linguistic drift, the arrival of dominant newcomers, etc. In this way the concept of Phantom Voyagers (Dick-Read 2005) becomes a true shibboleth of Sunda studies. We are beginning to understand why, whatever lists of genetic and cultural indicators of Sunda we may be tempted to draw up, in the last analysis our data will fit such systematics only very imperfectly.*

### 5.7. Towards the Revised General Sunda Hypothesis

All this taken together results in what we may call the *General Sunda Hypothesis*. The latter draws attention to the probability of massive post-Neolithic westbound (and eastbound, into Oceania) cultural influence from Sundaland, upon West Asia, Africa, the Mediterranean, and possibly the Atlantic coast of Europe and the New World. It may serve:

1. As an explanation for the intercontinental distribution of many cultural traits (except in the field of mythology) which we could identify as Sunda traits;
2. As an additional factor in the explanation of the temporal and spatial pattern in which the rise of complex civilisations has manifested itself, in the last 6 ka, in West Asia, Africa, and Europe
3. As a possible explanation of surprising East-West mythical continuities *in*

*addition to the broad patterns of spread and innovation that I have sought to identify with my Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology*

Following and extending Oppenheimer's General Sunda Hypothesis, we may think in this connection of the following specific regions:

1. the Munda region near the Gulf of Bengal, which is genetically close to Indonesia (Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994: 234);
2. Sri Lanka;
3. the Indus valley (although there is evidence of maritime trading contacts between the Indus valley and Ancient Mesopotamia, we have only a dim picture of Indus' nautical aspects)
4. the seminal influence of nautical developments emanating from the Persian Gulf, notably upon Egypt (Rice 1990, Ray 1996, and extensive literature discussed there) and the Arabian peninsula including Bahrayn (the presumable location of Sumerian Dilmun, to which we shall come back below)
5. subsequently Egypt, and its maritime contacts along the Red Sea (the traditional place of origin of the Phoenicians, the ancient mariners *par excellence*; Herodotus, *Historiae*, 7, 89), the Gulf of Aden, and the East African coast
6. Ancient Malagasy kingdoms; kingdoms in the Central African corridor from Mozambique to Angola;
7. kingdoms of the West African savannah;
8. Sunda extensions into the Mediterranean suggested by the Minoan civilisation – the first Mediterranean sea empire, for whose mythical protagonists (Minos, Daedalus) the invention of the sail was claimed – in parallel with Oceanian traditions
9. but also the chain of ancient peoples (often with North Caucasian, Basque and/or Ligurian linguistic and ethnic connotations) extending from Iberia in the East (in Antiquity a kingdom on the Black Sea coast, just south of Colchis / Georgia) to Iberia in the West (the Iberian peninsula), – via Leleges, Carians, Minoans, Cappadocians, Tyrrhenians, Phoenicians, and others notorious in Antiquity for inveterate piracy.
10. the emergence of the Sea Peoples in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean in the Late Bronze Age,
11. and finally the development of the British Isles and Ireland, the North Sea and the Baltic as interlocking centres of seafaring from the Bronze Age onwards

If these peoples and locations can be argued to be, to some extent, Sunda-related, it is because they display specific traits that we have reason to connect with South East Asia and particularly with westbound expansion from that region. These traits are far from obvious, otherwise the General Sunda Hypothesis had been canonised into mainstream global cultural history and cultural anthropology a century ago. Let us

therefore take a closer look at traits that could be argued to be Sunda.

### 5.8. *Towards a checklist of cultural indicators of Sunda influence*

So far my argument has been merely exploratory. With specific reference to African contexts, most of which I have known from personal fieldwork, I have suggested a number of possible cultural traits that, when occurring in combination, might be taken as indicators of Sunda influence. As a next step, we might work this list of traits into a provisional checklist, on the basis of which other specific situations in time and space may be assessed as to the likelihood of them having some Sunda background. Such a checklist could not be meant to produce firm results; it can only have some limited, heuristic value – for given the, as yet, hypothetical status of the General Sunda Hypothesis as a whole, Sunda attributions are provisional and conjectural in themselves, so considerable risks of circularity would attach to such a checklist.

### 5.9. *The checklist allows us to surmise Sunda influence in the Bronze-Age Mediterranean and to identify (as if these were two sides of the same medal) the ‘Pelasgian’ region from which the Sea Peoples appear to have sprung in the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean*

One of the uses of such a checklist would be that it may throw in relief the possible Sunda traits, if any, of a new spatio-temporal setting not yet considered from the Sunda perspective. Such a case is for instance the Mediterranean-Pontic economic and cultural complex in the Middle to Late Bronze Age – the context from which (according to my reconstructions in van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011) the Sea Peoples were soon to spring, and, in which they would soon operate (with devastating effect on the two major states and civilisations of the region, the Hittite empire and Egypt) in the Late Bronze Age. It is also the extended context in which, centuries later, central, sacred, nautically-orientated epics of the Graeco-Roman world were to be situated: the *Odyssey*, the *Oresteia*, the *Journey of the Argonauts*, and the *Aeneid*. Remarkably, and perhaps as a reflection of the homeland nostalgia typical of Sunda (spotted by Oppenheimer 1998 in his treatment of lost paradises such as Eden, Dilmun and Atlantis) all these cycles, with the exception of the *Journey of the Argonauts*, are what the Ancient Greeks called *nostoi* ‘stories of (more or less successful) home-coming after the Trojan war’. Strikingly, this same Mediterranean-Pontic region (central in the Argonaut story and the *Oresteia*) sets the scene for the legendary exploits of the Egyptian pharaoh Senwosret (I and / or III) (Greek name: Sesostris) during the early Middle Kingdom (c. 1900 BCE); the epic of Iskander, based on the historical exploits of Alexander the Great (356-323 BCE) covers a similar region but, in true Sunda fashion, extends even far more to the east (cf. Lombard 1993).<sup>157</sup>

<sup>157</sup> In this connection Karst speaks of:

‘...ein urzeitliche kosmographische Tradition, die ihren Reflex noch im Dulqarnain – bzw .Alexanderromane des Pseudokallisthenes hinterlassen hat (...) Dulqarnain mythenkreis der



source: Willis 1994: 155

Fig. 5.17. The world of the Argonauts

Sumerisch-Chaldäischen Tradition, die ein Pendant zu den Eroberungszügen des Sesos-  
tris-Osiris und Bakchos-Dionysos bildeten'. (Karst 1931b: 13)

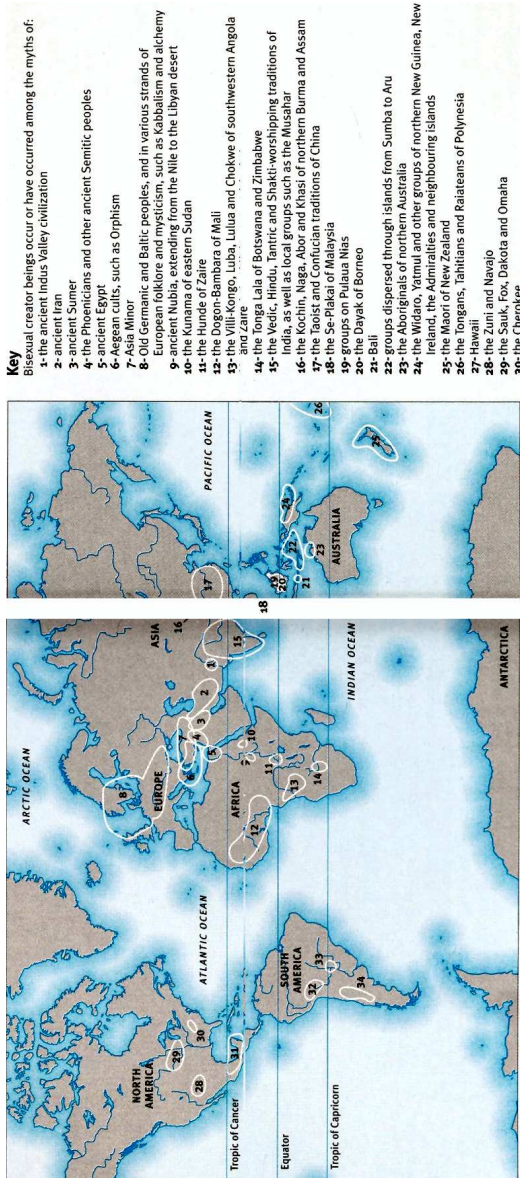



Fig. 5.18. Husain's (1997: 164.f.) map of the global distribution of bisexual creator gods

The first outlines of our proposed checklist becomes discernable once we enumerate the possibly Sunda-related elements among the cultural, ritual and iconographic features of the covered by this Mediterranean-Pontic Bronze Age complex, as in Table 5.7 (adapted after van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011). Later in this chapter we shall make this list of traits more specific and apply it to six contexts, specific in space and time, which we may expect to have come under Sunda influence. *With the gradual growth of our insight in the (eminently elusive) nature of Sunda and the limited possibilities of assessing the Sunda Hypotheses empirically, such lists take on a slightly different meaning.* In view of the unmistakable, well-attested reality of considerable cultural drift and massive social, cultural, political and linguistic change in Egypt, the Ancient Near East, and the Aegean in the course of just a handful of millennia, *we can no longer entertain the illusion (as Oppenheimer 1998 did) that such Sunda traits as we believe to have diffused to the western Old World, can in majority still be attested in present-day Indonesia itself.* From an Indonesian perspective such lists contain something very different: they sum up traits that, having diffused to the western Old World on the wings of Sunda expansion, may be surmised to have once formed the cultural core of an otherwise unknown Sunda civilisation ca. 7 to 6 ka BP that has, in nearly all other respects, disappeared without leaving a trace in its original Sunda habitat. In other words, such a list allows us to engage in *historical cultural reconstruction through transcontinental triangulation.*

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|--|
| <p>a. <i>Genetically</i>, there are several indicators of Sunda-related traits – assuming that the genetic characteristics today already obtained in the Middle Bronze Age</p> <p>b. In the <i>kinship domain</i> there are indications of a certain preponderance of matriliney, a relatively powerful socio-political position of women, and premarital sexual freedom of young women</p> <p>c. The <i>economy</i> is orientated, not only towards local primary production, but also towards raiding and trading</p> <p>d. There is a <i>great emphasis on navigation</i>; ships constitute major topics of iconographic representation; ships tends to be adorned by animal ornaments, preferably bird-like or horse-like, and often with prow / stern symmetry (this is how the boats of the Sea Peoples appear on contemporary Egyptian depictions)</p> <p>e. In the economy, in the sphere of royal symbolism, as well as in the religious domain there is considerable <i>emphasis on gold</i>, e.g. as the stuff of which the divine flesh is made</p> <p>f. There are indications of <i>extensive, largely maritime, interregional networks</i>, specifically of continuity between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, especially in the field of grain production, trade and religion.</p> <p>g. <i>Tales of interregional travel, adventure and exploration</i> are prominent</p> <p>h. In administering the trading and raiding economy, <i>royal courts</i> play a central role</p> <p>i. Communities, especially trading and raiding city states, invest their identity in a <i>palladium</i>, which may be aniconic, but often represents the virgin warrior (as an implied image of the Creator Goddess)</p> <p>j. Yet the polities controlling and integrating local communities are not the only force in the creation of supra-local organisation; there is a religio-political system which creates order not through monarchic political organisation holding sway over contiguous administrative divisions, but through <i>regional cults centring on shrines</i></p> |
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- k. In cosmology there is a general *emphasis on dual symbols, twin gods, twinned symbols in general*
- l. In cosmology, ritual and symbolism there is a strong *emphasis on the great luminaries Sun and Moon*
- m. In cosmology, ritual and symbolism there is a some evidence of a *reed complex* (Egyptian royal titulature, reed symbolic of Upper Egypt, earliest shrines and palaces in reed architecture, later emulated in stone and pottery ornaments)
- n. In cosmology, ritual and symbolism there is a some evidence of a *bee and honey complex* (Egyptian royal titulature; cult of Neith; cultic connotations of Chemmis / 'ḫ-bit, ; the central role of the bee in the Hittite Kumarbi epic; the densely pecked walls of the Neolithic sanctuaries on the Maltese islands can be interpreted as representations of bee combs; and throughout the Eastern Mediterranean male and female priests were designated as 'bees' (*Melissae*) in the Bronze and Iron Ages)
- o. In the religious domain, there is a *primal god of creation or second creation, of unspecified or bisexual gender*<sup>58</sup>, associated with *white aquatic birds especially swans, but also with insects especially hornets and bees, and generally with the colour white and with water*
- p. Given the tendency towards duality, this *primal god of creation may also dissolve into a gendered pair of gods, associated with horses and (once primal) waters – e.g. the later Athena and Poseidon*
- q. This *duality may also express itself in the socio-political domain, e.g. in the complementary opposition between Upper and Lower Egypt*
- r. In the cultic domain there is *taurumachy and other aspects of bull-centred ritual* (e.g. the various cults of sacred bulls in Egypt, the acrobatic bull cult of Minoan Crete, vestiges of a bull cult on the Balears Isl., the Iberian peninsula, the Rhône delta etc.)
- s. Much of the social, political and ritual process can be said to converge into a '*death industry*', which is most conspicuous in Ancient Egypt, but of which lesser manifestations may be found elsewhere in the region e.g. in Mycenaean Greece
- t. *Regicide* appears as an institution along the Northern shore of the Mediterranean, with possibly

<sup>58</sup> The theme of bisexuality in myth and rite was extensively treated by Baumann (1955) and was revived in Husain's synthesis (2002 / 1997) on the Goddess. Husain also presents a world map of the distribution of bisexual creator gods, which I reproduce here as Fig. 5.18. What is remarkable about that map is not so much the concentration of attestations in our familiar belt of literate state-supported civilisations from Northwestern Europe to China, with extension to Meso America; it is here, after all, that so many other Bronze-Age cultural and societal traits have turned out to be concentrated, in evidence of the logocentric package of writing, the state, organised religion and proto-science. No, remarkable are the data points *outside* that extended core area: West, Central, South Central and Southern Africa; Malaysia / Borneo / Bali / the eastern Indonesian archipelago / North-western Australia and Northern New Guinea; Polynesia including New Zealand; selected, especially Na-Dene speaking, cultures in North America; and selected cultures in South America. Remarkable is also the absence of Japan and Sri Lanka from the central literate cluster. Below, in Part II of this monograph, we shall consider a large number of East West parallels in myth and culture, in a bid to assess the explanatory power of the Sunda Hypothesis. The mytheme of the bisexual creator gods will not be among them, and I shall not attempt a systematic interpretation of Husain's map in terms of a provisional historical reconstruction, since I cannot be sure of the quality of Husain's summary data, not having collected and processed them myself. Yet a few suggestions are in order. The many massive gaps in the global distribution suggest that the mytheme in question was certainly not in Pandora's Box, and the African, Oceanian and American data points seem largely compatible with an interpretation as secondary echoes from the literate state belt – which would situate the mytheme of the bisexual creator god in a relatively late CITI (VII or VIII) – which is also in line with Baumann's argument. Alternatively, and with some plausibility (in view of the amazing Indo-Pacific distribution halo around Indonesia), yet reluctantly, a Sunda origin in CITI IX might be proposed, reducing the entire rest of the global distribution to a prolonged secondary Sunda effect.

an extension on the Southern shore.<sup>159</sup>

- u. In the musical domain nothing definite can be adduced, but *idiophones like the sistrum, and wind instruments like the shell or copper horn, and the Pan flute*,<sup>160</sup> with the mythological connotations, may be worth exploring
- v. The combination of metallurgy, musical instruments, and navigation or navigation-based imagery often seems to herald Sunda original culture in South East Asia, or Sunda traces elsewhere

<sup>159</sup> Frazer's *magnum opus The Golden Bough* (1911-1915) is a rambling argument, extended over twelve volumes, seeking to document and explain a practice in Ancient Latium, Italy: the king lives in a sacred grove (which in itself may be a Sunda trait), and the institutionalised mode of succession is that he is to be killed by his prospective successor. Robert Graves' poetic reading (largely rejected by today's comparative mythologists because of his neglect of academic standards, and his many inaccuracies and errors) of the Greek myths as dramatised folklore also brings up many instances of regicide, e.g.:

'The myth of the emasculation of Uranus by his son Cronus and the vengeance subsequently taken on Cronus by his son Zeus, who banished him to the Western Underworld under charge of the 'hundred-handed ones', is not an easy one to disentangle. In its original sense it records the annual supplanting of the old oak-king by his successor. Zeus was at one time the name of a herdsman's oracular hero, connected with the oak-tree cult of Dodona in Epirus, which was presided over by the dove-priestesses of Dionē, a woodland Great Goddess, otherwise known as Diana. (...) The king himself was eucharistically eaten after castration, as several legends of the Pelopian dynasty testify; but in the Peloponnese at least this oak-tree cult had been superimposed on a barley-cult of which Cronus was the hero, and in which human sacrifice was also the rule. In the barley-cult, as in the oak-cult, the successor to the kingship inherited the favours of the priestesses of his Goddess mother. In both cults the victim became an immortal, and his oracular remains were removed for burial to some sacred island — under the charge of magic-making and orgiastic priestesses.' (Graves 1988: 65-66)

'In the Peloponnese the Olympic Games were the occasion of this agricultural Hercules's death and the election of his successor. The legend is that they were founded in celebration of Zeus's emasculation of Cronus; since the tomb of the early Achaean Oak-king Pelops was at Olympia, this means that the oak-cult was there superimposed on the Pelasgian barley-cult. The most ancient event in the Games was a race between fifty young priestesses of the Goddess Hera for the privilege of becoming the new Chief Priestess. Hercules was cut into pieces and eucharistically eaten as before, until perhaps the later Achaeans put an end to the practice, and for centuries after retained some of his oak-tree characteristics: he was known as the 'green Zeus'. The sacrifice of the agricultural Hercules, or the victim offered in his stead, continued to take place within a stone-circle dedicated to the Barley Mother. At Herminon, near Corinth, the stone-circle was in ritual use until Christian times.' (Graves 1988: 132)

With these Ancient-Greek examples and the South Central African parallels discussed in chapter 4, and given the strong bee symbolism in Early Dynastic Egypt, and the evidence of funerary human sacrifice, one wonders whether the Delta bee-related priestesses and ladies-in-waiting emulated, towards the male Southern royals, a well-known theme in bee-keeping: the drones' sole function is to make the bridal flight with the queen-bee, for which they often pay with their lives – the queen is known to return with the garlands of torn-out male intestines hanging about her as testimony of successful mating – while the drones that survive the bridal flight are usually killed *en masse* in the late summer. Is this the sinister background of Ancient Egyptian bee symbolism e.g. in royal titulare? Is a similar sinister function of the Neith-associated queens and ladies-in-waiting in the Early Dynastic period implied in the otherwise uninterpretable tradition in Manetho (Waddell 1940) according to which the first Egyptian king, Menes (*cf.* Mino?) the question has been extensively debated), was killed by 'a hippopotamus' – probably one of the manifestations of Neith in her quality as Mother of the Waters, as *alias* of the hippopotamus-shaped Taweret ('Neith the Great'; also attested in Crete, *cf.* Fig. 5.19), and mother of Sobek; also but – in a manner typically Egyptian – the Nile god Hapi and the Sun god Hōrus's adversary Set appear in crocodile shape.

<sup>160</sup> The pan flute or panpipes are found, not only in Greece but also in China the Solomons Isl. (Melanesia), Africa, Asia and South America (*cf.* Mitsopoulou n.d.). Part of this distribution, but certainly not all, could be Sunda-related.

- (cf. Li 1986). It seems worthwhile to explore the possible Sunda aspects of Ptaḥ /Hephaestus / Vulcan and Neith / Athena / Minerva, with counterparts, more or less, elsewhere in the Mediterranean – even though nautical skills do not appear to be the specialised domain of any particular god there
- w. Cults of affliction have been attested throughout the Mediterranean region from the Iron Age onward (shamanism, incubation among the Libyans, Orphism, Pythagoreanism), later to take refuge in the ecstatic cult of popular Islamic brotherhoods, and in the tarantula cult (Vandenbroeck 1997; van Binsbergen 1971, 1985, in press (h))
  - x. male genital mutilation (see below)

Table 5.7. Towards a checklist of proposed Sunda connotations of the Middle to Late Bronze Age Mediterranean

Table 5.7 looks promising, but the real test lies in its application to concrete context in time and space where we have reason to expect Sunda effects. Such an application is attempted in the following Table 5.8:

		historico-ethnographic context						
	trait	I. Nkoya, Western Zambia	II. W.Grassfields Bamileke, Cameroon	III. Persian Gulf Bronze Age	IV. Indus	V Sea Peoples	VI. Ancient Egypt	comments
a	genetic indicators of Sunda	?	?	?	?	?	?	no specific genetic data available for these six contexts, although the overall genetic data unmistakably testify to Sunda
b	matriliney and female power	(+)	-	?	?	(-)	(+)	
c	raiding and trading	+	+	+	+	+	+	
d	emphasis on navigation	-	-	+	+	+	(+)	Indus: Melluhja
e	emphasis on gold	-	-	+	+	+	+	
f	extensive inter-regional networks	+	+	+	+	+	+	
g	tales of inter-regional travel	+	?	+	?	?	+	Bamileke: aware of distant provenance but no details
h	royal courts play a central role	+	+	+	(+)	-	+	
i	palladium	+	?	+	?	(+)	?	Nkoya: royal kettle drums); Sea Peoples: emphasis on aquatic birds in boat design;

								Persian Gulf: standard of Ur;
j	regional cults centring on shrines	(-)	?	(+)	?	?	+	Nkoya: royal graves, but only venerated per kingdom; Persian Gulf: some cities had interregional shrines; Egypt: district shrines
k	dualist / twinned cosmology	-	?	-	?	?	+	
l	emphasis on the great luminaries Sun and Moon	+	?	+	+	?	+	
m	reed complex	+	-	+	(+)	?	+	Indus: many references to reed but a reed complex not certain
n	bee and honey complex	+	-	(+)	?	?	+	
o	primal god of creation or second creation, of unspecified or bisexual gender, with aquatic birds, hornets / bees, white and water	(-)	?	?	?	+	+	Nkoya: Nyambi, but scarcely with these associations; Sea Peoples: boat design
p	gendered pair of gods, associated with horses and (once primal) waters	(+)	?	?	?	?	-	Nkoya: emphasis on mythical Kapes (chariot forked pole)? Indus: presence of horses contested
q	dual socio-political domain	(+)	-	-	?	?	+	Nkoya: the Mutondo / Kahare distinction but only since incorporation in Kololo / Luyana state (mid-19 <sup>th</sup> c. CE); Upper and Lower Egypt
r	bull-centred ritual	(+)	-	+	(+)	?	+	Nkoya: King Kahare has a buffalo shrine; Indus: bull on many graphic documents; Egypt Apis bull
s	death industry	+	+	+	+	?	+	Bamileke: second burial, skull cult; Persian Gulf: royal graves with funerary human sacrifices
t	regicide	+	+	+	+	?	?	Egypt: contested

u	idiophones (e.g. sistrum) and wind instruments	(+ / -)	?	?	?	(+)	+	Nkoya: no wind instruments, idiophones important; Sea Peoples: trumpet;
v	metallurgy, musical instruments, and navigation (/ - imagery) heralds Sunda	(+)	-	?	?	(+)	+	Nkoya: no navigation; Sea Peoples: no indication of refined metallurgy
w	cults of affliction	+	?	+	?	?	?	Sumer: the arts of the Asu and the Asipu therapists;
x	male genital mutilation	(+)	+	-	?	(+)	+	Nkoya abolished 1900 CE; Sea Peoples: only the Ekweh; Indus: contested
	number of positive scores (maximum 24)	14	6	14	7.5	7	18	

Sources: Nkoya, Zambia: van Binsbergen 1981a, 1992, 2010, etc. *Western Grassfields, Cameroon*: Kaberry 1952; Masquelier 1993, Nkwi 1976; Nkwi & Warnier 1982; Rowlands & Warnier 1993; Warnier 1993; van Binsbergen in prep. (g) and references cited there. *Persian Gulf*: Jacobsen 1970; Kramer 1959; Ritter 1965; Oppenheim 1970; Roux 1966; *Indus*: Vahia & Menon 2010; Lamberg-Karlovsky 1989; Kenoyer 1998; Wheeler 1966; *Sea Peoples*: van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011 and references cited there; *Ancient Egypt*: Wilkinson 2001; Trigger, 1995; Strouhal 1993; Rice 1990; Petrie 1894-1905; Maspero *et al.* 1903; Kemp 1995; Gardiner 1961; Emery 1961; Breasted 1906; van Binsbergen 2011; Scoring: + = 1; (+) = 0.5; ?, (-), -, +/- = 0

Unfortunately, the table measures not just positive Sunda traits but also my relative ignorance of the various contexts listed; probably the attributions for Cameroon are too low. It would be interesting to assess, by adding further columns, how Proto-Indonesia and present-day Indonesia would score on these variables – but that will be for later

Table 5.8. Six specific contexts in space and time (Nkoya, Western Zambia; Western Grassfields / Bamileke, Cameroon; Persian Gulf Bronze Age (Sumer / Ancient Mesopotamia); Bronze Age Indus Valley; Bronze Age Sea Peoples, Eastern Mediterranean; Ancient Egypt) assessed in terms of our checklist of Sunda traits

When we consider Table 5.8, a number of interesting conclusions may be drawn. In the first place, *it is difficult to speak of a fixed Sunda package that may be clearly identified in space and time*. Of the 24 variables listed, our six contexts only unanimously score positively on two variables: ‘raiding and trading’ and ‘extensive interregional networks’. The items in this package are selectively distributed, no context displays nearly all 24 traits (even top scorer Ancient Egypt has only 18), and two contexts where were suspected of considerable Sunda influence, the Cameroonian Bamileke and the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean Sea Peoples, attain barely 25% of the available traits; our data for these two are more defective than for the other four contexts – but the Cameroonian result tallies with the fairly negative results of my exploratory fieldwork (van Binsbergen, in prep. (g). The

volatile nature of our bundle of 24 proposed Sunda traits should be seen in the light of the fact that it is only in the relatively remote past (from 8 to 2 ka BP) that the Sunda effect, if any, can have exerted its impact, and for the several millennia elapsed ever since, we must count with such masking factors as localising transformation, and cultural drift, and the overlay of later more powerful and institutionally underpinned cultural and religious expressions, notably those associated with statehood and the world religions. In conclusion, we find that our check list is only too a limited extent reliable and valid as an instrument for the identification of the postulated Sunda effect. But it will do for a start.

In relation to the proposed Sunda traits in Table 5.8, it is illuminating to consider, in Fig. 5.19, the role played by gold, boat illustration, bee, and bull in the putative Sea People's realm of the Eastern Mediterranean Bronze Age.

Inevitably, such checklists are tendentious in that they are likely to be biased towards the intended result: identifying the Middle to Late Bronze Age Mediterranean as a region that may have undergone considerable Sunda influence. However, when we apply the items in this list to other arguably Sunda-influenced contexts, such as the East African coast, Nkoya royal courts and the Bight of Benin, soon a rather coherent and convergent pattern will emerge, that will also allow us to estimate the degree of Sunda-ness of much more doubtful cases, like the North Sea region,<sup>161</sup> and the American Northwest coast.

So, as our incipient checklist indicates, we have reasons to surmise the presence of considerable Sunda influence in the Bronze Age Mediterranean. However, we are no longer in the days when the mechanical diffusion of isolated traits was anthropology's main stock-in-trade; if there was such Sunda influence, we want to be able to formulate a socio-political model that helps us understand both the transmission of Sunda elements, their reception at destination, and why so far they have been able to elude scholarly scrutiny. After all, the Mediterranean, (however an ideologically contested ground in later identity constructions including the 19<sup>th</sup>-century CE myth of North Atlantic White superiority, and Afrocentricity and the *Black Athena* debate of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century CE) has been the best studied part of the world for several millennia.

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<sup>161</sup> For North and Central Europe, there is a marked preponderance of boat shapes in iconography and artefacts, widely recognised in the literature, cf. Goto 2006 for extensive examples. In combination with several other traits, this could be argued to be Sunda-related; van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen prep. 2011.

 <p>source:  <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bull-leaping#/media/File:Bull-leaping.jpg">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bull-leaping#/media/File:Bull-leaping.jpg</a>, with thanks</p>	 <p>source:  <a href="https://www.pinterest.ru/pin/829436456350956970/">https://www.pinterest.ru/pin/829436456350956970/</a>, with thanks</p>
<p>Bullfight scene in the palace of Knossos, Crete, 15th c BCE</p>	<p>The royal gold scepter from Kourion, Cyprus, 11c BCE.</p>
 <p>source:  <a href="https://nl.pinterest.com/aiwata62/snake-goddesses/?nic_v2=1a6lnEFnu">https://nl.pinterest.com/aiwata62/snake-goddesses/?nic_v2=1a6lnEFnu</a></p>	 <p>source:  <a href="https://www.pinterest.cl/pin/294352525619427987/">https://www.pinterest.cl/pin/294352525619427987/</a></p>
<p>Goddess holding snakes, Crete, c. 17th c BCE</p>	<p>Goddess served by a procession of bee-like fabulous creatures (but more likely, hippopotamus-like / Egyptian demon Taweret; cf. Weingarten 1991; Rehak 1995), signet ring, Tyrens Treasure, Mycenae, 15th c BCE</p>



Fig. 5.19. Significant artefacts in the putative Sea Peoples realm, Late Bronze Age Mediterranean

Spending his life on disentangling (with some success but without lasting recognition) the ethnic pre- and proto-history of the Mediterranean region, Joseph Karst (1931a, 1931b; cf. van Binsbergen, in prep. (I)), is still an illuminating guide in the present context, even though his intuitive long-range linguistics are now obsolete and even though he made insufficient use even of such little archaeology as was available in his time.

One may be surprised that I press into service a figure like Karst whose works, three quarters of a century old, are long forgotten, and on superficial and anachronistic reading have so much of the general idiom of their times that one would be inclined to call their author a racist. Admittedly, for lack of a sophisticated and empirically grounded theory of socio-political change, and ethnicity as a social process, and with only a dim picture of the linguistic, archaeological and genetic history of the Mediterranean over the past 15 ka, Karst and his contemporaries writing in the first third of the 20th century (e.g. Semper, Sergi) regrettably tended to make the most of the one theory they had at their disposal, and tried to make sense of their data by what we would today call demic diffusion, but what in the hands of scholars of the 1930s CE was still an exaggerated reliance on the, essentially Romantic, correlation between language, culture and genetic community or gene pool, calling the latter *Rasse*, 'race'. The latter term, for them, may have represented a scientific theory in good faith, even though it was a ticking time bomb which soon, by the massive genocides of the 1940s, would prove to be 'man's most dangerous myth' (Ashley Montagu 1942). We usually associate racialism with an emphasis on genetic purity and with claims of inborn superiority of a particular somatic group, especially that which was dominant in North Western Europe in Early Modern times.





Such an hegemonist, White-supremacist racialist orientation is totally alien to Karst (despite his occasional adoption of scholarly results attained by ideologically far less impeccable colleagues such as Herrmann). Much like Sergi, he sees – in ways that could not be further removed from the Nazist ideal – the Mediterranean ideal somatic type (*Edelrasse*) as shortish, highly pigmented descendants from the hybridisation of the Crô Magnon group<sup>162</sup> and ‘Liby-Aetiopians’, i.e. populations which both somatically / genetically, and culturally, and linguistically, may have had both African Negroid, and Sunda affinities.

Moreover, Karst sees innumerable indications of Afroasiatic, specifically Egyptian, Cushitic and Semitic linguistic and cultural influences penetrating deeply into Europe North of the Mediterranean, and for instance sees Ancient Rome and the cult of Jupiter Capitolinus as of Egyptian origin. He thus constitutes an example of anti-hegemonic anti-Eurocentrism *avant la lettre*.

In addition to Karst’s general argument that the linguistic, genetic and cultural elements from the Southern Mediterranean have massively penetrated into Southern Europe in pre- and proto-historical times (and we have already realised that, in the process, Sunda elements may have come to spread widely in the Mediterranean and elsewhere in Europe), his specific reasons in the case of Rome are:

‘die alten Tribusnamen der Ramnenses oder Romuliden, nebst Luceres, wovon jener mit dem ägyptischen *rom* "Mensch", dieser mit ägypt[isch]-kuschitischem lukaraite "Menschengeschlecht" oder "Geschlechtsnation" übereinstimmt (...) Wenn die Mutter des römischen Stadtgründers Romus-Romulus bald Ilia, bald Leuke-Lycia heißt, so drückt sich in diesen verstümmelten Namen die Reminiszenz an dasselbe alte Ethnikon der Kasluchen aus bzw. an das der sog[enannten] "ilisch-troischen" Elymer.’

Karst assumes wrongly that in Old Egyptian *rmꜥ*, ‘people’ , the emphatic *-t* can be removed to produce *\*rom*, ‘human being’. However, the emphatic *-t* is not a suffix, like standard *-t*  for feminine gender in Old Egyptian, but belongs to the root; and for all I know, Ancient Egyptian *\*rom*, ‘human being’ is not attested.

In order to account for the complexity of Bronze-Age Mediterranean linguistic and ethnic scene, Karst uses a model of hierarchical superposition of ethno-linguistic layers (like a geological layers – the model is greatly influenced by Semper’s work on the history of geology, for which work Karst had a greater admiration than we would summon today; Hofbauer 2005) which seems to solve some of the major puzzles of Mediterranean proto-history, for instance,

1. The question as to why the postulated political and economic expansion of a group (reasonably well argued on the basis of circumstantial evidence,

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<sup>162</sup> Crô-Magnon is the phenotype (named after its first excavation site) that is associated with the Franco-Cantabrian Upper Palaeolithic in South Western Europe. Many racists from North Western Europe fondly claimed Crô-Magnon as their ancestors. However, impressive to some for their high brow and athletic build, nothing is known about Crô-Magnons’ skin pigmentation, which may well have been considerable in view of their recent origin in North East Africa and ultimately in sub-Saharan, Africa, where pigmentation is an obvious selective response to high levels of solar radiation.

such as in the Sunda case) yet did not leave massive and obvious traces in the lexicon and in the culture, so that it is difficult to reconstruct the historical process from later sources.

2. What was the source of the considerable increase in nautical skills in the Mediterranean by the Early to Middle Bronze Age?

Karst viewed the ethnic history of the proto-historical Mediterranean in terms of the language families with which he was familiar from the Mediterranean, Europe, West Asia and the Northern half of Africa; in his analysis no Sunda / Austric / Austronesian consideration yet entered, but that does not diminish the heuristic value of the model he is proposing. For him, such expansion is *never culturally, ethnically, linguistically, or socially monolithic*: he always sees it as hierarchically layered, between an aristocratic or royal top layer which is ethnically, linguistically and somatically distinct from the commoner followers, and usually too little numerous to allow its distinctiveness from these commoners to stand out in subsequent periods. Thus in the population which ended up in the Levant<sup>163</sup> he prefers to see an Afroasiatic aristocratic layer, beneath that an Indo-European layer, then again a (linguistically) North Caucasian / Basquoid layer, and finally a substrate layer of unidentified linguistic and ethnic nature, where in addition to unidentified languages now lost without a trace, I suspect (and in some cases can demonstrate – e.g. the names Jabbok, Canaan) the presence of Nigercongo and Nilosaharan, and Khoisan. A very similar model has been formulated for the composition of the Hyksos groups that invaded the Nile delta and other parts of the Mediterranean including the Greek Peloponnesus in the Middle Bronze Age.

A similarly layered model, although with different ethnic, linguistic and cultural values to be substituted, is typical of kingship in South Central Africa, for instance among the Nkoya, where the royal families prefer to speak high Lunda whereas in the commoner villages the rather different Wiko or Mashasha dialects of Nkoya are being spoken. Specific Sunda ethnic and linguistic traits, notably among a powerful but numerically small aristocratic layer, could also easily be accommodated in such a model without ever leading to the kind of conspicuous attestations that would have made us adopt the General Sunda model already a century ago. Today, with the immigration of foreigner aristocrats into Nkoyaland probably dating from sometime in the mid-second millennium CE, no explicit subjective Sunda awareness can be found at all neither among the Nkoya kings nor among their followers. There is, however, an explicit awareness of the strangerhood of the kings and aristocrats (with the outlandish given names, and their stranger speech among themselves), and of their legendary provenance from 'Kola', 'a distant northern land' whose complex antecedents we have already explored above.

Much in the same way, no explicit subjective Sunda awareness has ever been recorded

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<sup>163</sup> As a result, in Karst's view – also cf. Karst 1931a –, not so much of the exploits of the Sea Peoples but especially as a result of a West-East return migration of Basquoids from the Iberian peninsula and Liguria, bringing nautical skills to the Levant; where the Basques obtained these, in their turn, Karst does not investigate).

for Mediterranean contexts in the Bronze and Iron Age. What we see instead is the ‘virtualisation’ of Sunda: the ethnic and cultural remembrance has gone underground and has been assimilated beyond recognition – much like the Christian culture of Western Europe has assimilated but largely dissimilated ancestral Celtic and Germanic elements. *It is my contention that some Sunda influence has gone underground in the form of the Pelasgian identity, spread from West Asia / Egypt into Europe by the Late Bronze Age.*

What is further interesting in the Karstian model is that *other* ethnic and linguistic groups may be recognised as endowed with the task of transmitting alien (e.g. Sunda) substrate elements which they, or their heterogeneous following, have so internalised that they no longer stand out as alien. Thus Hyksos-related aristocrats in Mycenaean Greece, and their presumable heterogeneous alien (including Egyptian) following, may have come to convey, not only a mixture of Indo-European and Afroasiatic linguistic, cultural, symbolic and religious elements from the Levant, but also such implied pseudo-Sunda elements as we now begin to discern in Levantine Bronze Age culture.

*Sunda increasingly appears in the way in which we will explicitly treat it, in the chapters to follow: as a movement, not so much of the transmission of authentic, localised and integrated South East Asian Proto-Indonesian culture traits, but of the selected, fragmented and translocalised traits circulating, in the hands of people from many different ethnic, somatic and linguistic backgrounds, in the multicentred, multidirectional inter-continental maritime network that was established in the Early Bronze Age, under conditions to which the westbound seaborne migration of Flood victims from South East Asia may have owed a great deal.*

Even though the postulated Sunda influence in the Bronze Age Mediterranean may have become implicit and virtualised, we would still be interested to know if there was a population or populations that particularly carried and perpetuated it. The question is essential for the identification of the ethnicity of the Sea Peoples as the end of the Bronze Age. Given the abundance of possible Sunda traits among the Ancient Egyptians, and the fact that Egypt was a major political, military, cultural and religious power for millennia, it stands to reason to expect that Egyptian influence in the Mediterranean was in the first place responsible for the spread and perpetuation of Sunda influence all over the Mediterranean region. There is no doubt that Egypt’s influence was felt all over that region: not only has Bernal (1987, 1991, 2001, 2006) and the *Black Athena* debate rendered the idea of massive Egyptian influence upon the Bronze Age Aegean commonplace, but there are also archaeological attestations from all over the Mediterranean to the same effect (Lambrou-Phillipson 1990; Ward 1961, 1971; Bietak 1995; Gorton 1996 / 1999). Karst, whose knowledge of Mediterranean linguistics was far greater than that of Mediterranean proto-history, speaks (1931b: 57 f.) of *ein gewaltiges Ägypterreich* – ‘an immense Egyptian empire’ to extend from North Africa, across the Hesperids,<sup>164</sup> to the Alps, while – like Bernal half a century later – he sees Old Egyptian etymologies in many Aegean toponyms as a sign of Bronze-Age Egyptian rule

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<sup>164</sup> The region of the Strait of Gibraltar / the Pillars Of Hercules, which in Graeco-Roman Antiquity held to be the site of the Garden of the Hesperids with its golden apples.

over the Aegean. However, despite the abundance of dispersed, usually mobile, Egyptian artefacts<sup>165</sup> and the linguistic especially onomastic indications, the claim of actual Egyptian territorial rule over the Aegean and even more remote parts of the Mediterranean has been very controversial (Lefkowitz & MacLean Rogers 1996). And moreover, focussing for a moment on the Sea Peoples' episode, the assumption of 'a huge Egyptian empire',<sup>166</sup> although grossly exaggerated, may suggest a convincing hypothesis to explain why nearly a dozen named ethnic groups from different parts of the Mediterranean-Pontic region should set sail to attack and destroy Egypt. From many parts of the Mediterranean, mercenaries fought in the Egyptian army for centuries, they knew Egypt and its riches, but probably were resenting its encroachment on local freedom, religion, and culture (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011). But even so one would need, in addition to these various experiences with Egypt as a pulling force, a regional ethnic identity, consciously felt among the historical actors themselves, before can understand the cohesion, effective organisation, and considerable success of the Sea Peoples. The Pelasgian / Sunda Hypotheses provides a possible answer on this point.

### *5.10. In addition to non-demic cultural diffusion, the demic-diffusion aspect of Sunda connotations: Evidence from population genetics<sup>167</sup>*

With all these cultural items, the emphasis is on Sunda as a form of mainly cultural diffusion, which (due to the relatively small number of conveyors as compared to the large number of receivers at the respective destinations, presumably the non-residential (e.g. trade, warfare) mode of cultural transfer) does not have a marked genetic complement but for which comparative mythology, iconography and ethnography, linguistics and archaeology may adduce more or less convincing evidence.

*However, the postulated westbound Sunda influence is not exclusively non-demic, in the*

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<sup>165</sup> For the Ancient Aegean and the Ancient Mediterranean region as a whole, the distribution of Egyptian artefacts is discussed in: Pendlebury 1930; Lambrou-Phillipson 1990; Pendlebury 1930; Brown 1975.

<sup>166</sup> In early versions of his *Black Athena* thesis, Martin Gardiner Bernal toyed with the same idea of an actual Egyptian colonisation of the Aegean, which he then held responsible for what he claimed to be the abundance of Egyptian words in the Greek language. Pyramidal-shaped hills and Egyptian-Greek analogies in mythemes were pressed into service to substantiate this claim. The abundance of Egyptian artefacts all over the Ancient Mediterranean, and Egyptian intervention to relief a famine in Asia Minor during the New Kingdom, are the only tangible, shaky grounds for such imperial claims. Soon Bernal was to tune down his claim, from downright Egyptian colonisation to merely the import of Egyptian traits in the hands of such Egyptians as would have found themselves among the Hyksos-derived aristocrats who created Mycenae. Meanwhile Arnaiz *et al.* 2001. 1999 have come up with a far better explanation of the Egyptian reminiscences in Ancient Greek: the Greeks are genetically demonstrated to have a sub-Saharan origin, so probably were Africans (Nubians?) displaced under Egyptian rule, victims of such mass deportations (of which the Israelites' Babylonian Exile is the best known example) as constituted a principal state policy of domination in the Ancient Near East including Egypt.

<sup>167</sup> For a more extensive discussion of genetic indicators of Sunda impact, cf. Oppenheimer 1998; van Binsbergen 2019d.

sense that sometimes a genetic continuity between postulated westerly destination areas in Africa and even the Mediterranean becomes clear even in the genetic material. Here the evidence is even more extensive than Oppenheimer claimed in 1998:

1. in addition to the thalassaemias (hereditary traits bringing considerable resistance to malaria, but at the price of debilitating anaemia) which he does mention, and which do encompass (although – as I argued in 2019d – not quite in the way envisaged by Oppenheimer) the entire region of postulated Sunda influence (Indian Ocean, Atlantic Africa, and the Mediterranean)
2. one could cite several other classic genetic markers based on Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* (1994), see van Binsbergen 2019a
3. as well as the finding (Forster 2004) to the effect that mtDNA Type B, which is the dominant pattern in South East Asia, has also been demonstrated to have spread all over Oceania and to Madagascar during the few most recent millennia, as tell-tale signs of Sunda expansion in all directions
4. The maritime connotations attributed by some writers to the Basques (Karst 1931), in combination with existence of a Basque genetic (mtDNA Type H) connection between NE Iberian peninsula, on the one hand, and the British Isles (and South Scandinavia), on the other hand (Forster 2004; Oppenheimer 2006a, 2006b) makes it plausible that Sunda influence was carried further north as far as the North Sea – and may have been one of the seeds of the ‘Sea Peoples’ that invaded the eastern Mediterranean at the end of the Bronze Age. Thus there may be a real historical connection between the Indonesian Sea Peoples (*Orang laut*) and the Mediterranean Sea Peoples.

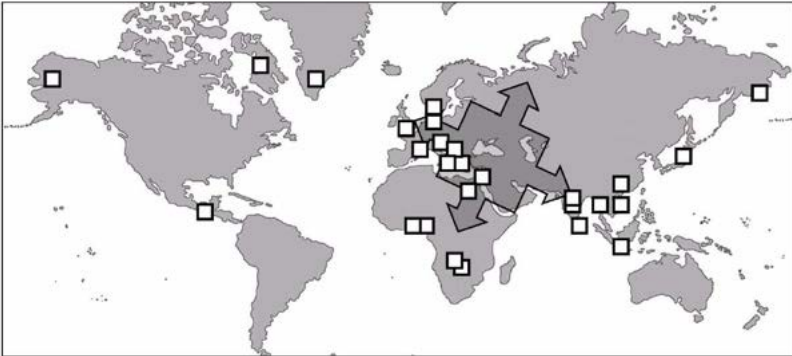
*In these mutually reinforcing ways Oppenheimer’s General Sunda Hypothesis finds a general genetic confirmation. It is high time that we enlist the General Sunda Hypothesis among the few general major processes of the more recent cultural history of Anatomically Modern Humans, as an accepted mechanism to which individual researchers can take recourse without having to argue it again from scratch – as has been the case so far.*

At a loss to pinpoint a cultural or linguistic factor which might explain the amazingly effective collaboration between the Sea Peoples in the Late-Bronze-Age Eastern Mediterranean, despite their obvious differences in names and attire, and their variations in culture (e.g. only one of the Sea Peoples was singled out in the Ancient Egyptian sources as practicing male genital mutilation), I proposed to revive (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011) the notion of the *Pelasgians*, an utterly confusing ethnic category used by the Ancient Greeks for an old population layer that however has so far eluded identification in place and in time. There is a documentary / literary basis for an ancient ethnic identity extending from Tunisia and Liguria along both shores of the Mediterranean, including Egypt and the Levant, and into Anatolia and the Black Sea: as we have seen, this is the scene of the *Odyssey*, the *Oresteia*, the exploits of Heracles, the *Journey of the Argonauts*, and the *Aeneid*. The many cultural and socio-political Sunda-related traits set out in Tables 5.7 and 5.8 find their expression, for this region, in many well studied item of material culture and art, as brought out in Fig. 5.19. A glimpse of what Pelasgian cultic life could develop into is

given in Graves' (1988: 69, n. 1) account of Pythagoras:

'Pythagoras is said to have been a Tyrrhenian Pelasgian from Samos in the Northern Aegean. This would account for the close connection of his philosophy with the Orphic and Druidic. He is credited with having refrained not only from beans but from fish, and seems to have developed an inherited Pelasgian cult by travel among other nations. His theory of the transmigration of souls is Indian rather than Pelasgian. At Crotona he was accepted, like his successor Empedocles, as a reincarnation of Apollo.'

The supposedly *Indian* nature of reincarnation beliefs is however a moot point. The Sanskritist Gonda (1943) claims that such beliefs do not form part of the oldest Vedic layers in Indian religion. Also the global distribution of reincarnation beliefs, as set out in Fig. 5.19a, suggest a more general Pelasgian rather than South Asian origin, although among the Nkoya<sup>168</sup> the South Asian connection may be, secondarily, the main factor.



Source: van Binsbergen 2018: 44, Fig. 9.1.

Fig. 5.19a. Provisional global distribution of reincarnation beliefs.

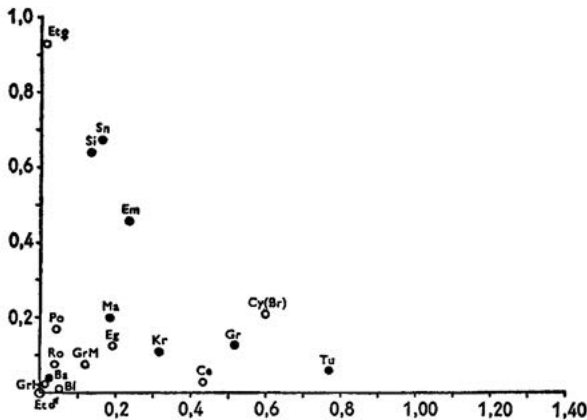
In this connection we should also turn our gaze to the Etruscans. Their somatic characteristics are the subject of Fig. 5.20. The great difference between Etruscan men and women makes the men stand out as constituting an immigrant population, but the mapping of data points with the greatest affinity to Etruscan men, as in Figure 5.20, scarcely tallies with the preferred suggestions for Etruscan origin (Asia Minor, Syria, Italy) in a growing and contentious body of literature, in which my sometime student and co-author Fred Woudhuizen takes pride of place (Woudhuizen 1982-1983, 1992, 1998, 2003, 2005, 2008,

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<sup>168</sup> And elsewhere in South Central Africa; cf. Stefaniszyn 1954; Sembereka 1996; Miles 1978; and sub-Saharan Africa in general: Echekwube 1987; Onyewuanyi 1996; Zahan *et al.* 1965; Delord 1957; Oluwole 1992. In addition to being (a) a fairly specific and localised belief system; (b) and a social-organisational device to conceptualise and regulate the relations between kin of successive generations (*e.g.* van Binsbergen in prep. (c); reincarnation constitutes also a major package of existential, philosophical and empirical questions, captivating humans' mind since times immemorial, and in the Western tradition associated with the venerable names of Empedocles and Plato; cf. Stevenson 1980; Rappe 2001; Hyslop 1906; Anonymous, Reincarnation; Zander 1999; Windisch 1908; Böhme 1989.

2013). The same region stands clearly out genetically, by thalassaemias (see chapter 5) and perhaps by the prevalence of the Rhesus-negative factor much highlighted for the Basques. And there is other converging genetic evidence. Thus Arnaiz-Villena et al 2001 proposed to distinguish an 'older' Mediterranean substratum, to which in their opinion the following people belong

'Macedonians, Iberians (including Basques), North Africans, Italians, French, Cretans, Jews, Lebanese, Turks (Anatolians), Armenians and Iranians'; the Greeks, in their opinion, do not belong to this stratum, but are found to 'have a substantial relatedness to sub-Saharan (Ethiopian) people, which separate them from other Mediterranean groups; (...) the time period when these relationships might have occurred was ancient but uncertain and might be related to the displacement of Egyptian-Ethiopian people living in pharaonic Egypt.'

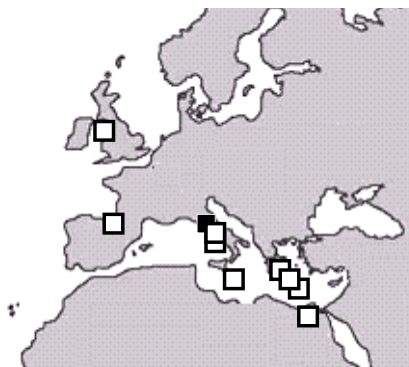


Statistics of length (Y-axis) and form (X-axis) based on 3 skull measurements: length, width and height. Source: Harrison *et al.* 1970: Fig. 24, p. 257; from Barnicot & Brothwell 1959.

Po = Pompeii; Em = Emilia; Sa = Sardinia; Kr = Crete; Ro = Rome; Sn is Sienna; Ma = Malta; Gr = Greece; Si = Sicily; Gr I = Greece, Iron Age; C = Cephallenia; Cy (Br) = Cyprus, Bronze Age; GrM = Mycenaean Greece; T = Turkey; Eg = Egypt (26-30th dynasty); Ba = Basques; BI = Great Britain, Iron Age; Et ♀ = Etruscan women; Et ♂ = Etruscan men

Fig. 5.20. Somatic distance between selected Mediterranean peoples and Etruscans.

We have revealing further evidence on the extent to which the Bronze Age Mediterranean Sea must have been a region of intensive interregional exchanges. Thus, Fig. 5.20 plots the closest physical anthropological associations of the Ancient Etruscans, whose elaborate funerary practices have furnished us with numerous skeletal remains. The pattern seems to corroborate the Anatolian associations of the Etruscans (which they have in common with the Basques and with the populations of the British Isles; *cf.* Oppenheimer 2006), as well as their Pelasgian connotations (which they have in common with Egyptians and selected Aegean and Italic populations).



Source: Fig. 5.20. The black square marks the Etruscans, the white squares their closest typological associates

Fig. 5.21. Geographic associations of ancient populations closest to the Ancient Etruscans

Sound archaeological evidence (notably presence of so-called cardial impressed pottery in western Mediterranean Europe and across the North African coasts at the beginning of the Neolithic) brings Arnaiz *et al.* (1999) even to claim, well in line with the General Sunda Hypothesis, pre-Neolithic circum-Mediterranean contacts by sea:

'In addition, pre-dynastic Egyptian El-Badari culture (4,500 years ago) is similar to southern Iberian Neolithic settlements with regard to pottery and animal domestication. Taking the genetic, linguistic, anthropological, and archaeological evidence together with the documented Saharan area desiccation starting about 10,000 years ago, we believe that it is possible that a genetic and cultural pre- Neolithic flow coming from southern Mediterranean coasts existed toward northern Mediterranean areas, including at least Iberia and some Mediterranean islands. This model would substitute for the demic diffusion model put forward to explain Neolithic innovations in Western Europe.' (Arnaiz-Villena *et al.* 1999)<sup>169</sup>

And also for Karst the connections between Eastern and Central Mediterranean Sea is not so much the result of the proto-historic redistribution of ethnic identities and the associated linguistic and onomastic elements brought about by the Sea Peoples episode in the Late Bronze Age, but goes back to a shared history in prehistoric times:

'Hamiten [ *i.e.* speakers of Afroasiatic – WvB ] in Hesperien und im atlantischen West und Mitteleuropa haben wir bereits in unseren früheren Schriften nachgewiesen. Kuschitische Hamiten haben zahlreiche Spuren in Hispanien und Sizilien hinterlassen. Das berberische Element ist anthropologisch und topographisch im prähistorischen Gallien, Norditalien und in Mitteleuropa nachweisbar. Ein gewaltiges Aegypterreich erstreckte sich einst in grauester Vorzeit ueber Nordafrika, wo die Guanchenkultur noch im Mittelalter einen aegyptoiden Charakter zeigte, und ueber Hesperien bis ins Alpenland hinein. Dass dabei auch volkische Elemente der aegypto-hamitischen Spezies weit ins nordliche Mittelmeerbecken, nach Nordostspanien, Etrurien und in die Aegaeis durchsicherten und in festen Siedelungen sich ansetzten, geht aus archaeologischen Funden und altertuemlichen Ueberlieferungen der griechischen Stamme ueber vorhistorische Aegypterkolonien in Hellas, Einfuehrung aegyptischer Kulte und dergleichen mehr hervor.' (Karst 1931b: section IV. Die nordlichen Hamiten)

<sup>169</sup> I thank Mark Scott for drawing my attention to the work of Arnaiz-Villena *et al.* 1999.



mehr hervor.' (Karst 1931b: section IV. Die nordlichen Hamiten)

Mizraimitische Kaphtoriten und Kasluchen waren einst gleicherweise über Kappadokien, Kreta und gewisse Striche Ausoniens, d. h. des praehistorischen Italiens, verbreitet. Dafür zeugt der toponomastische Parallelismus zwischen Camisa, Camisene, Stadt und Bezirk in Kappadokien, und Camesa, Camasena = Urlatium; zwischen Lavinium, uralter Stadt in Latium (sog[enannte] "troische" Gründung), und Laviane, Laviniane' bzw. Laviniasene (Laviansene), einem Kanton in Kappadokien bzw. Kleinarmenien; ferner zwischen Chammanene, dem phrygisch-pontisch-kappadokischen Grenzbezirk, und Cammania (Cadmania) in Epirus, letztere eine sogenannte "phoenikische" Kadmossiedlung, die wir in unserer Abhandlung *Ligures*, pg. 33, als hamitisirtes Lelegergebiet wahrscheinlich machten; vgl. auch Nora 1. sehr alte Stadt Sardinens, eine Iberergründung, und 9. ein Bergschloß Kappadokiens am Fuße des Taurus, das spätere Neroassos; ferner im libysch-iberischen Hesperien: Zama in Numidien gegenüber Zama in Kappadokien und Mesopotamien; Intibili in Hispanien gegenüber Andalalis oder Andavilis in Kappadokien. Auch Kypern muss als einstige Zwischenstation des mizraimitischen Kaphtorstammes gefasst werden. Darauf deutet schon sein vorzeitlicher Name' der nach Astynomos (bei Stephanos Byz[antios] sub v. Kupro) Kryptos (Variante Kyptos) gelautet habe. Kryptos steht durch Korruptel für \*Kypros, worin noch das [Bible] biblische Kaphtor durchscheint. Kerastia (oder Kerastis), eine andere primitive Bezeichnung derselben Insel, hat, trotz Steph[anos] Byz[antios], mit Keras "Vorgebirge" nichts zu schaffen, erklärt sich vielmehr als mutmaßliche Entstellung aus dem Ethnikon der Kreter: Amathusia und Akamantis, als Synonyma von Kypros, sind von dortigen Lokalnamen abgeleitete Bildungen; Sphekeia ist vom Ethnikon der Sphekes, eines kyprischen Urvolkes, deriviert. Mèionis, eine weitere Synonymbenennung derselben Insel (Stephan[os] Byzantios), deutet auf ethnischen Zusammenhang mit dem lydisch-maionischen Kleinasien hin; beiderseits, in Lydien sowohl als auf Kypern, breitet sich über einen lelegisch-pelagischen Grundstock eine hamito-semitische [= Afroasiatic – WvB] Oberschicht aus. (Karst 1931b: 82)

So far my provisional discussion of additional including genetic indications of the plausibility of the Sunda Hypothesis. In the original 2007 draft of this book now followed, in a chapter in its own right, a more extensive genetic discussion, largely based on Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994. However, I am omitting that chapter here, for a number of reasons: my main contribution to the Sunda debate should be based on my own specialist authority as a comparative ethnographer, historian and comparative mythologist – and not on genetics where I lack such authority; the original chapter has meanwhile been published (van Binsbergen 2019d); and that discussion was admittedly based on a conception of genetics based on classic markers, that has by now been largely supplanted by one of molecular biology where the human genome has been reconstructed in the minutest details.

So let us now proceed to the criticism of Oppenheimer's theory and method in *Eden in the East*.



## Chapter 6. Criticism of Oppenheimer's theory and method in *Eden in the East*

Despite my recognition of the General Sunda Hypothesis as a powerful, potentially mainstream, instrument for the analysis of global cultural history in the post-Neolithic period, there is room for severe criticism of *Eden in the East*. Let me single out Oppenheimer's Frazerianism, then deal with a few cases of what I consider 'archaeological credulity', and end with the unfortunate implications Oppenheimer's position has for Africa.

### *6.1. Oppenheimer's infatuation with Frazer makes it appear as if myth analysis already ceased to be a field of growth a century ago*

I have already noted Oppenheimer's almost exclusive reliance, for myth analysis, on Frazer, who published his main works around 1900. Of course, Frazer is the only anthropologist whose name became a household word throughout the British Isles – the layman's appropriated popular hero of exoticising scholarship, the proverbialised Einstein of the social sciences. Such popular veneration has little to do with actual and continued relevance.

'Many of my references are from Sir James Frazer because, in spite of some objections, I find his approach logical, encyclopaedic, and he has few pre-conceptions' (Oppenheimer 1998: 235-6).

I leave it to the reader to decide whether an approach to comparative mythology is primarily to be judged by its logical nature (mythology, involving flights of the imagination, often involves different kinds of logic than tend to appeal to the modern natural

scientist; for a discussion of such logics, see van Binsbergen 2012a, 2018); and how can an author known for his, now obsolete, evolutionism can be said to have ‘few pre-conceptions’.

How could Oppenheimer prefer Frazer’s theoretically-barren common-sense approach, highly coloured by evolutionism? Empirically, it was based mainly on the kind of utterly mediocre, amateur data from travelogues and missionary accounts. Frazer had never done any fieldwork himself. Encyclopaedic, indeed. It is as if I, as a non-geneticist, would limit my borrowing from genetics to the works of Gregor Mendel (1822-1884) and Hugo de Vries (1848-1935) – after all, what worthwhile advances could have taken place in genetics (Oppenheimer, of course, is a *modern* geneticist) after the decisive, final contributions from these two geniuses living scarcely a century ago?! Let us face it: even if I take recent genetics into account, the result of my interdisciplinary borrowing is awkward enough, and this is generally the case for interdisciplinary appropriations.

From the perspective adopted by Oppenheimer, the (literally) tens of thousands of anthropologists, comparative religionists and comparative mythologists that have contributed to the study of mythology throughout the twentieth century CE, seem to have merely wasted their time. Their work is only used by Oppenheimer if it has a direct South East Asian, Oceanian or West Asian content, or explicitly (like Dundes 1988) anthologises approaches to Flood myths from all over the world. As a result, in Oppenheimer’s hands myth analysis is presented as self-evident and unproblematic, and as established once for all by Frazer a hundred years ago. That does not mean that Oppenheimer’s handling of myth lacks subtlety or imagination – but it lacks the theoretical and methodological rigour, the application of state-of-the-art accumulative scholarship in the field of comparative mythology, and the explicit concern with operationalisation (the question of how to reliably and validly identify our theoretical concept out there in the – hopefully – real world of empirical data) which Oppenheimer, as a prominent scientist, so clearly can be expected to apply in his own specialist field.

Thus, myths, from the essentially momentary, fluid, oral – often ritual – pieces of articulation of multi-layered and incompletely understood meaning that they usually are in non-literate societies, via the medium of their being committed to writing (often by early missionaries and early colonial civil servants well versed in Christianity and the Graeco-Roman classics – it is not so amazing, after all, if these codified myths show Biblical and Graeco-Roman parallels; or recorded by anthropologists who as a rule (whatever myths to the contrary circulate outside the discipline) have only a superficial knowledge of the local language of their research area if at all) risk to be reduced (like languages and their components) to reified, context-less formal structural nuclei, immutable like atoms were once thought to be, and informed by intricate typologies imposed by the analyst (*cf.* van Binsbergen 2003).

Of course, only after being thus cut and dried can myths, reified probably beyond recognition, be subjected to statistical analysis. But it is not so much the infringement on the poetics of myth that renders such statistical treatment suspect – or I would not

try to clinch the argument in Part I of this monograph with the results of a multivariate analysis of Flood myths worldwide. My methodological point here is more limited, and can easily be remedied. In Oppenheimer's analysis, pride of place is given to percentages of stories and of motifs within a given region – but such quasi-exact data remain meaningless as long as we do not know how the corpus of all such stories and motifs was constructed in the first place, and how complete and reliable it is. Moreover, instead of being given insight in the actual data set and in the computational process, or being referred to technical analyses which Oppenheimer may have published elsewhere, we are merely presented with aggregate results: correlation matrixes that do not even contain correlations, but levels of significance, usually based on the very crude 'odds' test which was never meant, in the first place, to replace the chi-square or log ratio tests – in themselves, as non-parametric tests, crude enough! – as measures of association for cross-tabulated sample data with unknown underlying distribution (cf. Uebersax 2007; Siegel n.d.).

Oppenheimer also appears to be unappreciative of the *format* of myths, in other words, of the kind of statement that a myth (oral or written) entails. With present-day scientific texts as his main frame of reference, Oppenheimer (as so many other analysts of Flood myths) can only assume that a Flood myth is, self-evidently and non-problematically, a more or less distorted but yet essentially factual statement about some past actual event of flooding; so all we need to do is to situate it in time and place, filter out the distortions, and scientifically link it to the hydrography and oceanography then and there obtaining – a Flood myth from this point of view is more or less a hydrographic and oceanographic scientific conference paper *avant la lettre*.

My view, by contrast, is that the widespread type of the general Flood myth is predicated on the specific cosmogonic poetics of myth. Viewed from this perspective, Flood myths do not evoke historical flooding events, but merely entail a thought experiment: if the cosmogonic order primarily consists of the Separation of the emerging Land from the Primal Waters (which continue to engulf the land above, aside and below), then the Flood is the annulment of that separation and hence of the cosmic order that was installed in the beginning of time. A Flood myth is primarily an account of cosmogony, cosmoclasm, and of second cosmogony. When the bulk of the present book was being drafted, I believed there was evidence, against the background of my Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology, to link the emergence of Flood stories as cosmogonic statement to the emergence of mtDNA Type B in Central Asia c. 30 ka BP; my idea was that much later, this overall general model of cosmogonic Flood myth was transformed into very specific and elaborate Flood myths may relate to actual flooding events in the relatively near past, during the Holocene. I do not rule out the possibility that part of such a relatively recent transformation, and subsequent spread, of Flood myths took place under Sunda influence, from c. 7 ka BP. But given the nearly worldwide distribution hence estimated great age of Flood myths, they cannot possibly all have come from Sunda.

As this book's argument develops we shall come back time and again to the aquatic spirits that, as a manifestation of NarCom 10 'The Primal Waters and the Flood', turn out to haunt much of the field of comparative mythology, that surface in the most surprising contexts, for

instance in totally land-locked situations such as Central Asia and Bronze-Age Central Europe. In the context of Ancient Egypt, alone, the range of aquatic spirits reaches from Isis / Ast (whom many Egyptologists have considered originally an aquatic spirit, probably of Libyan origin), Neith (underneath of whose manifest identity of goddess of weaponry and spinning lurks, quite manifestly, that of the Mother of the Primal Waters), and the cosmogonic god Ptah / the sky god Nu, both called 'Lord of Fish' (Mercer 1921).

## 6.2. Archaeological credulity

Concentrating on what has been reconstructed as the third post-glacial Flood, 7.5 to 5.5 ka BP, gives Oppenheimer a plausible time slot for Sunda expansion to potentially exert some formative influence on the Indus, Sumerian and Egyptian civilisations. However, what he adduces in the way of archaeological or traditional evidence for such a claim is unimpressive, not only in fact but also because this is one of the few points where he shows to be lacking in essential comparative knowledge and method:

1. Niah cave, Sarawak, Borneo, with depictions of ships (Fig. 6.1.a below) – which (especially in a subcontinent teeming with soul ships and maritime traditions) are not necessarily evidence of some specific, historic cataclysmic flooding and escape by boat
2. Oppenheimer bases his argument on *mankala* as Sunda-related on the picture of an apparently large stone slab, said to be megalithic, from Sumatra (Fig 5.1d), showing, next and parallel to each other, three double rows of six cup-holes, and one single row; at the beginning and end of the double rows there appears one single cup-hole. Oppenheimer is right to point out that similar cup-hole patterns have been found as petroglyphs in Turkey, in East Africa (modern Ethiopia, in fact), and elsewhere in Indonesia – the distribution of such petroglyphs is in fact much wider, including attestations from Old Kingdom Egypt (on a temple lintel raised many meters above the ground), and (as our oldest attestations so far) from Neolithic Israel and Jordan. However, once more Oppenheimer jumps to typological conclusions when he asserts that all these cases involve the well-known game of *mankala* (where tokens such as seeds are moved along the cup-holes / cupmarks / cupules according to fixed and elaborate rules), as if the nature and symbolism of cup-holes has not been a bone of contention among archaeologists for two centuries. How to play such a game on a vertical Ethiopian megalith, or on the Egyptian lintel? How to know that the distribution of such cup-hole patterns across much of the Old World is supported by one and only one underlying body of reference and use (van Binsbergen 1997c / reprinted 2011)? Meanwhile, the 19th-century traveller and pioneering archaeologist Bent (1896 / 1969: 85 f.) also held the view, with Oppenheimer, that the modern distribution of *mankala* (which he sees extending from Singapore to West Africa) displays a Sunda element in the sense of having intercontinental Indian Ocean connections; however, he saw of ori-

gin of the game not in Indonesia but

'In short, wherever Arabian influence has been felt this game in some form or other is always found, and forms for us another link in the chain of evidence connecting the Mashonaland ruins with an Arabian influence. The Makalangas are also far superior to other neighbouring Kaffir races in calculating, probably owing to the influence of this very game.' Bent (1896/1969: 85 f.)

There are however strong indications (*cf.* van Binsbergen 2012a, 1997c / reprinted 2011) to the effect that the Indonesian extension of *mankala* is secondary and recent, so that we do not need to press the General Sunda Hypothesis into service here.

3. El Ubaid clay figurines from South Mesopotamia, 5th-4th mill. BCE,<sup>170</sup> are suggested (Oppenheimer 1998: Plate 3 after p. 208) to portray 'visitors from the East' (in other words, Sunda Argonauts) because of their slanted eyes and the clay pellets on their shoulders suggestive of tattoos or skin scarification, especially as practiced at Sepik, New Guinea (Oppenheimer 2001: 77). The El Ubaid figurines are admittedly reminiscent of Indus figurines, but unfortunately also of Central American ones! (Anthropomorphic clay figurines of "H-4" type, from Chupicuaro, Guanajuato; *cf.* Fig. 6.1). As the many fakes on the antiquities market already indicate, such figurines and adornments are too unspecific to base such far-reaching conclusions upon. (However, scepticism on this point does not mean that one had to concur with Strasser 1996, who interprets the Ubaid boat models – significant from a Sunda point of view – as mere spinning bowls.) Clay figurines are often crude and far from flattering for the human subject and some of the techniques applied in clay sculpture, such as the use of pellets, would seem to be a likely response to the nature of clay in human hands, rather than the result of global diffusion. Moreover, there is a wide range of figurines and other plastic and figurative representations, from all over the world, where the intended effect is therianthropic: a combination of human and animal features. So the lizard-like features of the Mesopotamian figurine may be intentional and the depiction of an animal species, regardless of any regional human phenotype or scarification practice. This is in fact what Oppenheimer admits in his main text, citing the Biblical archaeologist Parrot's (1960: 55) suggestion that these may be 'snake women' (Oppenheimer 1998: 77). In a vast region stretching from Central Africa, to Southern Europe and West Asia, reptiles (especially snakes), and arthropods (*e.g.* spiders, beetles, bees, flies) are considered to be so closely associated with cosmogonic divinities that the latter may be depicted with such animal features. There is another, even wider class of representations (abundantly attested also for Ancient Mesopotamia and the Indus) whose meaning, amazingly consis-

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<sup>170</sup> *Cf.* Strommenger 1964 and van Buren 1930 for clay figurines, some with pellets, from Ancient Mesopotamia.

tent through space and time and even through language families, hinges on speckledness as an evocation of contradiction, evil, subaltern and / or female status, night, Moon *etc.* – all the qualities that the leopard skin evokes so superbly; in this light the pellets may simply be signs of speckledness, and need not have any association with tattooing (unless tattooing in order to produce the effect of speckledness) or with East or South East Asia (van Binsbergen 2018, Appendix 3 and 4). For many different contexts in space and time, dots, pellets and cup-marks have been argued to be essentially statements of power and potency – or points of concentration that capture the roving mind. Here neurobiology and the philosophy of difference<sup>171</sup> offer universalising interpretations that intuitively have a greater appeal than the claim of direct diffusion and cultural indebtedness, for such simple and obvious forms. The point is not that Oppenheimer's suggestion is evidently wrong, but that it remains an empty suggestion as long as it is not presented in a comparative and methodological framework in which it could be argued to be plausible.

4. Oppenheimer sees the use of red haematite as a Sunda-related trait, but fails to appreciate that throughout Old World prehistory this mineral, as well as a similar iron oxide known as red ochre, has had such a wide attestation in space and time that Sunda as epicentre of diffusion is excluded (not only Borneo (Niah cave), Sumer, Çatal Hüyük, Mapungubwe (South Africa), and prehistoric China – which might all be argued to have Sunda connotations, but even the Blombos Cave block, South Africa, 70 ka BP (Henshilwood *et al.* 2001), as well as many prehistoric burial sites all over the Old World, in between!) (*cf.* Wreschner *et al.* 1980; Wreschner 1981; Marshack 1981).
5. Berossus' Oannes myth (Fig. 6.1.1),<sup>172</sup> in which humankind learns the arts of civilisation from an amphibian being that appears at the Persian Gulf and that, after teaching by day, retreats to join his companions at sea for the night. The source of the Oannes myth is a Berossus fragment in the ancient historian Alexander Polyhistor, as cited in Cory 1832, *cf.* Fragments n.d. and Jacoby 1923-27. On the Oannes myth, *cf.* Smith 1873; Schnabel 1923; Hallo 1963: 176, n. 79 and Lambert 1963: 65 (etymology of the name Oannes). A very interesting reading is that of Georges Roux (1992), who sees Oannes as a personification of the Sumerians: the latter settled in what is now Southern Mesopotamia when the general rising of the sea level chased them from the alluvial plain which is now the Persian Gulf – in other words they, like Oannes, came from the sea, but only locally so. As

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<sup>171</sup> *Cf.* Lewis-Williams 2004; Farmer 2008; Lewis-Williams & Dodson 1989; Clottes & Lewis-Williams 1998; Deleuze & Guattari 1980; van Binsbergen 2004b.

<sup>172</sup> After Smith 1873: 306; *cf.* Cory 1832.



the Berossus fragment has it:

'...he gave them an insight into letters and sciences, and arts of every kind. He taught them to construct cities, to found temples, to compile laws, and explained to them the principles of geometrical knowledge. He made them distinguish the seeds of the Earth, and shewed them how to collect the fruits; in short, he instructed them in every thing which could tend to soften manners and humanize their lives. From that time, nothing material has been added by way of improvement to his instructions. And when the Sun had set, this Being Oannes, retired again into the sea, and passed the night in the deep; for he was amphibious.' (Cory 1832 / Fragments n.d.)

This myth is purportedly dealing with Proto-Sumerian times yet only committed to writing nearly 3 ka later. This is a good example of one of the critical points in Farmer 2007: what looks like an old text often is much less old!

Although we must refrain from accusing Oppenheimer of guilt by association, yet it is instructive to compare the preposterous use to which Temple 1976 has put the same myth. As we have seen, he considers the legendary Oannes who appears at the Persian Gulf at the onset of Sumerian civilisation, an extraterrestrial space traveller, who imparts his local knowledge of the composite (allegedly, even triple) nature of the fixed star Sirius ( $\alpha$  Canis Majoris – apart from the Sun the brightest star visible from Earth), to the locals (who apparently have, or receive on the spot, the astrophysical background to make sense of the idea of stars as distant concentrations of matter which may or may not revolve around each other), and from there, via the Garamantes people who traversed the Sahara at some time around the beginning of the Common Era, that privileged knowledge allegedly made its way across space and time to the present-day Dogon, where Griaule and Dieterlen (1965) tapped it in the middle of the 20th century CE. As an apparent proof of African astronomical knowledge superior even to state-of-the-art North Atlantic science, the Griaule-Dieterlen publication has generated an enormous literature, mainly from Afrocentrist side. My sometime Leiden colleague Walter van Beek (1992) restudied the Dogon in recent decades, but could not get confirmation that Griaule's cherished ethnoastronomy had any ethnographic, intersubjective basis in Dogon culture; however, Dogon culture is generally admitted to be fragmented and heterogeneous, and it is a time-honoured epistemological principle that one can hardly empirically prove non-existence. In North Atlantic specialist science, the dual nature of Sirius was only proposed on mere mathematical grounds by the leading German mathematician Friedrich Bessel in 1844, to be confirmed astronomically a few decades later, when professional scientific astronomical telescopes had reached a level of resolution capable of resolving the very small angle between the two stars; there is no possibility whatsoever that the Dogon could ever tell the two apart by sheer naked-eye astronomy. However, all this

leaves ample opportunity for the scientific notion of a dual Sirius to have percolated by normal terrestrial means of communication to the interior of West Africa (Sagan 1979). In the early 20th c. CE, a professional cosmopolitan astronomical expedition came within a few hundred kilometers of Dogonland. After all, also Islamic secret sciences have made a considerable impact there – as is clear from the famous pronouncements of the Dogon sage Ogotomelli, likewise published by Griaule (1948). However, this part of Africa is generally known for its exceptionally elaborate mythological tradition (Willis 1994: 265), and my preferred view is that, by another ‘fallacy of misplaced concreteness’ (Whitehead 1925: 55, 58), Dogon mythology has simply been misread, not as a multilayered, ambiguous and heterogeneous mythical cosmology that it is, but as if it were a modern astronomical treatise in disguise. Incidentally, astronomers are still looking for a third member of the Sirius star system, but as far as I know, without success (Solstation.com 2005; Benest & Duvent 1995; Schroeder et al. 2000).

Meanwhile the most convincing identification of Oannes is simply the water god EN.KI. As the prominent Assyriologist Oppenheim writes (1970: 195 and 365, n. 24):

‘Among the old gods of the pantheon, Ea (corresponding to Sumerian EN.KI) occupied a special position. Originally the local deity of the southernmost city, Eridu, he shared, according to late speculation, the rule of the cosmos with Anu and Enlil inasmuch as his realm was the waters surrounding the world and those below it. *Apart from having been the patron god of exorcists,*<sup>173</sup> Ea was a master craftsman, patron of all the arts and crafts, and endowed with a wisdom and cunning that myths and stories do not tire of extolling. He must have been thought of in certain respects as a ‘culture hero’, until the late period, since an Ea figure seems to have been the prototype of the culture hero Oannes mentioned by Berossos. (...) Oannes taught men the art of writing and figuring, and all crafts, also to organize in cities, and to establish temples.’

The identification of Oannes with the god Ea / EN.KI is fitting in other respects (Cotterell 1989: 86): the god is reported to have pursued his daughters incestuously; moreover, like a real spider had left his semen in the body of Uttu (the spider goddess of weaving) as a resource

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<sup>173</sup> This could be an important detail. In the Ancient Near East, the rise of the crafts of the *asu* and the *asipu*, ritual specialists of healing and divination (Ritter 1966), marks the arrival of shamanism on its expansion into Western Eurasia and possibly into sub-Saharan Africa. But below we shall also identify such ‘cults of affliction’ (as they are known in the study of sub-Saharan Africa, by a term coined or at least propagated by the great anthropologist of religion Victor Turner) as potential tell-tale signs of Sunda influence. The Persian Gulf / Sumer is the most conspicuous candidate for Sunda influence to have landed in Western Eurasia. The term *asipu* has no ready Austronesian antecedents, but *asu* straightforwardly means ‘dog’ in Proto-Austronesian – and the dog in the Ancient Near East is mainly conspicuous for its close association with healing cults (Edrey 2013). It is still too early to draw further conclusions, but the coincidence of these indications is intriguing, and may also cast a new light on the emphatic veneration of the Dog Star, Sirius ( $\alpha$  Canis Majoris) in the Ancient Near East including Egypt.

throughout her lifetime; was part man part fish; was reborn from the womb of his wife Nimhursaga; and was the Great God protecting the lood Hero Ziusudra (in Sumer) = Nuaḥ (Bible) = Atraḥasis (Babylonia) = Utnapištim (Gilgameš epic).<sup>174</sup> Also compare the South Asian Matsya (an avatār or historical manifestation of the great god Vishnu), saving the Flood Hero Manu – Matsya is reminiscent of the Sumerian Oannes, and both are, admittedly, smack in the proposed Sunda trajectory.

6. Oppenheimer (my Fig. 6.1.j-k) seeks to argue continuity between ceremonial axes from New Guinea, the Isle of Roti (East Indonesia), and Sweden (the Galstad Axe, 800 BCE). Now ever since the times of Montelius (1843-1921) archaeology has emphasised definitional elaboration and rigour, and geographic and temporal self-restraint, in the field of typological comparison. Inevitably, one cannot engage in long-range comparison without arousing and, as the case may be, offending the ghost of Montelius, and that truism would apply to my own work as much as to Oppenheimer's. Yet when comparing artefacts from the extreme ends of the Old World, we do need to exercise extreme methodological caution. What the artefacts discussed by Oppenheimer have in common is that the outer periphery of the axe blade is more or less a circle segment, while similar curves return elsewhere on the artefact. The caption suggests continuity with Lapita pottery (the major class of 'index fossils' of early eastbound Oceanian expansion), and with the Dong-Son bronze culture of Vietnam. One might even go on to point to Etruscan, Celtic (La Tène) and Anglo-Saxon artefacts from South, Central and West Europe, whose ornaments are often circle-based. Again, the point is not that any connection between Sweden and East Indonesia is automatically to be dismissed (*cf.* the Nkoya example, which yet suggests the possibility of a genuine Sunda link), but that only a finely attuned, theoretically underpinned typology, explicitly argued and more or less accepted before a professional forum, could make such statements more than mere wishful thinking. Without the attending analytical framework, such assertions are, in the most literal sense, meaningless. The same argument holds for the example of the neck rings from Nias, Indonesia, and those from North Europe – and, as might have been added again, Celtic Europe, where, for instance on the famous Gundestrup cauldron<sup>175</sup> which is mentioned in Oppenheimer's text, they appear to be signs of divine and royal election rather than a 'Torc of Death'.

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<sup>174</sup> *Cf.* Cagni 1975; Oden 1981; Sherman 2015 (*s.v.* Ziusudra); de Liagre Böhl 1958; Bible 1985.

<sup>175</sup> A richly decorated vessel, found near Gundestrup, Denmark, in 1891, and attributed to the La Tène period, 200-100 BCE. *Cf.* Kaul *et al.* 1991.



a. Ships depicted at Niah cave, Sarawak, Borneo / Kalimantan.<sup>176</sup>



b. pre-Hispanic West Mexico figurine with pellets (provenance given in the main text, above)



c. Maya figurine from Jaina, Mexico, 7th c. CE; note the clay pellets on the seated figure; source: Maxwell 1986: 51.



d. mankala slab from Sumatra; Oppenheimer 1998 ©



e. see h



f. El Ubaid figurine; cf. <https://www.gaia.com/article/the-ubaid-lizardmen-figurines-reptilians-in-ancient-sumer>

<sup>176</sup> Incidentally, there is no tradition of maritime travel from Borneo to Madagascar (Adelaar 1994), which makes it somewhat unlikely that inhabitants of Borneo participated in the westbound Sunda expansion in general. But after all, they were mere *'Phantom Voyagers'* (Dick-Read)



g. Indus figurines (source: <http://kmtspace.com/indus.htm>)



i. Mehrgarh Indus figurine; cf. <https://www.livehistoryindia.com/history-of-india-2000-years/2020/02/08/mehrgarh-the-dawn-of-a-civilisation-8000-bce-2500-bce>



h. torques and armlets from the Indo-Pacific and Ancient Europe; Oppenheimer 1998 ©



j. King Kahare (Nkoya, 1992) worshipping at an ancestral shrine during the annual Kazanga festival (photo J. Kapangila) – note the ceremonial axe;



k. ceremonial axes from the Indo-Pacific and Ancient Europe (Oppenheimer 1998)



l. Oannes (Smith 1873)

Fig.6.1. Towards the archaeological underpinning of the General Sunda Hypothesis

### 6.3. *Tilting the scales of the various continents' respective contributions to global cultural history*

The above cases of archaeological credulity are of the kind to be expected when a researcher has the courage to go outside the field of his disciplinary specialty; the price for visionary innovation in science is that (in addition to the usual institutional and disciplinary ostracism) one inevitably commits errors in the adjacent disciplines – but since the alternative is much more to be regretted (namely: unimaginative myopia while trundling along trodden paths – the opposite of what Stephen Oppenheimer does in *Eden in the East*) such errors must be received with charity and understanding. Therefore, my critical sense is more aroused by the wider geopolitical and knowledge-political implications of Oppenheimer's approach, especially for Africa: it reduces Africa to passive, initiative-less peripherality, overestimates the effect of Sunda on Africa, and underplays the effect of the Back-into-Africa migration.

'In this book I describe my own exploration and analysis of the evidence for the peoples of the lost continent who fertilised the great cultures not only of the Far East but the Middle and Near East as well over 7000 years ago, and provided Eurasia with its library of folklore. I came to believe that all but a few archaeological traces of those founder cultures, located in Southeast Asia, were destroyed by a catastrophic Flood at the end of the last Ice Age.' (Oppenheimer 1998: xiii f; my italics).

If Oppenheimer thus claims that the most crucial cultural achievements of Anatomically Modern Humans are to be written to the credit of South East Asia, this is in denial of the great, truly incomparable, cultural achievements that were attained inside Africa before the Out-of-Africa Exodus, and of the great subsequent cultural achievements that were attained in Asia and other continents after the Out-of-Africa Exodus (80 ka BP) and before Sunda times (c. 7 ka BP), as well as in more recent millennia but outside the Sunda context – not to speak of the great African contributions to global cultural history in the most recent millennia, for instance in the fields of music, dance, therapy, dance, reconciliation, religion, and thought (cf. van Binsbergen 2003a, 2009a, 2015a, 2020h).

If the culturally innovative achievements of Anatomically Modern Humanity all are to hail back to South East Asia, this leaves the considerable genetic strands of Africans that remained in Africa and that are still found there (mtDNA Types L1, L2 and L3) in a position of cultural sub-humanity –, which view amounts to a naïve and no doubt unintended reproduction of the worst racist stereotypes of colonial times, as current in the North Atlantic region 50 to 120 years ago, and as still haunting that region today.

Like the Indian Ocean Coast, West Asia, and the Mediterranean, also Africa features in Oppenheimer's 1998 book as one of the passive recipient areas of fertilising Sunda culture including mythologies – which he maps, in continuity with the South East Asian and Oceanian attestations.<sup>177</sup> However, in favour of these claims of Sunda cul-

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<sup>177</sup> E.g.: Egypt is claimed, by Oppenheimer (1998: 448), to have received the allegedly Sunda theme of the 'Two Brothers'. Congo, Nigeria, Togo, Ghana, South Africa, Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya (in an anachronistic reliance on recent nation-states as units of analysis) are claimed to have received the allegedly Sunda theme

tural and mythological inroads into Africa, Oppenheimer largely ignores the equally important overland demographic and cultural stream from Asia to Africa, with substantial genetic manifestations: the 'Back-into-Africa movement' from 15 ka BP on. Again, if there is substantial genetic and cultural including mythological continuity between sub-Saharan Africa and Eurasia, it is primarily due to the fact that the contents of Pandora's Box were invented and developed inside Africa (from which these contents were transmitted all over the world), secondarily due to the 'Back-into-Africa movement' bringing West and Central Asian genes and cultural themes all over Africa – and only thirdly, peripherally (like in the case of Flood myths) to Sunda expansion.

However, it should very well be possible to adopt the General Sunda Hypothesis without lapsing into the antiquarian one-sidedness of Frazerianism, into archaeological credulity, or into the myopic monocentricity that only sees, in world cultural history, Sundaland as the only place of fundamental initiative. Let us now therefore continue our positive assessment of the General Sunda Hypothesis.

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of the 'Origin of Death' (Oppenheimer 1998: 338). The whole of sub-Saharan Africa is mapped as a region where *between 33% and 67% of the creation myths* is alleged to be 'totemistic' in the well-known but obsolete, Frazerian fashion (Oppenheimer 1998: 360; again, such percentages do not make the slightest sense without very strict criteria of classification and operationalisation). Egypt is claimed to have received the maximum of 9 to 10 motifs of the allegedly Sunda theme of 'Separation of Heaven and Earth' theme [ my NarCom 1 ] – the entire rest of Africa receives a minimum of less than 3 motifs on this score (Oppenheimer 1998: 320; the latter claim is totally at variance with my own finding (van Binsbergen 2006a, 2006b, 2010a) to the effect that the Separation of Heaven and Earth is one of the crucial signs of sub-Saharan African / Eurasian mythological continuity, as a result of the 'Back into Africa' migration – in other words, the Separation of Heaven and Earth (NarCom 1) could only become a Sunda theme (c. 7 ka BP) because it was first a CITI V theme in Central Asia c. 25 ka BP, and from there diffused into Sundaland). Egypt is claimed to have received the allegedly Sunda theme of 'the First Land was Raised as a result of fishing, ploughing or diving' (in fact, the major Egyptian cosmogonies tell us otherwise, notably of a Primal Hill, first sunlight, reed and bee) and Congo, where the First Land was considered to have resulted from drying (Oppenheimer 1998: 315). In these comparisons, Oppenheimer is clearly not at his best.





# Chapter 7. In defence of the General Sunda Hypothesis, nonetheless

## *7.1. Further empirical evidence*

Above I criticised Oppenheimer's archaeological credulity when he looked for empirical underpinning of the General Sunda Hypothesis. But this does not mean that scarcely any convincing archaeological evidence has so far been unearthed for the postulated high development of pre-flooding Sunda culture and of its postulated subsequent westbound expansion?

In this connection we may mention, as positive archaeological points of evidence supporting the General Sunda Hypothesis:

1. The great similarities between shell money from the Indo-Pacific region, and excavated shell money from Ur, Southern Mesopotamia, from the 3rd millennium BCE (Fig.7.1.a )
2. The pre- and proto-history of the diffusion of food crops, such as taro (Fig. 7.1 below, partly based on Lee 1999), banana, plantain, mango and perhaps rice.
3. Bronze-Age evidence of cloves in West Asia (e.g. Wright 1982; Chavalas 1996) is usually taken as evidence of Indonesian trade contacts; so is the

presence of bananas in West Africa, 1000 BCE: while cloves have a unique origin in the eastern Indonesian archipelago, bananas have a unique origin in New Guinea, and since bananas only propagate from saplings they must have been deliberately brought to West Africa with great care.

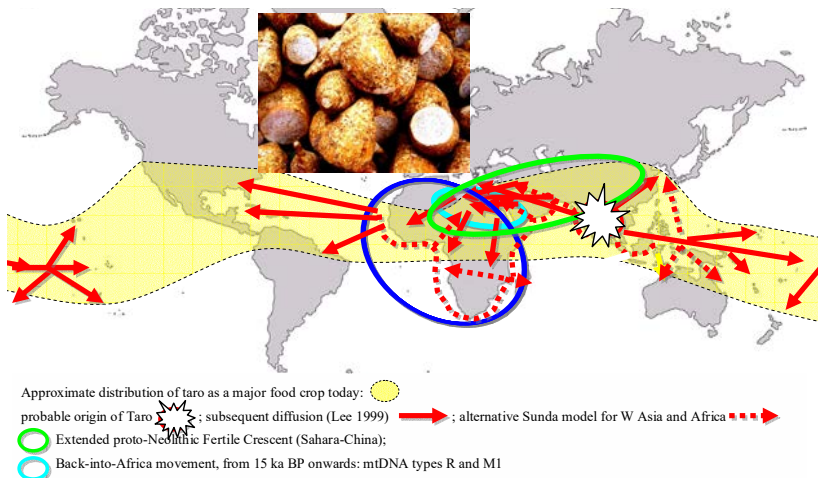


Fig. 7.1. The reconstructed diffusion of *Taro* (*Colocasia esculenta*) as another indication of Sunda influence



sources, with thanks: left: <https://pinterest.es/pin/17303681066388015/> ; right: <http://images.channeladvisor.com/Sell/SSProfiles/10053242/Images/sumeriashells.JPG>

Fig. 7.1a. Shell money from the Solomon's Islands, Melanesia, Pacific (left); and from Southern Mesopotamia, 3rd mill. BCE (right), as an indication of Sunda influence

Meanwhile, on the point of the relative dearth of concrete traces of the postulated Sunda process, we are reminded – not for the last time – of the apt title of Dick-Read's book, *The Phantom Voyagers* (2005): admittedly, the westbound Indonesian expan-

sion clearly has a tendency to leave remarkably few tangible traces in history. This is not proof of validity, but neither needs deter us!

In this respect there is a parallel with those other furtive ancient mariners: the Phoenicians (e.g. Muhly 1970). As we have seen, the latter may not be totally unrelated to Sunda, since their traditional cradle was claimed to be on the Red Sea, again in the proposed Sunda trajectory!

## 7.2. 'Is this a Black thing?'

'Is this a Black thing?' (question asked by the movie actor Eddie Murphy, in the motion picture *Beverly Hills Cop II*) – in other words, could social exclusion (even genocide) on the basis of perceived collective somatic difference be an explanation for the invisibility of Sunda elements, and of the stranger mariners bringing those elements? Often these mariners, as foreigners, may would have stood out as more pigmented and otherwise somatically different, – even if, in West Asia, the Mediterranean and perhaps Atlantic Europe (under the assumption of a multicentred intercontinental network) they hardly ever would have come directly all the way from Sundaland itself. Often when we probe deeply in European and West Asian traditions, we hit on people emphatically identified as dangerous 'others', and standing out by higher levels of pigmentation, specific ethnic names, Cushitic or Bantu connotations of their ethnonyms and of the toponyms they left behind: Karst 1931; van Sertima 1985; the dark people of Abkhazia, Colchis (with male genital mutilation) and surroundings featuring in the *Black Athena* debate, e.g. Snowden 1989:<sup>178</sup> some the legendary earliest inhabitants of Ireland: the demonised Fomhोरians with only one side to their body; Biblical toponyms such as Jabbok and Canaan, possibly also Jordan, without an acceptable etymology except in Bantu, etc.; the surprising trajectory<sup>179</sup> of the word *nikar* / 'nigger', originally a water spirit, not unlike Oannes and Matsya...). The mortal fear of the *Somatic Other* is one of the most deplorable constants of western Eurasian culture and society throughout recorded history (although scholars like Bernal and Snowden prefer to see a Graeco-Roman Antiquity without such blemishes). Perhaps this abhorrence of the somatic-Other is one reason why traces of Sunda expansion in western Eurasia have not simply been lost, but positively eradicated in ancient times. However, a much more important reason lies in the virtualisation, delocalisation and globalisation of whatever was the original South East Asian input into the intercontinental maritime network, in other words, the transition from Sunda to 'Sunda'. I just mentioned the Dark Irish. The general opinion is that traditions concerning this legendary ethnic group point to a North African origin. This is also expressed by Karst,

<sup>178</sup> Cf. Jairazbhoy 1985; also Karst, whose main specialty was Armenian and the Kartvelian / Georgian languages, reported already (1931b: 87) on 'Hamitische [i.e. Afroasiatic – WvB ] Kulturspuren am Pontus und in Nordwestvorderasien'. Following Vivien de St Martin he saw the 'Colchische Aegyptes' as Gypsies (Karst 1931b: 87f., among other identifications, but he also admitted to the existence of an Egyptian colony there.

<sup>179</sup> Cf. Bernal 1997, who like Karst 1931b: 9 on Nil / Nigir stresses the intercontinental extent of the hydronym Niger.

as an aspect of his general model of migrant groups that are internally stratified in combined ethnic, somatic and linguistic terms, but with an Afroasiatic and / or Indo-European upper layer, from the Southern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean spread to the Northern shore and all over Europe:

‘In Anbetracht, daß einst Lesgo-Kaukasier oder Kaspier über Thrazien-Dakien bis tief ins atlantische Nordwesteuropa hineinreichten (*Origines Mediterraneae*, p. 248) darf die Cappa[-]nation, als Seitenstück zu den mit den Paphlagoniern zusammen-gehörigen Lagnes des urzeitlichen Irland, geradezu mit den Kappadoken geglichen werden. Das unter dem Namen Cappa überlieferte antediluviale Urvolk Irlands gehörte gewiss ethnologisch zu der Sippe Katpaducha, Kappadokia und Kaphtor. Jenes Cappa erscheint uns als apokopierte Kurzform eines Ethnikons \*Kadhwa-ducha oder \*Kathweter / (-dor), welch letzteres noch historisch im Kassiteridenamen fortlebte. Wir hatten also als Fortsetzung der hesperischen Kaphtoriten ein atlantisch-hyperboräisches Kaphtor anzusetzen, das anthropo-geographisch mit den Kassiterideninseln im weiteren Sinne, [dass ist] Britannien und Irland, sich decken würde.’ Karst 1931: 104 f.

Such a North African connection may appear as an alternative to the more obvious explanation in the context of the present book’s argument, where Dark Irish would be considered in a Sunda connection. However, in fact there is no contradiction here. We have already seen how Sunda influence is likely to have gone underground, eclipsed from the subjective awareness of the historical actors themselves, from the Bronze Age onward, and that implied, submerged Sunda influence may often have been spread by the very inroads of the hierarchical, heterogeneous migrating groups (e.g. the Hyksos) mentioned here.


Or, if we do not wish to go to the extremes of a genocidal hypothesis in order to explain the absence of archaeological attestations of a culturally advanced ‘Eden in the East’, may we simply assume that, since flooding is supposedly the trigger to Sunda expansion, here is a massive invitation to marine archaeology – most evidence lying hidden under the shallow seas of now insular South East Asia?






*However, as a cultural historian I dislike this recourse to*

1. *the argument of silence,*
2. *and (cf. Bernal) to natural disasters in order to explain crucial transitions in cultural history – as if we had no theories to explain such transitions by reference to the inner dynamics of societies, such as overpopulation as a result of all too successful modes of production, the involution of state systems, etc.*

### *7.3. The inherent attractiveness of the General Sunda Hypothesis from the perspective of ancient history and linguistics*

Notwithstanding the paucity of concrete archaeological evidence, there is much attractiveness in the idea of some hypothetical Sunda influence upon the Indus civilisation, the Sumerian civilisation, even the Ancient Egyptian Early Dynastic civilisation. Sacred boats abound in Ancient Mesopotamian religion and iconography (especially cylinder seals), and at least two major boat myths may be cited: EN.KI’s boat journey to Enlil’s temple in Nippur, and Enlil’s rape of Ninlil in a boat (cf. Herold n.d.). Early

Dynastic Egypt has unmistakable Sumerian initial influence (Rice 1990; Ray 1992); it also has from earliest times on an obsession with sacred boats (cf. Kadry 1986; O'Connor 1995), and (in obvious connection with the Nile's annual inundation) flooding – and its legendary first king was named as Men  (Greek Menes),<sup>180</sup> cf. Minos – the equation of these two names has a considerable history: Baumgartel 1947, Waddell (cf. Casillo 1985), Bernal 1991, Trigger 1992 and remains contested; a plausible Austric etymology could be found for these names:

- Proto-Austric \*mVn, tooth – claimed to go back to \*Borean but only attested in Austric, and apparently without semantic resonances in Crete (in other words, we know of no myth connecting king Minos with 'tooth'), although for Egypt cf. Mnw , , , the god Min, whose emblem is two tooth-like belemnites; and
- Proto-Austric \*mVʔn (V = unspecified vowel), 'settlement, stay' – not inappropriate for a first king – cf. the king's privilege on sitting in South East Asia and among the Nkoya, and Egyptian Isis, 3st/3št , 'she who is seated', for which however I am unable to suggest a remotely plausible Austric etymology; but like in many such cases (e.g. Egyptian t3 , Proto-Austric \*tʋʔ, 'Earth', only other cognate in Sinotibetan, and going back to \*Borean; the specificity of the Austric attribution is spoiled by the fact that the same root has also been reconstructed for the hypothetical parent language \*Borean, and thus has a very wide distribution e.g. Eurasianic: \*menV and Afroasiatic: \*man- / \*min- (*Tower of Babel*, Long-range etymologies).

However, below we will adduce reasons why Sunda can never be the total explanation of the rise of the Ancient Near East including Egypt.

Linguistic work by Pedersen (n.d.) argues the continuity between Austric (the most likely language macro-family associated with Sunda), Indo-European and Afroasiatic; but since Pedersen turns out to be aware of Oppenheimer's Sunda Hypothesis, Pedersen's contribution seems a specific application rather than an independent confirmation.

Pallis' handbook for Sumerian studies, which was an authoritative source for decades, mentions (Pallis 1956: 232) the various attempts, then still considered totally fruitless, of connecting the Sumerian language with a large variety of other languages, including Bantu, Chinese, Polynesian and Basque. Half a century later, the fruits of long-range linguistic studies makes these attempts appear far less gratuitous, for whatever the Sumerian *Urheimat*, the language appears to have arisen in a context (presumably West to Central Asia, including the Persian Gulf itself) where Uralic was paramount, Sinocaucasian languages important, where sporadic Bantu elements were available either on their way to or on their way from sub-Saharan Africa, and where in line with the General Sunda Hypothesis a considerable impact of Austric may be postulated

<sup>180</sup> The usual identification of Menes with Hor 'Aha (cf. Emery 1961: 125 f.) is contested; Kinnaer 2003. Also cf. Kaplony 1963: I, 486; as the latter author demonstrates (I: 482), already in Early Dynastic period the phonemes *mn* constituting Menes' name were expressed through a hieroglyph apparently representing a gaming board.

from 7 ka BP onward – when Proto- Sumerian (apparently akin to Uralic) was probably already in place:

‘There are clues within the lexicon telling us when the Proto-Sumerian event horizon occurred. The *n-vowel* words suggest that the system of clay tokens for counting and recording which prevailed throughout the Near East from 8,000 B.C. to 3,000 B.C. [cf. Schmandt-Besserat 1992] was already in use. The [ Sumerian ] word for ‘clay’, *imi*, is related to the word for ‘tongue; speech’, *eme*.<sup>181</sup> The [ Sumerian ] word *Ur* meaning both roof and entrance, as well as the word *ub* meaning corner, suggests that they lived in the close-packed, rectangular houses entered through holes in the roof found in Western Iran at sites like Ganj Dareh as well as in Anatolia at sites like Çatal Hüyük. Proto-Sumerian includes words for domesticated animals such as dog (*ur*), goat (*üz*), cow (*áb*), and sheep (*us*<sub>5</sub>). Simple agriculture is indicated by the words for grain (*še*), irrigation ditch (*ég*), and digging stick (*al*). The indications are that the Proto-Sumerians invented their language at the start of the Near Eastern Neolithic, approximately ten thousand years ago.’ (Halloran n.d.; italics added – WvB)

Manansala (2006, 1995, and n.d.) specifically argues the Austric element in Sumerian. The latter author also points out continuity in physical anthropology between Sumerians and Indonesians.

Incidentally, there is a remarkable Austric parallel (*-taw*, ‘human, raw’ – Adelaar 1994) with the Bantu (Nigercongo) root *-ntu*, ‘human’, – even though one isolated case hardly counts. Of course, it was the root *-ntu* which brought Bleek (1851) to name the sub-family of Bantu languages. In the line of Bengtson & Ruhlen 1994, the global etymology is presented in van Binsbergen 2018: Appendix 3.

Another aspect speaking for Austronesian influence on Bantu is that, in both language families, the linguistic expression of orientation is not egocentric (in terms of left and right *etc.*), but by objective reference to the four directions (especially East), and to the flow direction of rivers (Adelaar 1994). Many more such influences may be identified, to such an extent that the Swahili specialist Schadeberg (1994) speaks of a Madagascar substrate in Bantu language, especially in Makuwa as spoken in East Africa. The probability of such an Austronesian substrate spreading further West and South, to the interior of the African continent, is suggested by the fact that there appears to be a close relationship between Makuwa on the one hand, and Southern Bantu languages such as the Sotho group (including Tswana): lapse of *-pe-*, *-ke-* and *-e-*.

However, if it is anything to go by, and if Bantuists are correct (which I seriously doubt) in seeking the origin of Bantu somewhere in Cameroon / Lake Chad some 8 ka BP, then the converging ethnographic and genetic evidence suggests that, from the Bight of Benin, there may also have been Sunda / Austric influence on the emergence of Bantu. 8,000 BP would be too early for maritime Sunda influence to reach West Africa via Cape

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<sup>181</sup> Cf. \*Borean \*LVLV, ‘tongue’ (Eurasiac: \*t̪ilV(ŋ)V; Sinocaucasian: ? \*H̪l̪il̪V; Austric: \*d̪ilaʔ tongue, lick – *Tower of Babel*, ‘Nostratic etymology’); Proto-Bantu *dimi* (Meeussen, II, 2/1) / *-d̪émi* 11/10-(Guthrie), ‘tongue; speech’; Nkoya *l̪il̪imi* ‘tongue, speech’. The connection between \*Borean, Eurasiac, Austric and Proto-Nigercongo > Bantu reveal a pattern which further glottochronological scrutiny has shown to be repetitive: in order to arrive at the Bantu reflex, the higher-order word is halved, then subjected to metathesis and duplication; van Binsbergen, in prep. (b).

of Good Hope, but such linguistic dating and such identifications of a language's *Urheimat* are highly conjectural and may easily be wrong by three or four millennia and by a few thousand kilometres – as the protracted debate about the *Urheimats* of Indo-European and Afroasiatic indicate. Considering the converging evidence for Sunda influence at the Bight of Benin, this is a possible place for the emergence of Bantu. However, the apparent similarities between Bantu and Indo-European languages in Asia such as Hittite and Khotanese, and the apparent presence of Bantu roots in significant West Asian place names and water names (Jabbok, Jordan, Canaan), suggests that the emergence of Bantu should rather be situated in the context of the Back-to-Africa migration, which in that case revives the old and despised Trombetti (1923) scenario for an Asian origin of Bantu. I refer to the provisional mapping of *Urheimats* above, Fig. 4.2.

#### 7.4. *The case for Proto-Bantu in the Mediterranean Bronze Age*

The discussion on fragments of Bantu being available in the Bronze Age Levant, perhaps as elements towards Bantu travelling from Asia to Africa, appears to be as fascinating as it is gratuitous. After all, we seem to have no written evidence of Bantu prior to the 2nd mill CE.

Or, have we not? Here the case of the controversial Strassburg comparative linguist Karst from the first third of the 20th century may be instructive once more – a pioneer of long-range approaches *avant la lettre* employing, inevitably, a methodology and a linguistic classification system that are now obsolete. Unburdened by any localising geopolitical mindset, neither by any ideological racism, nor having any reason yet (in his own time, the height of self-confident colonialism) to particularly steer clear from anything reminiscent of the Hamitic Hypothesis, Karst (1931: 243 *f.*) offers an interesting discussion of, possibly, Proto-Bantu onomastica in North Africa and the adjacent parts of Europe and West Asia. The widespread toponym *Punt* Karst sees coming back in Bantu names like Ama-Mpondo (a South African ethnonym of a coastal people).<sup>182</sup> In general:

‘Up to deep into the Near Eastern Semitic area a Bantu element is manifest’ (Karst 1931a: 244).

Especially in the field of divine names, Karst insists on accepting no boundaries between continents and language families. Entirely ignoring the obvious, mainstream connection with Semitic \*mlk, ‘owner, lord’, he suggests the Phoenician / Punic divine name *Moloḥ* to be associated with

‘Bantu *muluku* / *m-luko*, *mlungu*, *mulungu*, ‘God, Heaven (a connection already posed by Wirth [cf. Wirth Roeser Bosch 1928 – unfortunately with the racist orientation characteristic of its time, WvB] ); Canaanitic El / Bel cf. Bantu *y-ulu*, *e-ulu*, *wilu* ‘God, Heaven’ cf. the Sardinian / Aegean [proper names]<sup>183</sup> Iulus, Lolos, Iolaos.<sup>184</sup> Cf. Aegean Abantes, cf. *Abantu*, ‘people’. Bantu *m-logi*,

<sup>182</sup> In this connection, Karst also refers to the Mombuttu [Mangbutu] people, who however are not Nigercongo > Bantu speaking, but Nilosaharan speaking.

<sup>183</sup> In the context of Karst’s work, mythological and legendary proper names, especially theonyms, are always interpreted as personified ethnyms.

*m-lozi, moloki, m-rogi*, 'magician, sorcerer', cf. *Loḥios* (Apollo), *Meilḥios* (Zeus), *molo*, magical herb in Homer. Bantu *ô-wāngi, uwingo, uwingu*, 'God, Heaven', Chaldaean *Ōwan*, Cappadocian *Omanes*, Aegean primal god *Okeanos*. Bantu *m-ngu, mu-ungu, mu-ingu*, 'God', cf. *Minos, Menuas*. (...) Zulu *Nkulu*, God, Basque. *yinko*,<sup>185</sup> Masaai *ngai, en-gai*' (Karst 1931a: 245 f.; my translation).

Masaai, again, does not classify as Bantu, but is, like Mangbutu, a branch of Nilosaharan. Karst's other examples seem fairly correct as renderings of modern Bantu, although that does *not*, of course, in itself imply endorsement for Karst's specific application of Bantu to names and concepts in Ancient Mediterranean religions. He does not make sufficient allowance for the historical transformations that words and entire languages undergo in the course of millennia. Considering that his reference is to the third and second millennium BCE, he should have referred to Proto-Bantu forms, which however had not yet been systematically and consensually reconstructed by his time.

If we confine ourselves to Proto-Bantu, the Mediterranean parallels appear somewhat less conspicuous but nevertheless largely survive, as Table 7.1 indicates. However, there is a suggestion, especially in the case of table rows 1 and 2, that the parallelism claimed by Karst is more striking between Mediterranean onomastica and relatively modern forms of Bantu. If we stick to the hypothesis of a genuine connection, this suggests that the scenario is different from the one postulated by Karst: it is not so much as if pre- or Proto-Bantu speakers passed by West Asia and the Mediterranean on their way to Africa, but as if fully-fledged speakers of developed Bantu from sub-Saharan Africa exerted an influence in the Mediterranean region, perhaps as advance parties sallying forth from what modern Bantuist specialists consider as the Bantu homeland, the Lake Chad region in Central West Africa. This, however, smacks of the kind of lukewarm compromise with which geopolitically and paradigmatically unwelcome data tend to be treated. But under either scenario, there is much reason to take Karst's suggestions as to a Bantu substrate in the Mediterranean seriously.

	Connections proposed by Karst		Proto-Bantu		remarks
	Mediterranean	Bantu	Guthrie (cf. 1967, and n.d.), with Guthrie number	Meeussen (cf. 1980 and n.d.), with noun classes	
1	Phoenician / Punic Moloḥ (?> *mu-dok),	muluku / m-luko, mlungu, mulungu,	-dŌk-, 'to rain', 650, >? mulungu, 'God'?	-dók-, 'rain, drip', 5.4., [> South Central & Southern Bantu	Proto-Bantu *d often changes into -l- in historic attestations to relegate the West Semitic form to Bantu is certainly possible, but this is a case where

<sup>184</sup> Iolaos, closely associated (e.g. as nephew, younger brother and helper) with Heracles and his mythical cycle, ended up as the divine hero of the ancient Sardinians; cf. Jackson 1990; Rose & Farnell 1931; Karst 1931a: 246. Like Heracles himself, Iolaos has Levantine, Phoenician connotations (Barton 1900), but also Libyan, i.e. African ones (Contu 2003).

<sup>185</sup> I.e. a name variant, beside *Yainco* or *Yanico*, for the Basque god otherwise known as *Basojaun*, Ligurian / Italian / Sicilian name *Janus*; cf. Karst 1931a: 399, 451f.



	'Rain Person'? [ cf. Nkoya, Mvula, 'the Demiurge Rain' ]	'God, Heaven'		mulungu, 'God' ]	there is an overriding *Borean etymology with near-global application: cf. *Borean (approx.): TVKV 'to pour, drop' <b>Eurasianic:</b> *tUKV <b>Sinocaucasian:</b> *t[ɨ]Hänkó <b>Austriac:</b> Proto-Austronesian *itik, Proto-Austroasiatic *tV□ 'drop' <b>Amerind (misc.):</b> *tok <sup>w</sup> 'saliva; spit' (Ruhlen n.d.: 590) (...) <b>Reference:</b> Peiros 1989: 128.
2	Canaanitic: El / Bel, cf. Sardinian / Aegean Julius, Jolos, Jolaos	Bantu y-ulu, e-ulu, wilu 'God, Heaven'	-*gòdò 5-, top; sky, 880, [ > -ilu- in South Central & Southern Bantu ]	-*gudu 5 L LH, 'sky, above', 6.3.,	cf. Germanic god, whose etymology is unclear – both semantically and phonologically a Bantu connection is certainly more convincing than Old Indian huta, 'the one who is invoked' no obvious long-range etymology available
3	Aegean: Abantes	Abantu, 'people'	-*ntò 1 / 2, 'person', 1798	-*ntu L 1, 'person, some (or other), any', 6.4.	cf. Austronesian –taw, 'human' (Adelaar 1994) no consensual long-range etymology available, however, cf: <b>Indo-European:</b> *-nt-, 'under', 'underling', proposed (Ode 1927) as etymology of Ancient Greek anthrōpos (human being) and Athēna (as 'Underworld goddess') <b>Afroasiatic:</b> t3, 'land, ground' (Ancient Egyptian) <b>Sinotibetan:</b> *dǎlH, Chinese: 底 *tǎj? 'bottom', 抵 *tǎj? 'root, base'; Tibetan: mthil 'bottom, floor'; the connection with 'human', and with this entire complex, is hypothetical <b>Khoisan:</b> 'person' in the following reconstructed Proto-languages; Central Khoisan: *khóé; Khoikhoi: *khoe; West Central Khoisan: *khóé; East Central Khoisan: *khóé; South Khoisan (Taa): *ta <sup>h</sup> , *tu <sup>h</sup> ; North Khoisan: *žú
4	Aegean: Lothios (Apollo), Meilthios (Zeus), molo, 'magical herb in Homer'	Bantu m-logi, m-łzi, molo, m-rog, 'magician, sorcerer',	-*dŌg-, to bewitch, 644, [ > -roθ- in South Central & Southern Bantu ] / *dŌgi 14, 'witchcraft', 646, [ > S.C. & S. Bantu -roθi- ]	-*dog- L, 'bewitch', 5.4., / -*dog-L 1, 'witch', 5.4.,	no consensual long-range etymology available; Karst's Bantu proposal has a point
5	Chaldaean: Ōwan, Cappadocian	Bantu ô-wāngi, uwingo, uwingu,	-*gàNgà 9 / 10, 'medicine man', 786, / -*gàNgà 14,	-ganga L 1, 9, 'doctor, medicine man', 4.3. / -*gang- L, 'wrap	Dolgopolsky, one of the pioneers of the Nostratic hypothesis, identifies (1998) <i>nganga</i> as a Proto-Nostratic root which therefore cannot merely be counted as

	Omanes, Aegean primal god Okeanos	'God, Heaven'	medicine, 787	up, bandage, heal', 4.3.	originally Bantu
6	E.Mediterranean: Minos, Meneuas [Urartean king]	Bantu m-ngu, mu-ungu, mu-ingu, 'God'	? *nÉnĒ, 'big', 1350; ? *dÓk-, 'to rain', 650, [ > South Central & Southern Bantu mu-lungu, 'God' ]	*néne, big, 3.3.; -dók-, rain, drip, 5.4., [ > S.C. & S. Bantu mulungu, God ]	<i>cf.</i> my above attempt to propose an Austric etymology for Minos; for the 'rain' element, see above, line 1
7	Basque: <i>yinko</i>	Zulu Nkulu, 'God'; Masaai ngai, en-gai	*yInk-, 'to give', 2085, ?; *kódò DP, 'old', 1197, /-*kódò 1 / 2 / 14, 'old person / old ag'e, 1197, [ > -kulu, in South Central & Southern Bantu ]	*nink-, 'give', 2.3.; *kúdú 1, 'big, senior, adult', 6.3. [ > -kulu, in South Central & Southern Bantu ]	Not necessarily Bantu-related, <i>cf.</i> : *Borean (approx.): *KVRV 'old' Eurasianic: *gwVrV Afroasiatic: *gVrV- 'old' (Cushitic, Chadic + Berber *gVr- 'be bigger, older') Sinocaucasian: *xq(w)VrV African (misc.): Bantu *-kúdú 'old'; Ijo kUrai 'year'. (?) San. karē 'full grown person'. Reference: Illich-Svitych 1971-1984: 1, 297-298; Dolgopolsky n.d.: 664 ( (...) Turkic), 670 (Afroasiatic [= Semitic-Hamitic] Kartvelian).

(c) *Tower of Babel*, adapted

Table 7.1. What possible light could state-of-the-art (*i.e.* post-Karst) reconstructions of Proto-Bantu cast upon Karst's proposed connections between on the one hand Bantu, on the other hand Mediterranean divine names, religious concepts and ethnonyms?

Possible Bantu affinities in the Mediterranean are not limited to theonyms. Karst plausibly interprets the name Canaan as Bantoid (*cf.* Proto-Bantu *-káan-*, 'to refuse request', Guthrie no. 999; Meeussen *-káan-*, 'refuse, deny', 4.1). Apart from the fact that we do not usually associate Bantu speakers with this part of the world, such a connection makes excellent sense, in view of the fact that Bantu-speaking regions of Africa (*e.g.* South Central Africa) abound with ethnonyms containing a semantic element 'refusal': the refusal to accept the overlordship of a pre-colonial king or emperor, the refusal to accept (pre-colonial) state rule.<sup>186</sup> From c. 3000 BCE onwards, Canaan found itself in between two regions of major state formation: Egypt and Mesopotamia, with, from the mid-second millennium BCE onwards, the Hittite empire in the none too distant northwest; and whereas there were extended periods when either state held political sway in Canaan, exacted tribute and had administrative representatives there,

<sup>186</sup> *Cf.* Lancaster 1974: 324, where that claim is specifically made, on the authority of the Rhodesian colonial civil servant and researcher F.W.T. Posselt, for the Zambian Tonga. Another example, from Western Zambia, is the name of the Kwanga people, whose name is locally held to mean 'To Be Tired' (which in fact is the meaning of *ku-kwanga* in Nkoya and Luyana, the Barotse court language); the Kwanga ethnonym is locally explained – no doubt by a popular etymology – as 'people who are tired' of, *i.e.* are opting out of, the overlordship of the Barotse indigenous state, which dominated the Upper Zambezi Flood plain and surrounding areas for several centuries prior to colonial rule (1900-1964 CE).

the Bedouin segmentary style of self-government often prevailed, and effectively it must have amounted to a *refusal* to accept such state rule – as is abundantly acknowledged in the contemporary Ancient Egyptian documents in reference to the *habiru* / Hebrews (Breasted 1906 / 1917; Bottéro 1954). Alternatively, since (Proto-)Afroasiatic and (Proto-)Indo-European may be postulated to have been spoken in Syro-Palestine in the Early Bronze Age and earlier (Kammerzell 1994; Ray 1992), one might interpret a reconstructed meaning ‘refuse’ in terms of a fundamental ethnic cleavage between two groups that differed both linguistically and somatically (given our usual association of Bantu-speaking with an Africoid human phenotype).

The Canaanite hydronym Jordan might also be given a Proto-Bantu etymology: it is perhaps to be compared with Proto-Bantu *-códŌ* 3 / 4, ‘stream’, Guthrie no. 406 (uncertain reconstruction; Guthrie 1967 and n.d.; *d* in Proto-Bantu has the tendency to develop into *r/l*, but for our proposed etymology it is to develop into *rd*). Guthrie’s *-códŌ* 3 / 4, ‘stream’ however does not come back with Meeussen (1980 and n.d.). The latter has the rather different *-gedi* L 3, ‘stream’, 3.2., which is a less likely etymon for *jordan*.

This somewhat shaky example has however a much more convincing counterpart. One of the most moving and enigmatic passages of *Genesis* (32:22; cf. Mamre 2005) is when Jacob / Israel:

- כג וַיָּקָם בַּלַּיְלָהַ הַהוּא, וַיִּקַּח אֶת-שְׁתֵּי נַשְׂוֹי וְאֶת-  
שְׁתֵּי שִׁפְהוֹתָיו, וְאֶת-אֶחָד עָשָׂר, יְלָדָיו; וַיַּעֲבֹר, אֶת  
מִעְבַּר יַבְבֹּק.  
23 And he rose up that night, and took his two  
wives, and his two handmaids, and his eleven  
children, and passed over the ford of the Jabbok.
- כד וַיִּקְחֵם--וַיַּעֲבֹרֵם, אֶת-הַנָּחַל; וַיַּעֲבֹר, אֶת-  
אֲשֶׁר-לָו.  
24 And he took them, and sent them over the  
stream, and sent over that which he had.
- כה וַיִּנְתַּר יַעֲקֹב, לְבַדּוֹ; וַיֵּאבֶק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ, עַד  
עֲלוֹת הַשָּׁחַר.  
25 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a  
man with him until the breaking of the day.

The hydronym Jabbok, modern Naḥr al-/aš-Šeria, has no certain etymology in Hebrew, although the name is usually associated with *bāqqaq*, ‘to pour out’ (cf. Strong 1989 nos. 1238, 2999): the stream in question is a tributary of the Jordan. Biblical scholars have sought to interpret this enigmatic passage by pointing out that the Jabbok was ‘always’ a natural boundary of Amorite territory;<sup>187</sup> but certainly more is at stake here; for the *bāqqaq* etymology leaves the *Ja|b|*- element unexplained. The express mention of the Jabbok as a fordable place, however, points unmistakably to a Bantu etymology, cf. Proto-Bantu *-\*jabok-*, ‘to cross river’, Guthrie no. 916; Meeussen *-\*jabuk-* L, ‘cross (a river)’, 43.<sup>188</sup> Semantically, the proposal is further strengthened in that the world-view of

<sup>187</sup> Anonymous 1975, ‘Jabbok’. The Amorites constituted a dominant cluster of North-west Semitic-speaking inhabitants of western Ancient Mesopotamia (associated with such names as Hammurabi, Mari), with peripheral extensions into (presumably pre-Israelite) Syro-Palestine. The Bantu indications around the Jabbok hydronym, and the association with Tiamat / Kingu to be expounded in the next footnote, suggest that a substantial Proto-Bantu-speaking element existed among the Amorites; further perusal of North-western Semitic lexicons should be able to identify more relevant indications.

<sup>188</sup> As we will see throughout this monograph (also cf. van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011), this one case exhaust the indications for Proto-Bantu in Ancient Syro-Palestine. Toponyms like Jordan and Canaan are further candidates. So is, in distantly adjacent Ancient Mesopotamia, the name of the son and consort of

Bantu-speaking cultures tends (van Binsbergen 1992) to attach great importance to spirit provinces, that each have their centre down in the valley, and their boundary up in the elevated lands above the streams, where the latter have their watersheds. Hydronyms absolutely dominate Bantu toponymy: the landscape is essentially a map of hydronyms. Streams are venerated, particularly by small offerings (sprinklings of meal, beads, coins) when crossing. An elopement marriage is considered to be successful, irreversible, and legal, once the eloping couple has crossed the watershed and thus has passed into a different spirit province.<sup>189</sup> Meanwhile we must realise that many of these cultural features are not specifically Bantu but more general Old World, with parallels in non-Bantu speaking sub-Saharan Africa, in North Africa, Asia, and Europe. For instance, in rural North Africa and Anatolia the belief exists that, health-wise, one can only rely on a source for drinking water, after one has placated the spirit of the source by a small initial offering (usually a narrow strip of textile torn from one's clothing on the spot and tied to a branch near the spring) – a ritual link that needs to be reinforced occasionally (van Binsbergen in press (h)) The Old World is replete with such offerings, at so-called *rag trees* (cf. van Binsbergen 2017a: 407 f., 2018: 357). Towards the end of this monograph we shall see how the water dimension of the landscape is a very ancient trait, still emphasised in sub-Saharan Africa, and reminiscent of the Cosmogony of the Separation of Land and Water which is postulated to have preceded the Cosmogony of the Sepa-

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Tiāmat, the latter herself the formidable enemy of the Sun god Marduk; Marduk is often depicted as a dragon with two horns, suggesting that he is a celestial, late variant of the Palaeolithic Rainbow Serpent. The son's / consort's name is Kingu, which is usually translated as 'labourer', but which in Proto-Bantu can have a number of pertinent associations, such as king, 'shut / be across the way / insert crosswise' (Meeussen), and particularly (Guthrie) -kINGŌ 9/10, 1086 'neck' (indicating Kingu's junior status besides the 'head?'), or -dING- 625 'to wind round; to surround' (as is expected from a junior consort). Even more straightforwardly Proto-Bantu could be Tiāmat, Mother of the Waters, would be literally just that in a Bantu reading: t-ama = 1 personal pronoun J+ama, 'mother' (Guthrie / Meeussen). To qualify as the Babylonian Sun god and leader of the pantheon, Marduk has to establish his rule by defeating an older religious dispensation, with Bantu / Pelagian, possibly Sunda, connotations, in which the dominant axis of the world-view is horizontal (Land and Water), not (as in the later sky religion) vertical (Heaven and Earth). Thus we have to reconsider – as a task for future research – whether the solar religion which we find distributed all over the Old World (and North America) in late prehistoric and early historical times, was due to Sunda influence (or to a comparably recent cultural innovation). That in the ascent of Marduk also an important societal shift in gender power (in line with the claims of the pioneering feminist archaeologist Marija Gimbutas 1982, 1991) was involved is clear from the tradition according to which Marduk, before being accepted as leader of the gods (fighting a manifestation of the primal Mother of the Waters), had to emulate and surpass *the typical feminine act of creating a garment* – not by such manual labour as spinning, weaving and sewing (as a traditional woman would do), but hysterically, logocentrically, by the sheer power of his word (Fromm 1976 / 1951: 231 f.; King 1999 / 1902).

<sup>189</sup> This legal convention only applies to an eloping woman who was never married, or who is widowed or divorced. Yet from a Bantu perspective Homer's rationalisation for the Trojan war in terms of Paris eloping with Menelaus' wife would look even more lame: Paris took Helen overseas, out of the spirit province where the marriage was supernaturally sealed, and (as is very clear from the Homeric poems) into the realm of essentially different spirits: whereas Hera and Athena side with the Greeks, Zeus, Artemis and Apollo side with the Trojans. There are many more potential parallels between the Homeric and the African world (for instance, the obligation to be ritually cleansed after murder; or the principle that the link between sister and brother takes precedence over the link between spouses), which to me as, essentially, an Africanist, makes Karst's suggestion as to a Nigercongo presence near the proto-historical Mediterranean, worth the benefit of the doubt. To this we may add the suggestion of a sub-Saharan origin of the Ancient Greeks as resulting from recent molecular-genetic research (Arnaiz et al. 2001).

ration of Heaven and Earth in the Old-World Upper Palaeolithic,

Careful sorting out the available data, we end up with less but firmer evidence than Karst had at his disposal, concerning a distinct Bantu element in the Bronze-Age Mediterranean. We see once again illustrated that, given the existence of higher level linguistic parent groups such as \*Borean, comparison between linguistic families often dissolves the initial impression of horizontal borrowing, into the admission of, vertically, a joint common source. Whatever Bantu-reminiscent elements remain after deducting the vertical, \*Borean element, I would still prefer to attribute, not to Bantu influence (transmitted from sub-Saharan Africa in a north-eastern direction) from sub-Saharan Africa, but to the presence of pre- or Proto-Bantu in West Asia when some of the (presumable) Asian language elements towards Bantu (while making allowance for other, originally African elements towards the Bantu language group) were still on their way (South West bound) to Africa, in the context of the 'Back-into-Africa' movement.

Considering the fact that, among these presumably Asian pre- or Proto-Bantu elements, Austric affinities can be noted, we may be tempted to identify Austria / Sunda influence as one of the principal Asian linguistic (and by extension cultural) contributions to the emergence of the Bantu language family. Already three quarters of a century ago the Africanist linguist Trombetti (1923) suggested such Asian elements in Bantu, but this only gained him professional ostracism. The *pièce de résistance* of such a claim, as we have already seen, would be the Austronesian root *taw*, 'human', which is virtually indistinguishable from the eponymic root *-ntu* that gave the Bantu languages their name. Further, among the Indo-European languages of Asia, for instance, Khotanese, Tocharian, and Hittite show syntactic features that are interestingly though superficially reminiscent of Bantu – so that a Khotanese text transcribed in Latin script may look like Bantu because of an abundance of apparent nominal prefixes; or cf. *lebina* in Hittite, 'the children', cf. Tswana *lebana* with exactly the same meaning. (Meanwhile we must be careful lest Bantu speakers are appropriated as more or less token Indo-Europeans, as if (by North Atlantic delusions of *grandeur*) the latter were the universally most desirable identity; cf. Chrétien 2000.) As a language group which some specialists (Kaiser & Shevoroshkin 1988) at least have been prepared to classify as Super- Nostratic, Bantu shares to some extent in the lexical, phonological and syntactic features of higher-level reconstructed parent languages such as Eurasiatic, and even \*Borean, so that one should not be surprised to find striking correspondences like in Table 7.2: they may have little to do with any sub-Saharan antecedents of the Greeks, even though such antecedents have been confirmed in recent genetic research (Arnaiz *et al.* 2001).

Proto- Bantu	Greek (van den Es 1896)	higher-level etymology
1. 'to cut' Guthrie -tÉm- 'to cut down', 1703, 1705; -tén- 'to cut in two', 1740; Meeussen: -tém- 'cut	temnō, τέμνω, tamnō, τόμνω, tmēgō τμήγω: 'to cut', peri-temnō ta aidoia περί τα αἰδοῖα, 'to cut the private parts, to circumcise', also cf. temenos	<b>*Borean (approx.):</b> TVNV, 'to cut' <b>Eurasiatic:</b> *tanV 'hack': <b>Indo-European:</b> *ten- (Benveniste 1975); <b>Altaic:</b> ? *t'anu (Ramstedt 1952 / 1957, . 114); <b>References:</b> Illich-Svitych 1967: 352; for further examples in Old Greek, Slavic, Baltic, Latin, Celtic, see Pokorny 1959-1969: I 719 f., s.v. Proto-IE: *tema-, *tmā- 'to cut' <b>Afroasiatic:</b> *din- ?

<p>down, fell', 3.1.</p>	<p>τέμενος, 'sacred precinct, that which is cut off'</p>	<p><b>Sinocaucasian:</b> *ʔwVnV:  <b>Proto-Sinotibetan:</b> *tōnH ('-H) 'cut':  <b>Chinese:</b> 斷 *tōnʔ 'cut off, 專 *tonʔ, 'dōn to cut', 膊 *ton, 'tonʔ, donʔ' 'cut meat'  <b>Kachin:</b> <i>don'</i> 'to cut'  <b>Amerind (misc.):</b> *ʔan 'cut' (cf. Ruhlen n.d.:158) (...)  <b>African (misc.):</b> Bantu *-téén- 'to cut'                      Bengtson &amp; Ruhlen 1994: n3 list this as a Global Etymology under *ʔan.</p>
<p>2. *tina, 'to fear, respect'                       Guthrie -téén- 'to run away through fear', 174; Meeussen -tí- 'fear', 2.3.</p>	<p>deíma δείμα, 'fright';                      deínos; δεινός 'frightful'</p>	<p><b>Proto-IE:</b> *dweye- 'to be afraid, to hate, etc.'  <b>Tocharian:</b> A, B wí- (Adams 599)  <b>Old Indian:</b> dvēṣti, dviṣati 'to hate, be hostile', ptc. dviṣta-; dvēṣa- m., dvēṣas- n. 'hatred, dislike'  <b>Avestan:</b> dvaēā 'Bedrohung'; dvaēš-, t_baēš- 'an-feinden, kränken'  <b>Other Iranian:</b> Middle Persian bēš 'Leid, Unheil'  <b>Armenian:</b> րկոճիմ 'fürchte', րկիւ 'Furcht'  <b>Old Greek:</b> δέδδō '(sich) fürchten', etc.  <b>Latin:</b> dīrus, -a 'unheilvoll; grausig, grauenregend', pl. dīrae f. 'unheilvolle Wahrzeichen; Verwünschungen'  <b>References:</b> Pokorny 1959-1969: 227 f.</p>

Table 7.2. Greek-Bantu correspondences via higher-level reflexes

Whereas lexical item (1) in Table 7.2 does go back to \*Borean and therefore leaves us with a non-localised global etymology, this is not the case for item (2), where no communality between Bantu and Greek can be found above the level of Proto-Indo-European, and which therefore seems to corroborate the Asian connotations of Bantu as I suggested. However, such impressions, based on merely two lexical items, are certainly not enough to go by and extensive specialist research would be required before the suggestions in this section can be substantiated.

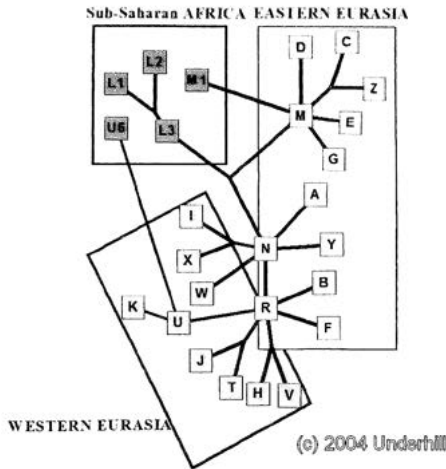


Fig. 7.2. The Back-into-Africa movement by mtDNA Type (after Underhill 2004)

At least two comparative ethnographic reasons can be given for the view that in the context of the Back-into-Africa movement groups passed through West Asia on their way to Africa,<sup>190</sup> bringing with them items of culture that can still be recognised as constitutive of African cultures many millennia later.

The first concerns the ground-plan of houses; throughout the early Neolithic (PPNA, Pre Pottery Neolithic A; Hawkes with Trump 1977) in the Near East the ground-plan was round, like in many parts of Africa, only to change to a square ground-plan rather abruptly at the onset of Pre-Pottery Neolithic B (PPNB) (c. 8800 BCE).

In Central, South Central and East Africa, including the Nkoya, it is a widespread ideal for women – an ideal transmitted by both formal and informal puberty training – to have very long *labia minora*, up to about 6 cm. This is a few times the natural length among the Bantu-speaking African population, and in order to produce this effect the girls spend scores of hours of their late childhood and early adolescence manipulating these body parts in order to stretch them. Sometimes a woman's male sexual partner is invited to briefly engage in similar stretching of the woman's parts as an aspect of sexual foreplay. There is only one human group known among whom such labia are natural and hereditary: the Khoisan speakers, who now live in Southern Africa, but whom genetic research – now somewhat obsolete, as we have seen – has argued (Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994) to be a hybrid population between Africans and Asians whose ancestors still lived in West Asia c. 10 ka BP. Probably the (Proto-) Bantu-speaking population adopted the custom of artificial elongation in order to imitate the group that already had this feature as an hereditary trait. That means that by that time, probably several millennia ago, (Proto-) Khoisan speakers constituted a culturally dominant group, and a reference group, for the Proto-Bantu speakers. We scarcely know of any other population practising the elongation of labia outside Africa today. The expression 'Chinese winged labia', with illustration,<sup>191</sup> suggests that the practice also once occurred in East Asia;<sup>192</sup> and as could be expected given the

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<sup>190</sup> Clearly, my underlying assumption here is that the Back-into-Africa movement was largely an overland affair, not involving seaborne locomotion. This need not be correct. The main components of the Back-into-Africa movements comprise mtDNA Types U6 and M1. Of these, M1 hails from Eastern Eurasia and may well have been brought to Africa (and Europe) by sea transport – notably in a Sunda context. Thus we might also bridge the conceptual and geographic gap between Austric and Nigercongo / Nilosaharan / Khoisan as constitutive, with Amerind, of the Peripheral Branch of disintegrating \*Borean. Perhaps here the observation may be added that, while ostrich-shell beads are the hallmark of Khoisan speakers (to such an extent that the archaeological distribution of ostrich-shell beads, not only in Southern Africa but throughout the African continent as well as in North-western India and adjacent regions, is often considered as indication of sometime Khoisan-speakers' presence; Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994: Fig. 3.2), the exquisite *wampun* shell beads (Holmes 1883) that are in use among Native Americans of North America can hardly be distinguished from Khoisan-speakers' ostrich-shell beads – but they are also very similar to shell beads made in Melanesia, and in fact to widespread Old-World prehistoric jewelry. As Holmes points out, also the *Conus*-shell bottom (the Nkoya *mpande* royal ornament) turns out to be in use in North America. Such continuity is hardly in line with Sunda connections, which are bound to be much more recent.

<sup>191</sup> Anonymous, n.d., 'Elongated labia'.

<sup>192</sup> Derrick 2001 reports the same condition as an occasional trait among Japanese women, named

West Asian Neolithic attestation of the trait, we also find it sporadically in the New World.<sup>193</sup> Whatever the case, a woman with similarly elongated labia was depicted in PPNB at Göbekli Tepe, Anatolia (Fig. 7.3; Landesmuseum 2007: 73, 276, catalogue no. 31). There is no way in which we can determine whether the Göbekli Tepe woman's condition was natural or artificial. If natural: cattle-keeping was already being practised then and there, so continuity with the pastoral Khoi is a possibility; in that case a similar group migrating on to Southern Africa would have brought cultural elements towards Khoisan-speakers, rather than towards Bantu-speakers. However, if artificial, there is a chance that here we stumble upon a cultural trait which meanwhile was being transmitted to Africa in the context of the 'Back-into-Africa' migration, and that elements towards Bantu were being transmitted in the same process. I have already noted the surprising, though no doubt superficial, similarity between Hittite and Southern Bantu. Meanwhile, in view of the apparent ramification of the trait to both Africa and China, we are tempted to assume that a trait originated in Central Asia and from there was carried both to East Asia and to Africa; a similar Central-Asia-centred model has been used throughout this book to interpret inter-continental connections that are much older than Sunda.



Fig. 7.3. Elongated *labia minora* depicted at Göbekli Tepe, Pre Pottery Neolithic B, Anatolia (8800-8000 BCE)

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'winged butterfly'.

<sup>193</sup> For instance in a Mohave Coyote story (Devereux 1948), which contains a giant's contemptuous expression *hithpan kwivilyva* 'vulva winged (referring to the labia [ Devereux's explanation] )'.



## 7.5. Further etymological considerations concerning a possible Austric presence in the Bronze Age Mediterranean, regardless of Bantu

### 7.5.1. Introductory

So perhaps such Austric influences in the Bronze Age Mediterranean world as we would postulate on the basis of the General Sunda Hypothesis, took the form of, or were mediated in the guise of, Bantu. However, Pedersen and Manansala's linguistic claims remind us that Bantu is probably not the whole story.

Impressive though their claims and documentation may be, the counter argument would be, once again, that given some degree of continuity between most language families within the Eurasiatic realm (*cf.* the *Tower of Babel*, extensive etymological database), it is very difficult to tell apart parental relationships from borrowing relationships between languages, on the basis of mere *mass comparison* *i.e.* the analysis of actual forms as attested in historical times. Both Austric and Eurasiatic (including Indo-European) are supposed to be descendants from \*Borean, *i.e.* the highest-level of long-range language reconstruction which may be attained with reasonable confidence at present. How do we distinguish, in West Asia and Europe, between

- relatively recently (<6 ka BP) imported Austric elements, and
- the genetic communalities with Austric going back to the Upper Palaeolithic (c. 25 ka BP)?

Prompted by the unconventional, but apparently successful work of Joseph Greenberg on African languages and, more recently Greenberg, and Ruhlen, on native American languages and on languages worldwide, all based on mass comparison, other historical linguists have objected that the only form of comparison to yield valid and authoritative results is that comparing, not actual forms, but systematically, intersubjectively reconstructed proto-forms.

This ongoing debate has very important implications for long-range comparative mythology, for there we tend to remain on the side of mass comparison, without even making that position explicit. In comparative mythology, whether we adopt a time-honoured and prestigious (but Eurocentric and theoretically barren) classification like that of Aarne & Thompson, or a finely-meshed classification of our own making (like Berezkin does, distinguishing c. 1,500 carefully defined micromythemes), or a broad classification into just a few dozen Narrative Complexes each encompassing up to twenty or thirty constituent aggregate mythemes (like in my own 'Aggregative (!) Diachronic Model) – we are always relying on the equivalence of actual forms, on recently attested mythemes, and have not developed a method that yet would allow us to validly and reliably reconstruct such mythical 'proto-forms' as may be presumed to underlie these actual forms. In other words, we are projecting back into the remotest past actual mythemes as if these were self-evidently equivalent to ancient mythological forms. Of course, proposals are made for the, more or less intuitive and certainly

qualitative and un-methodological, reconstruction of very broad general ancient forms, such as Witzel’s distinction between Laurasian and Gondwana mythologies, and my plea for the distinction between two broad types of cosmogonies, one based on the Separation of Water and Land, the other, later, one on the Separation of Heaven and Earth – but this is more like reconstructing entire lexicons rather than individual lexical proto-forms. Ultimately we will have to face the problem of ‘mass comparison in comparative mythology’, either by putting up an explicit argument as to why we believe our actual mythological forms are fair approximations of prehistoric mythological proto-forms; or by devising a method to specifically reconstruct the latter.

Back to linguistics. It is easy enough to propose an etymology, but very few etymologies do live up to the stringent requirements professional historical linguists (notably Blažek 2010) would impose, *i.e.*

1. systematic phonological correspondence;
2. semantic correspondence;
3. explicit transformation rules, specific to the language family/ies involved, that dictate the phonological and morphological link between the word in question, and the proposed etymon (Blažek 2005).

Yet, still in the linguistic field, it is possible to propose quite convincing Austric (*i.e.* Sunda) etymologies for, for instance, the key divine names in Ancient Egyptian mythology: Osiris, *Rē*<sup>c</sup> and Neith / *Nt*.


### 7.5.2. Possible Austric (*i.e.* Sunda) etymologies for the key divine names in Ancient Egyptian mythology

	1. ‘thread’	2. ‘string’	3. ‘salt, sour’
<b>Proto-Austric:</b>	*ʔcVʔr	*ʔsVɣ	*ʔcVʔra
<b>meaning:</b>	thread, string	string, rope	salt, sour
<b>Proto-Austro-asiatic:</b>	*cVr	*sej / *səj	*ʒVr
<b>Austro-asiatic meaning:</b>	‘to thread’	‘rope’	‘sour’
<b>Proto-Austro-nesian:</b>	*SuRsuR	*CuSuR	*qasiRa
<b>Austro-nesian meaning:</b>	‘drawstring; to thread a drawstring’	‘string together, as beads’	‘salt’
<b>remarks</b>	semantically not obvious for Wšir; yet threaded beads or shells play an important role in all	semantically not obvious for Wšir; yet threaded beads or shells play an important role in all societies along the proposed Sunda	extensive *Borean and Eurasiatic including Indo-European, Sinocaucasian and Dravidian ramifications; phonologically perhaps acceptable, but semantically unattractive, unless as reference to the sea – but Osiris is emphatically a

	societies along the proposed Sunda trajectory	trajectory	land-associated fertility and vegetation god. However, transposition of land / water functions we find also with Poseidon / Athena / Gaia. In some of the Eurasian semantic ramifications this root can mean 'rotten', and that seems interesting for a funerary god. Besides, 'sour' may also mean 'grievous', which is not inappropriate considering Osiris' fate at the hands of Set.
<b>additional reference</b>		Peiros 1998: 89 (suggesting a borrowing from Afroasiatic to Tai, in other words reversing the east-west direction as suggested by the Sunda theses).	

basic reference: (c) Tower of Babel 'Austrian etymologies' this Table summarised data earlier presented in van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011.

Table 7.3. Possible Austric etymologies for Osiris / Wśir

Osiris / Wśir  appears as a culture hero: he abolished cannibalism and taught weaving; then he left his land to civilise the world (Cotterell 1989: 145). This could be a Sunda reminiscence – both the extensive travelling and the weaving, which is an Indonesian speciality (but far from a monopoly). At any rate there is a close parallel, not only with the culture hero Oannes, but also with that other Mediterranean vegetation god, Dionysus, who also travelled to India among other places, also in the guise of a culture hero. It is not impossible to find candidates for an Austric etymology of Osiris: see Table 7.3.

Impressive though the above Austric etymology of Osiris may appear, it constitutes by no means the only possibility of making sense of that name.<sup>194</sup> Already in 1931 Karst proposed what effectively amounts to an Indo-European etymology of Osiris – surprising, but in line with the West Asian connotations of the Delta, which is one of Osiris' privileged regions. Karst (1931b: 19) presents for Osiris the following etymology:

<sup>194</sup> Osiris is one of the principal gods of Ancient Egypt, so the bibliography of this topic is extensive. Significant studies include (alphabetical order by author): Budge 1973 / 1911; Cooke 1931 / 1979; Frazer 1906 / 1914; Griffiths 1980, 1982; Hornblower 1937a, 1937b, 1941; Helck 1951, 1962; Mojsov 2005; O'Connor 2009; Otto 1966; Pommereau 2015; the concluding chapter of Ray 2002; Sauneron 1970; Scharff 1948; Schlesier 2011; Schuster 2000; Sethe 1910; Smith 1922; Westendorf 1977; Yahuda 1944. The *Nachleben* of the Osiris myth in later *belles lettres* of the West is treated in: Troy 1976; von Jagow 2003. In Western scholarship, Plutarch's 2<sup>nd</sup> c. CE text *De Iside et Osiride* has been, for nearly two millennia, the major source on Osiris; recent editions, translations and studies include: Hartman n.d.: 360–398; Hopfner 1940–1941; Plutarch [Plutarch] / Froidefond 1988; Plutarch [Plutarch] / Meunier 1924. Specific attention to the orthography and etymology of the name Osiris in: Bates 1915; Erman 1910; Leahy 1979. Despite obvious doubts, Egyptologists now agree that, despite Plutarch's inevitable *interpretatio graeca*, his account authentically reflects Ancient Egyptian traditions.


Sanskrit *Asura* = ‘Gott’; Sanskrit *surya* = ‘Sonne’; cf. the God Assur in Mesopotamia.<sup>195</sup>

Regardless of phonological and productive considerations, and of the generally accepted difficulty adhering the etymology of theonyms (e.g. Bates 1915, already semantically such an etymology seems unacceptable: Osiris is the god of the Underworld, not of the sky / Heaven. But on second thoughts we see (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011) all over the Ancient world throughout the millennia of religious change the supplanting of an established pantheon by a later dispensation, where the earlier dispensation is relegated to subaltern status: female gender and connotations, or the Underworld, or the bestowing of diabolical features – such a development may also have taken place in the case of Osiris (originally an agricultural god), although the extensive Egyptological literature on that god and his history scarcely supports such a interpretation. A state-of-the-art treatment of such an Indo- European etymology could be along the following lines of Table 7.4 (Starostin & Starostin 1998-2008, Tower of Babel, s.v. ‘Indo-European etymology’):

<p><b>Proto-Indo-European:</b> *Ans- &lt;Proto-Indo-Hittite *H-&gt; ‘deity’  <b>Hittite:</b> hassu- c. ‘König’, h.l. hasusara- ‘Königin’  <b>Old Indian:</b> ásurā- ‘spiritual, divine’, m. ‘spirit, ghost’, ásu- m. ‘breath, life, spirit’  <b>Avestan:</b> ahura- ‘Gottheit’, ahū-, arhū- ‘Herr’  <b>Germanic:</b> *áns-u-, *áns-i- (*ans-) c. ‘deity’</p> <p><b>Comments:</b> Also compared with Hittite has- (II,I) ‘zeugen, gebären’, hassa- ‘Enkel, Enkelin’; h.l. has(a)- ‘erzeugen’, hasmi- ‘Nachkommenschaft’; Lydian eša- ‘Enkel’; Lycian B qzze, qezr̥mi, ẓzzātā (Shevoroshkin <i>apud Tower of Babel</i>), Lycian A qeḥñ ‘Nachkommenschaft’ (Tischler n.d.: 191 f). ‘Enkel’ in Hittite-Luwian may be a result of contamination: cf. Hittite hammasa- ‘kleines Kind’, Luwian hamsa-, h.l. hamasa- ‘Enkel’ (see Tischler n.d.: 191f. and 141-142).</p>
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source (c) Tower of Babel, Indo-European etymology’

Table 7.4. Aspects of the Indo-European etymology of \*Ans, ‘deity’, as alternative etymology of the theonym Isis.






A possible Austric etymology for another pivotal Ancient Egyptian theonym, Rē<sup>c</sup> / Rā<sup>c</sup> , with considerable semantic and phonological fit, would be the following:

<b>Proto-Austric:</b>	*raŋ, ‘bright, light’
<b>Proto-Austroasiatic:</b>	*Cəra:ŋ ‘bright, morning’
<b>Proto-Austronesian:</b>	*siraŋ, ‘dazzle, glare, light’ <b>Austronesian code:</b> 21:34 (which, incidentally, might also qualify as an etymology for Osiris!)
<b>Proto-Thai:</b>	riāŋ.A ‘bright’(...)

source (c) Tower of Babel, Austric etymology’

Table 7.5. A possible Austric etymology for Rē<sup>c</sup> / Rā<sup>c</sup> (Tower of Babel, s.v. ‘Austric etymologies’)


<sup>195</sup> An earlier writer to connect Osiris with the Mesopotamian god Ashur was Smith 1922. The question as to formative early influences from Mesopotamia upon Egyptian culture is a recurrent one in debate on the Ancient Near East; cf. Ray 19926; Petrie 1917; Rice 1990. The latter author also discusses the problem of the identification of Dilmun, and casts further doubt on the consensus that this should have been Bahrayn.


Finally, for Neith / Nt ,  or  we may propose the following two Austric etymologies, of which the bow and arrows one has an amazingly good semantic fit: although throughout the historical period Neith has remained clearly recognisable as, originally, the Mother of the Primal Waters hence of the Sky (= Waters Above), she is particularly the virgin goddess of the Delta, associated with weaving and warfare; her hieroglyphic determinant is a package containing two bows ,<sup>196</sup> and her name appears already on First Dynasty funerary stelae, for instance the famous one of Mryt-Nt, as crossed arrows on a shield or<sup>197</sup> an inflated sack with protruding tassels:  (Emery 1961: 125 f.; Kaplony 1963).

	1. 'bow and arrow'	2. 'man, male'
<b>Proto-Austric:</b>	*nah 'bow'	*ʔhāj 'male, man'
<b>Proto-Austroasiatic:</b>	*na; *pañ 'shoot, bow'	*ŋjaj 'man, person'
<b>Miao-Yao parallels:</b>	*pon.B 'shoot'	
<b>Proto-Austronesian:</b>	*panah 'bow'	*RuqaNay 'male'
<b>Proto-Thai:</b>	(...) *pñ <sup>A</sup> arrow	
<b>References:</b>	Peiros 1998, 156, 164 (...) (Thai doubted in Peiros 1998, 77).	

Source: (c) Tower of Babel, Austric etymology

Table 7.6. Possible Austric etymologies of the theonym Neith/ Nt

This proposed Austric etymology for Neith is predicated on the assumptions: that the final -t may be considered a feminine suffix (quite plausible, because  is generally used for that purpose). Although the 'bow and arrow' etymology is semantically more to the point, the 'male, man' etymology in Austric may have created a context of contamination that helps to explain the i or y sound which is not conspicuous in Ancient Egypt Nt, but does transpire in the Greek rendering Nειθ. Although Nt does not have an obvious etymology in Ancient Egyptian / Afroasiatic, the goddess' aspect as Mother of the Primal Waters,<sup>198</sup> and

<sup>196</sup> However, the bow also occurs in the Early Dynastic Ancient Egyptian context as evocation of the goddess Satis (Kaplony 1963: I, 393), whilst the determinative  (the representation of a cured skin; Gardiner no.8o F27) with an arrow through it occurs as evocation of the goddess Satet, i.e. a form of Hathor in Lower Egypt (Budge 1969: i 43); could this both be manifestations of Neith as a hunting goddess? In the Early Dynastic corpus as presented by Kaplony (1963: I, 632), the bow appears as the emblem of Nubia, yet emphatically in the context of the palace and shrine at Buto / Pe, in the Delta. Could it be that the Ancient Egyptian historical actors consciously combined Libyan Neith's arrows with the Nubian bow (cf. Kaplony 1963: I, 643, the name Sty / Stj)?

<sup>197</sup> Cf. Kees 1977 / 1941.

<sup>198</sup> The proposed etymology does not acknowledge this aspect of Neith as Mother of the Waters – but neither do the established iconographic and scriptural conventions surrounding Neith in the Early Dynastic period. Yet there are indications of this aspect in the documentary corpus of that period, e.g. Kaplony 1963: I, 412, *Fy-Nt*, 'Neith takes her ablutions'. In another theophoric name she appears as *Nfr-p[yt]*: 'the beautiful female from Buto [the sacred ancestral site Pe in the Delta]', and the implication of reference to a female hippopotamus again refers to the Primal Waters (Kaplony 1963: I, 543). The Primal Hill – in Egyptian cosmology the first land to emerge from the Primal waters, and a central reference point in ritual and sacred architecture – is referred to

the Hittite and other Indo-European connotations of the Delta (e.g. Kammerzell 1994; Ray 1992; also the key word *bit*, 'bee, honey, [king/priest of] Lower Egypt' is isolated within the Afroasiatic linguistic realm to which Ancient Egyptian belongs,<sup>199</sup> and has primarily an Indo-European etymology) might suggest a connection with German *nass*, Dutch *nat* ('wet'), whose etymology however remains obscure in the opinion of many authorities, although outside Indo-European a convincing Eurasiatic, specifically Uralic, etymology may be formulated (cf. de Vries & de Tollenaere 1983; de Vries 1958; van Veen & van der Sijjs 1997, all s.v. 'nat').

My reason to insist is in Karst 1931b: 75, where he lists Finnish *neiti* 'humidity'; Armenian *nay* 'wet, fluid' and even with Nuba (Nilosaharan) *nie*, 'to drink', (cf. Proto-Bantu -nŭ- to drink 1378 (Guthrie); Nkoya ku-nwa, 'to drink') without making the specific connection with Neith. Incidentally, 'humidity' is the common translation of the name of the Egyptian goddess *Tfnt* (Tefnut), who with her husband / brother Šw (Shu) constituted the first creatures, twins, produced by an act of self-procreation through masturbation, as performed by the primal god Atum. In my opinion, the masturbation<sup>200</sup> is a later rationalisation (hinted at by Atum's name 'the hidden one?'), when the process of masculinisation of state, society and myth has progressed so far that the idea of a female creatrix had become unspeakable. Along the path indicated by Karst, the following modern etymology for the name Neith can be proposed (Tower of Babel, s.v. 'Nostratic etymology'):

**Eurasiatic:** \*ńă[cw]V 'wet';  
**references:** Illich-Svitych 1965/1967: 333, 1976: 2, 87. Dolgopolsky n.d.: 1578 \*ńăčǂV 'wet, moist' (Uralic, Indo-European + Semitic?), 1579 \*ńă/oc\*[qV] (same + different Semitic)  
**Indo-European:** \*yes- 'to boil': **Proto-Indo-European:** \*yes- (Greek zd-) 'to boil', leading to many reflex applications of cooking, seething, growth, ferment and excitement, but never returning to anything resembling *nt*  
**Uralic:** \*ńăčkV (\*ńăčV / \*ńăčǂV) 'wet, raw'  
**Finnish:** nahkea 'ledern; feuchtig, dumpfig' ? [if not < nahka 'Haut, Leder']  
**Estonian:** nahkjas, nahkjās (gen. nahkija) 'häutig, ledern, zäh' ?

in the 1<sup>st</sup>-dynasty name Wsb-ǧw-Nt, 'Spatious is Neith's Hill', Kaplony 1963: I, 470. A similar theophoric name is (Kaplony 1963: I, 592) Htp-Nt-ǧw, 'In peace is Neith of the Hill'. Her status as creatrix is further acknowledged in a double theophoric name combining Neith and Hnum (Kaplony 1963: I, 572).

<sup>199</sup> Its only proposed cognate (Tower of Babel, s.v. 'Afroasiatic etymology') within Afroasiatic is ébē 'kind of gadfly' in the Chadic Dangla language; the recognition of an otherwise isolated root \*bVy- in Proto-Afroasiatic seems merely to avoid the (essentialistic!) embarrassment of having to recognise an Indo-European etymology for an Ancient Egyptian word.

<sup>200</sup> Cf. Hephaestus' producing the first Athenian king, Erichthonius, through masturbation, with the assistance of his half-sister Athena as pin-up girl, and Earth as receptor of the seed and as instant incubator. A similar story is told in the Circassian Nart Saga, where the mother goddess Satanaay (hence Biblical Satan?) showed herself to the Nart herder Sawseruqw (Smeets 1999; Dumézil 1965). Apparently (unless the relationship is mainly in the reversed direction) the Ancient Egyptian primal god Atum lurks underneath the crippled Greek god of artistic handwork and the Nart herder, suggesting the latter to be transformed and demoted creation gods – but (cf. van Binsbergen, in prep. (d) Hephaestus is yet not identical to the Ancient Egyptian god Ptaḥ, *pace* Blažek 2010.

<p><b>Saam (Lapp):</b> njuoska<sup>s</sup> -s'k-, attr. njuos'ka<sup>^</sup> (...) 'wet, raw', njuoskas, attr. njuoska (...) 'feucht, naß; roh', řick, řick (...), řück (...), řuøhck (...) (attri) 'feucht, roh, ungekocht'</p> <p><b>Mordovian:</b> načko (...), načka (...) 'naß, feucht'</p> <p><b>Mari (Cheremis):</b> načke (...) , nočko (...) 'naß; regnerisch', nočko (...) 'feucht'</p> <p><b>Khanty (Ostyak):</b> řášax (...) , řášax, řášax (...) 'roh, ungekocht, frisch'</p> <p><b>Sammalahti 1908:</b> (...) *n'e"čkV</p> <p><b>Kartvelian:</b> *nisl-;</p> <p><b>Comments:</b> Expected *c in Kartvelian</p>
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source: (c) Tower of Babel, adapted

Table 7.7. Aspects of the Eurasianic etymology of 'wetness'



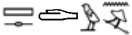
Such an Uralic etymology is no great surprise in view of other indications, however limited, of North Asian / Uralic affinities in the Egyptian kingship: the evidence from ceremonial headgear as set out in Fig. 7.4; and the conspicuous presence, in the New-Kingdom tomb of Tut-<sup>c</sup>anḥ-mun, of spoked wheels as chariot parts (Carter 1977; van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011). Against this background it is even possible that the reference to the forked (carriage?) pole in the myth of Kapesk ka Mununga Mpanda, of such eminent significance among the Nkoya, does not hail from India, after all, but – like we have established for several other items of Nkoya culture – has a direct connection with Ancient Egypt, or even has a Uralic background

<p><b>Eurasianic (Nostratic):</b> *biγ(w)V 'a kind of insect';</p> <p><b>Indo-European:</b> *bhi-:</p> <p><b>Baltic:</b> *bi-t-i- c., *bi-t-iā (2) f.;</p> <p><b>Germanic:</b> *bī-w-a- n., *bī-(j)a- n., *bī(j)-ō(n-) f.; *bī-n-ō(n-) f.; *bin-i- c.;</p> <p><b>Celtic:</b> Old Irish bech 'Biene', Cymric begyr 'fucus', byd-af 'yлеЙ' (&lt; *bhīko-)</p> <p><b>Altaic:</b> *biūgi:</p> <p><b>Turkic:</b> *bōg;</p> <p><b>Mongolian:</b> *böye-sü;</p> <p><b>Tungus-Manchu:</b> *bugu-tuna;</p> <p><b>Japanese:</b> *piwə-musi;</p> <p><i>cf.</i> Ramstedt 1935: 57, Räsänen 1969: 82-3, Starostin 1991: 294, Lexics, 1997: 184. The Japanese tone seems to contradict Turkic length (but is not sufficiently well attested).</p> <p><b>Eskimo-Aleut:</b> *pəʁu.</p> <p>N.B.: Dolgopolsky n.d.: 276 s.v. *bVyV compares Indo-European with Egyptian by.t 'bee'.</p>
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source: (c) Tower of Babel, adapted

Table 7.8. Selected aspects of the Eurasianic etymology of 'bee'

Further affinities between the Ancient Egyptian context and Uralic-speakers may be found in ceremonial headgear:

	
<p>Diadem of Tut<sup>c</sup>anḥ Amun (Carter 1977: Plate LXXV, p. 332 f.). Besides the well-known double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt, this is a deliberately archaising item of regalia, which may be taken seriously as an indication of remote ancestral antecedents of pharaonic kingship; as Carter notes (1977: 142 f., 145): ‘...royal diadem, with detachable emblems of Upper and Lower Egypt (Nekhbet vulture and Buto snake), and pivoting ornamental ribbons... This diadem must be of very ancient origin, in so far as its name Seshnen and its shape appear to derive from the headband which was already worn around the head by men and women of all walks of life during the Old Kingdom, some 1500 years before the New Kingdom [ when Tut<sup>c</sup>anḥ-Amun ruled – WvB ]. Moreover there are plenty of indications that we may consider it part of the funerary equipment of Ancient Egypt, since it was mentioned in inscriptions on Middle Kingdom coffins, and since diadems of this kind have thrice been associated with royal funerals...’ Interestingly, the term in question,  sšdw-n-hn, means ‘binding of the rower’ (Hannig 2000 s.v. ‘Diadem’) and while in the context of the Ancient Egyptian kingship it unmistakably refers to the solar ship (to whose navigation the king is promoted through his kingship, death, and identification with Osiris), and also may obliquely refer to the god Anti, ultimately it could have ancestral connotations of nautic crafts (like the sacred boat kept in the Sphinx temple near Cairo, Egypt, of Sunda</p>	<p>Crown of a Samoyed shaman (cf. Hoppál 1994: 117, and Rappenglueck 1999: 252, Fig. 256). In the description of Tut<sup>c</sup>anḥ-Amun’s diadem, no mention is made of shamanic connections but these appear obvious now. Note the twin swans ornament op top</p>

source: van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: 92, Fig. 4-7; there we also dwell on the significance of spoked chariot wheel in Tut<sup>c</sup>Anḥ-Amun’s tomb.

Fig. 7.4. Affinities between New Kingdom Egypt and Uralic speakers as exemplified by ceremonial headgear

The Uralic connection appears to spell bad news for a Sunda interpretation of Neith. We may assume that the Uralic branch of Eurasiatic / Nostratic was forming itself in a West Central Asian context (perhaps the Pontic-Caspian region) about half a dozen millennia (Mallory 2001) before our first attestations of the name Neith in the Early-Dynastic Egyptian corpus including inscriptions on stelae. There is hardly any



way in which the General Sunda Hypothesis could account<sup>201</sup> for penetration to Central Asia or to most of the regions where Uralic is being spoken in modern times (the Ural mountains, Northern Siberia, North Eastern Scandinavia and the adjacent Baltic, and Hungary). Instead, it looks as if the name Neith primarily has a Eurasiatic / Nostratic and not an Austric background, mediated towards Egypt in the overall process of the 'Back-into-Africa' migration. This argument presses all the more since we have several more examples of continuity between Uralic theonyms and those in the Mediterranean.<sup>202</sup> Yet that does not exclude the possibility that when Sunda influence putatively introduced Austric sometime in the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age, that then interference took place between the already established meaning of Nt / Neith, and the meanings ('bow and arrow', 'male' [ *i.e.* male weapons ] contained in the semantics of the similar Austric roots; nor is it completely to be ruled out that there was Austric influence both on Old Egyptian and on Proto-Uralic – perhaps via the Black Sea. We have seen the puzzling linguistic and cultural indications of a Proto-Bantu presence in Anatolia and the Levant, which makes it conceivable that the presence of highly pigmented populations East of the Black Sea (Colchis *etc.*) was not brought there by migrations in historical times (*e.g.* under Sesostris / Senwosret I or III) as has been the common claim since Herodotus, but at least several millennia earlier. We have also seen the West Asian affinities contributing, in addition to Nubian elements, to the Delta culture and to the kingship of unified Egypt, and the whole question of Neith's apparently Uralic connotations is solved if we assume that the original nucleus of Delta culture was formed, not in the Delta but in Colchis or adjacent regions, under Sunda influence coming in via the Black Sea, and only subsequently transmitted to the Delta – a distance of a thousand kilometres which is not without precedents for proto-historical migrations, especially if (through the postulated Sunda influence) new nautical skills had come available. And finally, we must be careful lest we fall into the familiar trap of considering the remote and rural form of a particular phenomenon necessarily the original form.

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<sup>201</sup> Here a Sunda perspective is at variance with the Pelasgian Hypothesis, which could be pressed into service on this point. For if Uralic traits could be identified in the context of New-Kingdom Egypt *e.g.* in Tut-<sup>c</sup>anġ-Amun's tomb (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011), they might also have travelled South to sub-Saharan Africa when some of the Sea Peoples appear to have done, thus being among the travellers who have left depictions of chariots in rock art all over the Sahara (Lhote 1959; Mauny 1947).

<sup>202</sup> Cf. Karst 1931b: 80 *f.* Uralian *Toñis* (which Karst argues is identical to Dionysus) = Basque *Tusuri* = Old Egyptian *Osiris*. Also according to Herodotus, *Historiae*, 2: 42, Osiris is equivalent to Dionysus: a dying but resurrecting vegetal god. Karst goes on to indicated the Uralic continuities of other theonyms in West Asia: *Gaia*, *Gē*, *etc.*, according to him derives from the name of the Phrygian Al-Mother Ma, Maia, with various cognates in Armenian, Finnish, and Sumerian. In the same vein: Cronus as the Greek god of death = Basque *herio* = 'dead, death' = Finnish *žkr* = 'to kill, to die'. Also the Phrygian god Savazios, Savos, Savadios is found in the Uralian region. Similar results, based on more state-of-the-art etymologies, are to be found in: Blažek 2001.

<sup>203</sup> The dilemma may be illustrated by the argument (*rightly* contested, admittedly) that the very word *shaman* derives not from the Altaic (>Tungus-Manchu) languages from which it was introduced to global usage (Witsen 1692 *etc.*; Anonymous, Shamanism), but from Central and South Asian Buddhism that had mediated ecstatic practices up North (Karst 1931a: 564, referring to an etymon *çramana*, 'Buddhist religious leader'). By analogy we might postulate that it is not the pharaohs emulating an Uralic-speakers' crown, but

The semantic and phonological resemblance of the name and symbolic connotations of Neith with proto-Austriac \**nah* 'bow' is remarkable but probably largely coincidental, all the more so, because it is only the oldest reconstructed proto-form that resembles the name of Neith, whereas the late forms in Austronesian and Austroasiatic are widely divergent from the Egyptian name.

Meanwhile Egyptian / Irish parallels throw a rather different light on the above etymologies. In Irish legend, Neit appears as a male god of war, husband of Nemain (cf. Patton 1992), and ancestor both of the heinous unilateral (cf. Luwe, repeatedly referred to throughout this monograph) Fomorians and of the godlike Tuatha Dé Danann. There can be no doubt that Irish Neit is a transformation of Egyptian Neith,<sup>204</sup> having undergone a gender change in the context of a widespread process of masculinisation – already noted above; cf. van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011 – which tends to come with the invention of the public sphere as an aspect of state formation in the Bronze Age (also cf. Fromm 1976: 231 f.). The relatively close ties between Ireland and Ancient Egypt have often been discussed in the literature. For Graves (1988), they are particularly conspicuous in early Christianity. Karst (1931b) gives the following linguistic examples of the continuity between various Celtic languages and Old Egyptian: Breton: *bod, bot* 'bush', cf. Old Egyptian *b3-t*, 'bush'; Celtic *mor* 'sea, lake', cf. Old Egyptian *mr* 'canal, river'; Irish Gadhaelic: *re* 'Moon', Old Egyptian *re<sup>c</sup>*, *ra<sup>c</sup>* 'Sun'; Armenian *arev* 'Sun'. The last example, taking us once more back to the Pontic region, suggests that we do not necessarily have to reach for Austriac to find an etymology for *Re<sup>c</sup>*; but could find such an etymology closer at home, in Armenian and other Black Sea languages. Alternatively, however, it could mean that Sunda, with its emphasis on the luminaries, had the same influence on both Egypt and Ireland. Hence we could take the correspondence of Egyptian Neith / Irish Neit as a further example of the masculinisation process noted above.

Another Egypt-reminiscent element in Irish mythology is Queen Medb of Connacht (Edel 1986): not only is she, as a female warrior, parallel to Egyptian Neith; as 'great-bladdered Medb' she is in the most literal sense 'the Mother of the Waters'; and her name 'She who is, or makes, drunk', evokes the bee-derived intoxicating drink *mead* – which among the Nkoya and on Madagascar appears as probably Sunda-associated – as well as the Ancient Egyptian myth of the lioness goddess *Sekhmet* who in a murderous rage attempts to annihilate humanity but is stopped by tricking and intoxicating her with red-coloured beer. The Ireland-South Central Africa link assumes amazing proportions when we hear that, like the Lunda queen Ruweji (Turner 1955) and like a Nkoya queen in a myth recounted in *Likoya lya Bankoya* (van Binsbergen 1992), also Medb's menstruation is all of a sudden invoked as a

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the other way around in other words the Uralic speakers emulating a pharaonic crown – after all, the flow of cultural borrowing often (although far from always) goes from the centralised, powerful state and its culture to the periphery. But there are many examples of the opposite flow: from the periphery to the centre, when e.g. subjugated peoples yet manage to capture the conquerors' imagination in a kind of revenge action: African music (in the transformed forms of jazz and pop) conquering North Atlantic White culture; Nkoya music conquering the otherwise dominant Lozi state in Western Zambia; the vanquished's cults of affliction and possession penetrating the conquerors' consciousness all over the world.

<sup>204</sup> The *-th / θ* ending of the Egyptian name of Neith is a mere affectation of Greek spelling; the Ancient Egyptian name has a simple *-t*.

reason to declare her, as a woman, unfit for the kingship.<sup>205</sup> The oldest, pre-Irish inhabitants of Ireland, because of their cultural connotations and the tradition of them being highly pigmented, have often been considered to hail from North Africa. This could explain the connection with Egypt and (via the 'Back-into-Africa' migration) with South Central Africa – so that ultimately the original scene of the Queen Medb story would be somewhere in West or Central Asia. In his fascinating contribution to the 2007 Edinburgh conference on the Deep History of Myth, John Colarusso presented from the Indo-European realm narrative themes, with their philological background, that, in his opinion, were so ancient that they may go back to some pre-Indo-European phase of Eurasiatic, in which parallels with Bantu may well be contemplated (Colarusso 2007, personal communication). Queen Medb is only one of a number of Celtic / Nkoya parallels, e.g. the cattle raiding (cf. the Irish legendary hero Cú Chulainn; Lincoln 1976) by the legendary Nkoya King Shihoka Nalinanga ('Snake, Child [ or Mother ] of Drought',<sup>206</sup> his rivalry with his sorceress sister whose kingship he

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<sup>205</sup> Like in these stories from the Ancient Celtic world, menstruation in South Central Africa is something of a puzzle. Among the Nkoya and elsewhere in South Central Africa, menarche is celebrated as the onset of womanhood, it triggers for the young girl a period of seclusion and of extensive, often harsh and authoritarian teaching at the hands of middle-aged non-kin women, to be crowned by the individual girl's public coming-out ceremony (*ku-tembwishá kank'anga*) where the new woman, proud of her skills in dancing, sexuality and other forms of bodily activity she has acquired during seclusion training, shines before the entire community – subsequently to be put on display for inspection as nubile. All this does not take away, however, that the spirit of menstruation (K'anga) is considered to be antisocial, menacing, and even deadly – the puberty rites are meant, contradictorily, to exorcise it as much as to celebrate it. It is for this reason that among the Nkoya children born from a mother who had not perceptibly menstruated immediately before getting pregnant, were traditionally killed: they were still possessed by K'anga and had all of the latter's evil connotations. Remarkably, a similar belief perspires in the Biblical account of the illegitimate child of King David and Bathshebah (2 *Samuel* 12:15). In the 1970s-1980s, in the early stages of my Nkoya fieldwork, menstruation seclusion huts were no longer conspicuous in Nkoya village life, but there were suggestions that they had once been – perhaps as another sign of South and South East Asian Sunda influence, for otherwise menstruation huts are not common in African life (Anonymous, 'Menstruation hut' – the puzzling spotty world distribution of this trait mainly includes Nepal, Ancient Judaism, and selected traditional societies in Australia, Micronesia, California and Columbia). Nkoya women take great pride in their womanhood and confide in each other against the chauvinistic, self-centred men; the latter they covertly coax and manipulate while not taking them too seriously (van Binsbergen 2003: ch. 3 – knowing themselves to be largely protected by the local legal system as long as that was still more or less intact, van Binsbergen 201g). Men greatly fear and abhor menstruation and childbirth as states of contagious, potentially deadly, impurity. A Nkoya woman can effectively protect herself from unwanted male advances by visibly wearing a menstruation pad in her underpants. The widespread, apparently Pelasgian, view according to which the normal, healthy functions of the female body inspire profound fear and restraint in men, is amazingly virulent among the Nkoya – even though the social position of women in 20th-c. CE Nkoya society contrasts favourably with that in Islamic and Hindu countries, in terms of freedom of movement, initiative, opportunities for women to divorce, relative freedom from physical assault, relative protection of the integrity of their body both inside and outside marriage, and women's eligibility to social and political exalted roles (van Binsbergen 2003: ch. 3 – an extensive discussion of Nkoya sexual life – 1977, 201g). Constituting an awkward meeting ground of nature and nurture, the world of gender relationships is universally a battle ground among Anatomically Modern Humans; the Nkoya are no exception, but I submit that in their particular case the grafting of South Asian literate, male-dominant cultural and political traits upon a women-centred autochthonous African substrate goes at least some way towards an explanation that is specific in space and time.

<sup>206</sup> There is a potential Ancient Egyptian perspective to Shihoka 'Snake Child of Drought'. One of the principal

seems to have usurped but who eventually destroys her brother through an manmade puppet brought to life as a beautiful young woman whose embrace is deadly. These may well be ancient themes circulating in the West and Central Asian groups percolating to Africa and leaving, in passing, their mythological and genetic traces in Europe. However, the General Sunda Hypothesis offers a more direct and recent explanation of Irish / Nkoya parallels, which are worth considering because, being relatively recent and no older than a handful of millennia, they throw light on the relative precision with which these story-lines are preserved in both societies. What would help to clinch the matter is evidence of similar stories in a South East Asian, Sunda context. Of course there are parallels in the Indian Vedic literature; now, for an Africanist it is already a huge step to admit the possibility of elements from the Mahabharata travelling to South Central Africa via Indonesia, and it would require a major paradigmatic shift before Indo-Europeanists could be prepared to consider a similar scenario linking South Asian, Indo-Aryan narratives to Ireland, not simply via the spread of Indo-European languages across Europe, but via Indonesia and Sunda influence. However, the transcontinental ramifications of the Alexander / Iskander / Skanda / [ Shikanda ] saga seems a fair precedent (Lombard 1993).

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First-Dynasty Egyptian kings was Hr D̄t, 'King Snake'. owner of a famous stele with his name now in the Louvre Museum, Paris, France. In Ancient Egyptian cosmogony, the first creatures were the twins of opposite gender Shu and Tefnut, produced by Atum (with the goddess Hand) through an act of masturbation; and since Tefnut means 'moisture', Shu (who prizes Heaven and Earth apart) is by implication 'drought'. However, the Egyptologist / Sanskritist Bruno Stricker has pointed out the very close continuity between Ancient Egyptian religion and Hinduism (1963-1989; cf. Cornelius 1957), and from a South Asian perspective there is – at least at the onomastic level – a striking parallel between Shihoka Nalinanga and वृत्र Vritra, the evil demon of drought, who obstructed the world waters, until he was slain by the primal god Indra. Another apparently Indra-related trait is that Nkoya kings establish sovereignty by shooting an arrow into a sacred tree (*Likota Iya Bankoya*); of Indra the same is told in myth (cf. Thompson 2004). However, the authoritative Egyptologist Kees (1977 / 1941) tells us that also at the coronation of the Egyptian *pharaoh* four arrows were being shot, so ultimately the trait may have been Egyptian (like a number of other Nkoya traits), possibly transmitted via the detour of India – where so many Ancient Egyptian traits have been preserved (Stricker 1963-1989). Just as Late Ancient Egyptian processions with divine images may be considered to lie at the root of bier divination in West Africa and the Caribbean, the bow-shot at the Ancient Egyptian coronation may have been at the root of another widespread divinatory practice: *belomancy*, shooting an arrow to determine the divine will – which particularly in classic Islamic culture was of great importance, and one of the inspirations for geomantic divination (Fahd 1966; Buckland 1876). For whatever it is worth, I add that the name of Zmey Gorynych, the dragon of Slavic mythology, translates as 'Snake Son-of-Mountain' (Anonymous, Dragon). We will need another full round of theory and reflection before all such parallels can be systematically accounted for. A detailed analysis of Nkoya mythology would reveal further Indian parallels. When one of the Nkoya kings was reported as having been buried by ants (*i.e.* his subjects had become so estranged from him – allegedly, but in an obvious nationalisation, because he assaulted his subjects' wives – that they refused to give him a proper burial; *Likota Iya Bankoya* 34:5), we are reminded of the battle of the gods in Indian mythology, resulting in one of them being buried by ants (van Hamel n.d., section 'Vedic / Indian mythology'). Incidentally, in ways I cannot readily explain, Kapeshe ka Mununga Mpanda was alleged by a Kaonde tradition (north of Nkoyaland) to have belonged to the Ants totem (Sandasanda 1972: 12). However, the Nkoya theme may be much older, and be held in common – since their common origin in Upper Palaeolithic Central Asia? – with the Native populations of North America, where myths of burial and resurrection through the intermediarity of ants have been presented by Swann 1994. In the Old World mythical context, the most conspicuous Ants clan is that of Achilles's Myrmidons (Homer, *Iliad*; Ovid, *Metamorphoses*) – a trace of which may have travelled to South Central Africa on the wings of Pelasgian expansion south.

Such a direct Sunda influence on Ireland is thinkable, but very far from likely. Genetic research published a decade ago, still on the basis of classic genetic markers, suggests a different picture: continuity from Egypt and Libya via the Iberian peninsula with Ireland in Mesolithic and Neolithic times:

‘... the main feature of the genetic landscape in northern Africa is an east-west pattern of variation pointing to the differentiation between the Berber and Arab population groups of the northwest and the populations of Libya and Egypt. Moreover, Libya and Egypt show the smallest genetic distances with the European populations, including the Iberian Peninsula. The most plausible interpretation of these results is that, although demic diffusion during the Neolithic could explain the genetic similarity between northeast Africa and Europe by a parallel process of gene flow from the Near East, a Mesolithic (or older) differentiation of the populations in the Northwestern regions with later limited gene flow is needed to understand the genetic picture. The most isolated groups (Mauritanians, Tuaregs, and south Algerian Berbers) were the most differentiated and, although no clear structure can be discerned among the different Arab- and Berber-speaking groups, Arab speakers as a whole are closer to Egyptians and Libyans. By contrast, the genetic contribution of sub-Saharan Africa appears to be small’ (Bosch *et al.* 1997)

Thus after our initial sense of serendipity, we now have to conclude that it is probably too early to claim that the key theonyms in Ancient Egypt have convincing Austric etymologies; there are at least equally attractive alternatives that remain closer to home. But we have still not exhausted the etymological potential for underpinning the General Sunda Hypothesis, as the following section brings out.

### *7.5.3. Daedalus and the invention of the sail; Talōs as evidence of a Sun cult – and the etymology of that name*

According to several writers in Graeco-Roman Antiquity,<sup>207</sup> it was wings fitted to their arms which made Daedalus and his son Icarus escape from Crete, where Minos (irate because of Daedalus’ technical assistance to the bestial sexual inclinations of Minos’ wife Pasiphae)<sup>208</sup> held them prisoner. However, the Ancient writers Diodorus and Pausanias in this connection speak of boats, propelled by the sails that Daedalus had invented; and according to these stories, Icarus meets his death not because of flying too close to the Sun, but by his clumsiness as a mariner. That Icarus was subsequently buried by Heracles, who happened to pass by, is another significant Levantine (because of Heracles’ Levantine connotations, especially with the city of Tyrus), and possibly Sunda element. Later Daedalus, in Pausanias’ version of the story, has to flee from Athens because of killing his nephew, a rival craftsman-inventor – notably of the saw, inspired by a fish’s backbone – by the name of Talōs (or Perdix, ‘partridge’, according to Ovid – the name is rationalised by letting Athena turn Talos into a partridge when

<sup>207</sup> With thanks to Anonymous, n.d., ‘Daedelus [sic] - inventor’, where the relevant Ancient authorities are cited and discussed. For a fairly exhaustive overview of sources also cf. Atsma 2000-2008, s.v. Talos.

<sup>208</sup> The whole grotesque narrative is clearly based on a mythologising misinterpretation of an myth whose meaning was no longer understood, considering the celestial connotations of Pasiphae (All-Shining: Sun or Moon) and of the Bull (an asterism, or symbol of Heaven itself); this myth was apparently largely astronomical.

Daedalus threw him off an height).<sup>209</sup> Perhaps Talos is Daedalus' alter-ego not only as a fellow-craftsman: reinforced by duplication \*dal- > \*dadal, the two names looks strikingly alike. Interesting, we also meet the name of Talos in another maritime and possibly Sunda-related connection: as the name of a winged man of brass<sup>210</sup> (cf. Daedalus' wings!) that was given by Zeus to the Phoenician princess Europa in order to guard Crete,<sup>211</sup> for which purpose he would fly all around Crete thrice daily; when hurling rocks at the passing Argonauts (whose Sunda connotations we have argued above), Talos was killed by one of them, Poeas, with an arrow (Apollodorus, *Bibliothēke*); but according to Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*, he died through the magic of Medeia, the lover of the Argonauts' leader Jason<sup>212</sup> (also cf. Anonymous, Talos).

If this connection it may be remarkable that the emblem of one of the first Ancient Egyptian kings, N'r-Mr, puzzlingly had the emblem of a chisel (Gardiner no. U23; the

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<sup>209</sup> The complex, and transcultural, background of Talos is further brought out by the fact that Talos is reputed to be either Hephaestus' artisanal product (and gift to King Minos), or Hephaestus' very father (as claimed by Cinaethon of Sparta, and by Pausanias, *Descriptio Graeciae*, VIII, 53, 2, 5). Hephaestus is the god of artisanal handwork and especially of fire – but with parallels with the Ancient Egyptian creation god Atum, and (according to Blažek, but see van Binsbergen in prep. (d)), with Ptaḥ.

<sup>210</sup> If we are to go by the bronze substance attributed to Talos, and take this as his skin colour, South or South East Asian associations are a possibility. Talos is reputed to have been 'the last of a race of bronze men' (Apollodorus, *Bibliothēke*, I. 140; Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica*, IV. 1638) – which (if not simply a reference to the Graeco-Roman – e.g. Hesiod's – tripartite division of history in periods associated with metal of diminishing quality: gold, silver and bronze) might be interpreted as the last survivor of a group of Sunda immigrants. But we may also follow the more common interpretation of the enigmatic Talos as one of a set of metal automatons, allegedly fabricated by the dextrous Hephaestus, who according to other sources was not Talos' maker but his son. The popular etymology of Talos' name in terms of 'cut down the sun' is probably no more than just that: a popular etymology – but considering Talos' various solar connotations his celestial / solar association is not in dispute. It is as an early automaton that Talos is mainly treated in the recent literature – with the risk of anachronistic projections from our own robot and computer age. Considering the rich and amazing aspects of Talos, there is room for further extensive studies of this character, beyond the predatory, often merely perfunctory, entries in mythological dictionaries, and the exploratory discussion by Buxton 1998 / 2002.

<sup>211</sup> Incidentally a confirmation of the much-contested Levantine nature of Crete (ever since Evans' discovery of the Minoan civilisation around 1900 CE Crete has been claimed by Eurocentrists as the first European, i.e. Indo-European–speaking, civilisation), yet Afroasiatic language elements must have played an important role there throughout the Bronze Age. Cf. Gordon 1981; Best 1997 / 2011.

<sup>212</sup> Talos was reputed to have been Zeus' gift to his mistress Europa (whom he abducted in bull shape), in order to guard Crete. Against the background of the rise and fall of solar religion in western Old World, on which we touch repeatedly in the course of this monograph, such a narrative invites not just a mythological interpretation but also one in terms of religious history. Zeus is a principal exponent of the rise of celestial gods of lightning and wind that, in the course of the Bronze Age, came to supplant solar gods and relegated them to subaltern positions. Objectified to a gift, even a machine, Talos seems to have been one of these solar gods. But why a gift to Europa, why the movement (following that of the alphabeth, and of other crucial aspects of the logocentric package, perhaps the democratic form of politics – cf. Bernal 1993 –, or astronomy, or organised religion, or fundamental mythology?) in northwesterly direction from Phoenicia, and why the bull association – in itself a celestial and astronomical symbol of great antiquity, as attested in the Upper Palaeolithic? Other attending solar associations of the Talos mythology include: the Argonauts are led by Jason, the champion of Hera, perhaps in her capacity of the Setting Sun / Evening Star; Colchis is a Land of the (Rising) Sun; King of Colchis is Aetes, formerly king of Corinth, and (like the sorceress Circe) child of the Sun god Helios – implicitly Hera's enemy; Medeia is a daughter of Aetes, granddaughter therefore of the Sun, and therefore a likely candidate for the murder on Talos.

identification as a tool is doubtful) under a fish – although it was a catfish and not a saw fish. Was N<sup>c</sup>r-Mr associated with the invention of the saw or the chisel (another indispensable carpenter’s tool), and an avatar of Athenian Talos? It the accumulation of fish references an indication of Sunda connotations?



Fig. 7.5. The hieroglyphic representation of the name N<sup>c</sup>r-Mr on the soc-called N<sup>c</sup>r-Mr Tablet (Ancient Egypt, 1<sup>st</sup> Dynasty)

Significantly, whenever the name Talos appears there is the evocation of mortal conflict between a local and a foreign element – which may well encode a historic confrontation in the Aegean between pre-Hellenic inhabitants and Hellenic groups coming in and ousting the former. Relying on Ancient sources (notably the *Lexicon* of Hesychius of Alexandria (c. 5th c. CE), the principal specialists in Greek religion have interpreted the name of Talos as standing for a solar god, who was later identified with Zeus as *Zeus Tallaios*.<sup>213</sup> We have already identified the solar cult as potentially Sunda-related. Moreover, there is an attractive Austric etymology for the name Talos as ‘star, luminary’, and although it can be traced back to a \*Borean root TVLKV, the element *-tal-* is preserved mainly in Austronesian.

<p><b>*Borean (approx.):</b> TVLKV ‘Moon, luminary’  <b>Eurasianic:</b> *tʰlgV(nV):  <b>Indo-European:</b> *dōngh-;  <b>Altaic:</b> *tʰjōlgu; <b>Uralic:</b> *{ö}lVč̣- ‘Moon’ (...);  <b>Dravidian:</b> *tʰjəɭ;  <b>Eskimo-Aleut:</b> *taRqj-;  <b>Chukchee-Kamchatkan:</b> *tʰiqəŋ (~ *t-)  <b>Remarks:</b> cf. Blažek n.d.; Dolgopolsky n.d.: 2284 *tEŋgVl/ŋV (Dravidian-Indo-European; (...)). Cf. Austric  <b>Afroasiatic:</b> *tʰiluɕ-  <b>Austric: Proto-Austric:</b> *tʰVʔlVʔ ‘star’;  <b>Proto-Austroasiatic:</b> *tuor ‘star, Moon’;  <b>Proto-Austronesian:</b> *talaq, *mantalaq ‘star, Venus’  <b>Amerind (misc.):</b> *tal(U) ‘sky, Sun, thunder, lightning’ (all glossed as ‘cloud’) (Ruhlen n.d.: 132) ?</p>
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source: (c) Tower of Babel, ‘Austric etymology’ and ‘long-range etymology’ (adapted)

Table 7.9. Selected reflexes of \*Borean TVLKV ‘Moon, luminary’

However, *-tal-* (regrettably without obvious correspondences in Proto-Bantu) also appears in Amerind. Most surprisingly and significantly, also the unpromising

<sup>213</sup> Cf. Kerényi 1951:110; Nilsson 1923: 148; Cook 1914-1940: I, 729 f. with thanks to Anonymous, Talos’.

Proto-Afroasiatic root \**tiluʃ*- gives rise to Proto-Westchadic: \**tal*- (?< \**tyal*-), which in addition to a perfect phonological fit also has a perfect semantic fit, for it means not just luminary or star, but specifically 'Sun'. This is reminiscent of the cases discussed above, of Bantu words being attested in the Bronze Age Mediterranean: although West Chadic is a branch of Afroasiatic, we would normally not expect traces of it (such as the name Talos) outside sub-Saharan Africa, specifically Nigeria. Is Talos then a trace, not of Austric / Sunda influence, but of the Greek sub-Saharan ancestry as demonstrated by recent genetic research (Arnaiz *et al.* 2001)? Or can we have our cake and eat it, seeing the West Chadic etymology as an indication of Sunda influence on Nigeria, of which we have already discussed several examples (head-hunting; or the myth of primal gods incessantly mating and thus obstructing the emergence of reality), and then from Nigeria to the Mediterranean? Or is this once again a case (*cf.* Fig. 5.7) of Western Chadic having peripherally retained archaic forms that elsewhere have evolved almost beyond recognition – in other words must we explain the presence of the *-tal*- 'Sun' element in the Cretan context, not by the General Sunda Hypothesis, but by the model of demic diffusion along the lines of the Back-into-Africa model?

As a protective birdlike god with solar connotations Talos has much in common, not only with the Nkoya High God Nyambi and the latter's<sup>214</sup> child Mvula, but also with Garuda, the divine eagle that, in Hindu and South East Asian mythology, serves as a mount to the cosmic god Vishnu. However, a god's relegation to servitude is often a sign that a previously Supreme God, and the attending socio-cultural group, was subjected by a new religious dispensation, often by newcomers or of a newly emergent local class. As we shall see below (section 9.3), there are several indications throughout the Old World and even in the New World (Raven, Eagle), of a primary bird god of creation, of which the prototype of Garuda could be one example, later recast as subservient to a Hindu god.

## 7.6. *Moonlight on Dilmun*

Above I referred to the possible Sunda context of Bahrayn / Dilmun, the small island in the Persian Gulf, close to the Arabian peninsula and to the small, jutting Qatar peninsula. A great deal of scholarly effort has been invested in the identification, localisation and etymology of the Ancient Mesopotamian toponym *Dilmun* / *Tilmun*, 'the place where the Sun rises', 'the holy land', allegedly the place of origin of the Mesopotamian love goddess Inanna, and the place where the gods granted immortal life to the Sumerian Flood Hero Ziusudra and his wife after the Flood – as described in the Flood story recorded in the

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<sup>214</sup> Since Nkoya and other Bantu < Nigercongo languages do not have grammatical gender, the gender attributed to these deities cannot be determined – it is likely to be intended as feminine, but surmised by present-day native speakers to be male, after a century of Lozi and globalising colonial influences favouring the male gender; *cf.* van Binsbergen 1992.



library of Nippur, early 2nd millennium BCE.<sup>215</sup> Clearly Dilmun plays a pivotal role in any attempt to reconstruct the antecedents of the Flood story, and Oppenheimer does discuss it in *Eden in the East*. The identification of Dilmun as the island of Baḥrayn in the Persian Gulf has now been widely accepted, even though this is South South East, rather than due East, of Nippur, and even though the early Assyriologist Delitsch would rather situate Dilmun in a part of the Persian Gulf that is now silted up in the mouth of the rivers Euphrates and Tigris (Maspero *et al.* 1903: vol. III), whereas the famous Assyriologist Samuel Kramer of a subsequent generation, (who first translated the relevant Nippur tablet) seeking to do justice to the easterly direction, opts for a localisation in Western Iran, *i.e.* right across the Persian Gulf. The archaeologist Bibby's popular book *Looking for Dilmun* (1972) makes captivating reading and has managed to widely popularise the Baḥrayn identification. Moreover, after his team had studied Early-Bronze-Age piles of discarded pearl shells in nearby Qatar, Bibby made the somewhat convincing argument that the herb of life which Gilgamesh sought, found and lost, was in fact a pearl from this region, harvested from the sea. However, the Gilgamesh epic in the famous Babylonian redaction from the library of Assurbanipal (7th c. BCE) does not mention Dilmun.

<p><b>Proto-Austric:</b> *mVʔn 'hearth; settlement'  <b>Proto-Austroasiatic:</b> mVŋ 'town'  <b>Miao-Yao parallels:</b> Yao muŋ.1 'town, city'  <b>Proto-Austronesian:</b> *qumun 'oven, hearth?'  <b>Proto-Thai:</b> mian.A 'city, country'</p>
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Source: (c) Tower of Babel, 'Austric etymologies'

Table 7.10. The Austric etymology of \*mVʔn, 'settlement'

In the early 1990s, Rice could still report that the etymology of Dilmun was an unsolved problem, and no breakthrough seems to have been made since. Meanwhile, however, the Sunda Hypothesis offers a rather new context where to look for an etymology of the name: in the Austric language family. Here a *-mun* element might be explained as 'settlement', Proto-Austric: \*mVʔn, especially compare Yao muŋ.1 'town, city'; the Proto--Austric root has cognates in the other language families descending from \*Borean, including Eurasiatic such as Indo-European and Dravidian, but there the vocal never develops into *-ū-*. One of the striking phenomena in the field of toponymy (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: chapters 2-4) is that, when a local group expands into a new territory, it tends to bring its familiar toponyms and hydronyms and to attach them to the new land, hence place names like New Amsterdam (now New York, USA), New Zealand, Holland (Illinois, USA), etc.; in pre- and proto-history, the same practice must have existed, which is why place names like (H)Iberia, Libya, Punt, are tantalisingly confusing since they have plural applications, both in the Western part of the Old World (Europe, Africa), and in the Central (West, Central and South Asia).

<sup>215</sup> Cf. al-Khalifa & Rice 1986; Alster 1983; Bibby 1969; Cornwall 1946, 1952; Kramer 1944; MacAdam 1990; Potts 1995; Rice 1994; Thapar 1983.



Source: [https://satellites.pro/Bahrain\\_map#26.075318,50.369053,10](https://satellites.pro/Bahrain_map#26.075318,50.369053,10), with thanks; at its largest west-east section, the island measures 16 km across.

Fig. 7.6. Satellite photograph of Bahrayn

Karst<sup>216</sup> tried to identify as an ethnically and linguistically distinct and coherent unit, a region that would extend from 'Libya' (North Africa, especially the part east of modern Algeria) to the Caucasus and again to the Indian Ocean – so vast that it could accommodate both Eastern locations (which Karst considered to be the older, more original ones) and Western locations (which Karst considered to be secondary and derived) of such repetitive ethnonyms as Libya, [H]lberia and Punt. Karst reckoned with a major East-West movement from (Southern) Central Asia (in his obsolete terminology 'Turan') which in his opinion has shaped much of the ethnic and linguistic map of West Asia, Europe and the Northern half of Africa.

The state of linguistic, archaeological and genetic research at Karst's time (1920s-1930s) did not yet allow him to define this postulated westbound movement systematically nor to date it with any precision. For lack of a better designation he termed this westbound migration (which we now recognise as the Back-into-Africa migration from Central Asia, 15 ka BP onward) 'Atlantean', and he dated it in or just before the Early Bronze Age. Karst was much impressed by a professionally scholarly debate being waged around 1930 (Borchardt 1927, Herrmann 1934; Karst 1931b: 1 *f.*), when Tunisia, with adjacent parts of the Maghreb and of modern Libya, was proposed as the original site of Plato's Atlantis, and the Djott al-Jerid salt lake in Southern Tunisia as the proper identification of Lake Tritonis, the legendary

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<sup>216</sup> Cf. Karst 1931a, 1931b; and van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011.

## birth-place of the goddess Athena:

‘Bei Diodor, Sic., Kap. 56—68, wird von einer Göttin Tritonis Athena berichtet, deren Kult in der Gegend des libyschen Tritonissees heimisch war. Diese tritonische Göttin Athena ist sicher identisch mit der arisch-iranischen und pontisch-kappadokisch-armenischen Anahit. Tritonis oder Triton ist als Göttesattribut, als Theophorname derselben Gottheit zu fassen und direkt zu identifizieren mit der eranischen Gottheit Thrita oder Thraetaona (Thraetana), bzw. dem indischen Trita, dem wassergeborenen Gotte Aptya, der iranisch als Athwya erscheint. Dies wäre ein weiteres Argument für eine einstige ostarische Besiedelung Kleinafrikas, vorausgesetzt, daß, nicht schon in der Diodorquelle eine Verwechslung des hesperisch-libyschen Tritonsees mit einem homonymen irano-turanischen Libya und der afrikanischen Libya mit dem innerasiatisch-turanischen Libyerlande vorliege. Hierfür sprache die bei Diodor, Kap. 68, erwähnte "libysche" Dionysosinsel mit Stadt Nysa in der Tritonissee, wo es sich vermutlich ursprünglich entweder um die "indische" Nysa (Nyssa) handelte, die Heimat des jungen Dionysos, bzw. um das medisch-hyrkanische Nisâa, oder um die Nisäische Gefilde in Medien Kaspien, also um Lokalitäten des innerasiatischen Libyen.’ (Karst 1931b: 95)

On the basis of his insight in the dual East-West locations of major toponyms and the associated mythical geography, Karst welcomed this identification but reserved the right to see the Tunisian location only as secondary, as westbound migrants’ projection onto a Westerly location of a hydronym and a divine myth for which Central Asia must have been the more original context – where the goddess in question would still have been Anahita or Ne[il]th, rather than Athena yet. Now, the western half of the region demarcated by Karst coincides with what I would propose (on genetic, comparative ethnographic, and literary grounds) to be the geographic cradle of Sea Peoples’ culture and identity – a region extending to both shores of the Mediterranean as well as the Black Sea. For this region I propose the name of Pelasgia – not because it was ever called by that name by historical actors (indications are that parts of it were occasionally, though, – subject to the perspectival shifts that toponyms undergo depending on the speaker’s standpoint; van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: chapters 2-4) but because analytically it covers many of the puzzling contradictory connotations that the ethnonym / toponym Pelasgian often has had in ancient texts. The genetic and cultural unity of the Pelasgian region and its eligibility as the cradle of the Sea Peoples can be argued in detail without specific and explicit reference to the General Sunda Hypothesis. However, such an argument will largely coincide with the data and the interpretation of the Bronze Age Mediterranean as Sunda-related (Table 5.8 above). For that reason I propose that a submerged but unmistakable Sunda influence of which the historical actors themselves were no longer aware, greatly contributed to the subjective sense of ethnic unity and purpose which made the Sea Peoples’ exploits in the late Bronze Age so effective. Needless to add that this tentative identification of the probable Sunda factor in the Sea Peoples solves the problem of the provenance of the latter’s nautical skills. A common Pelasgian (in the above sense) ethnic and regional basis fed by a largely or totally submerged Sunda reminiscence would also be in line with several of the few firm data we have on Sea Peoples’ ethnicity: the fact that one section (the Ekweš), but not the others, was given to male genital circumcision like their Egyptian enemies themselves; and the fact that, after the ultimately unsuccessful military confrontations with the Egyptian state, the Sea Peoples withdrew to the Levant where they each occupied a specific regional niche of their own, marked by

their ethnic and cultural distinctiveness: they had united on the basis of an overarching shared identity, but from beginning to end did form, and did mutually recognise, ethnic sub-identities in their midst.

This brings us the objectionable question of whether the concept of Atlantis, as a distant, idealised place of impressive planological achievement and maritime activities destroyed by flooding, could not be a cherished Sunda idea which the original mariners co-founding the intercontinental maritime network, brought with them and spread all over that network. Of course, ever since Plato, libraries have been filled with texts about Atlantis; identifying Atlantis has been one of the chief para-scholarly futile pastimes of the West (next to Biblical chronology, astrology and the Merovingian / Magdalenian blood line), and no one can pretend to disentangle that giant Gordian knot with one sudden flash of insight. Yet, if the Herrmann identification of Šotṭ al-Jerid, which Karst favours, has a point, it is an identification well in the proposed Mediterranean Sunda path. So are Santorini / Thera (Bernal 1991 and references cited there) and the Levantine coast (Woudhuizen 2001) as proposed Atlantic locations. Oppenheimer seems to suggest a Sunda background for the Atlantic myth in one remark (1998: 9), but the remark is too furtive to go by, and his other references to Atlantis mainly refer to the well-known proposed identification of Atlantis as Thera / Santorini. However, the thrust of Oppenheimer's remarks on Eden, Avalon, Atlantis and other lost paradises as conceived in the West is that they may ultimately refer to the lost paradise of Sunda, and he must be exaggerating. But perhaps we can go a bit further.

The emphasis on the great luminaries Sun and Moon and the preoccupation with the stars, which we have identified as a Sunda trait (*cf.* Snow 1988 – could this trait have to do with navigating on the stars?), may help us to identify an Austric etymology for Atlantis: the same we have already invoked for Talos and Dilmun:

<p><b>Proto-Austric:</b> *tVʔIVʔ 'star'  <b>Proto-Austroasiatic:</b> *tuor 'star, Moon'  <b>Proto-Austronesian:</b> *talaq, *mantalaq 'star, Venus'</p>
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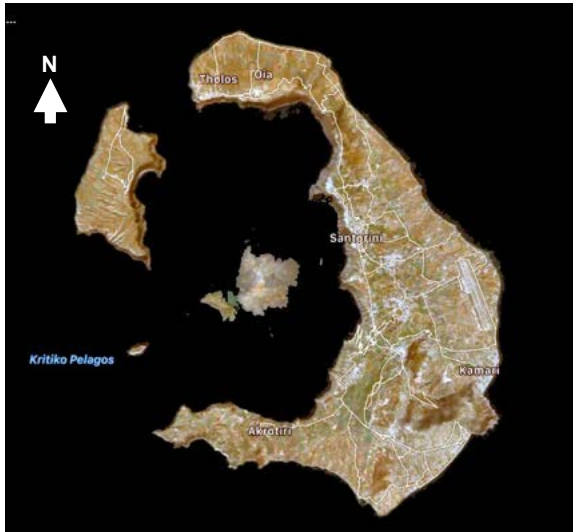
Table 7.11. Aspects of Proto-Austric \*tVʔIVʔ 'star'

Atlantis, therefore, may be identified as 'Moonland' (or less likely 'Sunland', 'Venusland' or 'starland'. If this was the hypothetical Sunda mariners' nostalgic designation of the lost Sunda homeland, we may well understand why they projected it onto other, new lands along their trajectory: Ceylon, Madagascar, Dilmun, perhaps even Tunisia and the Isle of Santorini.

Under the General Sunda Hypothesis Ceylon, Madagascar and Baḥrayn all make part of the same Sunda domain developing into an intercontinental maritime network, so by analogy with the Moon element in the names of Ceylon and Madagascar, and by an application of the etymologies listed for Talos above, 'Moon island?', 'Moon settlement' appears a plausible explanation of the ancient name Dilmun – if it can be applied to modern Baḥrayn at all.<sup>217</sup> Ceylon and Madagascar share with Baḥrayn a rounded, oblong

<sup>217</sup> By analogy to the use of the form *Baḥrayn* بحرين in the Qur'ān (Surah Al-Furqan (25):53; *cf.* al-Awwa 2005), the name Baḥrayn in the Arabic / Islamic context means, not 'two seas' (as a routine reading of the

shape orientated along a North–South axis, in other words a rough crescent form. A similar, even more pronounced crescent form has had the Isle of Thera / Santorini ever since the volcanic eruption which is often dated in the 17th c. BCE; the dating is heavily contested (Warburton 2009). However, such an argument assumes that ancient mariners had at least mental maps of the shape of islands which (in the case of Madagascar and Ceylon) many days to circumnavigate, and it is more likely that significant islands were put under the protection of the Moon god, perhaps because in recognition of their junior status vis-à-vis the mainland.



Source: <https://satellites.pro/#36.405948,25.437813,12>, with thanks; at its largest north-south section, the island measures 15 kms. across.

Fig. 7.7. A satellite photograph of the Isle of Santorini / Thera today

Arabic *dualis* form would suggest), but: 'sea (salty and bitter) and river (sweet and thirst-allaying)'. Scholars have interpreted the toponym Bahrayn (Rice 1994) as referring to the confluence of the sweet-water rivers of Mesopotamia with the salt water of the Persian Gulf, but that confluence is in fact hundreds of kilometres North North West of the island of Bahrayn. The proper explanation lies in Bibby's (1972) observation that Bahrayn owes its maritime significance ever since remote antiquity not to any specific produce but to the fact that (with the adjacent Arabian coast) it is one of the very few sources of sweet water all along the Persian Gulf. One might expect this element ('water', 'drinking', 'comfort') to be represented in any ancient, pre-Arabic name of the island, regardless of the Moon analogy, but I have not been able to identify an Austric etymology of Dilmun to this effect.<sup>218</sup> Against the background of our remarks made in connection with Talos, above, could a case be made for most of these ethnic groups and regions so prone to piracy, to have a special association with the Sun cult? How would that relate to the rise of male celestial gods of thunder and wind, and to our main theme: Sunda expansion?

Nonetheless, all this does not mean that Austric was ever spoken in the island of Bahrayn. Probably it is enough to assume that the first Moon island (probably Ceylon) was named in a Sunda linguistic context, after which that toponym spread, on the wings of Sunda expansion, to various 'New Ceylons', including modern Madagascar and Bahrayn; perhaps Crete was also such a Moon island, under the sway of the Moon goddess Pasiphae ('Widely Radiant') whose father according to some sources was Talos – this the connotations of a solar god. These toponymical and mythological arrangements could have been mediated by local or nearby peoples, hundreds, even thousands of years after any actual and conspicuously Sunda contact had taken place; by that time any original Sunda character may long have been absorbed and integrated in local culture. But even so, the probability of Early Bronze Age Sunda influence in a Persian Gulf location, so close to where the oldest Nuhite Flood stories were attested in Southern Mesopotamia, must make us wonder whether, after all, Oppenheimer was not right when formulating his Special Sunda Hypothesis, postulating decisive Sunda influence upon the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East.

### *7.7. Conclusion: Promising themes for research into the corroboration of the Sunda Hypothesis*

In this chapter we have considered further support for the General Sunda Hypothesis, from such diverse fields as the archaeology of food plants, historical and comparative linguistics, and Egyptology. Carefully picking our way between scraps of evidence thousands of kilometres and thousands of years apart, inevitably we have displayed the tendency to interpret the scattered and contradictory evidence in favour of the General Sunda Hypothesis, while we may have been determined to suppress the opposite tendency of being hypercritical and trying to avoid credulity at all costs. However, there was enough of a convergence between the different sets of data we considered to make it more than mere wishful thinking when we conclude that, amidst many red herrings, we found a number of amazing coincidences pointing in a Sunda direction, as well as a few bits of downright unmistakable positive evidence supporting the Sunda Hypothesis.

This does by no means exhaust the field of possibilities. There is enough reason to continue further research along the lines suggested by the General Sunda Hypothesis:

Whence the thalassaemias in South Asia, Africa and the Mediterranean? Whence the sudden rise of these early civilisations in the Indus, the Persian Gulf and the Northern Red Sea? Whence the rise of nautical societies in the Mediterranean-Pontic region: Minoans, Mycenaean, Carian, Leleges, Tyrrhenians, Corinth, Athens, the Black Sea region and Colchis<sup>218</sup> – with the original Argonaut connotations that Malinowski (1922) so aptly applied, metaphorically, to the Melanesians! – and finally Phoenicians? Come to think of it, could there be Sunda reminiscences behind the ancient tales of (usually sea) voyages to distant lands: Gilgamesh, Osiris (to foreign lands as a culture hero), Odyssey, Dionysus (to India), Argonauts, Aeneid, St Brendan? Whence the striking increase of nautical skills in the eastern Mediterranean in the Middle Bronze Age? In this connection Daedalus (Pausanias, *Descriptio Graeciae*, IX.11.4 f.) is credited with the

invention of the sail, like the culture hero Pakaá on Hawaii (Cotterell 1989: 230)! Others (Willis 1994: 81) give this credit to Daedalus' adversary Minos (legendary founder of the first maritime empire in the West) – Willis 1994: 81; whilst there is also a tradition of attributing that invention to the Nile valley – Barnett 1958). Whence the apparently sudden increase in nautical skills (and boat depictions) in the Northwestern European Bronze Age, the boat-centred Scandinavian rock art and Late Bronze Age / Early Iron Age mobile art of Central Europe, the Nordic Bronze Age trumpet (*lur*) which seems to have a counterpart, not only in Linus' invention of the trumpet in Ancient Greek myth (*cf.* Woudhuizen 2006) but also (in the form of a sea shell) in Indo-Pacific mythology, whence it seems to have found its way into the South Asian and Tibetan cult of Tara and in Mongolian and Tibetan religion (see below, chapter 13). Could a remote awareness of Sunda background be the ultimate source of the ethnicity that bound the Sea Peoples and allowed them to inflict decisive blows to the two major empires of the Eastern Mediterranean at the end of the Bronze Age (Hittites and Egypt)? Could major sea gods, like Poseidon and Achilles (and his mother Thetis), and the conch shells their lesser counterparts (like Nereus, Triton, Proteus and their folk) are sounding, fit into a Sunda pattern of mythological and religious continuity? Could the Ancient Mediterranean Pelasgian population fit in such a framework (*cf.* van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011)? Are the various protector divinities of seamen, from Tara in North India / Tibet to Isis, the Kabeiroi, the Dioscuri / Asvins, Hera (Slater 1992) and St Mary / Stella Maris (Cotterell 1989: 165, 140), mere parallel local inventions or *cognate transformations of hypothetical Sunda Proto-Indonesian divinities*?

Many more isolated indications could be suggested: *e.g.* Elymian, Ligurian, Irish, and further Celtic head-hunting, on the Mediterranean and Atlantic extreme of the postulated Sunda path; and, on the Mozambican / Angolan corridor, head-hunting by the Zambian Ila / Nkoya, and further up the proposed Atlantic Sunda trajectory on the Bight of Benin (*cf.* Hutton 1947, who perceived the Indonesian influence in the latter region very clearly). When below we consider the emerging global maritime network we shall come back to these topics.

But since we have already agreed that the General Sunda Hypothesis as such deserves to be enlisted in mainstream cultural history, these are merely questions for further research. Of all the suggestions given above as to a possible Sunda connection of all the many items of culture, I do not consider any one of them as a proven fact – these suggestions are merely heuristic, yet taken together they drive home the great potential relevance and explanatory power of the General Sunda Hypothesis.





# Chapter 8. The Special Sunda Hypothesis

## Oppenheimer's specific claims in the field of comparative mythology

### *8.1. Introduction*

Let us now leave the General Sunda Hypothesis for what it is (highly credible, and deserving of canonisation as mainstream, yet not to be overestimated as far as its postulated effects are concerned), and turn to Stephen Oppenheimer's second Hypothesis, which in the context of comparative mythology is particularly exciting: *the claim that it is Sunda westbound expansion that brought the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East, including those of the earliest chapters of Genesis.*

Already without going into detail, it is clear that this is a very bold hypothesis, which (even more than Bernal's *Black Athena* thesis, affirming the North Atlantic indebtedness to the Ancient Near East especially Egypt, and – in a later Afrocentrist elaboration – via Egypt to Africa) is refreshingly non-hegemonic and anti-Eurocentric. It goes to extremes in proposing total North Atlantic cultural indebtedness, and gives pride of place to a part of the world that has hitherto mainly been considered as a culturally dependent appendix of mainland Asia – not to say a modern playground

of European (specifically Dutch) imperialism and cultural hegemony, after having lived, during the last two millennia, under marked Indian (Hindu, Buddhist), Islamic and Chinese influences.

To substantiate his mythological claim, Oppenheimer develops a lengthy and sophisticated argument, based on a methodology whose outlines are implicitly *structuralist* – arguing (like most comparative mythologists do, in one way or another) the underlying identity between mythical items whose surface structure is apparently very different. So far-reaching transformations are suggested to link, and to reveal the implied identity of, the mythemes that surface at the western (Ancient Near East) and the eastern (the postulated Sundaland) extremes of the proposed Sunda trajectory. The specific method applied, while ingenious and intelligent, is of Oppenheimer's own invention; for, as we have seen, his sole inspiration in this field is Frazer (1918 (!)). The inevitable sleight-of-hand that any such reduction to identity of very different myths entails, is not problematised – but in this Oppenheimer is, admittedly, far from alone: most comparative mythologists, including myself, rely on an approach that, theoretically, conceptually, methodologically, and operationally, leaves much to be desired; the extreme complexity of the field – forcing one to pick one's way between disciplines as far apart as literary scholarship and genetics, and encompassing in principle the entire range of human societies and languages world-wide and across many millennia – hardly leaves any other option.

## *8.2. Dating, and the hypothesis of East-West diffusion of core mythological themes: the dilemma of ancient Western attestation of literate forms versus much more recent (and often oral) attestation of Eastern forms*

From the perspective of comparative mythology, by far the most interesting, and meritorious, part of Oppenheimer's book is his argument on the indebtedness of Western Flood stories to East and South East Asian prototypes (which, as he rightly argues, also diffused, in fairly original form, into Oceania, whereas in South East Asia today we only find them overlaid with later influences from the great historical civilisations and religions of South, East, and West Asia).

Here, beyond the mere fact of East-West parallels,<sup>219</sup> a fundamental dilemma of interpretation and dating arises. Let us illustrate this by two themes that conceivably are indications of East-West diffusion of myth since the Early Holocene

1. Our first theme is the *throwing-stick*; we have already introduced and referenced it above, and return to it in chapter 13. The throwing-stick (with the returning boomerang as its most spectacular version) is not limited to Australia but has a rather wide distribution. In (a) the Gilgamesh epic, the hero loses a drum stick or throwing-stick: it falls into

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<sup>219</sup> To which Part II, below, is devoted.

the Underworld through a hole and Enkidu (Gilgamesh's marginally humanised friend), rather than retrieving the implement, finds himself trapped there forever. A very similar story is told (b) in the Malay Peninsula among hunter-gatherers.

2. Our second theme combines *The wishing fish* (Aarne-Thompson AT 0555) brother-sister incest threat, the cage (cf. Oppenheimer 2001: 268f): these themes form the background of the fish motif in (a) the Hindu Flood account<sup>220</sup> (where the Flood Hero Manu's rescuer is Matsya, i.e. 'Fish': an avatar of the primal god Vishnu), but a similar story was also repeatedly attested among (b) jungle Aboriginal groups in Central India. That story is also reminiscent of (c) the familiar Flood story involving Nü Wa 女媧 (often with Fu Xi 伏羲), from the Miao people of coastal South China. (cf. Lewis 2006; in van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011 we propose that Fu Xi is etymologically identical to Poseidon, and Nü Wa to Noah).

Intuitively we would consider hunter-gatherers (1c) and Indian Aboriginals (2b) to be closer to a myth's original version, to its origin, so that the other versions (1b, 2a) would appear to be recent derivatives. However, the actual attestation (in writing and / or iconography) the versions attested among hunter-gatherers and jungle Aboriginals are only about a century old, and potentially contaminated by Western (Christian, intellectual) models – if not in the original oral form among the original owners, then still very likely in the process of Western recording and commission to writing; by contrast, the attestation (in writing and / or iconography) of the Gilgamesh epic is up to 4 ka years old, and even that of the *Purusha Purana* and the *Matsya Purana* (although Hindu sacred texts were committed to writing only quite late) may be given at least 1 ka.

In other words: there is the danger of a counter-hegemonic, self-fulfilling prophecy: East-West is anti-Eurocentrist hence politically correct, but (at least in the field of myth) our data, while supportive of some kind of link, do not at all stipulate the direction of that link, since the intuitive argument that attributes primacy to the version with the oldest attestation, would suggest West-East borrowing *towards* Sundaland!

Given the virtual absence of archaeological attestations (except perhaps strange underwater structures before Gujarat, India, and before Taiwan) and the absence of historical traditions (except the Atlantis myth) of a great emanating civilisation in the East; and given the massive attestations of great civilisations in the western Old World, we are better advised not to jump to conclusions but to investigate, first, if the hypothesis of West-East movement might also fit the scanty empirical evidence we have at our disposal. Below we will encounter a specific application of the same problem, when we look at the huge differences in attestation dates between Flood myths East and West (Fig. 10.3).

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<sup>220</sup> *Matsya Purana*; *Purusha Purana*.

Contrary to an inveterate stereotype among non-anthropologists, we must admit that people with less elaborate forms of social organisation and less advanced modes of production do not necessarily hold the oldest, purest traditions and myths. If languages, symbols, implements, other artefacts, and formal systems such as games and signs, can penetrate to such peoples from other more developed centres of civilisation, so can traditions and myths that have percolated through our (proto-)globalising world of the last few millennia, from the Early Bronze Age on.

THE NAME OF THE NJUKA HIGH GOD. An interesting example of how a Great Tradition can take refuge in a remote, local periphery is the following: A married couple of field anthropologists with whom I have associated for decades (the husband was my first lecturer of anthropology in 1964-65; the wife was my colleague at the Free University, Amsterdam, in the early 1990s) had conducted several years of intensive participatory fieldwork among the Njuka Maroons of Suriname. After having been kept in suspense during all this time, the secret name of God was finally to be revealed to them by the local Njuka shrine priests – and much to our couple's disappointment the revelation proved an anticlimax: the secret name turned out to be *Jehovah* – the central theorem of the Judaeo-Christian tradition whose proselytising has covered the entire world! (Thoden van Velzen, personal communication, 1973).

NEW GUINEA AND AUSTRALIA MYTHOLOGICALLY PRISTINE? Other relevant examples could be gleaned from Australia and New Guinea. These regions have been separated from the rest of the Old World by c. 70 km of open sea even when the sea level was at its lowest point since the emergence of Anatomically Modern Humans. Australia and New Guinea feature in the Out-of-Africa scenario as the final destinations of the first Out-of-Africa migration (80-60 ka BP). So one would suppose that these regions have preserved the contents of Pandora's Box in fairly pure form, and that these contents dominate there. Nonetheless, not only local transformations and innovations, but also later waves of immigration have greatly diversified this pattern, and brought Australia and New Guinea much more in line with cultural and mythological contents in Indonesia, Oceania and South India. In Australia, in addition to the original Nigrito wave, later waves brought the Murrayans to the South East, and the Carpentarians to the North, thus restoring considerable continuity with the cultural history of the rest of the Old World (Tindale 1978). By the same token, there has been a considerable immigration from later groups from South East Asia into New Guinea, introducing Austronesian into originally Indo-Pacific-speaking New Guinea (Oppenheimer 1998). As a result, finding a particular mythological or ethnographic item in New Guinea in historical times does not necessarily mean that one is afforded a straight peep into Pandora's Box – in all likelihood one has at hand a much more recent and widespread mythological product of the percolation and transformation of myth after the Out-of-Africa Exodus. We have already seen that this principle applies to male genital mutilation among Australian Aboriginals, which (in view of its absence in New Guinea and among the Andaman Islanders) is most probably not a trait from Pandora's Box, but a much more recent innovation from Central Asia, brought to Australia as the very periphery of Austric / mtDNA Type B expansion (cf. van Binsbergen 2018).

Divination techniques, board games and musical instruments are known to have crossed cultural boundaries and end up among remote people who were not their original owners or inventors.

The counter-hegemonic form of knowledge production which argues that the fundamental elements of present-day North Atlantic culture derive must necessarily from elsewhere, from Africa, Ancient Egypt, the Ancient Near East, or Indonesia, is *in the first place an experiment in present-day trans-cultural humility, tolerance and accommodation*: how much of my own historical heritage am I prepare to share, and

to yield, to my intercultural neighbour today?

And once that problem has been confronted and is, more or less, out of the way, we may face another truth: it is, in general, unlikely that cultural themes have one clearly defined and clearly identifiable origin – unless we can go back to the earliest phases of the cultural history of Anatomically Modern Humans, when cultural ramification can still be assumed to have followed the demic diffusion of mtDNA Types. Normally, in the more recent periods (proto-Neolithic and after, including the Sunda context) cultural themes are the product of percolation, innovation and transformation over rather vast stretches of space and time. The real benefit of the Sunda Hypothesis, and of Oppenheimer, therefore, appears to me that it helps us to render thinkable, not a complete intellectual dependence of today's North Atlantic region (or of humanity as a whole) from any one continent or region in recent millennia (although there is of course the general indebtedness of the order of magnitude of 100 ka: 'Out of Africa'), but a transcontinental multicentred, multi-directional network of exchange, in which maritime links are likely to have played an important part, as we shall see in the final chapters of this monograph.

1. One way out of the dilemma of ancient Western attestation of literate forms versus much more recent (and often oral) attestation of Eastern forms, is: to find datable iconographic (*i.e.* archaeological) evidence that allows us to shift the balance in attestation, and claim a time depth of several millennia, or more, for the Eastern variants. Places like the Niah Cave, Borneo, and numerous (but difficult to date) Aboriginal rock paintings in Australia, may help us here; even though the problems of fixing – intersubjectively, before a forum of professionals – a recognised mythical motif to prehistoric rock art are immense (*cf.* van Binsbergen 2018: ch. 8, 2012a: ch. 6).
2. Another way out is to scrutinise the existing corpus of myth for topographical and temporal clues pointing either East or West, such as (Oppenheimer 1998: 268 *f.*) the Malaya or Malabar reference in the *Matsya Purana* (which we have just encountered as a version of the Hindu Flood myth).
3. A third way out, and by far the most promising, is typological and methodological:
  - Suppose we could break down each of the myths in our corpus into constituent components
  - Suppose we could argue, by means of a hermeneutical analysis, that some of these components are more primary and others more secondary, derived (which would allow us to suggest an ordinal temporal sequence between the components)
  - And suppose that we could situate, in space and time, attestations with a large number of primary components as against attestations with a smaller number of primary components, and with more clearly derived components
  - Then that would give us a qualitative impression of prece-

dence and indebtedness of East or West, which we could subsequently try to underpin with linguistic, archaeological and genetic arguments.

Method (3) is Oppenheimer's main method throughout the mythological part of *Eden in the East*, and (never mind his infatuation with antiquated Frazer, and his lack of exposure to the very extensive twentieth-century specialist literature of approaches to myth) it makes for the most exciting parts of the book. Method (3) is also very much in the line of my own 'Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology'; and thus we can pinpoint my main difference with Oppenheimer on the point of comparative mythology not as one of overall method, but as a difference in geographic and temporal scope: Oppenheimer expects a satisfactory explanation from a model that sees Sunda as the sole source of mythological initiative, on a shallow time scale of 7 ka – I employ a global geographic scope with a time scale of 80 ka, and potentially 200 ka.

### 8.3. *Glimpses of Oppenheimer's myth analysis*

Let us now consider Oppenheimer's comparative mythological argument in some detail.

In *Eden in the East*, elaborate attempts to spell out the accumulation of constituent components, and the prevalence of these in the East, are made in Oppenheimer's Tables 7 (Oppenheimer 1998: 307) and especially 8 (Oppenheimer 1998: 322). Table 8 is in terms of percentages of stories from an otherwise undefined sample frame / corpus, and therefore again fails to convince methodologically. Most illuminating I found table 12 (Oppenheimer 1998: 387), where the three themes of the Moon's waxing and waning, the tree of life, and rejuvenation through cast skins, are discussed in mutual relation – with an attempt to map the typology intercontinentally in his Figure 42 (Oppenheimer 1998: 389; this is really the promising beginning of a methodologically adequate typological component analysis). Equally illuminating as giving insight in implied constituent components and in a sustained narrative logic extending from Egypt to New Britain, is his Table 13, pointing out the underlying connection of rising and dying tree spirit, loving Earth mother / sister, and jealous brother.

Leaving aside Oppenheimer's discussion of Flood myths to which I will return shortly, part of Oppenheimer's typological argument in favour of an East-West transmission for all of these themes is contained in statistical analyses whose aggregate statistical results<sup>221</sup> the reader learns, but not the calculatory details, nor the original data distributions, and which therefore do not convince me. Apparently Oppenheimer here follows a biosciences practice, according to which it is not unusual to publish only aggregate results. In the biosciences,

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<sup>221</sup> E.g. Oppenheimer's 1998 Table 9 p. 352 – on Separation of Heaven and Earth; table 10 p. 372 – on anthropogony; table 11 p. 375 on the fate of the 'model' involved in the creation of humankind.

procedures and protocols to create and process data are more or less fixed so any specialist knows *grosso modo* how the material has been processed. In the social and cultural sciences and the humanities however this is not the case, data are far from fixed but highly subject to personal interpretation, and the method of their processing therefore is never self-evident and can make all the difference. Therefore summary, aggregate reporting of results is scarcely meaningful in the social and cultural sciences.

**Table 7. Story motifs in the creation of Heavens and Earth. Motifs grouped into those that characterise Eurasia and Oceania, and those that are found in other continents or have a more general worldwide distribution.**

Eurasia and Oceania	Other continents & worldwide
Watery chaos with dragon at start	Watery chaos at start
Apsu (a body of fresh water)	Dry rocky start
First light before luminaries	
The word as a creative force	
Separation of sky and earth	Sun
Moon/lake complex	Moon
Mother earth (+/- father Sky,	
Land raisers (fishers and ploughers)	(divers, driers and scratchers)
Parricide	
Use of body parts to make elements of cosmos	
The wind as a creative force	
Incest at creation	
Use of seven in describing aspects of cosmogony	
Cosmic egg	

Fig. 8.1. An example of Oppenheimer's (1998: 307; ©) handling of cosmogonic motifs worldwide

**Table 9. Mutual association of 10 individual motifs of the story of 'Separation'.** Each value indicates the chance or 'odds' of finding a pair of motifs in the same story. An odds ratio of 1 (i.e. 1:1) or less means no association. A high value with one or more asterisks shows a significant link.

	Water Dragon	First Light	Creative Word	Separation of Heaven & Earth	Parricide	Use of Body	Creative Wind	Sevens	Creator Incest
Light	2.4								
Creative Word	4.9*	5.9**							
Separation of Heaven & Earth	3.5*	16***	15***						
Parricide	3.0*	3.1*	1.6	4.0***					
Use of Body	2.4	6.2***	3.4*	8.1***	9.3***				
Creative Wind	4.0**	2.8*	5.3**	2.7*	5.9***	4.1**			
Sevens	5.7***	3.1*	3.3*	3.1**	2.5*	3.7**	3.9**		
Creator Incest	3.2*	0.7	1.6	1.3	4.4***	3.8***	2.5*	2.3	
Cosmic Egg	2.5	1.7	2.9	3.0*	2.4	3.2**	3.3*	2.1	1.2

Key: \* Chances of random association less than 1 in 20.  
 \*\* Chances of random association less than 1 in 100.  
 \*\*\* Chances of random association less than 1 in 1000.

Fig. 8.2. An example of Oppenheimer's (1998: 352; ©) handling of statistical associations between motifs

With the specific exception of the elaborate Flood myths (Oppenheimer 1998: ch. 9-10, 242-296; see below) I am not convinced that Oppenheimer, with all his scholarship on West and South Asian myths and despite the rich complexity of his argument, has managed to prove his case of East-West transmission for the themes that he considers. These themes are mainly the following:

- *Dragons* (my NarCom 13 'the Rainbow Serpent') and *watery origins* (what I have called, in the context of my Aggregative Diachronic Model, 'the Primal Waters and the Flood', NarCom 11) (Oppenheimer 1998: chapter 11). I consider NarCom 13 to have been in Pandora's Box (> 80 ka BP, Africa), and NarCom 11 to have emerged in Central Asia c. 30 ka BP – both are therefore supposed to be much older than Sunda, and if they have to be subsumed under a Sunda heading, it is only as older motifs to be transformed and innovated, and subsequently spread, in their new Sunda-induced form.

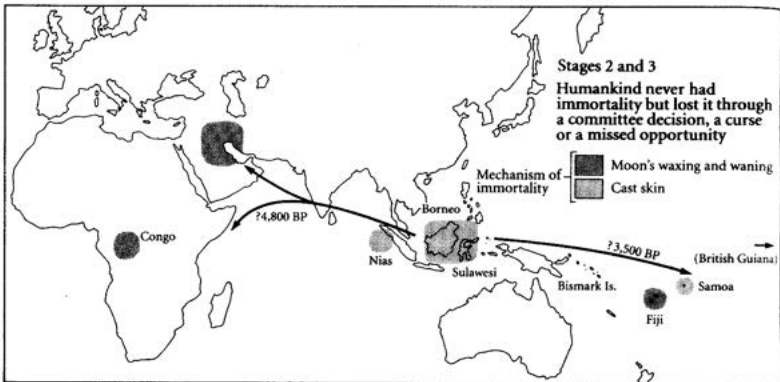
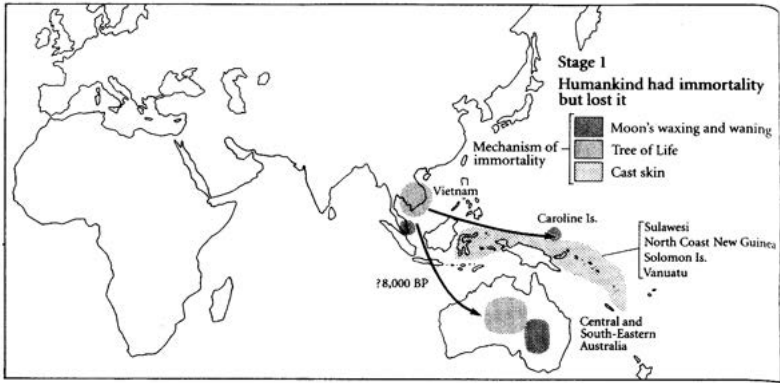


- *Heaven and Earth*, which for me comprise a number of different NarComs: The Separation of Heaven and Earth (NarCom 1); the Cosmic Egg (which I initially situated in Pandora's Box as part of NarCom 4 but later found to be much more recent; van Binsbergen 2020e); the Primal Light (which I would consider under the heading of the White Primal gods, NarCom 21), the great luminaries (NarCom 9, the Moon; and 35, the Sun – although the latter NarCom was already implied in NarCom 3), and (not considered as a separate NarCom by me) the Seven Sisters *i.e.* the Pleiades (Oppenheimer 1998: chapter 12). 'Separation stories' play a central role in Oppenheimer's argument; I agree with him that the Separation of Heaven and Earth (NarCom 1) – and their subsequent Re-connection (NarCom 2) – has constituted one of the dominant cosmogonic themes of Anatomically Modern Humans – but with a very wide intercontinental distribution, hence probably much older than the 7 ka that separate us from the proposed Sunda complex, and therefore with an origin elsewhere in Asia. The same applies to the other NarComs mentioned here under 'Heaven and Earth' – see my Table 4.2 and 4.3, and my earlier accounts of the Aggregative Diachronic Model for details.
- *The Creation of Man* (Oppenheimer 1998: ch. 13), which I would consider under a number of different NarComs: The Earth as Primary (NarCom 10); From the Tree (NarCom 12); the Lightning Bird (NarCom 4), all of which I consider to have been in Pandora's Box, hence to be more than 10 times older than Sunda – so that, for this motif again, Sunda can only have been a context of recycling.<sup>222</sup>
- *The quest for immortality* (Oppenheimer 1998: ch. 14), which I would consider under NarCom 20: 'Contradictory Messengers Bring Death'; personally I have not yet made a detailed distributional analysis and historical reconstruction of this NarCom, but I tend to take very seriously the judgment of Yuri Berezkin (2007) who claims that this NarCom was part of Pandora's Box, so has a very ancient, pre-Out of Africa, African provenance, again more than ten times older than Sunda.
- *The Dying and Rising God* (Oppenheimer 1998: ch. 15), which I would discuss under the heading of the NarCom 12 'From the tree', but where the serpent theme belongs to a totally different NarCom: NarCom 13, the Rainbow Serpent, whereas Oppenheimer's *Frau-Holle* motif would for me belong to 'The Earth as primary' (NarCom 10).
- *Cain and Abel* (Oppenheimer 1998: ch. 16): in regard of this motif I do have

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<sup>222</sup> In the light of the *Genesis* story of the Fall, the serpent etc., even if told in the 6<sup>th</sup> c. BCE by Israelite religious specialists speaking an Afroasiatic and not an Eurasianic language, Hebrew, it is remarkable that Eurasianic \*dghem- 'serpent' can hardly be distinguished, also in its reflexes, from \*ghem- 'Earth' (*Tower of Babel*, 'Eurasianic etymology'). This detail suggests considerable influence from Indo-European speakers upon the *Old Testament* even though the 7<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>-c. BCE redaction of the Bible must have been largely the work of Afroasiatic (> Semitic > Hebrew) speakers.

NarCom 14, 'duality', and NarCom 28 'the combat'; but I did not see reason to specifically define a mytheme which Oppenheimer stresses most and for which, again, he claims an Eastern origin on the basis of its latter-day attestation in New Guinea (and North Australia): 'the two brothers conflict'. Alternatively, the duality theme may arguably be Sunda, but the combat motif is so widespread (Fontenrose 1958; Flood stories worldwide and especially in the Americas) that I would be disinclined to tie the combat theme specifically to Sunda. Much more light will be thrown on the combat theme in my forthcoming quantitative and distributional analysis of Flood myths.



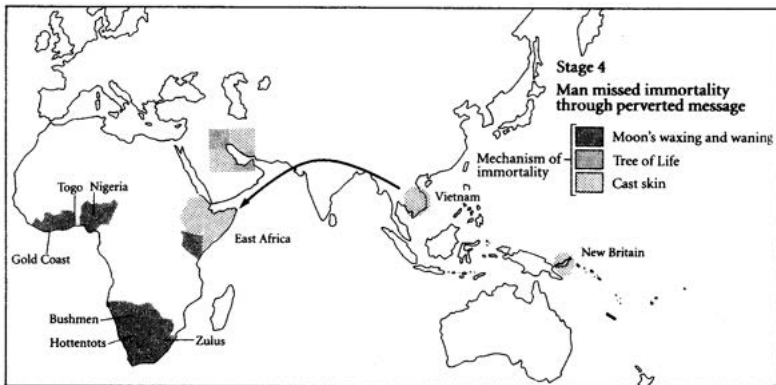


Fig. 8.3. An example of Oppenheimer's (1998: 388; ©) handling of intercontinental connections around the motif of the quest for immortality

I am afraid this is not just a matter of me preferring my own subjective classification to Oppenheimer's. Oppenheimer defined his core mythemes on the basis of his impressive knowledge of the mythologies of the Indo-Pacific realm, and with the aim of proving them to be at the root of well-known Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern core mythologies. As stated above, my NarComs were distinguished on the basis of a corpus of African cosmogonic myths attested in historical times – and subsequently projected onto Eurasian (mainly literate) mythologies and their distribution maps, so as to try and identify pre-Out of Africa NarComs if any, and to suggest how, upon that handful of NarComs in Pandora's Box, the others may have emerged as transformation and innovations, in the course of an extended world history of mythology which largely coincided with the world history of the spread and diversification of Anatomically Modern Humans in Asia, along with their mtDNA Types, their main language groups, and their modes of production. Both in time and in space my model is far more comprehensive, and consequently – if I may say so myself – more convincing. Later, in my multivariate analysis of Flood myths world-wide, more than a dozen further NarComs could be identified and added. Both Oppenheimer's classification, and my own, initial classification, are informed by a specific, essentially regional research perspective, and in principle my classification cannot lay greater claims to objectivity and universality than Oppenheimer's. However, whereas Oppenheimer's historical reconstruction stops short at merely 7 ka as the time perspective that the General Sunda Hypothesis affords, my time frame is more than ten times more extensive. Moreover, whereas Oppenheimer's approach is predicated on the assumption (whose stark nature he admits) of a unique Sunda origin for

'Eurasia[s] (...) library of folklore' (Oppenheimer 1998: xiii)

within that comparatively shallow time depth, my global approach is based on the generally accepted Out-of-Africa model for Anatomically Modern Humans, but in-

stead of tracing all subsequent NarComs to that primordial African origin, sketches an extended and prolonged genesis of world mythology along a number of tentatively identified Centres of Intensified Transformation and Innovation, closely attuned to the spasmodic historical rhythm of the emergence of mtDNA Types, major language groups, and innovations in the field of modes of production.

Much as I have been thrilled and impressed by Oppenheimer's approach, it seems no idle boast to suggest that my classification and theoretical position are superior to his, precisely because they allow for the possibility (even the high probability) that most of the mythemes Oppenheimer's treats in his analysis, had an origin outside Sunda, and had a extensive prior history in Africa and Asia long before Sunda. They may be considered to have ended up as Sunda all right; but they only arrived in the Sunda context after a very protracted history elsewhere; and even though they may be argued to have been transformed and innovated in the Sunda context, and have been subsequently redistributed from Sundaland across much of the globe, that does not mean that they were originally and essentially Sunda. However, as the great historian of Africa Jan Vansina (1983; cf. van Binsbergen 1987, 1992) asked in a famous discussion of Luc de Heusch's (1972, 1982) conjectural prehistory of Bantu[-speakers'] thought: 'Is elegance proof?' In order to decide between Oppenheimer's Sunda model, and my own Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology, and to ultimately formulate a model that is superior to both these models, what we need is not just an argument on comparative theoretical merits but also closer empirical scrutiny. This is the subject of the next few chapters.

We must admire the visionary nature of Oppenheimer's approach, which has taken him far outside his familiar domains of paediatrics and genetics, and brought him to address perennial themes of major world religions (the *Genesis* mythology has been foundational for Judaism, Christianity and Islam), and confront the hegemonic, Eurocentric perspective of the modern world. However, as the comparable case of Martin Gardiner Bernal and his *Black Athena* Thesis has abundantly demonstrated, good intentions do not automatically make good scholarship, and if good intentions lead to results that challenge the established paradigms of scholarship, the mainstream response has often been hypercritical, harsh and violent. This is not simply the expression of personal interests, protection of established positions, even of *hate* – as Oppenheimer (echoing Bernal) complains. Established mainstream paradigms are there for a reason, they are not in the first place fortresses of academic power but particularly the results of serious, painstaking efforts by a large number of researchers over many years; and therefore mainstream researchers would not be doing their job if they would give up such paradigms overnight and without a serious fight. Tolerant, constructive, and defending – I hardly recognise myself! – though I have been in Bernal's case (van Binsbergen 1997a / 2011a), my first reaction to Oppenheimer's laudable flight of scholarly imagination has been meticulous and respectful, but violently dismissive (van Binsbergen with Isaak 2008). But you cannot keep a good man down, and the present book, over a decade later, is meant to extensively show on second thoughts the merits of Oppenheimer's explorations into uncharted territory.

# Chapter 9. Why it is important to put the Special Sunda Hypothesis to the test<sup>223</sup>

## *9.1. Sunda as one possible solution to the puzzles posed by my own research since the 1980s*

Spurred on by the many important applications and implications of the General Sunda Hypothesis which I could see in my own work (at least, if that thesis would prove to be tenable at all), I had several specific reasons from the realm of comparative mythology to further investigate the extent to which Oppenheimer's specifically mythological claims could be true.

Up to 1990 I had done extensive anthropological and ethnohistorical research in a number of African settings (the highlands of North Western Tunisia – which gave me access to Arabic and Islam as idioms of proto-globalisation; the suburbs of the Zambian capital, Lusaka; Nkoya village society in rural Western Zambia; rural Guinea

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<sup>223</sup> Meanwhile, I have conducted a short spell of African fieldwork specifically meant to put the Sunda Hypothesis to the test: in the Western Grassfields, Cameroon, 2016. The results were disappointing in the sense that little more than a few minor indications of Sunda influence was found. But in scientific research, a negative result is also a result. Cf. van Binsbergen, in prep. (g) When this field research was conceived and conducted, I had not yet realised – as is one of the serendipities of the present monograph – that Sunda traces, supposed to relate to Proto-Indonesians more than half a dozen millennia BP, are unlikely to look like present-day Indonesian traits.

Bissau; and the boom town of Francistown, Botswana, with extensions into the rural North Eastern District of that country). Most of this research had comparative implications, especially the Zambian research, which furnished the inspiration and empirical baseline for a comprehensive regional comparison (van Binsbergen 1981a) of the genesis and development of royal cults, cults of affliction and syncretistic Christian movements in South Central Africa from the middle of the second millennium CE, thus reconstructing half a millennium of pre-colonial pre- and protohistory.

Participating in the Africanist research work of many other researchers as colleague, head of department and academic supervisor, had further broadened my comparative scope. The Botswana research made me end up as an initiated and practising African urban diviner-healer in an ecstatic cult, whose divinatory system soon turned out to have antecedents throughout Southern Africa, but with links to West Africa, Madagascar, the Comoros Islands, the Islamic divination system of *‘ilm al-raml* علم الرمل ‘sand science’ as it emerged in Iraq by the end of the 1st millennium CE, to Renaissance magic at Early Modern West European royal courts, and even to the well-known Chinese system of *Yi Jing* 易經 whose roots go back to at least the first millennium BCE;<sup>224</sup> besides, in the Southern African *sangoma* cult of which the Francistown lodge that I joined was an offshoot, strong South Asian elements of both Hindu and Buddhist origin proved increasingly conspicuous (van Binsbergen 2003: ch. 8). Here the old and fantastic idea (cherished in many esoteric and New Age publications, to begin with Blavatsky – 1877, 1950) of an intercontinental network of specialists in divinatory and occult sciences began to take on very tangible, empirical proportions.<sup>225</sup> Yet at this stage of my long-range research, for the specific period involved (the last four millennia), and for the specific topic involved (divination systems, later extended to board games and astronomical nomenclature) I assumed that overland contacts (the Silk Road and other caravan routes) constituted the principal technology of intercontinental communication, although I had begun to look at Chinese-Persian Gulf contacts, and circum-Indian Ocean contacts in general, in order to account for what I then believed was the spread of *Yi Jing* to Abbasid Iraq, and of the resulting *‘ilm al-raml* to East and Southern Africa. At the time I was still under the impression that the wide spread of clearly *‘ilm ar-raml* related forms of divination in West Africa (Fa, Sixteen Cowries)<sup>226</sup> directly resulted

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<sup>224</sup> Van Binsbergen 1995b, 1996b, 2012a.

<sup>225</sup> In the Arabic / Islamic ‘Secret Sciences’ (divination, astrology, magic etc.) legendary authorities like the Indian Kanaka (‘Honeyman’, by an Indo-European etymology) and ʿUmṭum al-Hindi (perhaps identical with the former) play an important role, along with such standard authorities like the prophet Idrīs / Inūṭ / Enoḥ, and the angel Jibril / Gabriel (Steinschneider 1864: 146, n; Ullman 1972). Are these contemporary references to South Asia merely literary devices of exoticising? Do they reflect the very genuine influence India has exerted on the Arabic / Islamic sciences (cf. al-Biruni, whose 1029 CE book (1888) on India created an intellectual sensation in the 11th-century Islamic world); or do they reflect a reminiscence, in Indian disguise, of prehistoric Sunda influence on the Arabic / Islamic intellectual world?

<sup>226</sup> Cf. Bascom 1969, 1980; McClelland 1982; Bewaji 1992; Drewal Thompson & Drewal, 1985; Trautmann

from Trans-Saharan caravan trade between West Africa and the Middle East.<sup>227</sup> It is only after reading Dick-Read's (2005) convincing analysis of the absence of direct overland trading contacts between the Bight of Benin and the Middle East (see Fig. 10.25), and his stress on the maritime route from the Indian Ocean around Cape of Good Hope as the source of cowries, a stray Roman coin fund at Buea, Cameroon,<sup>228</sup> even major food crops, that many loose ends in my analysis fell into place: the striking resemblances between Venda and Yoruba divination boards and bowls; the equally striking correspondences between the interpretative catalogues of (ultimately and clearly *'ilm al raml* derived) geomantic divination on Madagascar, in Southern Africa, and at the Bight of Benin; the many reminiscences of South and South East Asian popular cultic life in ecstatic religion on the Bight of Benin especially the *vodun* cultic tradition of Benin and Togo, – they all spoke of an intercontinental maritime network joining the African East coast and West coast, and extending into South, ultimately South East and East, Asia. However, there was no evidence of any Indonesian contribution to geomantic divination, and therefore it was not along this specific line of research that I came to consider the Sunda theses.

While the painstaking and sustained exploration of these intercontinental divinatory ramifications made me concentrate on a complex bundle of long-range research since 1990 (which finally led me to Oppenheimer's Sunda theses), my Zambian research continued. It was in the early 1990s (van Binsbergen 1993b, 2003d) that I realised that kingship among the Nkoya – hitherto (*e.g.* van Binsbergen 1992) treated more or less as in continuity with the other aspects of their society and culture – was in many ways in extreme opposition with these other elements: while the surrounding commoner villages were characterised by a sense of primary production, egalitarianism, reciprocity and an abhorrence of violence, the royal courts were (at least under pre-colonial conditions) parasitically thriving on the agricultural production by slaves, on raiding and on long-distance trade, extreme status differences were emphasised and ceremonially enacted there, while extreme physical and occult violence were standard expressions of Nkoya court life. It was not the first time that anthropologists and historians had been confronted with such inner contradictions within one society (*e.g.* Leach 1954), and still clinging to (a Marxian version of) the structural-functionalist paradigm, I initially sought to explain these contradictions

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1939-1940; Verger 1957; Maupoil 1943.

<sup>227</sup> Later I found strong evidence to the effect that the origin of geomancy was to be sought in West Asia, so that the relationship between *'ilm al-raml* and *Yi Jing* despite influence from China upon Iraq by the end of the first millennium CE, was yet largely collateral, both being applications of a divinatory and classificatory system emerging in the Pontic-Anatolian region in the Pre-Pottery Neolithic, c. 10 ka BP (van Binsbergen 2013. The global history of divining bowls, with Graeco-Roman, Persian / Jewish, Chinese and Southern African ramifications, although relevant, is too complex to do justice to here. Also *cf.* Davis 1955.

<sup>228</sup> Bent 1969 / 1992 remarks on a similar, Antoninian Roman coin found in Zimbabwe. That this is probably a tell-tale sign of a network involving both the Bight of Benin / Cameroon, and the interior of Southern Africa is suggested by the fact that divining bowls from both regions are remarkably similar, have unmistakable prototypes in Tang Dynasty Chinese ceramics, and both serve a superficially localised form of geomancy based on a prototype first attested in Abbasid Iraq by the end of the first millennium CE.

as primarily a balanced institutional arrangement springing from the local historical dynamics of Nkoya society. Given the structural-functionalist paradigmatic orientation of African Studies in the 1970s and 1980s, it was rather unthinkable that the Nkoya kings constituted, with their complex institutional court arrangements, what in fact local Nkoya sources literally said they constituted: a foreign element from a distant Northern geographic origin ('Kola') introduced into a South Central African world whose material culture (as testified by pottery finds), had been remarkable continuous over two millennia.

In the mid-1990s, after a year of full-time participation in the Working Group on Mesopotamian Religion and Magic of the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS, Wassenaar), I realised (van Binsbergen 2010a) that the oral traditions from Nkoyaland which I had analysed (van Binsbergen 1987, 1992) as if they faithfully reflected local political, ecological and economic changes over the past half millennium, in fact contained many fragmented elements in which the mythological traditions of the Ancient Near East, Ancient Egypt, and South Asia were unexpectedly but unmistakably refracted. The analysis of this state of affairs was to form the core of my book draft *Global Bee Flight*, but after writing hundreds of pages I shelved the project because – lacking then, even more than today, the resources of genetic, linguistic and archaeological knowledge necessary to bring such a project to a satisfactory conclusion – I could not identify a feasible model that explained the disconcerting long-range ramifications of Nkoya local culture. The *Black Athena* / Afrocentrist paradigm which I pressed into service for this purpose, soon proved to be hopelessly inadequate, because in this case – and much against my general theoretical inclination at the time! – Africa appeared as the recipient, not as the source, of general Old World mythological themes. A decade later, steeped in intercontinental long-range research of ever widening scope, did I realise that we need not look at Nkoya kingship and society as one self-contained local package, and while the structural-functionalist model continued to be useful to explain the how Nkoya society has managed to juggle with these contradictions without being destroyed by them, I am now more and more wondering whether the discontinuity between Nkoya royal courts, and commoner segments of their society, is not partly that between Sunda-derived invaders, and a subjugated local population. Meanwhile the *Global Bee Flight* manuscript has recently (2020) been scheduled for publication, two decades behind time.

In the meantime, as an offshoot of my preoccupation with the *Black Athena* debate (van Binsbergen 1996, 1997a, 2000, 2010a), and in the context of my chair in ethnic studies at the Free University, Amsterdam (1990-1998), I had started to engage in research into the ethnicity of the Sea People of the Late Bronze Age, jointly with my then PhD student Fred Woudhuizen (*cf.* Woudhuizen 2006). This had not only led me to consider Aegean nautical history (*e.g.* by my new close reading and re-interpretation of the 'Catalogue of Ships' in Homer, *Iliad* 2, against the background of the existing, impressive scholarship on that famous text), but also to scrutinise the first chapters of *Genesis*, especially *Genesis 10* (again the subject of a library of previous scholarship, going back two millennia), for clues as to the ethnic structures prevailing in the Early Iron Age (when that text received its main redac-



tion) and projected back into the Middle Bronze Age (which was purportedly treated in that text). In this context I encountered a number of puzzles which, finally, forced me to put the Sunda Hypotheses in the forefront of my research, and to subject it to what I hoped would be a decisive test. In the first place, *Genesis 10* is situated in a wider narrative that is essentially a story of creation, destruction through Flood, and second creation; I could only exert the necessary historical criticism on the Table of Nations (which is essentially a list of ethnic groups, at various levels of inclusion, extending from North Africa and the Eastern Sahara to Southern Europe and the Middle East), once I had a clearer picture of the comparative historical status of *Genesis* as a cosmogonic and cosmoclastic (*i.e.* Flood) story against the background of the global distribution of such stories, and of their variety and perhaps convergence. This question addressed ethnicity as perceived, and as projected back into the Bronze Age, by Middle-Iron-Age religious specialists in Palestine who had the task of producing the first coherent, systematic redaction of the *Genesis* text, in the 7<sup>th</sup>-6th century BCE. Thus I hoped to derive, from a close and critical reading of a local ethnic text in the form of *Genesis*, a model that *mutatis mutandis* could be applied to another, adjacent ethnic situation in the same period: the ethnicity of the Sea Peoples at the end of the Mediterranean Bronze Age.

Here further puzzles arose. The concrete volume of specific archaeological, epigraphic and documentary information on the Sea Peoples is so limited (Woudhuizen 2006) that only with a great deal of *Hineininterpretierung* ('liberally creative superimposed interpretation'), with the aid of a theoretically and comparatively reinforced historical imagination, could one hope to solve the puzzle of who the Sea Peoples were, where they came from, and what was the binding force that enabled them to destroy one major empire (Hatti / Hittites), and decisively and lastingly unsettle another (Egypt). The question is of eminent importance for world cultural history, for it was only the destruction of these two imperial powers that allowed for the centre of cultural initiative to shift, in the course of the Iron Age, from West Asia / North East Africa, to the Central Mediterranean (Carthage, Greece / Sicily, Rome), as a jumping-board for the subsequent cultural dominance of Europe (and by extension the North Atlantic region) in the second half of the second millennium CE. In the absence of information on their culture, religion, ideology, cultic organisation, military and naval organisation, and with only a few fragments of information concerning their dress, weapons, ships and other means of transportation, and the fact that one of the nine identified groups practised male genital mutilation – how could one make the most of these scraps of information in order to find a tentative answer to these questions? My strategy has been to weave a net of symbolic, cultural, religious, cosmological, mythological, linguistic, archaeological and genetic interpretation so theoretically informed, so tightly meshed, so widely applicable in a geographic sense, and so intersubjectively and interdisciplinarily persuasive, that even such few concrete data as we have on the Sea Peoples could be systematically interpreted and yield a tentative answer to our questions. This has been the implied or hidden agenda behind much of my research into comparative mythology. In the process, a concrete guiding question to be answered was (in the wake of Karst 1931a):

*what was the origin of the apparent rise of nautical skills and nautical activities in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Early to Middle Bronze Age?*

Gradually I took up the idea that the combination of the General and the Special Sunda Hypotheses might contain the key to most of the outstanding questions concerning the ethnicity of the Sea Peoples and the cultural dynamics of the Bronze Age Mediterranean – by seeing there, from the sail-inventing Daedalus to the conchthreading Cocalus, the Ligurian head-hunters and the throwing-stick wielding Gilgamesh, a strong Sunda *i.e.* Neolithic Proto-Indonesian, influence. Now, ten years later, I have partly given up this explanation, but it functioned as the indispensable stepping-stone towards, what I now consider, the correct explanation: Sea People ethnicity as based on an ethnically self-conscious and self-named (Karst: *autophylic*) Mediterranean-Pontic ethnico-genetic cluster during the Neolithic and Bronze Ages; for this cluster I propose the *analytical* term ‘Pelagian’, although I am fully aware of the gaudy confusion with which historical actors from the Iron Age have used the term Pelasgian / Πελασγοί, Πελάσγιος, Πελασγικός).

Woudhuizen, in his 2006 synthesis on the Sea Peoples, proposed to answer the question as to the ethnicity of the Sea Peoples as follows: they were, in his opinion, members of a chain of Late-Bronze Age Mediterranean societies

1. propelled by the push of expanding Urnfielder culture in Central Europe
2. attracted by the riches of Hatti and Egypt, which were well-known among prospective Sea People societies because of trading contacts and personal mercenary services in especially the Egyptian army;
3. united by a general sense of ethnic communality, whose identifiable main component lay in their belonging to the Indo-European language community.

As an analysis of ethnicity, this could only be the beginning of an answer. For given the high degree of disintegration that Indo-European without the slightest doubt already displayed by the end of the Bronze Age, one can only doubt that sharing an Indo-European language was enough to constitute a *subjective* bond of ethnic identity solidarity as perceived by the historic actors themselves – a bond strong enough to brave the seas over a distance of nearly two thousand kilometres (at least, for those Sea Peoples who, by the widespread scholarly identification of *Šrdn* as Sardinians and *Trš* as Tyrrhenians were supposed to have come from the Northern Central Mediterranean), and to organise themselves with such effective solidarity that rich and militarily well-organised states could be dealt a vicious blow. Such doubt remains, even if we may assume, with Woudhuizen, that, with the language group, came a whole package of attending socio-political institutions and religious beliefs and practices: a tripartite<sup>229</sup> layered structure of society, the institution of kingship, a recognisable pantheon, *etc.* And apart from the presumable Indo-Europeanness, neither the pull of distant riches, nor the push of Urnfields-associated expanding neighbours to the

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<sup>229</sup> Note that the model proposed by Karst, consisting of local or regional systems each with four superimposed layers, is not Dumézilian tripartite, but – apparently appropriately – more archaically and pre-Indo-European, quadripartite.

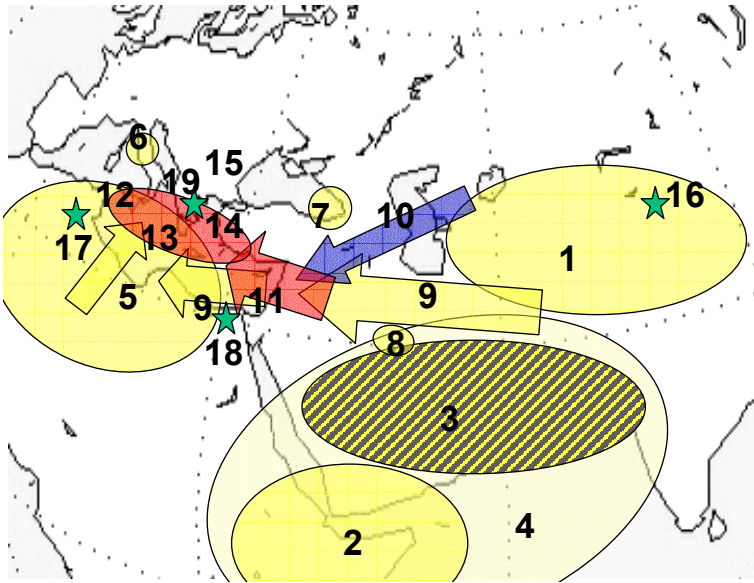
North, would be enough to forge the apparently very heterogeneous conglomerate of Sea Peoples (hailing from at least nine different geographic locations situations along the Northern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean), into the well-organised, ethnically self-conscious and ethnically segmented group which they clearly were in the eyes of the principal specialists:

‘Dieser Befund legt somit die Auffassung nahe, daß zumindest für den Kern der “Seevölker”-Bewegung des 14.-12. Jh. v. Chr. mit Krieger-Stammesgruppen von ausgeprägter ethnischer Identität – und nicht lediglich mit einem diffus fluktuierenden Piratentum – zu rechnen ist.’ (Lehmann 1985: 58)

If Indo-Europeanness was the only ethnically binding factor to be identified in the heterogeneous conglomerate of Sea Peoples, then they all had to come from the Northern shore of the Mediterranean or from the major islands, for the Southern shore and the Levantine East coast, probably Cyprus, and possibly part of Crete (even in the Late Bronze Age; cf. Gordon 1981; Best 1997) were probably in majority Afroasiatic speaking. But could genetics, archaeology, comparative linguistics, comparative ethnography, and comparative mythology not come up with a more convincing basis for subjective ethnic identity, notably with one that was of the measure of the very considerable historic achievements of the Sea Peoples as an organised and effective collectivity?

According to Oppenheimer’s Special Sunda Hypothesis, any historical criticism of *Genesis 10* would have to include a consideration of the possible Sunda connotations of the Nuhite Flood narrative and its aftermath. According to the General Sunda Hypothesis, Proto-Indonesian influence reached up to the Persian Gulf – and in my extension of that Hypothesis, it even reached up to the Red Sea, Egypt, both shores of the Mediterranean, as well as the Atlantic and Indian-Ocean coasts of Africa, the Atlantic coast of Europe, the North Sea, and possibly the Black Sea and the Baltic. Even if the postulated Proto-Indonesian influence had reached the Mediterranean long before the end of the Bronze Age and had meanwhile fragmented and paled into an indistinct memory thickly overlaid by the effect of more recent and more local identity processes, it was quite possible that Sea-People solidarity, organisation and effectiveness resided, at least partly, in a remote sense of shared Sunda influence, plus the factual retention of institutions, myths and beliefs, as well as specific nautical skills, borrowed directly or indirectly from the protracted Sunda movement. In that case there was no longer reason to confine ourselves, for the identification of the original homes of the various Sea Peoples, to the northern shore of the Mediterranean and the major islands, for the postulated Sunda influence would also have affected the Southern shore and the Levant – in the latter case also because of its nearness to Egypt, the Red Sea (Phoenicians!) and the Persian Gulf, all three highlighted as likely Sunda targets.

Clearly, both Sunda theses were so crucial to my ongoing research that I had to stop and establish, to my own satisfaction, their merits before I could carry on with the rest of my ongoing research projects. Above we have already covered much of the ground for a positive affirmation of Sunda effect in the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean, although a full discussion is outside our present scope (cf. van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011). Let us now concentrate on the figure of Nuh.



LEGEND

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p>1 'Turanic' Libya (I)<br/>                 2 Libya IIa = Lehabim, Lubim, Lubu, Lebu = Havila = Kuš<br/>                 3 coastal Libya IIb (Turanic)<br/>                 4 Libya II<br/>                 5 Libya III = Phu-Ibe<br/>                 6 Libyans in N and C Italy<br/>                 7 Chalybes<br/>                 8 Kephenians (Libyans)<br/>                 9 sub- / proto-Iberians or Ibero-Aethiopiens or Liby-Aethiopiens,</p> | <p>10 Proto-Semites, resulted in:<br/>                 11 'Liby-Hamites', spreading to:<br/>                 12 Sicily<br/>                 13 Crete<br/>                 14 Leleges lands<br/>                 15 Amazons<br/>                 16 Tarim Basin: presumable original scene of the birth of Athena / Anahita / Neith; N.B. 'Turan' is claimed by Karst to be the original realm of Poseidon<br/>                 17 Soğt al-Jerid = Lacus Tritonis, reputed birth place of Athena</p> | <p>18 Saïs, major cult centre of Athena / Anahita / Neith<br/>                 19 Attica, with Athens as Athena's principal cultic centre, and scene of mythical contest between Poseidon and Athena<br/>                 the green stars signifies places allegedly associated with the theonym Athena<br/>                 data Karst 1931a; mapping van Binsbergen, in prep. (e)</p> |
|--|---|---|

Fig. 9.1. The hatched area constitutes coastal Turanic Libya

9.2. Nuaḥ as Flood Hero

Several traditions have insisted on Nuaḥ's albino features (e.g. *Book of Enoch* 105:2, cf. Charles 1977); such features were recently stressed once more in the context of the *Da Vinci Code* hype (Brown 2004). An alleged albino physiognomy, in combination with a Eurocentric reading of *Genesis 10*, has often led interpreters of *Genesis* to associate Nuaḥ with Central Asia ('Turan', in obsolete terminology), and with the 'Caucasian' i.e. Euro-

pean', 'White' human phenotype.<sup>230</sup> This inveterate view can easily be accommodated in the model stressing a Central Asian origin of NarCom 11 ('The Primal Waters and the Flood') to which Nuaḥ belongs, but not in the Sunda scenario, where Nuaḥ would have a South East Asian phenotype including considerable pigmentation. However, on second thoughts attributing a specific regional phenotype to Nuaḥ is falling victim to the 'fallacy of misplaced concreteness' (Whitehead 1925: 81 *f.*). In a basic symbolic scheme that has a wide distribution globally, 'white' and 'bright' are solar features, and I suggest we should take Nuaḥ's albino connotations, just like his rainbow associations, and his association with evenly coloured white or black birds (dove, raven – *cf.* my leopard symbolism argument), as indication of his solar nature. This makes it possible to link Nuaḥ to Western mythical characters that appear to be his counterparts and that have the same associations with the Sun and with white animals: Re<sup>c</sup>, Basojaun, Janus, Apollo, Hera, Aphrodite. Incidentally, also in Africa traces may be found of a formidable white spirit that nonetheless has no European ('Caucasian') somatic connotations nor is systematically rooted in local cosmology: *Chihamba* (Turner 1962); *Bituma* (van Binsbergen 1981a); and the Togoese *Vodun* goddess *Akuwa* (Duchesne 2005; by analogy with Common Bantu -*kuwa* the name probably means 'White One'). I am inclined to situate Graves 'White Goddess' (1988) also in this bracket. Nuaḥ's partially solar nature very well fits into the Sunda pattern, where Oppenheimer<sup>231</sup> has highlighted the central place the Sun occupies in Sunda-related cosmology, ritual and symbolism.

Since Nuaḥ was originally attested in a Semitic-speaking environment, let us explore the possibility of an Afroasiatic etymology of his name:

**Proto-Afroasiatic:** \*nVwVq- 'rest'

**Semitic:** \*nVwVḥ- 'rest, be still' / be extended, stretched out, repose; be long':

**Akkadian:** na<sup>h</sup>ḥu;

**Ugaritic:** nwh;

**Hebrew:** nwh;

**Syrian Aramaic:** nwh;

**Mandaic Aramaic:** niaha;

**Arabic:** nwh 'lie down upon his breast (camel)';

<sup>230</sup> *Cf.* Leslie 1984 (on Japhet, who like Nuaḥ is traditionally associated with European / 'Caucasian' lowly pigmented phenotype). By an amusing coincidence, Turan is the Etruscan name of the Greek love goddess Aphrodite (Bloch 1984), unmistakably (in her emphatic femininity, association with sexuality, yet virginity, and her association with white birds such as the goose and the dove), a terrestrial transformation of the Mother of the Waters. Why amusing? Because in Karst's reconstruction, we find Athena back in what he calls – by an now obsolete terminology – *Turanic Libya* (*i.e.* Central Asia, roughly at the place where I propose to situate the \*Borean Urheimat; see Fig. 4.2) as transformation of the Mother of the Waters, whereas her Athenian counterpart Poseidon, can be argued (perhaps from \*Borean PVCV, 'genital, womb' to be a male transformation of the same primal Creation goddess. And so are Mesopotamian Oannes, Basque Basojaun, Latinic Janus, and South Asian Ganesh – the names of these four all so similar that one thinks of them as descending from the same deity, which (given genetically attested migration from the Caucasian region to South Western Europe, producing the Basques; and given the overall North-west / South-east movement from West Asia which we have seen many times in the present argument; *cf.* Forster 2004) we should situate in the Pontic-Anatolian-Caucasian region.

<sup>231</sup> Oppenheimer 1998: *passim*, see index of that book.

<p><b>Geʼez (Ethiopian):</b> nwh 'be high, tall, long, extended, stretched out, repose, linger', nuḥat 'length, patience';</p> <p><b>Tigre:</b> näwwäḥa 'lengthen';</p> <p><b>Tigrai (Tigriñña):</b> näwwih 'long'; Cf. Arab nwh 'put a camel on its knees'.</p> <p><b>Western Chadic:</b> *nVwlyVq- 'rest' (v.);</p> <p><b>Mupun:</b> nook (...); <b>Sura:</b> nōok (...); <b>Angas:</b> nyok (...)</p>
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Source: (c) Tower of Babel, s.v. 'Afroasiatic etymology, adapted

Table 9.1. Aspects of the possible Afroasiatic etymology of the proper name Nuaḥ

Alternatively, more or less plausible Afroasiatic etymologies can also be formulated for Nü[a]ḥ. The standard *Old-Testament-Studies* etymology (cf. Wright 1915), in terms of 'rest', although phonologically impeccable (Table 9.1), semantically has little to recommend it; it seems to evoke some kind of stable state of equilibrium at the centre of the universe or the Heavens, cf. the possible but as far as I know unattested Ancient Egyptian \*Nu(t) Aḥ, 'celestial horizon') – even though the statistical and etymological findings which I shall present below are not encouraging for the implication of Oppenheimer's theory to the effect that Nuaḥite Flood myths have a Sunda connection. Likewise, Austric etymologies might be offered for the South East Chinese Flood Heroine Nü Wa (whose name and character are so close to Biblical Nuaḥ that we are probably dealing with transformations of what originally was the same mythical figure) and<sup>232</sup> the Central Chinese culture hero and tamer of the waters Fu Xi, in whom we may see a Neolithic, masculine transformation of the Mother of the Primal Waters, like in his Greek counterpart and virtually name-sake Poseidon (< \*Pu / Fu-ši / Xi-dōn); but a discussion of these details would take us too far in the present context.

Flood myths as in *Genesis* 6-9 had, of course, a wider distribution in the Ancient Near East, and that context needed to be clarified before I could confidently interpret and use *Genesis* for my ethnic study – my year as a member of the Assyriological Study Group on Magic and Religion in the Ancient Near East (Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study, 1994-95) gave me some of the access and background I needed. Moreover, there were, in my data on the Sea Peoples, recurrent themes of whiteness, aquatic birds, the primary deity of creation (often female, often to be identified as the Mother (later Mistress) of the Primal Waters), twinning, paradise, circumcision, the first discovery of sexuality, the first murder, flooding, mountains / towers / ladders into Heaven, that all seemed to hang together as if they were part of one major 'extended Flood myth' scenario which had only been incorporated into *Genesis* in mutilated and ideologically distorted form. (It is for this reason that I prefer to refer, in the present context, to *Genesis* 1-12 – including the Tower of Babel (cf. Sasson 1980) – and not just to the specific creation, paradise, Fall of Man and

<sup>232</sup> The Sinologist Professor Françoise Lauwaert graciously reminds me (personal communication 2007) of the fact that the pairing of Nü Wa / Gwa and Fu Xi is only a relatively late phenomenon in Chinese cultural history, no earlier than the last centuries before the Common Era. This suggests that each had their own regional career as Flood Hero, Fu Xi in central China and Nü Wa / Gwa in the ethnically distinct (Miao) southwest, before further incorporation of the latter region necessitated a marriage between the two deities.

Flood chapters (1-9) which Oppenheimer singles out.)

9.2.1. A proposed \*Borean etymology of the name Nuaḥ

It is a moot point whether the name Nuaḥ itself would be part of that proposed recent Sunda innovation of NarCom 21. A Central Asian origin 30 ka BP, with subsequent South East Asian / Oceanian and Amerindian ramifications as well as Indo-European, Afroasiatic and Nigercongo attestations, make it plausible that we can find a \*Borean etymology for the name Nuaḥ. For \*Borean the most likely candidate as etymon for Nuaḥ, is \*Borean \*WvNXV, 'breast', leads to a perfect fit:

<p><b>*Borean (approx.)</b> *WVNXV, 'breast, udder'; Bengtson &amp; Ruhlen 1994: 54 list this as one of their 'global etymologies': *nuk</p> <p><b>Afroasiatic</b> *nVʕay- (cf. also *hun-):</p> <p><b>Egyptian:</b> ʕnn.t (<i>Pyramid Texts</i>) 'part of a body' (?);</p> <p><b>Central Chadic:</b> *Vni 'milk' &gt; Vni-m 'breast';</p> <p><b>South Cushitic:</b> *nyaʕ- 'breast' 1, 'udder' 2; Cf. *ʔa-nwan- 'breast, udder'</p> <p><b>Sinocaucasian:</b> *wHenx_e (~-a):</p> <p><b>Proto-Sinotibetan:</b> *nōH 'nipple, breast; suckle';</p> <p><b>Chinese:</b> 孚乳 *nOʔ 'nipple; milk, suckle';</p> <p><b>Tibetan:</b> nu 'to suck, <i>nud, snun</i> to suckle';</p> <p><b>Burmese:</b> nəwʔ 'breast, milk', Lower Burmese *hənw(?);</p> <p><b>Lushai:</b> hnu-tē 'milk, breast'; <b>Kiranti:</b> *ŋ[u]</p> <p><b>Comments:</b> Kham nwīN; Tsangla nu 'milk'; Trung nuŋ 'nipple, breast, milk'. Ben. 100; Peiros-Starostin n.d.: 216. STEDT 189-201 *s-nəw-[tŋ] (with a variant *(y)u[k/ŋ]). Cf. Proto-Austronesian *nunuH 'breast, milk' (Sag 4).</p>
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Table 9.2. Proposed long-range etymology of the name Nuaḥ

By comparison, the Afroasiatic listing in the above Table 9.1 makes it clear that this Biblical proper name (like so many in *Genesis*) is better not interpreted within the West-Semitic, and by extension Afroasiatic domain, even although it is the inveterate habit of Biblical scholars to do so.

If the proposed \*Borean etymology is acceptable, then Nuaḥ was originally considered the female, not the male, ancestor of humankind, which makes a lot of sense, and tallies e.g. with widespread Old World mythologies of a primal mother (e.g. among the Nkoya). As far as Austric is concerned, here we find Proto-Austronesian \*nunuH 'breast, milk' which is close enough, but the Sinotibetan etymology must yet be preferred, since the duplication manifest in the Austric form is not present in the Biblical name Nu[a]ḥ. Moreover, there are a few indications<sup>233</sup> that cognates of the theonym Nuaḥ also occur in the New World, in which case the \*Borean / Sinocaucasian, rather than Austric / Sunda, connection would be the most probable. Incidentally this revives the East Asian connotations of Nuaḥ.

We have already seen how cosmogonic myths worldwide have a tendency to feature

<sup>233</sup> van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011.

birds, especially white aquatic ones, who may be seen as symbols of primal gods of creation, or even as identical to such gods. Birds also play an intriguing role in the Nuaḥite Flood story, not only as being among the animal inmates of the Ark but also because they are sent out (first a raven, than a dove) to ascertain whether the Flood had already subsided in other words whether the second creation after the destruction of the first has been implemented. Let us allow ourselves little diversion by having a closer look at these mythical birds.

### 9.3. *On birds as very ancient symbols of creation*

In the ancient world-view that may be reconstructed for several cultures of the Ancient Near East and that probably has Upper Palaeolithic antecedents, bird are the fishes of the Waters Above. The implications of this idea may reach as far as fishing customs among the Zambian Nkoya, where women cannot join the men's annual collective treading of the reclining natural pools to spear fishes – women's cosmological place seems to be the Earth. not Heaven.

The<sup>234</sup> controversial claim has been made<sup>235</sup> that certain constellations were already distinguished 22,000 BP, and the converging cross-cultural ethnographic evidence (Rappenglueck 1999: *passim* with very extensive literature; Berezkin 2010) strongly suggests that such was certainly the case towards the end of the Upper Palaeolithic (12,000- 10,000 BP). Birds have featured prominently among the nomenclature of constellations world-wide, including aquatic birds, especially the swan. That such bird-like connotations may be of very great antiquity and amazing constancy is brought out by the fact that what is called the constellation Aquila (Eagle) by present-day world-wide scientific nomenclature, is a buzzard for various Amerindian groups throughout North America; an eagle, falcon, or raven in ancient Babylonia; and an eagle, goose, chicken, crane, or swan on rock art in Karelia (northern Scandinavia) and Siberia.<sup>236</sup> From star nomenclature to shamanism is only a logical step, because throughout Eurasia and the Americas shamans have been specialists in astronomic knowledge throughout historical and proto-historical times, and most probably since at least the Upper Palaeolithic; in my opinion, concurring with that of the archaeoastronomical specialist Rappenglück, it was the upward gaze of naked-eye astronomy that resulted in a vertical placement of worlds along the cosmic axis, along which the shaman during trance was privileged to travel up and down for the benefit of the community. Birds have of old had strong shamanistic connotation, in the sense that shamans often have staffs topped by a bird-like image<sup>237</sup> while often

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<sup>234</sup> I am indebted to Michael Rappenglueck for greatly illuminating me on the topics discussed in this section.

<sup>235</sup> Cf. Muglova & Stoev 1994: 36 f.; Rappenglueck 1999: 291 f. n. 14. More conservative interpretations have situated the invention of the constellations in the Early Bronze Age, in Mesopotamia or the Eastern Mediterranean (Hunger 1992; Ovenden 1966; Berezkin 2010; Hunger & Pingree 1989; Hunger 1992

<sup>236</sup> Rappenglueck 1999: 324, n. 409 with extensive references.

<sup>237</sup> See the rich bibliography Rappenglueck 1999: 314, n. 110.



shamans themselves are considered to change into birds in the context of their journeys into the realm of the unknown (Rappenglueck 1999: 248 *f.*, 359 *n.* 179).

Among these shaman-associated birds, the swan takes pride of place. It appears among the oldest mobile Upper Palaeolithic art (figures of swanlike birds, one of them speckled, at the Upper Palaeolithic site of Mal'ta, near the Baikal Sea, eastern Siberia (c. 17,000 BCE; Poikalainen 2001; Ozols 1971; Gerasimov 1931). In more recent accounts of shamanism, the practitioner may be considered to change into a bird, with the swan as one of the preferred species.<sup>238</sup> Further comparative and historical research brings out that this corresponds with a widespread theme, found *e.g.* in the Americas, Ancient Egypt, and China, according to which the shaman or the divine king (who in inchoate political systems, in the very process of state formation, may be indistinguishable) turns into a bird, *e.g.* a swan; *cf.* the Egyptian king, to whom the same applies: a divine king, he has had shamanistic connotations from Early Dynastic times right through to the New Kingdom – *cf.* Tut-<sup>c</sup>anḥ-Amun's diadem (see Fig. 7.4) and leopard-skin attributes; and of course he is Ḥorus, the falcon – it can hardly be an accident, but on the contrary may testify to the convergent ancient shamanistic roots of this complex, that this bird name (ḥr) is one of the very few that could be identified in the reconstructed Proto-Nostratic corpus (Bomhard 1984; Bomhard & Kerns 1994), and that therefore has remained a lexical constant for a dozen millennia or more. In the Aegean context in classical times, the priests of the very ancient Eleusis mystery cult were considered to be of swan descent or have more general, Orpheus-related swan connotations.<sup>239</sup> These images are reminiscent of the cross-like basic structure of the constellation Cygnus, however, there is only a remote possibility that it had already its present-day name by those very early times.<sup>240</sup> There are indications (Rappenglueck 1999: 359 *f.* *n.* 84) that our present-day constellation Cygnus had Ḥorus (falcon) connotations in Ancient Egyptian times, and was then thought to be a god sacrificing the bull, or the beef leg-piece, identified as Ursa Major. Like in the case of the Sea People's boats (whose sterns are ornamented with depictions of either ducks or swans) there is a persistent confusion, in the representation of bird-associated constellation, between aquatic birds with long necks and with short necks (Rappenglueck 1999: 325 *f.*, *n.* 450).




When throughout this book we have paid attention to the almost world-wide rise (in

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<sup>238</sup> Rappenglueck 1999: 360 *n.* 200, based on Ridington 1983: 182.

<sup>239</sup> Rappenglueck 1999: 360 *n.* 200, based on Verhagen 1987: 142; *cf.* Plato, *Republic*, X.

<sup>240</sup> Another point to consider when dealing with the prehistory of constellations is whether the constellation as manifest to the naked eye displayed already the same stellar patterns as in historical times. Constellations are perspectival illusions, depending upon the position that the planet Earth, and its Sun, occupy in our Galaxy, and upon the proper motion of all of the stars apparently coming together in the constellation. However, for most constellations the stellar pattern only undergoes marked changes, not yet across ka, but only across tens or even hundreds of ka – an observation that can easily be checked with professional astronomical software taking all these factors into account, such as *Starry Night 5Pro*. For an example of an archaeoastronomical analysis going back to the Middle Palaeolithic and arguing Neanderthal's ability to make a stellar map, see van Binsbergen 2018: 277-283; van Binsbergen with Lacroix 2000.

the Neolithic to Bronze Age, and perhaps under Sunda impact) of solar religion, and the subsequent demotion<sup>241</sup> of solar gods for the benefit of other sky gods (of storm and lightning, especially) towards the Iron Age, the occasional surfacing, in myths, of creator gods in bird shape suggests an older, pre-solar dispensation, finally subjugated to the solar gods so that the birds became their mounts and servants. The Nkoya court jester *Kayoni ka Mwene* ('the king's bird') in eagle shape is a case in point – perhaps in emulation, ultimately, of eagle-shaped Indra, or eagle-shaped Garuda, who stole the *soma* sacred drink.<sup>242</sup> It was Indra who put out the fire. The use of bird images for vital positions in the Ancient Egyptian pantheon ( Horus, falcon;  Nēhbet, vulture – part of the royal titlature as  Nubty, 'the Two Ladies') suggests that in the Egyptian case (and perhaps by extension the Pelasgian case) such demotion took a long time to be effected in its totality.

Having sufficiently prepared the ground now, let us see, in the next Chapter, whether the claims of Oppenheimer's Special Sunda Hypothesis stand up to the statistical test such as the extensive, quantifiable data on Flood myths world-wide allow us to administer.

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<sup>241</sup> At least in the literate, state-associated parts of the Old World – whereas in the New World solar gods largely endured; Hultkrantz 1980.

<sup>242</sup> *Rig Veda* 10.99.8, Macdonell 1897: 152; Fontenrose 1980 / 1959. *Soma* may be nothing else than the honey mead which Nkoya courtiers value more than anything, including dignity, a woman's beauty, and wealth. Garuda putting out the fire guarding the *soma* by draining '90x90 rivers', comes back in Nkoya mythology (*Likota lya Bankoya*, 4:4) as Shikalamo sha Mundemba, the early royal princess who managed to extinguish the fire under the Cauldron of Kingship, and thus established her clan as the owners of *Wene* ('kingship'). Incidentally, that same story appears, with animals as protagonists but still in a South Central African context, in Mackintosh 1922: 367 *f.*, where the first human's upsetting the Cauldron of Kingship appears as the reason for the High God Nyambi and his wife Nasilele to retreat from the Earth to Heaven. To the limited extent to which Sunda traits may be attested in present-day South East Asia despite the elapse of millennia, it may be relevant that Garuda has become the emblem of present-day Indonesia, notably of its principal airline.

## Chapter 10. Putting the Special Sunda Hypothesis (Oppenheimer's comparative-mythological claims) to the statistical test

In this chapter we shall be occupied with the study of Flood myths and their significance for the Sunda Hypotheses. Repeatedly, comparative mythologists have turned to Flood myths in recent years (*e.g.* Witzel 2010, 2012; van Binsbergen 2010h) and it is as if the entire history of world mythology – and what is more, the history of modalities of human thought – is concentrated in that subject. Our strategy will be to first dwell on the quantitative analysis of such myths and their relevance for Oppenheimer's claims – then to conclude with a wider qualitative discussion of Flood myths.

Having, to my great good fortune, enlisted the research collaboration of Mark Isaak (*cf.* Isaak 2006), I had at my disposal a corpus of 395 adequate, well referenced Flood myths worldwide. It turned out that I had to spend much time on designing a system for detailed and systematic data-entry towards contents analysis. Since I lacked the resources to process the entire corpus, I took a 20% aselect sample. For an initial statistical description of the data set, see Appendix 2; for the final protocol and results, see van Binsbergen, in prep. (k).

There is not an obvious way to statistically test hypotheses in long-range

comparative mythology concerning proposed cultural indebtedness thousands, even tens of thousands years ago, and on the basis of a highly heterogeneous corpus of Flood myths worldwide, most deriving from oral literature collected less than two centuries ago, but some deriving from the oldest texts at our disposal, nearly 5 ka old. A lot of reflection and trial and error went into this challenging task. Finally I designed two approaches for statistical testing that promised to be viable and valid:

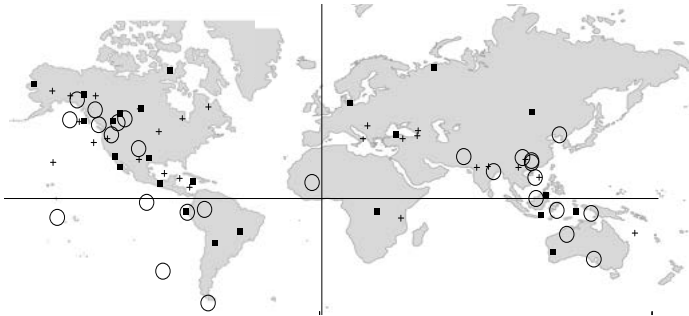
### *10.1. Approach 1: Discriminant analysis of cases corresponding with the 'elaborate Flood myth type'*

Following Isaak, my working definition as to what constitutes a Flood myth was so wide that most cases in the sample were not of the elaborate type. Oppenheimer's Special Sunda Hypothesis stipulated that the elaborate type, reminiscent of the Biblical Nuhic story, would exhibit a marked Sunda effect. Because of the limitations of the statistical application and of the computer at my disposal, I could not handle the entire package of the elaborate Flood myth, and instead concentrated on the unmistakably Nuhite variant, the Biblical Flood mytheme: *'The man who survived the Flood in an Ark, as ally of the Supreme God'*. If Oppenheimer was right, the distribution of this type with undeniable Ancient Near East / *Genesis* connotations would have to display Sunda traits, i.e. marked concentration on South East Asia and Oceania, and along the postulated Sunda westbound trajectory. In order to test this, I first subjectively scored for each Flood story in my sample if it was of the elaborate type: yes, no, or uncertain. This resulted in a variable CONTAMIX. Then I let a discriminant analysis produce a mathematically constructed variable CONTAMIN, approximating the values of CONTAMIX on the basis of a correlation matrix containing as many of my contents analysis variables as could be included without running into defects of multicollinearity<sup>243</sup> or other statistical undesirabilities; by longstanding consensus among statisticians, dichotomous nominal variables were included in the matrix as if they were equivalent to variables measured on a ratio scale. The idea was that, whereas I personally (or any other human) could only take a few traits into account and might be subjective and one-sided in my scoring of individual cases as 'yes, no or uncertain', the discriminant analysis, by contrast, could manage vast numbers of variables, and therefore would be more objective and balanced. This was confirmed. Much to my surprise and satisfaction (and also as a sign of the overall quality of my

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<sup>243</sup> Multicollinearity in statistical analysis stands for the undesirable accumulation of apparently significant correlations occurring when the analysis contains variables that have been linearly constructed out of other variables also in the analysis. For instance, an unrecorded variable AGE may be estimated from a measured variable BODY LENGTH, but when AGE and BODY LENGTH are then *both* entered into the same multivariate analysis, any effect will be spuriously enlarged because of multicollinearity.

data set) CONTAMIN proved superior to my own subjectively scored CONTAMIX: a case-by-case confrontation of CONTAMIN with CONTAMIX against the original texts of the Flood myths in question corrected several obvious misjudgements on my part, and allowed me to confidently interpolate some of the missing cases. Mapping the projection of CONTAMIN was to reveal the Sunda effect, if any. The following Figure gives the geographic distribution:



+ = attested; ■ = uncertain; ○ = absent / missing  
 Isaak 2005 sample of Flood myths worldwide, N = 79. In the computer-generated maps based on my contents analysis of Flood myths locations of individual cases may be off by a few degrees but the overall pattern is correct. I thank Yuri Berezkin for his advice in this matter.

Fig. 10.1. Sample world distribution of variable CONTAMIN as constructed with discriminant analysis: ‘The man who survived the Flood in an Ark, as ally of the Supreme God’

We note a surprising number of cases in the Americas (all three categories); hardly any positive attestations, but many negative ones, in insular South East Asia although a few in India and South China. A Sunda effect therefore does not seem to be indicated. I suggest the best historical reconstruction for this distribution pattern is as in Fig. 10.2:

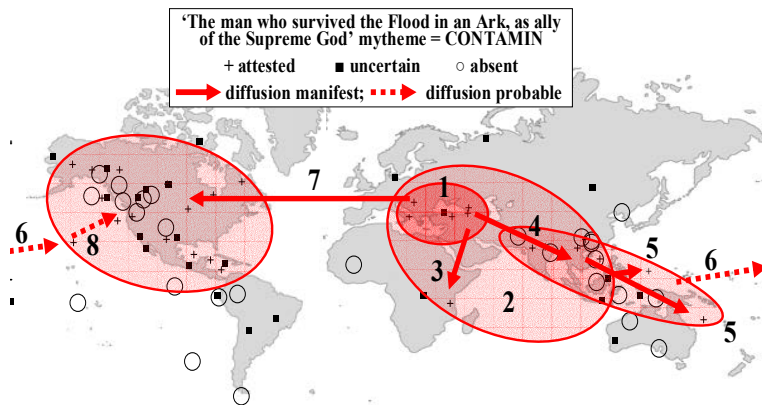


Fig. 10.2. Proposed historical reconstruction based on previous diagram

LEGEND OF DIAGRAM 10.2, AND DISCUSSION

1. Ancient Near East / Bible world as core region of origin of this mytheme
2. primary diffusion area around the Indian Ocean, specifically (3) and (4) (see below); note the halo of 'uncertain' attestations neatly around this proposed primary diffusion area, as another sign of the quality of the data set.
3. diffusion from West Asia to East Africa (cf. Frobenius 1931 on 'the Southern Erythraean culture'; and, on the basis of more recent and more convincing research, the recent genetics model of the Back-into-Africa movement)
4. as intensified section and as extension of the primary diffusion area around the Indian Ocean, diffusion from South West Asia to South East Asia and the Western Pacific via India; this movement follows Sumerian, Babylonian and Indus maritime relations, and runs parallel to the spread of Aramaic bureaucratic models, the alphabet,<sup>244</sup> Hellenism, Hinduism, and Buddhism; it could also be interpreted as the expected west-east movement along the intercontinental, Sunda-induced maritime network postulated above (chapter. 7)
5. from the South and South East Asian intensification and extension of the primary diffusion area, extension (which I take to be unmistakable, manifest) to one Carolines outlier (Palau Isl.) and one Melanesian outlier (New Hebrides)
6. from the South East Asian edge of the primary diffusion area, probable diffusion to one Polynesian outlier (Hawaii)
7. from the core region of origin (1) to the Americas, mainly specifically through post-Columbian Christian mission in combination with the general colonisation of Meso and South America by the Roman Catholic states of South West Europe; but there are also the more diffuse effects of European offshoots of this mytheme spreading as a result of Viking and possibly other West European early intrusions, some of which are manifest (Cavalli-Sforza et al. 1994) above the threshold of present-day genetic attestation
8. Effect (7) does not seem to provide adequate explanation for the positive attestations of the mytheme on the North-western Coast of North America; here the old idea of possible diffusion from Polynesia;<sup>245</sup> (Heyerdahl's Kon-Tiki Hypothesis inverted, in other words<sup>246</sup>) may provide an additional explanation

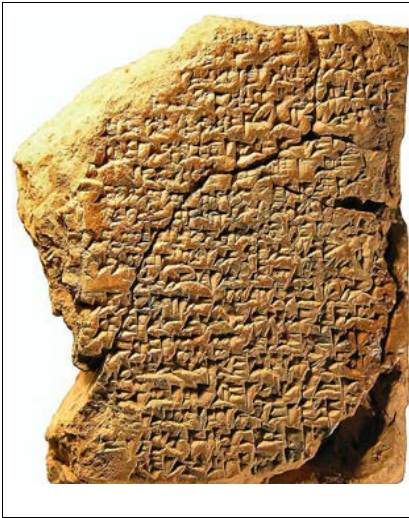

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<sup>244</sup> From an Aramaic parent form, the alphabet penetrated the whole of Asia in hundreds of local variants; Diringer 1994. Gelb 1963 even claims that all scripts that qualify as true writing as defined by him, ultimately derive from the Mesopotamian script.

<sup>245</sup> Cf. Heine-Geldern 1937, 1964-1967, 1966, cf. Barnard 1968; Schuster 1949; Hentze 1933; Badner 1966; cf. Needham & Lu Gwei-Djen 1985; Shao 1976; Scobie 1975; Kelley 1992, 1996; and Klar & Jones 2005. Lévi-Strauss, the famous Americanist (1963: 258) does not deny the possibility but stresses (flatly, and unconvincingly) that such an idea does not have any explanatory power. Pre-Columbian Trans-oceanic contacts with the Americas, especially Trans-Atlantic ones, cf. Gilmore & McElroy 1998. For sobering critical voices, see cf. Davies n.d., and 1979: 87 f.; Ortiz de Montellano 2000.

<sup>246</sup> Over half a century after Heyerdahl's spectacular but naïve attempts at experimental archaeology,

I read the results of Approach (i) as indicative of the reality of concerted global spread of the mytheme 'The man who survived the Flood in an Ark, as ally of the Supreme God', according to the eight phases indicated above. I take the New World cases as almost totally dependent upon the Old World ones, in other words as a result of Judaeo-Christian-Islamic proselytising (here again Farmer 2007 is right up to a point: the distribution of *some* Flood myths worldwide, notably those of the elaborate Nuaḥite type, is largely based on Judaeo-Christian-Islamic proselytising). However, I see no reason (*pace* Oppenheimer) to give up the time-honoured idea that this mytheme has an origin in the Ancient Near East

	
<p>a. One of the oldest attestations of a Flood myth in the Ancient Near East: The Sumerian Flood story, Babylonia, 19th-18th c. BCE (Schøyen Collection MS 3026</p>	<p>b. Among the Dead Sea scrolls from Qumran (between late 1st c. BCE and 68 CE) we find the oldest attestation of <i>Genesis</i> (where the Nuaḥite Flood myths takes up the chapters 6-9). Before the discoveries at Qumran, our oldest text of <i>Genesis</i> was three or four centuries younger. The picture shows Professor Biberkraut unrolling the <i>Genesis</i> Apocryphon (tQapGen) (source: Pictures n.d.)</p>

there are genetic indications of some slight Amerindian influence on Oceania, coming from the Andes Inca (Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994: 366, 371). This is at the level of classic genetic markers, especially (their p. 369 *f.*) FY\*A, RH\*C and RH\*E; conclusive evidence can only be expected from molecular genetics, but was not yet widely available in 1994, although this shift to molecular biology does render Cavalli-Sforza *et al.*'s 1994 approach obsolete, however authoritative it was in principle.

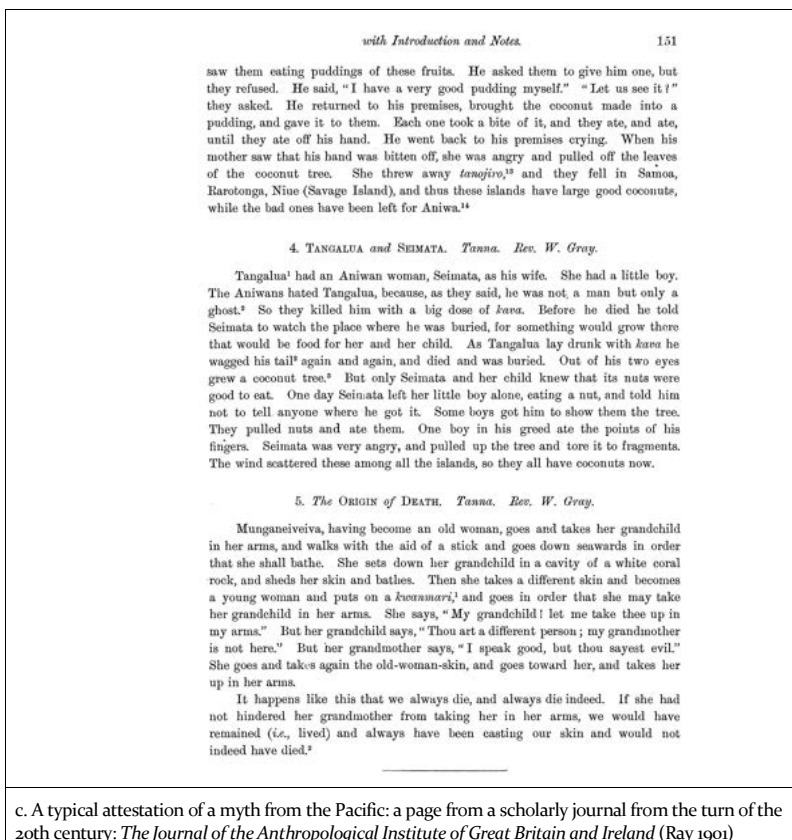


Fig. 10.3. The huge differences in attestation dates between Flood myths East and West

This is also what one would intuitively assume: how could we argue that myths whose textual and iconographic attestations go back to nearly 5 ka BP (elaborate Flood myths in the Ancient Near East) could derive from myths from the Indo-Pacific region whose attestations are no earlier than the 18<sup>th</sup> c. CE, in other words whose *certain minimum age* is 25 times younger! The original myths behind the Indo-Pacific ones could be local and could be much, much older, even older than the Ancient Near East ones, but how can we ever be sure? On this point Farmer's (2007) methodological criticism of long-range approaches in comparative mythology is very well taken. The Proto-Indonesians may have left no manifest traces in theregion., for we cannot just assume that they were continuous with present-day Indonesians.



One would be tempted to add, to these textual attestations, also iconographic attestations of the Flood story from the Ancient Near East. However, although a wealth of mythology, and many details of everyday, ritual and royal life have been depicted on tens of thousands of cylinder seals, these are nearly always without textual caption, and there is little agreement among scholars as to the identification of such seals as carrying a depiction of the Flood. Smith's (1873) claim is often cited, but his interpretation of the central, enclosed figure as Nuh in his Ark has later been criticised: the figure in question may be the water god Ea / EN.KI himself.<sup>247</sup> By and large, these seals do not have any greater antiquity than the cuneiform texts we have for the Sumerian Flood story.



Fig. 10.4. Proposed depiction of the Flood on a Sumerian seal

Anyway, once we have agreed that Sunda expansion soon must have given rise to an intercontinental maritime network of cultural and material exchanges, Flood myths of the Nuhite type could easily and rapidly have travelled from west to east, and *vice versa*.

*Meanwhile the many unmistakably negative cases (O) demonstrate beyond any doubt that (contrary to Farmer's 2007 sweeping assertions) most Flood myths in the world are fundamentally different from the mytheme of 'The man who survived the Flood in an Ark, as ally of the Supreme God', and therefore cannot be attributed to proselytising of the Judaeo-Christian- Islamic complex.*

However, Approach 1 can only give a first indication if at all – for its basis is subjective judgment. A more definitive approach is the following.

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<sup>247</sup> Reinhold & de la Torre 2005-2007, which is also the picture source for Fig. 10.4. Smith's (1873: 257) interpretation of a seal as showing a Flood Hero has also been contested by John McHugh, who has proposed another seal to be a Flood seal; his view is still debated. Cf. Thompson 2004-2007; McHugh 1998; I am indebted to Gary Thompson and John McHugh for some of the elements in this passage.

## 10.2. Approach 2: Factor analysis of the total variance contained in the sample ( $N = 79$ )

### 10.2.1. Introduction

This analysis again starts with a correlation matrix containing as many of my contents analysis variables (including dichotomous nominal variables) as could be taken along without running into defects of multicollinearity and other statistical undesirabilities. Factor analysis indicates how many mutually uncorrelated, independent variables have to be mathematically constructed (given certain reasoned choices on process parameters such as number of iterations, and tolerance of convergence of the resulting matrix), in order to account for the largest percentage of the total variance in the sample. Parameter choices were: number of factors = 12; Eigenvalue = 2, tolerance = 0.03; rotation method chosen is Varimax. (For the full matrix of rotated loadings, see Appendix 1.) Inspection of which mathematically constructed factor does load highly on which combination of input variables allows us to suggest the nature of each factor (initially blindly constructed by mathematical criteria alone), and allows us to name it. Each of the factors thus constructed has a geographic distribution, and can be mapped for all 79 cases; for our present purpose it is sufficient to merely map the upper quartile (25%) of the distribution, because this is where the obviously positive cases are to be found; since the quartiles have been distinguished by letters a to d, the upper quartile appears as a scatter of 'd's on the distribution maps below. If a particular factor map displays a marked Sunda effect, that means that Oppenheimer is probably right, and I am probably wrong.

For some of the factors, more than one historical reconstruction seems to fit the distribution pattern; then two or even three maps are shown:

- *one modelling a Central Asian Upper Palaeolithic epicentre;*
- *one modelling a Sunda Neolithic or Bronze Age epicentre;*
- and sometimes (against the thrust of current global long-range reconstructions in comparative mythology, yet worth considering, *cf.* the debate on a proposed – though implausible – New World origin of the domestic dog, one map modelling a *New World epicentre (Upper Palaeolithic or later)*)

How to proceed from the global distribution of (the upper quartiles of) each factor, to the proposed historical reconstruction for that factor? This is a creative and uncertain interpretative process, comparable with the identification of the concrete nature, and naming, of mathematically constructed factors. Initial inspection of the scatter halo for each factor reveals the geographic region(s) of concentration of cases. The shape of continents (scarcely altered during the past 80 ka) and the (pre-) historically attested trajectories of cultural diffusion subsequently suggest where to situate the epicentres of diffusion (white explosion signs), and which other centres of concentration to consider as secondary; *e.g.*

- in the Americas, mainly from North West North America to
  - North East America and

- via Meso America to South America,
- and not the other way around;
- from Eurasia to the new World
  - mainly via the Bering Strait,
  - rather than from east to west across the Atlantic, (except from Early Modern times onward);
- from South East and possibly East Asia
  - into Oceania
  - and perhaps further on to the New World.

It is the uncertain interpretative nature of the exercise which allows for more than one outcome per factor.

The following 12 factors could be identified; together they explain over 50% of the total variance (that may not be too impressive, but we have to make allowance for the extreme heterogeneity of Flood myths from all over the world, and for the admittedly poor quality of much of the data – here Farmer 2007 again has a point). Table 10.1 provides a list of this factors, indicates how much of the data set’s total variance each explains, and on the basis of the factor loadings, gives an identification of each factor:

Factor, with % of total variance explained	FACTOR NAME and proposed interpretation
FACTOR(1) 4.461 %	VERTICAL FROM PARADISE: In this factor / motif the vertical dimension is emphasised, with the vertical reed (NarCom 27) which, like the shamanism (NarCom 16) that is also explicitly included in this factor, represents the vertical connection between the separated Heaven and Earth – and also in the image of animals suspended from Heaven in their attempt to escape from the Flood. The same idea of suspension between Heaven and Earth we find in the spider motif. While this separation implies the notion of transcendence, the vertical, spatial separation also becomes a conceptual and temporal separation in the sense that a transcendent paradise, not here and not now, is evoked as pre-Flood and having ended with the Flood. To this attaches the NarCom 14 of the two children, twins often, who belonged to a paradisiacal state which however came to an end when one killed the other – the Cain and Abel theme (which however in the Bible is not recognised as specifically part of the Nuaḥite Flood story).
FACTOR(2) 5.646 %	GOD AS ALLY OF HERO: The supernatural is present in the form of the Supreme God, who dwells in Heaven (NarCom 3), sends the Flood (NarCom 11) and enters into an unequal alliance – the Supreme God being evidently superior to his ally the hero – with the Flood Hero. The latter receives warning of the Flood, sends out birds (no doubt transformations of the Earth diver <i>i.e.</i> NarCom 26 of an earlier dispensation) at the end of the Flood, and (in a sense that is evoking NarCom 24) engages in agriculture after the Flood – this is the Biblical or in general Ancient Near Eastern story

FACTOR(3) 4.694 %	HERO AND ARK: There are survivors to the Flood, specifically there is a Flood Hero who is the survivor, and there is a concrete material rescue device (an 'Ark') which allows the hero to survive; this motif / factor is an alternative to the ogre motif (NarCom 6 – here the confined space is doom rather than rescue), and also an alternative to the blood motive (NarCom 30)(both of which are evocations of the feminine traits – the feminine as source from which life emerges (womb) and to where it returns in death (grave) – the Primal Waters, or Earth not as male land, but as life-giving and death-receiving)
FACTOR(4) 4.815 %	FLOOD ALTERNATIVES: An alternative to the Flood motif is the evocation of other and more destructions than just the great Flood. Here the attention is drawn to the vertical axis, with the emergence of mountains as a result of the Flood, the evocation of the Celestial Cow (NarCom 25), and cosmogony from the fragments of a shattered featureless object (NarCom 33)
FACTOR(5) 5.310 %	ANIMAL SURVIVORS: Animals survive the Flood, especially the Earth diver (NarCom 26) who is often in the shape of a rodent-like small mammal, or a coot. The theme also speaks of the human Demiurge of male gender. <sup>248</sup> A formal characteristic attaches to this factor: if it is high, also the length of the Flood story in question will be high – which reflects the tendency for elaborate North American Flood stories, where the themes of this factor prevail, to be rendered <i>in extenso</i> both in the professional ethnographic literature and in Isaak's rendering of that literature
FACTOR(6) 3.890 %	SWEETNESS THROUGH INCEST: <sup>249</sup> The themes of sibling incest and honey (NarCom 18) appear to celebrate the discovery of sexuality; <sup>250</sup> in some, still unclear way this is associated with the theme of a warning which comes to the Flood Hero from some third party and not from the causer of the Flood himself or herself – one is reminded of the snake in the Biblical paradise, since the Fall of Man was sometimes (especially in the Christian tradition) associated with, again, the discovery of sexuality. <sup>251</sup>

<sup>248</sup> It is to be expected that the male human Demiurge directs the Earth Diver, but that is not explicitly stated in this factor, nor could it have been, since the variable in question, HERODIVR, was kept out of the factorised data set for suspicions of multicollinearity.

<sup>249</sup> This theme is very prominent in the Philippines Flood story presented by Shi Yang 2006.

<sup>250</sup> Cf. Lévi-Strauss's equation of honey and sexuality; Lévi-Strauss 1969-78: *L'Homme Nu; Du Miel aux Cendres*; cf. Cook 1976.

<sup>251</sup> It is in the nature of factor analysis that each factor is constructed to be totally unrelated to any other factor from the same analysis, e.g. the one highlighting the two siblings in combat (see FACTOR(1)). Yet it is tempting to see a relationship between these two sets of siblings: in FACTOR(1) siblings of the same gender and adversaries; in factor(6) siblings of opposite gender and sexual mates. Could the male sibling adversaries of FACTOR(1) be seen as a transformation of the incestuous siblings of factor(6) – as if FACTOR(1) dates from a later dispensation than factor(6), when the idea of sibling incest could no longer be entertained and instead the siblings, who were yet too important to leave out of the story altogether, were reconstructed in the most forbidding, anti-incestuous form: as both male, and as enemies.

<p>FACTOR(7) 3.777 %</p>	<p>POST-FLOOD REPOPULATION ABNORMAL BUT NOT STONE: Since the Flood usually is held to destroy the whole of humankind with the exception of up to a handful of Flood survivors, there is usually the need for post-Flood repopulation of the Earth. Under FACTOR(7), such repopulation proceeds along abnormal lines <i>i.e.</i> otherwise than through normal heterosexual human sexuality. This FACTOR(7) celebrates the alternative (whatever) to the common connection between the Flood and stones (NarCom 8) – Flood victims turning into stones,<sup>252</sup> and repopulation after the Flood taking place by means of stones which (as in the Greek Flood story of Deucalion and Pyrrha) turn into human beings. This factor appears to reveal relatively very ancient mythological layers, with the original creator identified as female.</p>
<p>FACTOR(8) 4.393 %</p>	<p>KILLING ANIMAL DEMIURGE AND WHITE GOD: This motif highlights the animal trickster or Demiurge, who is being murdered or himself engages in murder. This attaches to the theme of the White God (NarCom 21), who may be evoked as a Primary God of Creation, subsequently to be supplanted by a later divine generation or dynasty, and then may be associated with the Sun or Moon – bright luminaries between Heaven and Earth in a less than supreme role. One reason for the appearance of the White God theme appears to be the following: this is typically the original God of Creation (<i>e.g.</i> Janus and his cognates Basojaun and Ganesha), and the myth therefore is situated at a time, and speaks from a worldview, when the Separation of the Waters into land / sea, Heaven and Underworld had not yet taken place or at least not completed. In the context of this primordial mythical time, repopulation was not by normal means (<i>i.e.</i> sexual, and intra-species), but by a-sexual, homosexual or inter-species means; However, the entry variable 'White God in evidence' as a variable has only very few attestations. Perhaps it is out of place in the large, final factor analysis, even though it does produce significant loadings. We are here in the presence of such shape-shifters are Proteus, Nereus <i>etc.</i>: transformations of the Original Mistress of the Primal Waters once she was dethroned by the gods of a later dispensation, typically of a male gender. This suggests something about the origin of the trickster figure in general: possibly as a transformation of the original Creatrix, of reversed gender.</p>
<p>FACTOR(9) 3.485 %</p>	<p>SACRIFICE AS RE-CONNECTION: This is a somewhat unusual factor in that it only loads considerably on one variable in the data set: whether in the context of the Flood, and especially after the Flood, an explicit reference is made to sacrifice, and especially after the Flood.</p>
<p>FACTOR(10) 4.359 %</p>	<p>HEAVEN, LUMINARIES, CONNECTION, PARADISE: I have postulated that the Flood stories are predicated on a thought experiment revolving on the following idea: 'if the essence of the cosmic order is the Separation of Land and Water (later verticalised and otherwise transformed into the Separation of Heaven and Earth), then destruction of that order must be equivalent to the annulment of the Separation of Heaven and Earth. This factor considers Heaven, not (as in FACTOR 2) as the dwelling place of the Supreme God as Flood causer, but as the context of the great luminaries Sun (NarCom 35) and Moon (NarCom 9). Remarkably, the Spider complex (NarCom 15) turns out to belong to this factor – confirming an earlier hypothesis of mine, which equated the mythical Spider with the Sun. In the mytheme conveyed by this factor, the connection of Heaven and Earth is still intact, hence the inclusion of the chain theme, and the explicit idea that the Flood ended the period of paradise – which, of course, what that of the unproblematic, self-evident connection of Heaven and Earth.</p>

<sup>252</sup> Cf. Lot's wife (*Genesis* 19:26); here the destruction is in the form of fire (NarCom 36) as an alternative to the Flood; but there are many similar examples in the regular Flood stories in our global sample.

FACTOR(11) 3.683 %	HEROIC COMBAT: In this motif the combat theme (NarCom 28) appears as, emphatically, an alternative to the Flood motif; there is a heroic evocation of the hero as the human incarnation of the Re-connection (NarCom 2) <i>par excellence</i> between Heaven and Earth; yet, in line with the Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern conception of the Flood Causer and the Flood Hero as allies, the combat is not between the Flood Causer and the Flood Hero, but with a third party.
FACTOR(12) 3.056 %	NUMBERS: This motif is predominantly about numbers, especially entire numbers greater than one. One might even say that this motif is about numerical rationality. It stresses that there is more than one Flood Hero. If we are allowed to consider the weaker loading variables, the emphasis on a plurality of heroes merges with another plurality: that of the four directions (NarCom 29); since these are, virtually globally, the dominant evocation of the land, and since the Flood Hero, in the light of the above analysis, is another evocation of the land, it is not surprising that the four directions have come to be thought of as persons, implicitly even as Flood Heroes joining their forces. <sup>253</sup> Moreover we encounter a number of additional themes here: if there are more Flood Heroes mentioned, these will not be closely related as siblings. The emphasis in this factor is on equality. No special, exalted rank is attributed to the Flood Hero. The Flood Hero is not picked for such rank, but for instance for his moral quality; the latter could be interpreted in terms of personal achievement, since in traditional contexts rank is often a matter of ascription, of birth right. If this factor is high, a specific duration for the Flood tends to be given. Also this factor loads slightly on the theme of volcanic qualities (NarCom 37) of the Earth (fire, Earthquakes <i>etc.</i> ) as opposed to the theme of the Earth as source of life and nourishment.
% TOTAL VARIANCE EXPLAINED 51.569 %	

Table 10.1. List of factors with name, proposed interpretation of factor loadings, and percentage of variance explained

I repeat: it is important to realise that all 12 factors have been so constructed, mathematically, as to be totally uncorrelated to one another, however suggestive the names may be of interrelatedness.

Here we are in for surprises, for instance, factor analysis indicates that what we have so far taken to be one valid mythical type ('The man who survived the Flood in an Ark, as ally of the Supreme God') is in fact a composite of two in principle unrelated mythemes, each presumably with its own history in space and time: FACTOR(2) GOD AS ALLY OF FLOOD HERO and FACTOR(3) FLOOD HERO AND ARK.

Inevitably, my comprehensive quantitative analysis of Flood myths yields much more in the way of insight in Flood myths than just a confirmation or refutation of Oppenheimer's 1998 claims – but it was primarily intended to do the latter, and here

<sup>253</sup> They return in many disguised through global mythology and religious systems, for instance: as the four sons of Horus and the guardian spirits of the *canopic jars* in which the entrails of an embalmed person are interred; or as 'The Four', mythical ancestors of the Nkoya people; as four winds, shaman's guardian spirits in Peru (Sharon 1978), *etc.*

I must concentrate on Sunda-related results. For the full report also on non-Sunda related results, see: van Binsbergen, in press (k).

*10.2.2. Using the Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology as a background for the historical reconstruction of the twelve factors found in multivariate analysis of Flood stories world-wide*

The following components explain over 50% of the variance in the data set, consisting of a 20% sample from Isaak's collection of 395 Flood myths world-wide:

FACTOR(1) VERTICAL FROM PARADISE
FACTOR(2) GOD AS ALLY OF FLOOD HERO
FACTOR(3) FLOOD HERO AND ARK
FACTOR(4) FLOOD ALTERNATIVES
FACTOR(5) ANIMAL FLOOD SURVIVORS
FACTOR(6) SWEETNESS THROUGH INCEST
FACTOR(7) POST-FLOOD REPOPULATION ABNORMAL BUT NOT STONE
FACTOR(8) KILLING ANIMAL DEMIURGE AND WHITE GOD
FACTOR(9) SACRIFICE AS RE-CONNECTION
FACTOR(10) HEAVEN, LUMINARIES, CONNECTION, PARADISE
FACTOR(11) HEROIC COMBAT
FACTOR(12) NUMBERS

Table 10.2. Flood myths resolved into their major components

*My analysis is predicated on the idea that if we have a composite phenomenon in cultural history, we can only reconstruct its history by tracing the distinct history of the component parts. This is a strategy I have also followed in my analysis of the global cultural history of geomancies. It is in fact a standard procedure in palaeontology – the application of a principle known as Watson's Law (Thenius & Wendt 1974: 602).*

First a few words about the methodological background of this part of my analysis. On the basis of an elaborate, pre-defined entry form, the content analysis of each Flood story in the sample yielded dozens of entries for each case; each case consists of a particular culture defined in place and in time, and therefore the cases can be projected onto a world map. All variables subsequently constructed on the basis of the original entry variables also take specific values for each case, and these values can also be projected onto a world map. Factor analysis leads us to mathematically construct (at least) twelve factors that, while so constructed as to be mutually uncorrelated (in fact they all have a Pearson correlation of 0.000 vis-à-vis one another), together explain as much of the data set's variance; and for each individual case, the factor analysis produces, for each of the twelve constructed factors, a specific factor score that can also be projected onto a world map. For each factor we will only

consider those cases whose factor score for that particular factor is in the upper quartile (upper 25%) – their mapping will tell us where on the globe that particular factor takes its highest values, and we will use these geographic distributions as a guide for a historical reconstruction of the history of that factor. We need to proceed with great caution, for our twelve factors are mere mathematical constructs that, in their particular combination of primary data entry variables (see Table 10.1), may only have a virtual existence – may only be mere figments of our analytical imagination; moreover, we are only working with a 20% sample of the available data, which increases the error inherent in any statistical analysis. Yet, considering the fact that our attempts to name and identify these twelve factors have a fair degree of consistency, and considering the reasonable size of the 20% sample ( $N = 79$ ), and the relatively large percentage of variance explained (52%), I am confident that the historical reconstructed based on the factor analysis has some real value.

The main underlying assumption of my interpretation here (and of much of my recent work on intercontinental relations of formal cultural systems, *i.e.* ‘Ancient Models of Thought’, van Binsbergen 1999-2020) is that parallel invention has made no significant contribution to the phenomena under study. Since the Flood myths clearly constitute one data set, with continuity and often near parity in the distribution between New World and Old World, I reject the possibility of parallel invention and a totally separate history of Flood myths in the New World and the Old. In general I do not believe in the existence of two independent continental epicentres. I admit that this is very one-sided, yet it is a position which intensive application to comparative mythological data over decades has suggested to me. Of course, my interpretation of Flood myth patterns is predicated upon my earlier analysis to develop an Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology. The conceptual apparatus and theoretical insights developed there (initially on the basis of a sample of African cosmogonic myths collected in historical times, and subsequently projected onto world mythology of all continents) have greatly informed the present analysis.

Summarising the results of the detailed factor-by-factor discussion below, we may say that for most of our 12 factors we can propose three models which each propose the following epicentre for diffusion:

1. Central Asia
2. Sunda
3. New World

The latter, third explanation seeks the origin of a particular Flood myth theme in the New World, and then has to explain how such a theme found its way back into the Old World. Admittedly, similar cases of westbound Trans-Bering diffusion have been considered (*e.g.*, though probably spuriously, the domesticated dog), and there is some genetic support for them from human genetics (Tamm *et al.* 2007), but one is at a loss as to how such diffusion could attain the attested wide spread across the Old World. If we assume that New World to Old World diffusion of a particular Flood theme could have taken place, not just Trans-Bering, but on more tropical



latitudes, we have a remote variant of the Kon Tiki scenario proposed by Heyerdahl (1947 and later); westbound Sunda expansion might then have been an important vehicle to effect the subsequent Old World distribution.

By and large, the Central Asian model appears to be the most convincing for nearly all the factors to be considered. Sometimes, however, it looks as if a combination of a Sunda and a New-World model seems to provide the best explanation for the diffusion pattern on the map. These results will be argued in detail below. The prominence of a New World origin in my analysis of these twelve factors comes as a surprise, also to myself. On the one hand I take recourse to the common, intuitive consideration that the place of the highest concentration of later attestations may well be the place of origin. About as many Flood stories have been recorded for the Americas (and especially for North and Meso America) as for the rest of the world. We must be careful not to relegate also the Americas to the same position that Africa has so long unjustifiably occupied (and in most researchers' minds, still occupies): that of the perennial periphery, towards which major elements of cultural history may have drifted but from where such major elements could never have originated. On the other hand, a primary New World origin of some of the factors under consideration only comes in once the overall idea of a total cosmoclasm in the form of a Flood has been established, and (given the relatively late peopling of the Americas, no earlier than 25 ka BP, and according to most authorities less than half that period) in all likelihood that basic idea emerged in Central Asia in the Upper Palaeolithic, and not in the New World. Meanwhile I stress once more the deficiencies of the present analysis: the twelve factors are highly virtualised constructs, and they are based on only 20% of the available data.

The factors we have mathematically constructed cannot be fully analysed and understood on the basis of an examination of their geographic distribution, and of the identification of their nature from the constituent original input variables. Thus, in the course of my struggling with the results of the quantitative analysis of Flood myths, I have gradually and painfully made a transition from the formal, mechanical interpretation of distribution maps of factors (a very dicey approach anyway, due to the virtual, mathematically constructed nature of these factors; the imperfect and partial nature of the input data; and the reliance, largely, on dichotomous, nominal variables) to a semantic, hermeneutical approach against the background of the systematics of my Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology. This Model can be usefully invoked here, to explain the implied meaning of each factor, its position in the modelled history of mythology, and thus its probable dating. In my personal, myopic infatuation with this model, it sometimes appears to me as some kind of Periodic System of world mythology, in which (like the chemical elements of the physical world) specific mythemes can be situated in time and place merely on the basis of the internal systematics of the model. Such ambitions are certainly grossly exaggerated, yet the interpretation of the twelve factors constitutes a test for the explanatory power of my Aggregative Diachronic Model, which it

sustains amazingly well. In the original formulation of the NarComs and CITIs, and their tentative positioning in time and place, we have relied greatly on a hermeneutical methodology that looked for the formal and semantic implications of particular mythical elements, and sought to relate these to modes of production *etc.* The same methodology will be much relied on in the following sections.

This will also allow us to choose between the three epicentres (Central Asia, Sunda and America) we have in principle available as possible origin for each of our twelve factors.

### 10.2.3. FACTOR(1) VERTICAL FROM PARADISE

Our first factor, FACTOR(1) VERTICAL FROM PARADISE, combines two themes which may be better understood, and tentatively situated it in place and time, on the basis of my Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology. It is not possible that FACTOR(1) could directly reflect the contents of Pandora's Box, *i.e.* the original cultural package with which Anatomically Modern Humans left Africa c. 80 ka BP. In my approach, humankind's vertical gaze has been proposed as a product of CITI V (Central Asia, Upper Palaeolithic, c. 20 ka BP, when a general verticalisation of the world-view brought naked-eye astronomy, the role of the shaman, and social hierarchy; the invention of Heaven was a requisite for the installation, some 8 ka later, of the mytheme of the Separation of Heaven and Earth, which as a central cosmogonic concept came to supplant the hitherto dominant idea of the Separation of the Primal Waters and the Emergence of the first Land. With Separation came the idea of CONNECTION and RE-CONNECTION (NarCom 2), the central themes of CITI V. The emergence of the notion of Heaven meant the beginning of transcendence as a state fundamentally different from life here and now.<sup>254</sup> Paradise (the evocation of the state of bliss that obtained before the Separation of Heaven and Earth) is the articulation of such a difference, and there is some evidence to suggest that, in addition to the idea of an Underworld, the idea of Heaven as paradise was widespread in the Upper Palaeolithic and persisted into historical times.

*I therefore propose one continental epicentre for this theme, Central Asia c. 20 ka BP, a time window early enough to ensure the demic diffusion of FACTOR(10) to the New World and inside the New World, and to allow for overland further diffusion within the Old World, without a substantial role for Sunda to be played. The Trans-Bering diffusion from Central Africa is generally supported and needs no special argument, nor does it need to be marked as 'putative'.*

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<sup>254</sup> Although in principle the possibility of transcendence was already implied of all language use: a standard lexicon available for general use and capable of being applied to specific situations here and now – but also to far away and even non-existing situations that only appear in language, in the mind. More on transcendence in global cultural history in van Binsbergen 2012a, 2018.

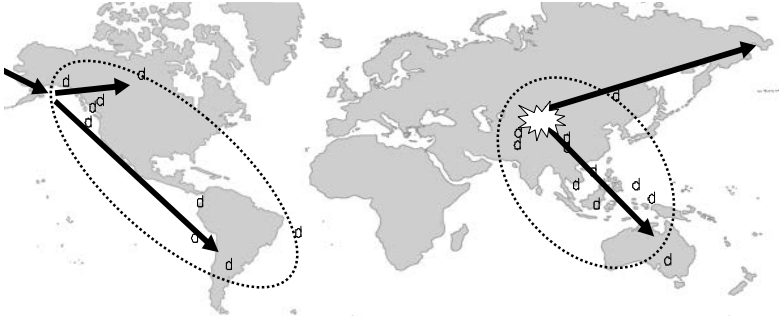


Fig. 10.5. FACTOR(1) VERTICAL FROM PARADISE: Central Asian epicentre

#### 10.2.4. FACTOR(2) GOD AS ALLY OF FLOOD HERO

FACTOR(2) GOD AS ALLY OF FLOOD HERO strongly reminds us of the central Ancient Near Eastern / Biblical theme, and we have already argued (in the preceding analysis of the distribution of CONTAMIN ) that its origin lies in the Ancient Near East, *at too recent a time to allow for standard demic diffusion into North America along the Bering Strait.*<sup>255</sup>

My Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology offers a perspective to make sense of this factor, and to tentatively situate it in place and time. There is no question that FACTOR(2) could directly reflect the contents of Pandora's Box. In my approach, the Flood (with the possibility of at least one surviving Flood Hero) has been proposed as a product of CITI IV (Central Asia, Upper Palaeolithic, c. 30 ka BP, when a cosmology seems to have prevailed in which the Mother of the Primal Waters produced the Land as her Son and Lover. Here we have perhaps already the basic ingredients of our FACTOR(2), if we may interpret the Mother of the Primal Waters as the Supreme God, and the Land / Son / Lover as the allied Hero. However, for the god to become truly Supreme, and male, as in the Biblical / Ancient Near East version, further transformations are needed in the direction of vertical-

<sup>255</sup> By 'standard demic diffusion' I mean the human groups that, across the windows of opportunity that occasionally opened up between North-eastern Asia and Alaska, filtered into the Americas and brought the genetic, linguistic and cultural material from which, through subsequent innovations and transformations, Amerind and Nadene speaking American cultures were to develop over the past 20 ka. However, recent research has brought to light later inroads of, e.g., Uralic speakers, which (arriving from across the Northern Arctic Sea, and having ancestrally been exposed to the periphery of Ancient Near Eastern culture in the Bronze Age) might have mediated a NuaHITE Flood story to the New World in recent millennia. However, one must seriously doubt whether they could have influenced especially Meso America so massively as is indicated by the distribution of FACTOR(2). Of course, there is a fair influence of Post-Columbian Roman Catholicism here, but again, that does not explain the entire picture.

ity and masculinisation. Moreover, a marked transformation of dissociation and loss of original meaning is to be supposed before we can understand the transition from (divine-born) Land / Son / Lover to the merely allied and distantly mortal Flood Hero. The idea of one Supreme God I would situate when naked-eye astronomy emerged along with a general verticalisation of the world-view, the role of the shaman, and social hierarchy; the invention of Heaven was a requisite for the installation, some 8 ka later, of the mytheme of the Separation of Heaven and Earth, which as a central cosmogonic concept came to supplant – I propose: in the context of CITI V – the hitherto dominant idea of the Separation of the Primal Waters and the Emergence of the first Land. With Separation came the idea of CONNECTION and RE-CONNECTION (NarCom 2), the central theme of CITI VI – which also contains the seed for the articulation of the human conditions as distinct from divine and as evicted from a pre-Separation paradisiacal state of bliss. I have associated the dissociation that produces masculinisation with CITI VII (Extended Fertile Crescent, Neolithic or Bronze Age).

This would seem late for the products of CITI VII combined with VI, V and IV to be transmitted to the New World through standard demic diffusion. The most satisfactory reading of the evidence seems to be that FACTOR(2) found its origin in the Extended Fertile Crescent in Neolithic times, from there filtered into the New World – in post-Columbian times through Roman Catholicism, but also already in pre-Columbian times via Trans-Oceanic contacts across the Pacific and probably also across the Atlantic (*cf.* Gilmore & McElroy 1998; Mann 2006). Such Trans-Oceanic contacts imply use of the intercontinental maritime ‘Sunda’ network to be discussed towards the end of this monograph, but whether there was a specific South East Asian, *i.e.* Sunda, contribution to the transmission is FACTOR(2) to the New World remains to be seen.

The Ancient Near Eastern / -Biblical element is far more conspicuous, and we may take it that specific Christian (notably Roman Catholic) missionising and in general the imposition of Roman Catholic state religion throughout Meso and South America in post-Columbian times could be a major factor. To ascertain this Christian impact, we project, in Fig. 10.6, the positive cases of the CONTAMIN variable upon the distribution of FACTOR(2). Making allowance for the inaccuracies of the plotting procedure we see that not all Meso American cases of the upper quartile of FACTOR(2) are also positive on CONTAMIN. This seems to indicate some pre-Columbian presence of FACTOR(2), in addition to the much later, massive impact of Roman Catholicism. I therefore propose (Fig. 10.7), for Meso America, a secondary epicentre for FACTOR(2), in line with what I will propose below for FACTOR(9).

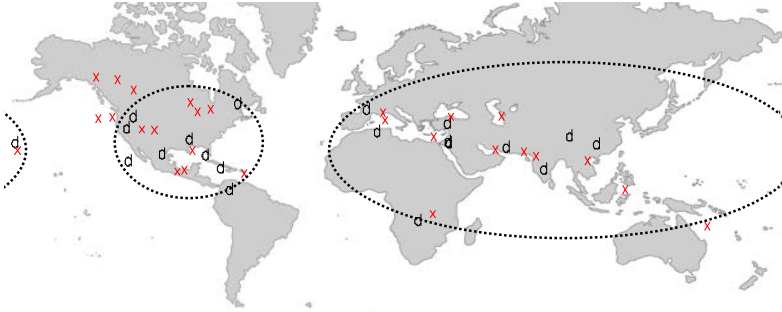
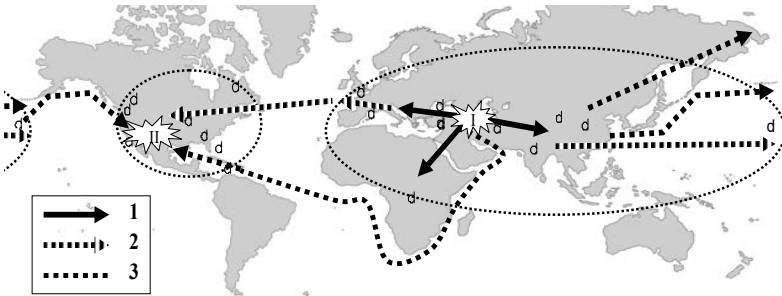


Fig. 10.6. FACTOR(2) GOD AS ALLY OF FLOOD HERO against the distribution of CONTAMIN



1. Neolithic and Bronze Age spread
2. Early Modern and High Modern spread under impact of Roman Catholicism
3. putative

Fig. 10.7. FACTOR(2) GOD AS ALLY OF FLOOD HERO: West Asian primary epicentre with New World secondary epicentre, with consideration of Early Modern and High Modern proselytising of this factor from the Old World to the New World

However, there is also the remote possibility of reading the world distribution of FACTOR(2) as an indication of a New World origin of the factor GOD AS ALLY OF FLOOD HERO, further mediated through Sunda intercession (Fig. 10.8). There has been a demonstrable gene flow from the New World back into the Old World across the Bering Strait (Forster 2004; Tamm *et al.* 2007), and this may have further percolated presumable New World mythological achievements along the lines of FACTOR(2). The extended, wide scatter of FACTOR(2) in the Old World would then have to be taken – against our intuitive insight to the contrary – as a sign of

being a secondary development. Such a reading is implausible: there are few examples of cultural traits travelling from the New World to the Old World in prehistoric times (whereas there have been numerous proposals for borrowings from the Old World to the New World). Moreover we have a much better explanation for the extended nature of the Old World scatter of FACTOR(2): the unity of the Extended Fertile Crescent, as a result of developments around CITI VI in proto-Neolithic times. It is here, rather than in the New World, that the notions of transcendence have been pioneered which make the idea of God as ally of a Flood Hero at all conceivable. We may assume that a trickle of such notions spread to the New World with the original migrations across the Bering Strait, but (if such notions are at all pre-Columbian in the New World) they are more likely to derive from Bronze Age spread from South Asia, or from North Asia (whence Uralic speakers – in principle with peripheral access to Extended Fertile Crescent ideas, *e.g.* as mediated through Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism or Islam) – have been argued to cross to North-western North America in the last few millennia.

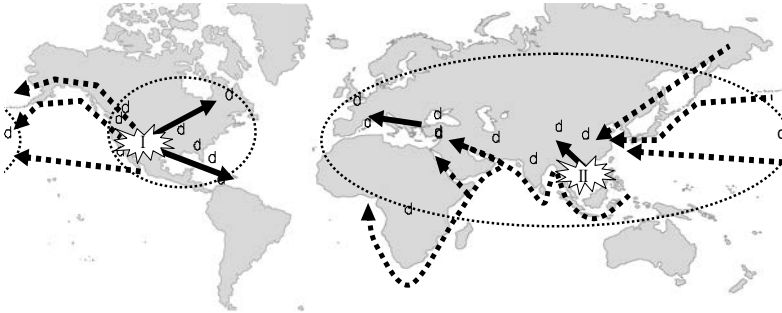


Fig. 10.8. FACTOR(2) GOD AS ALLY OF FLOOD HERO: New World primary epicentre Sunda secondary epicentre

### 10.2.5. FACTOR(3) FLOOD HERO AND ARK

Our next factor is FACTOR(3) FLOOD HERO AND ARK. My Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology, offers a perspective to make sense of this factor, and to tentatively situate it in place and time. There is no possibility that FACTOR(3) could directly reflect the contents of Pandora's Box. In my approach, FLOOD HERO AND ARK are to be seen as a product of CITI IV (Central Asia, Upper Palaeolithic, c. 30 ka BP, when the cosmology of the Separation of the Primal Waters and the Land was established. If the Land is the Son and Lover of the Senior Agent, the Mother of the Primal Waters, then the Ark is a transformation of the Land as Junior and dry element, but so is the Hero – Ark and Flood Hero are in the last analysis the same thing. However, in order for the concept of Land as Son and Lover to be transformed into Flood Hero and

Ark, a considerable transformation of the imagination was needed, which could only have occurred when the Water / Land cosmology was no longer the dominant one, but came to be supplanted by a later cosmology, especially that of the Separation of Heaven and Earth as the central cosmogonic event (NarCom 1, CITI V).

*I therefore propose (Fig. 10.8) one continental epicentre for this theme, Central Asia c. 20, early enough to ensure the demic diffusion of FACTOR(3) to the New World and inside the New World, and to allow for overland further diffusion within the Old World, without a substantial role for Sunda to be played.*

When, according to Oppenheimer, Sunda arose c. 7 ka BP FACTOR(3) had already been in place for over 10 ka. Probably a Central Asian continental epicentre with demic diffusion to the New World is the best model also for FACTOR(3). It explains the West Asian and European attestations best. We are reminded of the South Asian Flood story involving an avatar of Vishnu, Matsya, which for reasons of periodisation would be difficult to interpret as a borrowing from Sundaland (the general line of indebtedness between South East Asia and South Asia is rather from west to east), but, like the figure of Indra, is rather to be interpreted as a transformation of ancient Central Asian mythological traditions. However, the prominence of maritime themes (e.g. sacred shells, and a Poseidon-reminiscent, horse-associated, even horse-headed deity Hayagriva) in landlocked Central Asia represents a puzzle which has no easy solutions; a strong presence of a nautical people on the Indian Ocean shore to the south would be the obvious solution, but these ancient mariners need not have come from Sundaland, they could also have come from South Asia (Indus) or West Asia (Mesopotamia), and even from a cultural complex encompassing both Mesopotamia and the Pontic region. And, even more to the point, we might already have been in a time after the establishment (which I situate in the Early Bronze Age) of the multicentred, multidirectional intercontinental maritime network which we have called 'Sunda' by contradistinction from Sunda *tout court*.

However, it is not absolutely necessary for the transformation from Land / Son / Lover to Ark and Hero to have taken place in the Old World, in Central Asia. Since there is genetic evidence of some backflow of American genes into the Old World across the Bering Strait (Forster 2004; Tamm *et al.* 2007), it is also possible (even in the absence of concrete other cultural traits that can be argued to have travelled from the New World to the Old World in the same way) that FACTOR(3) FLOOD HERO AND ARK originates in the New World and subsequently spread to the Old World. Nor does such transmission need to have gone exclusively via the Bering Strait: The high incidence of the upper-quartile cases of FACTOR(3) in North America and in the Sunda region suggest that in the most recent millennia there may have been a substantial Sunda contribution to the recycling and redistribution of FACTOR(3).

However, before we jump to conclusions and reap the apparent anti-Eurocentric, anti-hegemonic fruits of the latter proposal, we must stop to re-examine FACTOR(3) as a candidate for Early Modern and High Modern world-religious proselytising from the Old to the New World. In FACTOR(3) we consider another element in the

typical Nuaḥite model known from the Ancient Near East and the Bible. An obvious first step is to confront the geographic distribution of FACTOR(3) with that of CONTAMIN. This is done in Fig. 10.9, where upon the upper quartile of FACTOR(3) (marked 'd') the positive cases of CONTAMIN (marked 'x') are superimposed. The overall scatter is in general agreement but it is clear that the individual cases far from fully coincide; and this is not just due to known inaccuracies in mapping admitted above. I propose therefore that there is reason to assume considerable pre-Columbian presence of this factor in the New World – in other words, the New World attestations of this factor are only partially due to 'contamination' by Roman Catholic proselytising.

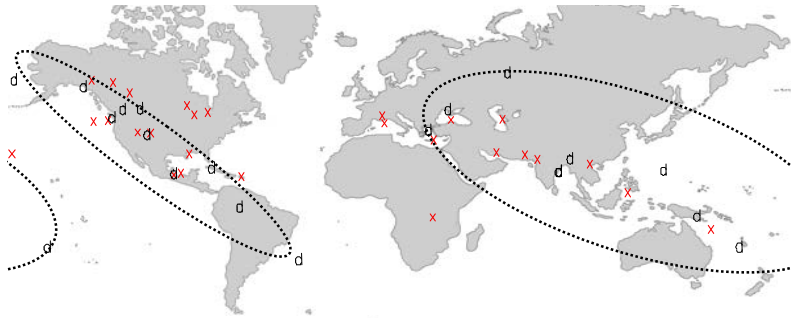


Fig. 10.9. Distribution of FACTOR(3) FLOOD HERO AND ARK against that of CONTAMIN

Finally we have more or less Heyerdahl's Kon-Tiki scenario, for which there is some slight genetic support (Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994) and for which Heyerdahl and his associates demonstrated the practicability, in view of existing oceanic currents and prevailing winds.

In fact, a possible model is one that combines New World and Sunda – originating in the New World, the theme FLOOD HERO AND ARK travels to South East Asia Kon-Tiki fashion (Heyerdahl's narrative itself is a reflection of this mode of seaborne Trans-Pacific transmission!) and from there it is further distributed in the Old World on the wings of Sunda expansion.

According to Dick-Read also food crops from South and Meso America did travel west across the Pacific and thus to the rest of the world; since the Flood Hero is often reputed to have travelled with food crops aboard, and since food crops may have brought their own associated myths and rites, the American scenario is not so absurd. This means that for this theme – one of the most important themes in Flood stories world wide – Oppenheimer may be partially right in stressing the Sunda element, and may be congratulated with his visionary insight – although he did not spot the earlier, New World antecedents nor the probability that yet a Central Asian origin is the most likely.



Our factor analysis has revealed that all Flood stories, including the Biblical one, are composite, in the sense that each mathematically constructed factor is independent from all other factors. It now turns out that the component theme 'Flood Hero and Ark' has a different origin from that of 'God Ally of Flood Hero'. It stands to reason that the immanent version, 'Flood Hero and Ark' is the more original and older one, and that it was only drawn in the orbit of transcendence – *i.e.* charged with major elements from the logocentric package writing-state-organised religion-science, once it had penetrated to the Ancient Near East, from an eastern, probably New World, origin, with the aid of Sunda expansion.

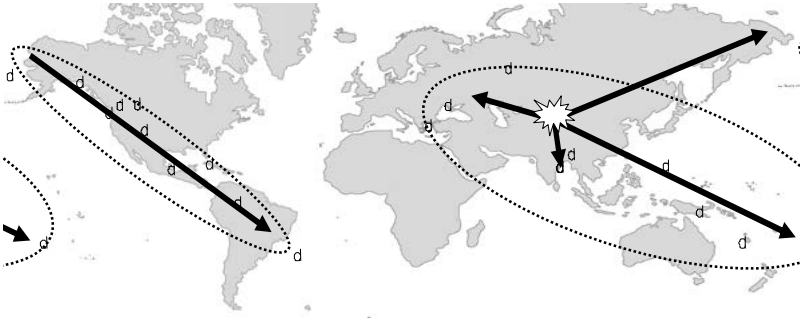


Fig. 10.10. FACTOR(3) FLOOD HERO AND ARK Central Asia systematically most attractive

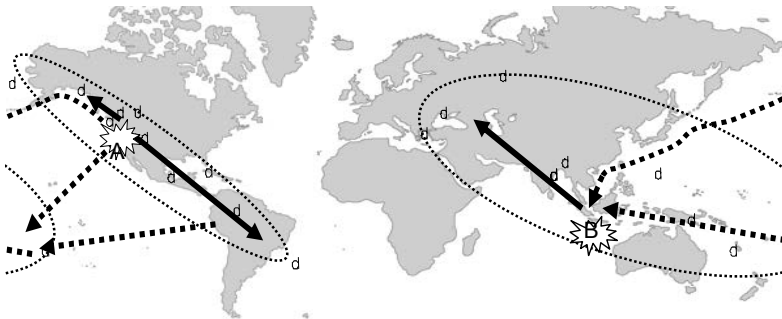


Fig. 10.11. FACTOR(3) FLOOD HERO AND ARK: (A) North American primary epicentre ("Kon-Tiki" scenario); with (B) secondary Sunda effect possible

Proto-Bantu reconstruction by		comments	
Guthrie	1	-gòdò 5- 'top; sky' 880	becomes <i>yilu</i> in Common Bantu, e.g. in Nkoya. This is my preferred etymology for Germanic <i>god</i> , 'deity' and for Semitic <i>ilu</i> , 'god'. Imperfectly integrated in the rest of the <i>Genesis</i> narrative, Lot becomes the protagonist in an inverted Flood story, where the earth is destroyed not by water but by fire. He is the highest ranking survivor
	2	-dòt- 'to surpass; (to pass)' 1536	as under (i)
	3	-yòt- 'to warm oneself' 2136	quite appropriate for the protagonist in a fiery cosmoclasm
Meeussen	4	god- 'accumulate, gather up', 5.3.	in an attempt to avert the terrible fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot's kinsman Abram bargained for the number of righteous persons that would bring about that effect
	5	-jót- 'warm oneself', 5.4.	quite appropriate for the protagonist in a fiery cosmoclasm
	6	-jota 9 'star', 5.4.	astronomical imagery occurs in the <i>Genesis</i> account of Abram, Lot's kinsmen (e.g. <i>Genesis</i> 15:5); cf. Maunder 1915 etc.; Quainton 1926
	7	-jóto 3 'fire, hearth', 5.4.	quite appropriate for the protagonist in a fiery cosmoclasm

Sources: Guthrie 1967 and n.d.; Meeussen 1980 and, n.d.

Table 10.2a. Conjectural Proto-Bantu etymology of the Biblical name Lot

### 10.2.6. FACTOR(4) 'FLOOD ALTERNATIVES'

Our next factor under consideration is FACTOR(4) 'FLOOD ALTERNATIVES'. My Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology, again offers a perspective to make sense of this combination, and to tentatively situate it in place and time. There is a distinct possibility that FACTOR(4) may directly reflect the contents of Pandora's Box. The mastery of fire appears early in the cultural evolution of humanity, and although the precise dating and context are contested, clearly fire had been mastered before the emergence of Anatomically Modern Humans, and therefore primal pyrotechnics must have been part of Pandora's Box.<sup>256</sup> Among the NarComs which I proposed to be part of the original cultural package of the Exodus out of Africa, several are fire-related: NarCom 4: The lightning bird, and NarCom 3 which sees the sky inhabited by the opposing and warring forces of Rain / Lightning on the one hand, and Sun / Heat on the other. Fire is probably equally central to the hu-

<sup>256</sup> On the human use of fire before the Upper Palaeolithic, cf. Milne 1996; Rigaud e.a., 1995 report on Mousterian, i.e. Neanderthaloid, fires from Grotte XVI; Stapert & Johansen 1999 discuss some prehistoric fire-making techniques and substances; Black 1931 was the first to report on the *Sinanthropus* ('Peking Man's) use of fire; Balter 1995 asks the question 'Did Homo erectus Tame Fire First?' but one and a half decade earlier Gowlett *et al.* (1981) reported already on fire traces from the Chesowanya site (Kenya), 1.5 Ma BP; further, cf. Bachelard 1965; myths on the origin of fire were brought together in Frazer 1930.

man experience and in human history as water, and although the particular perspective of Flood myths brings us to see destruction stories on cosmoclasm by fire as an derived alternative from deluge cosmoclasms, it is possibly the other way around: a water-centred cosmology being invented as an alternative to a fire-centred one. At any rate the two genres of cosmoclasm may have coexisted side-by-side for many millennia, like they still do in the Bible (where we have not only the Nuaḥite Flood story but also the fiery destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (*Genesis* 13:10 *f.*)– the latter has all the makings of a cosmoclasm, including the incestuous reproduction of Lot’s surviving daughter with their father as if the rest of the world were depopulated).<sup>257</sup> Fire cosmoclasms are found in several Old World contexts (*e.g.* Ragnarok of the Nordic peoples; the destruction attributed to the Lion goddess Sḥmt in Ancient Egyptian mythology; Bonnet 1952), and also in South Asia, the largest main periods of Hindu history (*yuga* युग) are supposed to end by a fiery cataclysm. The Biblical Covenant concluded by God and Nuaḥ is generally considered to revolve on the promise that never again would God destroy the Earth by water, but alternatives were kept open – as Hiroshima and Nagasaki may testify. Among these alternatives, destruction by fire is the most obvious. Fire is a theme in several Flood stories, especially the absence of fire, or the taboo on fire, immediately after the Flood, and the devious means by which fire was secured after the Flood (*e.g.* the fire theft of Prometheus – he was reputedly the father of Flood survivor Deucalion). As we have seen, there is a South East Asian counterpart of the myth of Prometheus, and of Gilgamesh’s friend’s weapon falling into the Underworld, in a story from the Chewong hunter-gatherers in Malaysia (Willis 1994: 305).<sup>258</sup> However, such cosmologies are relatively rare as compared to the high, nearly global, incidence of Flood stories.

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<sup>257</sup> In the course of this monograph we repeatedly consider names of places and persons in the Ancient Near East to which a Proto-Bantu etymology could be attributed: Jabbok, Canaan, Kingu, *etc.* I submit that another such name might be Lot, although the precise derivational rules at work elude me, which makes this proposal a very weak etymology indeed. See Table 10.2a. Lot’s wife, who was turned into a salt pillar because against an explicit divine prohibition she turned around to watch the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, remains unnamed in the Bible but in other Jewish sources receives the name of Edith (in the *Mishna*) or Ado, perhaps *cf.* Proto-Bantu (Meeussen) -di, unguḥ ‘turn round’, 1.3; incidentally, her turning around makes her comparable with Thracian Orpheus when rescuing Eurydice from the Underworld, and Japanese Izanami when engaging in the wedding ceremony with the brother the primal god Izanagi, prior to retreating to the Underworld because giving birth to their child Kagutsuchi / ‘Fire’ has caused her death (van Binsbergen 2009b, 2017).

<sup>258</sup> There is yet another complex of parallels to Prometheus: the Asian mythical complex of kings carrying fire eastward / towards the Sun, which Witzel (2009) sees as extending from the Aegean (Jason towards Colchis) to Japan, for which Witzel gives several concrete cases. One could add a few more names here: Dionysus, Alexander, Sesostriis, Nimrod – all going east, although not particularly carrying fire. There is even an African version, of Luche among the Bemba / Luba, going east with fire in his mouth (Roberts 1973; van Binsbergen 1981). According to Witzel, going east means establishing realm (which does apply to the Japanese and Indian legendary figures he discusses, and also to the Biblical figures, Moses (the founder of Judaism, to whom the first five books of the Bible are attributed) and Nimrod, even Cain (*Genesis* 4: 16, and 10:8 *f.*). What is striking about this complex in the overall context of the present monograph is that it stresses the opposite direction from the Sunda Hypothesis: from West to East, towards the rising Sun instead of from East to West.

Is FACTOR(4) truly a primal mytheme going back to Pandora's Box? Is the fiery cataclysm merely an implied possibility of the original mythical material exported out of Africa? And was it only activated and articulated at a particular point in time and place after the Out-of-Africa Exodus? These questions cannot yet be answered. The archaic nature of FACTOR(4) is also suggested by its relative frequent incidence in the interior of South America and in other cultures that have been relatively peripheral to the major progress of world mythological history (which is so markedly present in the Extended Fertile Crescent and in Meso America). Compare the oblique, veiled way in which it appears in a North-western European *Hausmaerchen*, typically in the nonsensical, wild form that obsolete, older contents take under a new dispensation that has rendered them meaningless – they take refuge in peripheral and peasant forms where they are away from the mainstream of central mythological development and from supervision by the major ideological and political agents of the centre.

'A louse and a flea were brewing beer in an eggshell. The louse fell in and burnt herself. This made the flea weep, which made the door creak, which made the broom sweep, which made the cart run, which made the ash-heap burn, which made the tree shake itself, which made the girl break her water-pitcher, which made the spring begin to flow. And in the spring's water everything was drowned.' (Grimm no. 30, cf. Grimm 1812-15, 1944; Isaak 2006; Ashliman 1998-2005)

This Grimm fairy-tale is also reminiscent of how fire and water appear in certain North American Flood stories, where the trickster both challenges, causes, and defeats the Flood, as in the following example from the Wintu people of north central California:

'Katkatchila (Swift) was a wonderful hunter. He had something which he aimed and threw, and it would kill game. Torihas (Blue Crane) invited Katkatchila to hunt with his people, with the ulterior motive to see how he kills things. On the first day of the hunt, Torihas sent his grandson Kaisus (Grey Squirrel) with Katkatchila. Whenever Katkatchila shot a deer, Kaisus rushed to the deer, but Katkatchila was faster and had taken out the weapon. On the second, day, Hau (Red Fox) went with Katkatchila, and finally, when Katkatchila shot his tenth deer, Hau reached it first and hid the flint weapon in his ear. Katkatchila demanded it back, but Hau denied having taken it. Katkatchila went away angry, threatening trouble. The others examined the flint. Hilit (House Fly) rubbed the flint with his hands and legs, making it large. Patsotchet (Badger) warned that Katkatchila would make trouble, and Torihas asked Tichelis (Ground Squirrel) to carry the flint north. When Katkatchila reached home, he told his sister Yonot (Buckeye), her husband Tilikus (Fire-Drill), and her husband's brother Poharamas (Shooting Star) of the theft. They brought out Yonot's child Pohila (Fire Child) and ignited pine sticks from it. Poharamas ran southeast to where the sky meets the Earth, and Tilikus did the same in the southwest. Both ran northward near the sky leaving a trail of fire behind them. The fire spread to Torihas's people. Only two of them escaped to the north. The flint still lies where Tichelis dropped it. Katkatchila, Yonot, Pohila, and Tilikus went behind the sky. Poharamas went to Olelpanti, the highest place above the sky, where the Supreme Being Olelbis lives in a wonderful house made from living oaks. Olelbis looked down on the world and saw only waves of flame. The sparks stuck fast in the sky and remain there as stars. Olelbis's grandmothers told him of Kahit (Wind) who lives in the far north outside the first sky, sitting with his head in his hands facing north. Olelbis sent Lutchi (Hummingbird) to bid Kahit come with Mem Loimis (Water). Lutchi went quickly, propped up the sky, and gave the message to Kahit. They came through the opening in the sky. Mem Loimis came first, followed closely by Kahit, who (not unlike Triton in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, I) was blowing his whistle with all his might. The water covered the Earth, putting out the fire, and rose to the top of the sky. All kinds of people who could swim came with them, such as Yoholmit (Frog) and Sosini (a Water Bird). Some of these people

Olelbis sent far away [ theme of the Confusion of Tongues – WvB ] ; others stayed at Olelpanti. Olelbis told Kahit that they had wind and water enough, and Kahit drove Mem Loimis back to her home in the ground in the north. Olelbis looked down and saw nothing but naked rock. There was no water left except in a rock basin at Tsarau Heril. At Olelbis's bidding, Klabus (Mole) worked five days bringing baskets of Earth from beyond the sky in the west and spreading it over the world. He and Yilahl (Gopher) then raised mountains and hills. Olelbis saw smoke in the southwest where Yonot had returned with Pohila. He sent Tede Wiu (a small bird) to get some fire. The house was closed, but after many days (...) Wiu caught a spark that came out. Olelbis threw a grapevine root and tule roots onto the Earth, and water flowed from where they hit. Olelbis directed Tsurat (Woodpecker) to carry Hlihli (White Oak Acorn) over the Earth; meal drifted out of it, and oak trees sprung up everywhere. Olelbis also spread seeds of all kinds of plants from around his lodge. Olelbis sent to Earth all of the people who were not needed at his home. The great people he kept at Olelpanti, but he sent down parts of each to turn into something in the world below.' (Curtin 1995: 3f; Isaak 2006)

Elements that found themselves in Pandora's Box have, potentially, global distribution – they may be implied in whatever mythical material from wherever in the world, and may surface in many different contexts in time and place without these surface manifestations having direct historical connections with one another except via pre-Exodus Africa. It is therefore fairly meaningless to try and trace a global historical reconstruction for FACTOR(4). Yet, since the New World was populated from the Old World, one would expect the familiar Central Asian shunting station of c. 20 ka BP (CITI V) to re-emerge in the distribution of FACTOR(4), which is the case.

While elements from Pandora's Box can be said to underlie all mythological forms in any place and time, and may re-emerge independently, it remains possible that one such surfacing has been particularly articulate and impressive, and has been subsequently distributed widely. It is possible to read the South and Meso American distribution of FACTOR(4), and its South East distribution, in such terms: which makes FACTOR(4) appear as a relatively novel package subsequently spread over the world, possibly on the wings of Sunda expansion. However, there is little to support such a view – even the South East Asian cases where FACTOR(4) is in the upper quartile usually are in part situated in local hunting and gatherer cultures and can be very well explained as expressions of a peripheral re-emergence of a mythical theme from Pandora's Box.

Fire is among humankind's oldest and most dramatic inventions. Natural fire mainly comes in two forms: volcanic (suggestive of the Underworld especially in a mountainous context), and meteoric (having to do lightning). In the meteoric form, fire / lightning is one of the most obvious natural connections between Heaven and Earth, closely associated (also as a natural phenomenon) with rain – however, I have postulated that Anatomically Modern Humans' interest in the connection between Heaven and Earth, and their articulation the concept of Heaven, does not constitute a cosmological constant throughout the 200 ka of the history of Anatomically Modern Humans, but is, on the contrary, a relatively recent emergence, under CITI V, in Central Asia c. 20 ka BP. In most natural environments there are other sources of drinking water available besides rain, and therefore rain only became of truly vital importance to humans with the invention of agriculture (c. 12 ka BP); even so, it is

the absence, rather than the overabundance of rain which is most terrifying. This is another reason for me to seek the explanation and obvious extremely wide and persistence fascination that Flood stories hold for humans, not in the inherently terrifying nature of water, but in a thought experiment that could only be executed in a worldview predicated on the Primal Waters. Fire (to deter predators, to secure warmth at night and to cook food, probably in that order) is far more a perennial life necessity also to non-agricultural hunters and gatherers, which suggests that fire destruction stories may be intrinsically older than Flood stories. It is attractive to read the reference to fire in many Flood stories as a reminiscence of older, alternative destruction stories, once these had been eclipsed by Flood stories.

The Egyptian, Nordic and South Asian myths on fiery cataclysm are perhaps so unspecific that they may well have emerged directly from the substratum of pre-Exodus mythological material world-wide, without needing a particular moment of transformation and innovation. However, we do have evidence of another fire-related mytheme that gives the suggestion of such transformation and innovation. This is the cosmological cycle of transformation, which is best attested for Taoist China as the ‘five-fold cycle of changes’ (五行 *wǔ xíng*) involving wood, fire, Earth, metal and water, but of which further traces may be found as far afield as Ancient Egypt and Greece (Empedocles’ four elements) but also in the Nkoya clan system in South Central Africa – taken there, perhaps, on the wings of the ‘Back-into-Africa migration’, but far more likely (given the catalytic details of the Nkoya system) as a relatively recent Asian intrusion during the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> mill CE (van Binsbergen 2012a). What makes this cycle interesting as an instance of mythological transformation is that – in a way reminiscent of the processes of reconciliation between mutually incompatible belief traditions in religious traditions (cf. Farmer *et al.* 2002) – they combine the four or five major cosmogonic themes (Table 10.3) in a way that renders it unnecessary to choose between them (for one theme systematically gives way to and transforms into the other), and that ignores the substantial time differences that exist between the postulated date of emergence of each of these themes).

element	CITI	time	place	description	associated mtDNA Type
Earth	I	Pre-Out-of-Africa Middle Palaeolithic 80 ka BP and earlier	Sub-Saharan Africa	10. The Earth as primary (10 was subsequently revised towards cattle, in the Neolithic)	L (L1, L2, L3)
Wood	I	Pre-Out-of-Africa Middle Palaeolithic 80 ka BP and earlier	Sub-Saharan Africa	12. From under the Tree (in subsequent CITIs diversified into 12a ‘The world and humanity from the tree’, and 12c ‘the leg child’)	L (L1, L2, L3)

Water	IV	Middle Palaeolithic, c. 30 ka BP	Central Asia	11. The Primal Waters and the Flood	B (out of N)
Air	V	Middle Palaeolithic, c. 20 ka BP	Central Asia	1. The Separation of Heaven and Earth <sup>259</sup>	N (H, A, B)
Metal	VI	Proto-Neolithic c. 12 ka BP	Extended Fertile Crescent	2. The Connection between Heaven and Earth (after Separation): the Demiurge in the form of a meteorite <sup>260</sup>	R and M

Table 10.3. The Taoist Chinese ‘five-fold cycle of changes’ as a reconciliation between cosmogonic NarComs, each belonging to a different CITI as situated in time and space

Traces of this cycle, with the omission of metal, are also found in certain New World Flood stories, and we may postulate this cycle, as a mytheme, to have been formulated under CITI V, Central Asia c. 20 ka BP. It is in that form that it also took the route west as part of the Back-into-Africa movement, which is how we spot it in Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece, and Zambia. The amplification with metal was a regional development in the eastern part of the Extended Fertile Crescent, under CITI VI (12 ka BP) – hence its being limited mainly to Chinese expressions. The point is that the transformative cycle set out in Table 10.3 replaces the definitive and unique cosmoclasm by Flood or fire (or the collapse of the world tree – the Yggdrasil theme in the North European cosmoclasm of *Ragnarok*) by a repetitive sequence, in which the idea of final destruction loses much of its terror. I propose that the transformative cycle is a later development, at least typologically, than the idea of fiery cosmoclasm.

The spotty distribution of the upper quartiles of FACTOR(4) may be interpreted as the dispersed peripheral remnants of an older dispensation that was, in most parts of the world, eclipsed by Flood stories as a newer genre of world destruction stories.

*Under that assumption the Flood alternatives under FACTOR(4) may be considered to form one unity with a common origin, which I am inclined, once more, to situate in Central Asia, prior to the emergence of Flood stories, i.e. c. 30 ka BP. In that case we can do without Sunda and New World epicentres.*

Significantly, the theme ‘Flood alternatives’ reaches a low (lowest quartile of FACTOR(4)) in two regions where Flood themes are highly in evidence: the belt from South-western Asia to South East Asia (as we have seen, the core area of the Nualhite pattern as measured by the constructed variable CONTAMIN), and North-western North America. Here one does not expect alternatives to Flood

<sup>259</sup> There is an obvious association between the Separation of Heaven and Earth, and the creation of air as the intermediate space created by such separation. Sw, the Ancient Egyptian god of air, was with his sister Tft the first creature to come into being as a result of Atum’s masturbation. EN.LIL, ‘Lord Air’, was one of the principal the Babylonian gods.

<sup>260</sup> Meteorite iron being among the very first metals to have been explored by humans.

stories to be so conspicuous that they yield high scores on FACTOR(4).

On purely distributional grounds the same pattern might also be interpreted as based, not on a Central Asian epicentre, but on Sunda expansion. If we reckon with Sunda northbound transmission along the East Asian Pacific coast, or across the Pacific, we could thus account for the American pattern, although Sunda transmission to the North Sea and even the Northern Arctic Sea would be problematic, and we have no ready explanation why there are no upper quartile attestations in the postulated westbound Sunda path; possibly, the dominance of the NuaHITE pattern in West and South Asia has prevented spread of the 'Flood alternatives' beyond Sundaland – assuming that the NuaHITE model was not yet established there when FACTOR(4) arrived from the New World. Finally, the concentration of positive cases of FACTOR(4) in Meso and South America and again in South East and Central Asia could bring us once again to adopt a combination of a primary American epicentre with secondary Sunda transmission in the Old World as a possible solution. Both the Sunda and the New World origin I consider as extremely implausible.

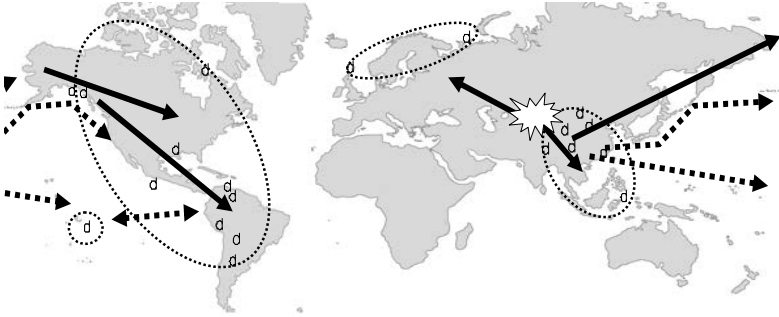


Fig. 10.12. FACTOR(4) FLOOD ALTERNATIVES, Central Asian epicentre

### 10.2.7. FACTOR(5): ANIMAL FLOOD SURVIVORS

Our next factor is FACTOR(5) ANIMAL FLOOD SURVIVORS. The theme 'Animal survivors of the Flood' may basically refer to two, analytically distinct, story lines:

1. The earliest conscious beings were animals, not humans, so it is animals who must have been involved in the Flood
2. Animals are still prominent in the Flood story, but under a younger dispensation it is the human hero (e.g. Nuah) who dominates the scene, and animals have been reduced to being the object of the hero's agency: he saves them, by his own initiative or on divine command; however, I read FACTOR(5) as just animals surviving the Flood, without necessarily the active intercession of human agency to bring such animal survival about.

Like for the Flood alternatives discussed under FACTOR(4), also for ANIMAL FLOOD



SURVIVORS a case can be made to find antecedents for at least part of this factor in Pandora's Box. When we overlook the earliest NarComs which I have reconstructed with some confidence, animals are very conspicuous there: the Lightning Bird, the Rainbow Snake, the Spider, and soon (in the first CITI after the Out-of-Africa Exodus) the Mantis. In the American Flood stories, animals are very often the sole inhabitants of the Earth at the time of the Flood – these are alleged to be the totemic clan ancestors, whose transformation into human beings has not yet taken place, in the logic of the Flood narrative. There is good reason to situate the animal component of FACTOR(5) in Pandora's Box. The other component of this factor is a Flood to be survived by living beings that are not physically equipped to survive the prolonged immersion in water, and that yet are supposed (sc. by means of some Ark-like device) to survive in order to create continuity between the world before and after the Deluge. The notion of salvation from a fatal predicament does not come only with the idea of the Flood (under CITI IV, NarCom 11: 'The Primal Waters and the Flood'). It belongs to the preceding CITI, III, of the Middle Palaeolithic in West Asia, whose principal identified NarCom is 6: 'Escape / Rescue from the Ogre'. Although the Ogre could be an image of the all-devastating Flood, I have hitherto mainly interpreted it as an evocation (surprisingly sophisticated for the Middle Palaeolithic, and probably anachronistically imposed by me as analyst) of the state of Non-Being from which reality and all its components are about to be rescued through the event of cosmogony. While thus CITI III furnishes the idea of escape, of being saved, we need CITI IV for the specific context of the Flood to materialise, in the Central Asian Upper Palaeolithic c. 30 ka BP. This means that with CITI IV, all the ingredients of FACTOR(5) were in place, and we can safely postulate CITI IV as the likely context for the emergence of FACTOR(5).

*I therefore propose one continental epicentre for this theme, Central Asia c. 30 ka BP, a time window early enough to ensure the demic diffusion of FACTOR(5) to the New World and inside the New World, and to allow for overland further diffusion within the Old World, without a substantial role for Sunda.*

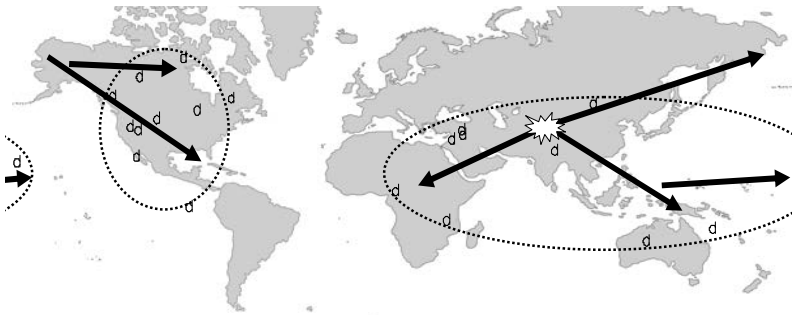


Fig. 10.13. FACTOR(5) ANIMAL SURVIVORS Central Asian epicentre

### 10.2.8. FACTOR(6) INCEST AND SWEETNESS

Our next factor is FACTOR(6) INCEST AND SWEETNESS. The factor combines incest with honey, honey beer (mead), other intoxicating beverages, and other forms of sweetness which (as Lévi-Strauss saw clearly) may well stand for the delights of sexuality. This factor is only tangentially attested in the Biblical Flood story: neither immediately before nor immediately after the Flood is there any question of incest (but there is in the parallel story of Sodom and Gomorrah, when the absence of other reproduction partners forces Lot's daughters to be incestuous with their father, who has to be made drunk in order to overcome his inhibitions), although Nuh's growing a vineyard, making the first wine, getting drunk and cursing Ham or the latter's son Canaan for mocking the *pater familias'* nakedness are told in detail – leaving us to solve the puzzle as to why the discovery of alcoholic drink, and drunkenness, should be so very significant in the Biblical Flood story. In other Flood stories, e.g. in the Philippines variant recounted by Shi Yang, the incest takes place before the Flood, in the context of the discovery of sexuality by the first humans who inevitably were close kin, – it is incest that brings about the Flood, and this upsets the cosmic order, as a lesson that in the restored order of post-Flood life incest is to be avoided.

*I therefore propose one continental epicentre for this theme, Central Asia c. 25 to 12 ka BP, a time window wide enough and early enough to ensure the demic diffusion of FACTOR(6) to the New World and inside the New World, and to allow for overland further diffusion within the Old World, without a substantial role for Sunda.*

Does my Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology, offer a perspective to make sense of this combination of incest and sweetness, and to tentatively situate it in place and time?

Early anthropologists (e.g. Durkheim, Mauss, Westermarck) have long recognised the importance of the incest taboo for the construction of the social order, and this idea became the cornerstone of Lévi-Strauss's seminal *Les Structures Élémentaires de la Parenté* (1949), the foundation of structuralist anthropology whose very title shows its author's indebtedness to Durkheim (who in 1912 published *Les Formes Élémentaires de la Vie Religieuse*, the foundation of modern religious anthropology; cf. van Binsbergen 2018). As an Americanist, Lévi-Strauss was conversant with, and greatly inspired by, the incest theme in American mythology.

Since the incest taboo is universal among Anatomically Modern Humans, it most probably belonged to the contents of Pandora's Box, and presumably already constituted a mythological theme which could be pressed into service in the context of Flood stories wherever and whenever. Meanwhile it is most interesting to note that in the handful of NarComs which I have managed to identify as probably belonging to Pandora's Box, there is hardly any reference to sexual reproduction but, on the contrary, the symbolic and imagery material is offered with which, in the Flood myths as attested in historical times, the *a-sexual post-Flood reproduction* may be articulated: from the tree (and the

leg child), from plants and fruits, from stones, from the Earth directly.<sup>261</sup> Apart from their specific use in Flood stories, these NarComs also furnish the images for cosmogonies along lines of non-sexual reproduction: the world and human-kind is said to have originally grown on a tree, sprung from the Earth, or from stones; the post-Flood devices for repopulation of the depopulated Earth simply re-apply these cosmogonic scenarios.

The high probability that the incest taboo was in Pandora's Box leads us to believe that there was also a primal mytheme conveying the incest prohibition and explaining the dangers of transgression. I have not yet been able to identify such a mytheme with any certainty – originally, my work leading up to the formulation of the Aggregative Diachronic Model was based on the analysis of a corpus of African cosmogonic myths as recorded in historical times, and whereas that led me to identify about 20 Narrative Complexes which allowed me to suggest some of the mythical contents of Pandora's Box, none of them seemed so far to hint at incest – yet. One could imagine that the conflictive relations in the sky between Lightning / Rain on the one hand, and Rainbow / Bright Sky / Sun on the other, were also conceived as some kind of marriage (which as an institution again is so universal that it must have been in Pandora's Box), or that the same model was projected onto Sun and Moon, but I

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<sup>261</sup> Here we are again reminded of the miraculous birth of Erichthonius, from Hephaestus' sperm as produced through masturbation (cf. Atum), aroused by Athena, but conceived by Earth, who immediately gave birth. We have already recognised the essentially cosmogonic nature of this enigmatic myth. There is also an echo here of the cyclical transformation of elements (van Binsbergen 202a; in prep. (d)), with Hephaestus = Fire, Earth = Earth, Athena playing the role of Air or Water (she may be recognised as a sea goddess; van Binsbergen 201f); and some fourth personage (implied to be Erichthonius himself?) playing the one role still open if we count on four elements. But is there any way in which this myth could also be construed to be an account of *re-population after cosmoclasm*? Hysterically the myth avoids all reference to the terrible act of sibling incest – although Athena and Hephaestus are half-siblings, both children of Zeus. In Flood stories world-wide, the Flood may be triggered by the discovery of sexuality, but the few Flood survivors are often a pair of siblings from complementary genders, who have no option but to commit incest so as to produce the offspring that will re-populate the world. What else has been suppressed from the mythical account of Erichthonius' conception and birth? What would we need to make it a cosmoclasm and re-population story? Could it be that the sheer suggestion of sibling incest in itself was sufficiently destructive so as to bring about a cosmoclasm that needed the re-population of which Erichthonius could be the first item? The latter's snake feet bound his tightly to terrestrial symbolism, and to a whole range of snake-footed mythical characters West and East from a snake-footed giant identified in Aarne & Thompson No. F53.1.3.1 (Fontenrose 1980 / 1959: 70, 80, 117, 242n) to Graeco-Roman Gigantes, Typhon and Pantheus, Gnostic Abraxas and Harpocrates, Hindu Vyaghrapada ('Tiger-Feet'), the primal, cosmogonic Chinese gods Fu Xi and Nu Wa, and Meso-American Quetzalcoatl / Kukulcan, the Plumed Serpent. Further research needs to be done on this point. Meanwhile I submit that there is an obvious explanation for this wide geographic distribution: the Pelasgian 'cross model', which makes for transmission in all four directions, even into Asia, Oceania, and the New World. Of all Hellenic cities, Athens is the only one to be explicitly associated with the Pelasgians in Classical Antiquity, Athena and Hephaestus are (with Poseidon) among the city's principal gods, and not only Erichthonius ('Wool-Earthy', by a popular etymology) but also the Pelasgian people as a whole are considered to have been 'born from the Earth' (Asius of Samos, *apud* Prichard 1841; Anonymous, Pelasgians). Snake-footed mythical characters are a tell-tale sign of Pelasgian presence. Even in China, where also another Pelasgian trait has penetrated: the *amphictyony* or Twelve League, an ancient form of egalitarian political organisation besides China attested in Etruria, Ancient Greece, Ancient Israel, and the eastern Atlas Mountains, North Africa (von Vacano 1961: 46; van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: 121; van Binsbergen, in prep (h); and references cited there).

have not yet had occasion to explore these possibilities. The first NarComs with a potential sexual element are the Mantis NarCom 5 and the Spider, NarCom 15) – insect species known for the easily observable peculiarity that the male is eaten by the female in the process of copulation. One could well imagine that such animal classes would be used for socio-sexual teaching, and in fact such is the case among the Khoisan cultures of Southern Africa, where the Demiurge / culture hero appears in the shape of a Praying Mantis. However, much as I would have liked to generalise this feature and include the Mantis in Pandora's Box as another universally underlying NarCom, it proved that worldwide the attestations of mythical or ritual attention to the Mantis is too limited to warrant any claim of universality; instead I propose that this NarCom emerged in the first CITI outside Africa, c. 80-60 ka BP; similarly, we have situated the emergence of Spider mythology in the Upper Palaeolithic (van Bnisbergen 2020d). In the next few CITIs we find NarComs hinting at close, potentially incestuous, relations between Mother and Son: under CITI III NarCom 6 'Escape from the Ogre' (where a Mother with her only Son, and possibly other people, are locked up by, or inside, the Ogre, only to be rescued by the Son's heroic actions); under CITI IV NarCom 11, 'The Primal Waters and the Flood' with the Mother of the Primal Waters giving birth to her only Son, Land, which is implied to become her lover; and under CITI VI NarCom 19, 'The Cosmogonic Virgin and her Son / Lover', clearly a direct transformation of NarCom 11. Such transgenerational incest, however, seems to be of a fundamentally different nature from the intragenerational sibling incest, which is more typically covered by FACTOR(6).

In the original version of my Model based on African cosmogonic myths, I did see reason to identify a NarCom 14 'Duality, Two Children, Twins', and (under the inspiration of Baumann's *Das Doppelte Geschlecht* – 1955) I proposed to consider it the product of a very late CITI, VIII, in the Extended Fertile Crescent in the Neolithic to Iron Age, where we see it as the defiance of the taboo on sibling incest, in pharaonic kingship in Egypt, and in other royal settings. However, I now realise that 'fundamental duality' in cosmology and socio-political arrangements is a special application of much older themes of duality, that are already implied in the NarComs 11 ('Primal Waters and the Flood' – the Duality Water / Land) and NarCom 1 ('the Separation of Heaven and Earth'). Above I gave reasons why the notion of a transcendent Paradise may be considered to be implied in the NarCom 1 'The Separation of Heaven and Earth', under CITI V, c. 20 ka BP.

The global distribution and proposed historical reconstruction of NarCom 14 'Duality, Two Children, Twins' are sketched in Fig. 10.14, with special emphasis on the cult and myth of divine twins.

Apparently,

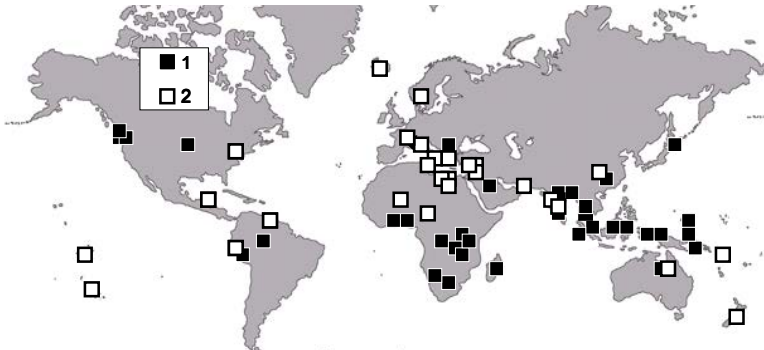
- (a) the myth and cult of divine twins to some extent overlaps with
- (b) the distribution of cultures where twins are important, often negatively,

but the two distributions are by no means coinciding, as is clear from South East Asia (where there is (b) without (a), and in parts of the New World; considering the fact that, in societies where infant survival is of prime importance to parents' economic strategies and depends largely on directly physical maternal care, twins are always a burden that tends to be valued negatively – this fairly general pattern is only breached in those cultures (proto-Neolithic and later, as the distribution suggests) where twins are elevated to mythical and divine status – thus probably enhancing their survival chances (*cf.* Ball & Hill 1996).

The myth and cult of divine twins (a) often coincides with (c) the mytheme of the Cosmic Egg (van Binsbergen 2020e – the standard example being Helen, Clytemnestra, and the divine twins the Dioscuri, but often there is no such coincidence especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where (c) is much more frequent than (a). If my interpretation is correct and NarCom 14 is to be situated in CITI VI (Proto-Neolithic, Extended Fertile Crescent, c. 12 ka BP), then it is much older than Sunda, and the attestations of NarCom 14 in Africa must be mainly attributed to overland spread in the context of the Back-into-Africa movement. NarCom 14 would also have reached Sundaland, and it may have spread from there to Oceania.

The four attestations of the cult and myth of divine twins in Central America are puzzling. They are associated with food crops, and we must take into account the remote possibility that it is in Central America, and not in the Old World, that the cult and myth of divine twins had its origin and subsequently spread along the intercontinental maritime network, westbound to Oceania and from there to the Old World, or eastbound to West Africa. What argues in favour of this possibility is that, although widespread within the Extended Fertile Crescent and in Europe that is clearly tributary to the latter, the cult and myth of divine twins has hardly managed to spread outside of the Extended Fertile Crescent, and instead of spilling over into the New World as several other CITI VI mythemes have been shown to do, there are no intermediate attestations along the path between the Old World Extended Fertile Crescent and Central America, via the Bering Strait.

The twin theme does not in itself imply sibling incest, but this is how it often turns out, both in myth (*e.g.* in some of the Flood myths in our sample), and in myth-legitimated actual practice *e.g.* among royals in Ancient Egypt, and in Zambia in proto-historical and historical times. I have the impression that the mandatory sibling incest in these royal cases not just expresses (as the usual explanation runs) royal exception from human laws, but particularly re-enacts the post-Flood re-population of the world through the incestuous intercourse of the only flood survivors: a pair of siblings of complementary gender. I propose to associate the emergence of the sibling incest theme as closely connected with the Paradisiacal mytheme and to situate this emergence at CITI VI (Proto-Neolithic, Extended Fertile Crescent, c. 12 ka BP).



Source: mainly Hastings 1909-1921, especially Hartland's article on 'Twins'.  
1. twins important, often negatively; 2. cult and myth of divine twins

Fig. 10.14. Global distribution of twin-related traits

The two distributions of twin-related traits in Fig. 10.14 appear to be totally unrelated. The trait 'twins important, often negative' would by our rule of thumb be a likely candidate for inclusion in Pandora's Box – which stands to reason because in most gene pools of Anatomically Modern Humans twin births have a considerable frequency of c. 1.25% (1 in 80) so we would expect the cultural articulation of such a biological feat to be both global and of great antiquity. However, attestations for the Andaman Islands are missing so far; elaborate information for the Isle of Nias (due East of the Andaman Islands, in front of the Sumatra coast) are available (Kleiweg de Zwaan 1913; Hartland 1909-1921) – the Andaman situation may be comparable. But even if our rule of thumb may be applicable, still an inspection of the global distribution of the trait 'twins important, often negative' suggests that an interpretation in Sunda terms is possible here; it is even more attractive, for it explains why, for a trait supposedly in Pandora's Box, global attestations are so sporadic in most of Asia and the New World:

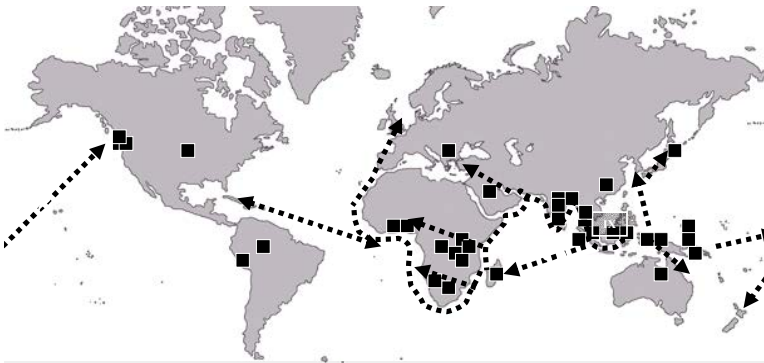


Fig. 10.15. Proposed historical reconstruction of the trait 'twins important, often negative'

The distribution of the trait 'cult of divine twins' (Fig. 10.16) is rather straightforward and suggests an epicentre in CITI VI (Extended Fertile Crescent Neolithic):

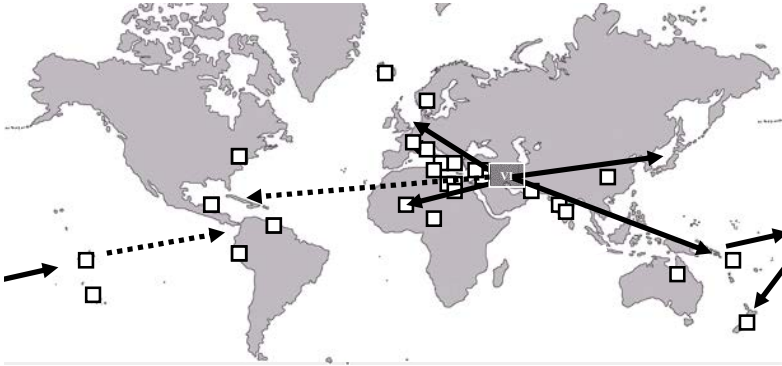


Fig. 10.16. Proposed historical reconstruction of the trait 'cult of divine twins'.

After we have thus cast some light on the incest theme in FACTOR(6), we now turn to the sweetness theme: honey, mead, and other alcoholic drinks. Honey must have been part of humankind's diet since the Lower Palaeolithic (Reichholf 1991), and from the Mesolithic on we have rock art attesting to honey collecting practices, *e.g.* from Spain and South Africa. Apart from Lévi-Strauss' *Du miel aux cendres (From Honey to Ashes)*, vol. II of 1969-1978,; the bee dimension of Ancient Egyptian royal titlature and the Nt cult; Bee (Melissa) as priestly title throughout the Bronze and Iron Age Eastern Mediterranean, where the bee was the emblem of Potnia, the Powerful Mother; and the well-known examples of honey and bees in Graeco-Roman mythology (foremost the Aristaeus myth), honey and bees as a mythical theme have received relatively little attention in the scholarly literature. Beaujard has written on the symbolism of honey and mead in Madagascar (1985), which together with his other works has stimulated me to see a Sunda trait in the Nkoya mead complex. Wine, beer and other alcoholic drink is considered to hail from the Neolithic but considering the ease with which honey may ferment we need not date alcoholic drink to the invention of agriculture. In my original scheme of NarComs I distinguished this as NarCom 18; but at the time I was not able to argue a particular CITI under which this NarCom could be subsumed, and I am afraid the situation has not improved since. I think we may safely assume that it is the incest theme, and not the sweetness themes, that presents the *terminus ante qua non* element in the dating of FACTOR(6) in the sense that, given the presence of the incest prohibition in Pandora's Box, one needs a substantial level of mythological evolution – of the growth of a virtualised and literary use of consciously make-believe language – before a myth highlighting incest as an original and ideal condition can be tolerated without destroying the texture of social life.

*This means that, like for most of the previous factors, we may stick to a Central Asian origin early enough to contribute to the demic diffusion to the New World. A Sunda ele-*

ment, and in general transmission along the intercontinental maritime network from the Bronze Age on, may have contributed to the further spread of this factor, but only secondarily so. There is no need to propose an independent New World epicentre for this factor.

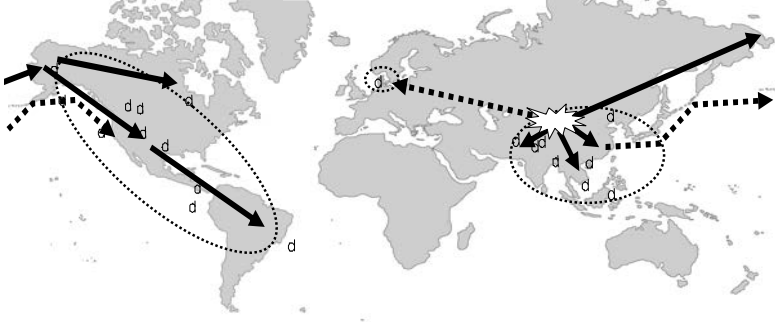


Fig. 10.17. FACTOR(6) INCEST AND SWEETNESS Central Asian epicentre

#### 10.2.9. FACTOR(7) POST-FLOOD REPOPULATION ABNORMAL BUT NOT STONE

The theme 'post-Flood repopulation abnormal but not stone', like that of incest and virgin birth, originates, at least in part, in the logical puzzle of how humankind could have repopulated the Earth after a worldwide Flood had totally eradicated the human race. Since normal reproduction in historical and proto-historical times had been through heterosexual intercourse between humans under conditions of the incest prohibition, most Flood stories could not repopulate the Earth through normal reproduction: either there was only one Flood survivor or none at all, or if several survivors they may have been of the same gender, and if of both genders the narrative often considered them to be close kin and thus ruled out as reproductive partners by the incest prohibition. A common solution to this problem is intercourse between a human survivor and an animal, plant, or spirit; another solution is to let the Earth's post-Flood population spring from stones. The present factor covers all forms of abnormal post-Flood repopulation, including incest, but explicitly not the stone variant.

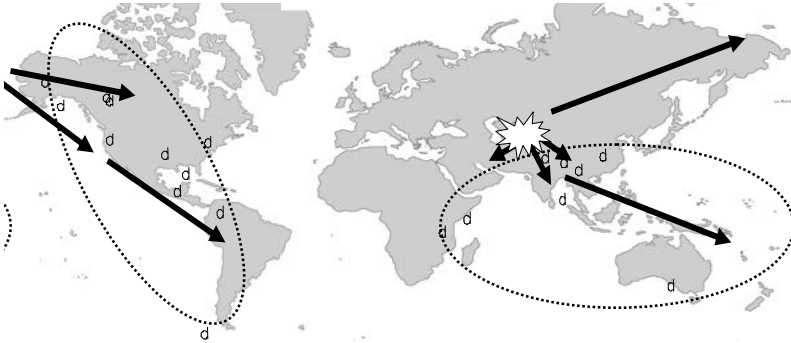
As already indicated above in the discussion of FACTOR(6), in the handful of NarComs which I have managed to identify as probably belonging to Pandora's Box, there is hardly any reference to sexual reproduction but, on the contrary, the symbolic and imagery material is offered with which in the Flood myths as attested in historical times, the a-sexual post-Flood reproduction is shaped up: from the tree (and the leg child, *i.e.* one born otherwise than through the normal birth channel), from other vegetal origins, from stones, from the Earth. Apart from their specific use in Flood stories, these NarComs furnish the images for cosmogonies along lines of non-sexual reproduction: the world and humankind are to have originally grown on



a tree or plant, sprung from the Earth, or from stones; the post-Flood devices for repopulation of the deserted Earth re-apply these cosmogonic scenarios, but in other cases opt for the incestuous solution.

*This means that the major ingredients for FACTOR(7) were available as soon as the obsolescence of CITI IV had produced the Flood theme (Central Asia 30 ka BP). This offers a time window wide enough and early enough to ensure the demic diffusion of FACTOR(7) to the New World and inside the New World, and to allow for overland further diffusion within the Old World, without a substantial role for Sunda.*

Possibly, the refining of incestuous models in NarComs 19 ('The Cosmogonic Virgin and her Lover / Son') and 14 ('Twins, Two Children, Duality') under CITI VI allowed for further diversification of the narrative repertoire under FACTOR(7); and considering the relatively late date of this proto-Neolithic CITI it could only very partially be transmitted to the New World; in that respect, later inroads into the New World especially of a Sunda nature can be contemplated. A New World origin looks to me as implausible as an original Sunda origin.



*Fig. 10.17a. FACTOR(7) POST-FLOOD REPOPULATION ABNORMAL BUT NOT STONE: Central Asian epicentre.*

#### **10.2. 10. FACTOR(8) KILLING ANIMAL DEMIURGE, AND WHITE GOD**

Our next factor is FACTOR(8) KILLING ANIMAL DEMIURGE, AND WHITE GOD. This factor scores high on the following variables: presence of an animal Demiurge; White God; pre-Flood Separation of the Waters; post-Flood reproduction sexually normal; and murder of Demiurge in evidence. One reason why FACTOR(8) is so important is that it contains, in a nutshell, the myth of salvation through violence that is at the heart of Christianity as one of the most successful mythologies in history. The Demiurge is the connection between Heaven and Earth, and is murdered by humans on Earth. This is the essence of Christian Christology, which however has ramifications throughout the Old World that cannot be relegated to Christianity,

and that suggest a powerful and ancient underlying theme, surfacing here in the context of Flood stories.

Above we have already discussed the presence of animals in prehistoric mythology, and we have argued that this is probably a trait going back to Pandora's Box. Such an archaic trait is likely to be overlaid with all sorts of transformations and innovations at the central growth points of world mythology (the various CITIs in Asia and throughout the Extended Fertile Crescent), and therefore we are not surprised to find upper-quartile cases of FACTOR(8) especially in the New World and in the Old World periphery.

Above we have also discussed the White God, and assigned to that mytheme (NarCom 21) an origin in CITI IV (Central Asia, c. 30 ka BP). Nuaḥ, in the Biblical Flood myth, is a White God (an albino, according to the Book of Enoch; Charles 1977), and as such comparable with other gods of beginning and creation such as Janus and Ganesha. That Nuaḥ has Central or East Asian connotations has been recognised over a century ago by Biblical scholars, in which they followed Islamic scholars like Masmūdi who had asserted the Chinese identity of Nuaḥ's son Japhet (cf. Leslie 1984; Cook & Rosemont 1984) and this thesis was subsequently taken up by the comparative linguist Karst. Instances of White Gods with Nuaḥ-like connotations and even names reminiscent of Nuaḥ can be found in North American religion and mythology, but they risk to be missionary contaminations, until we have developed the means (like in the present analysis) to separate Judaeo-Christian contamination from historically independent Flood traditions.

This leaves two ingredients of FACTOR(8) to be accounted for: the Demiurge, and the killing of the Demiurge. The Demiurge is a central element in NarCom 1: The Separation of Heaven and Earth, which I situate in CITI V (Central Asia, 20 ka BP) – the separation produces an undesirable state, which has to be remedied by restoring the connection between Heaven and Earth – for which there are many devices: dead matter (rope, thongs, ladder, mountain, temple, altar), living matter such as plants and animals that are being transmitted between Heaven and Earth, by being lowered from Heaven or sent up in the form of sacrifices, as well as personal: the Demiurge, the king, the shaman, the human sacrificial victim.

Currently, several views circulate concerning the emergence of sacrifice in global cultural history, each with specific implications for dating. From the 1970s on the dominant view in anthropology has been that of René Girard; he saw the establishment of human society as based on mimesis, which for him is not Plato's remembering of the original and eternal Ideas in present human life, but more a humanities version of what sociologists already in the 1930s called 'reference group behaviour': Ego constructs himself or herself by emulating the Other; the contradictions of this process lead to sacrificial killing, which therefore, theoretically at least, must be situated at the very dawn of human consciousness – a 'Primal Scene' (Freud 1918 / 1995 uses that term for a different situation – the infant witnessing its parents' love-making) – but the reference to Freud is appropriate here because in his 1913 book *Totem und Tabu* he sketched a similarly violent, and similarly hypothetical, prehistoric scenario) which may well mark the emergence of Anatomically Modern Humans, in Africa 200 ka BP, or perhaps earlier, for archaeological evidence on intragroup killing has been argued for even earlier periods. Another view has been advocated by the classicist and

comparative religionist Walter Burkert (1983), who sees sacrifice as a transformation of Palaeolithic hunting; of course, without anything to offer one cannot make a sacrifice, and for bloody sacrifice hunting or human sacrifice) is an obvious requirement in times when there are no domestic animals yet to kill as offerings – moreover, comparative ethnographic evidence from Africa (cf. de Heusch 1985) does reveal that hunting quarries may be sacrificed in historical times. One should not overlook the potential contribution, in this connection, from human captives produced by inter-group warfare. Burkert's theory appeals to me because it runs parallel to my own theory of the emergence of another formal cultural system, board games and divination, which I also see as transformation of pre-Neolithic food producing practices; however, I have not attempted to extend my views of the emergence of such formal systems, to sacrifice specifically. Although specific archaeological evidence on Palaeolithic sacrifice other than the killing of humans is both scarce and contested, under Burkert's theory one would expect sacrifice to date from not much earlier than the Mesolithic, perhaps the Upper Palaeolithic – 25 to 10 ka BP. Mithen, a theorist of the emergence of mind, would situate the emergence of sacrifice rather earlier, on the basis of the idea that sacrifice is a form of anthromorphising man's interaction with nature (which is then patterned after the way interhuman relations are manipulated by gift-giving), and since anthropomorphic artefacts and representations abound in the Upper Palaeolithic (recent research would already claim several such artefacts for the Middle, even Lower Palaeolithic, cf. Bednarik 1990), Mithen (1996) proposes to situate the emergence of sacrifice at the transition from Middle to Upper Palaeolithic – which for Europe coincides with the appearance of Anatomically Modern Humans from the Near East and ultimately from Africa. That transition has been hotly debated by palaeoanthropologists since the 1980s, and several of them would concur with Mithen. An alternative proposal however (Smith 1987) sees sacrifice strictly in the context of domestication of animals, therefore dating it to the proto-Neolithic. My own view<sup>262</sup> is that human sacrifice to the Earth (the Underground, chthonic spirits, the ancestors, the dead) may be as old as NarCom 10: 'The Earth as primary' – which I would situate in Pandora's Box; however, for sacrifice (including human sacrifice) to be conceived as re-connecting Heaven and Earth it is necessary that the vertical gaze has been installed and that the Separation of Heaven and Earth has established itself

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<sup>262</sup> While acknowledging that the emergence of the Neolithic food production through agriculture and animal husbandry does make a fundamental difference to the nature and conceptualisation of sacrifice. I touched upon this on two counts in my own research. When seeking to explain the implicit, underlying symbolism of the *mankala* board-game I was led to the same Neolithic watershed (van Binsbergen 1997c / 2011 reprinted). And when investigating the nature of animal sacrifice among the *sangoma* diviner-healers of Southern Africa, I found much to my surprise that victims could not be taken from one's own domestic stock but had to be expressly purchased in the open market – *as if essentially the cult was an expression (much like I found for cults of affliction further up north, in South Central Africa; van Binsbergen 1981a) of transregional, non-domestic contacts in a (pre-colonial) world of long-distance trade and proto-globalisation* (van Binsbergen 2005b). When below we shall unfold the discovery of a global maritime network, I shall take the opportunity of pointing out that in a transcontinental perspective of cults of affliction throughout the Old World, such cults (given their convergences in format and ideology) may in the first place be considered expressions of such transcontinentality.

as the dominant cosmological myth – which I think was only the case with CITI V, c. 20 ka BP or later. The following factor (FACTOR(9), ‘Sacrifice as Reconnection’), is another application of the same NarCom 2. In my recent book on Durkheim (2018) these questions are discussed in greater detail.

Among the means of Re-connection of Heaven and Earth after the Flood, sacrifice occupies an important place. It is typically a late development, in that it is predicated on the fully conceptualised Separation of Heaven and Earth, an implicit expression of the transcendence of Heaven, and depends on human agency in order to be realised – and often also on the moral / ritual / anatomical purity / perfection of the sacrificer (often also the victim) in order to be effective at all.

NarCom 2 speaks of the Re-connection of Heaven and Earth, for which the Demiurge is an excellent device – just like the king, the shaman, the ladder, mountain, rope, etc.; and there is nothing there that inherently points to the necessity for the Demiurge to be killed in the process. Is it the killing that was added to this NarCom as a New-World mythical elaboration, subsequently to be exported all over the world? Is it an image of the calculating, manipulative, exploitative intercourse with nature, typical of agriculture but rather at variance with the attitudes with which nature is approached in hunting and gathering cultures? Or is the eminent success of Demiurge-killing as an elaboration of NarCom 2 simply to be explained from the fact that this elaboration is a uniquely apt expression of the human condition, to be recognised worldwide, and a major tool for myth-making and for any other kind of literary and philosophical reflection? Further research and reflection are needed on this point.

Probably the idea of restoring the Connection between Heaven and Earth is not in itself the origin of the mytheme of sacrificial killing – after all, killing and being killed in the context of hunting and warfare were common experiences in the Palaeolithic, which did not need the emergence of a new NarCom (such as the Separation of Heaven and Earth, and its subsequent Re-connection) to materialise. Mythical themes of combat and death could be (and probably were) already derived from two NarComs in Pandora’s Box: NarComs 13 ‘The Cosmic / Rainbow Snake’ (which typically features as ‘the Adversary’, notably of Rain / Lightning and of the Earth), and NarCom 15 ‘The Spider’ – van Binsbergen 2020d (whose hunting and killing is as conspicuous as its weaving; that both the violent and the skilful traits were recognised is clear from the transformation of this NarCom into ‘feminine arts’ under the proto-Neolithic CITI VI, when goddesses (as role models for young womanhood) appear (as transformations of demoted Mothers of the Primal Waters) who combined weaving with warfare (and transcendent virginity). In the early post-Out-of-Africa CITIs II and III the mythical killing element is also implied in NarCom 5 ‘the Mantis’ and NarCom 6 ‘Escape from the Ogre’. So the model of sacrificial killing was available and ready to be applied by the time the NarCom 2 was formulated as ‘the Re-connection of Heaven and Earth’.

Finally, the Demiurge – a junior divine being who because of his or her intermediate status

between divine and mortal is eminently suited to connect Heaven and Earth. We have seen this figure build up in a long process that noticeably started long before the Out-of-Africa Exodus. Dissociation of a (hypothetically) initially One divine figure is already implied in NarCom 4 'the Lightning Bird; the latter may dissociate into its product, the Cosmic Egg. Also the idea of the Rainbow Snake, inhabiting the sky as the Adversary of both Rain / Lightning and of the Earth below, is an instance of divine plurality. Escape from the Ogre suggests both dissociation (the escapees on the one hand, the ogre on the other), and (in many versions at least) complex difference in rank among the escapees – the Mother produces the Son, but is also saved by the latter, and the two may be lovers. The most powerful association is that of NarCom 11, 'The Primal Waters and the Flood', where the senior Mother of the Primal Waters produces the junior Land, as her Son and Lover. Here the idea of verticality and Heaven is added which was the main achievement of CITI V; as a result we have all we need to conceive of the idea of the Demiurge, which therefore may be considered a product of CITI V in Central Asia, 20 ka BP.

*Again we end up with a time window suitable for demic transmission to the New World, and for FACTOR (8) we need neither a Sunda origin nor an origin in the New World. Yet it is not impossible that Sunda played a role in the further distribution of this factor once it has emerged in Central Asia.*

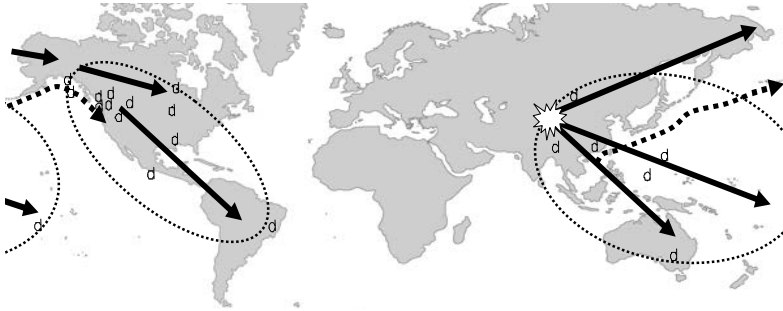


Fig. 10.18. FACTOR(8) KILLING ANIMAL DEMIURGE, AND WHITE GOD: Central Asian epicentre

FACTOR(8) appears to be very much a New-World one, with the larger part of the upper quartile in (especially North) America. When we also consider the other quartiles we see most of the lower quartile spread out all over the Old World – but with a remarkable extension of the lower quartile to North-western North America. The following observations suffice to explain this situation. North America is relatively peripheral to the realm of mythological innovation along the CITIs of Asia and the Extended Fertile Crescent – so whereas in the latter parts of the world the contents of FACTOR(8) were already being transplanted by innovations and transformations from later CITIs, in the New World the inheritance from CITI V remained paramount. The New World did not participate in the ever intensifying trend of Asia and the Extended Fertile Crescent towards the idea of transcendence, which – although already implied in CITI V – yet became one of the principal products of the later CITIs, and the very basis of the

development of human thought, religion, science, and society ever since. In the Old World, the Demiurge therefore could develop into major religious figures that in many ways were to determine the global future of humankind from 5 ka BP: Osiris, Dionysus, Buddha, Christ, Muḥammad. Two of these (Osiris and Dionysus) are vegetation gods, whose body is literally torn apart and with whose fragments humankind feeds itself; Christ follows the same imagery and, although symbolically, the same fate, on the cross and in the Eucharist – and so do the Prophet Muḥammad’s grandson the Shi’ite martyr Ḥusayn in the Middle East, and in Africa the figures of Mbona (16th century CE Malawi) and Mwana Lesa (19th century CE Zambia; not to be confused with the 1925 CE witchfinder with the same nickname – Ranger 1975). It is most remarkable that these figures have so much in common with Central and North American vegetation gods, – as if these could yet fully realise the potential already available, in nucleo, in CITI V when it was transmitted to the New World through demic diffusion. In fact, the correspondences are so close that one would prefer to see a more direct and recent link, for instance through American food crops, and the attending myth of vegetation gods killed and eaten, travelling to the Old World along the routes (either westbound, across the Pacific by a Kon Tiki scenario, or eastbound across the Atlantic) of the intercontinental maritime network that had been established, by Sunda influence among others, from the Bronze Age onward. This tallies with Dick-Read’s claims concerning the Pacific trajectory of American food crops found in Africa. However, also the reverse scenario is possible: Old World vegetation gods spreading to the New World – for instance from West Africa. I find it difficult to choose between these scenarios – both are attractive as anti-Eurocentric, anti-hegemonic reminders. Yet my preference is for a New-World epicentre.

*What is however important is that by and large, the subsequent mythologico-religious development inside the New World was such that the lofty promise of transcendence inherent in the Demiurge of CITI V could not easily be sustained – the New World only peripherally, and by occasional trickles of migration and maritime contacts, partook of the later development after CITI V with which the intellectual history of the Old World was shaping up over the last 12 ka, and as a result the New World Demiurge lost much of its transcendence and became the divine trickster which abounds in American Flood stories.*

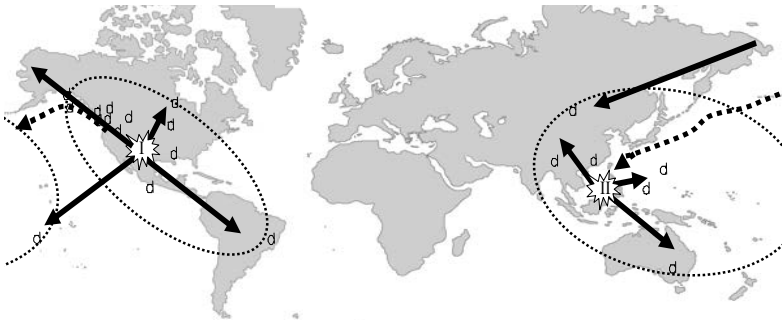


Fig. 10.18a. FACTOR(8) KILLING ANIMAL DEMIURGE, AND WHITE GOD: (I) American primary epicentre, (II) Sunda secondary epicentre for Old World spread

### 10.2.II. FACTOR(9) SACRIFICE AS RE-CONNECTION

Our next factor is FACTOR(9) SACRIFICE AS RE-CONNECTION. My Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology, offers a perspective to make sense of this combination, and to tentatively situate it in place and time. One of the interesting implications of the mathematical construction of factors by multivariate analysis is that the present FACTOR(9): SACRIFICE AS RE-CONNECTION, is expressly unconnected with the previous FACTOR(8): KILLING ANIMAL DEMIURGE, AND WHITE GOD. Although *New-Testament* and subsequent Christian theology combines the two themes in its Christology, this is another example of heterogeneous motifs which only in relatively late narratives, from historical times, have been compounded into a single mythico-religious representation.

*Yet FACTOR(8), and the analytical discussion given above for that factor, already contains all the elements we need for a dating in terms of my Model. I therefore propose one continental epicentre for this theme, Central Asia c. 20 ka BP, a time window early enough to ensure the demic diffusion of FACTOR(10) to the New World and inside the New World, and to allow for overland further diffusion within the Old World, without a substantial role for Sunda.*

When we consider the distribution of the upper quartile of FACTOR(9), we note that the highest values of this factor occur in both the New World and the Old World. The New World has a concentration in Meso America, with outliers North and South. Most of the attestations of the upper quartile are in the Old World, this time, and they cluster once more around South and East Asia, with outliers in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean, Africa, Mongolia, Korea and Australia.

I take it that a model of spread from one Old World continental epicentre from c. 12 ka BP is the best solution to account for this evidence.

This tallies with my earlier analyses (van Binsbergen 2006a, 2006b) of the origin, transformation, innovation and spread of NarComs, on the basis of other data than Flood myths worldwide: The Re-Connection of Heaven and Earth (NarCom 2) is one of the main products of the proto-Neolithic CITI VI, which I situate in West to Central Asia and in the Back-into-Africa movement, in the context of the (emerging) Extended Fertile Crescent (from the Fertile Sahara to China).

Where to situate such an Old World epicentre for FACTOR(9)? A look at the distribution map suggests (Fig. 10.19) that Central to West Asia, the proposed scene of CITI VI, would be a good option, suitably situated between the attestations in West Asia, the Aegean, Africa, South Asia and East Asia, – with the usual extensions into Australia and Oceania due to expansion of mtDNA Type B people in the course of recent millennia.

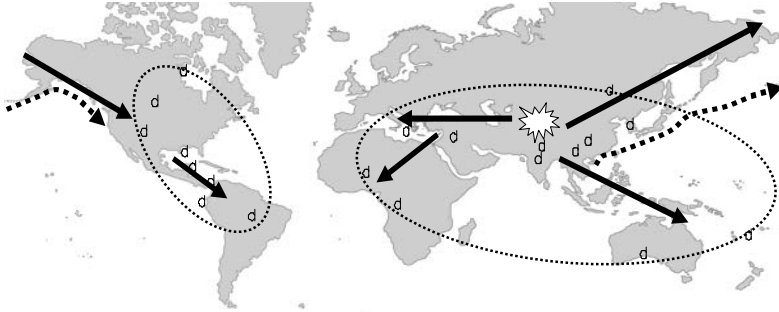


Fig. 10.19. FACTOR(9) SACRIFICE AS RE-CONNECTION: Central Asian epicentre

### 10.2.12. FACTOR(10): HEAVEN, LUMINARIES, CONNECTION, PARADISE

Our next factor, FACTOR(10) at first view would appear to be fairly heterogeneous: HEAVEN, LUMINARIES, CONNECTION, PARADISE. There is no possibility that FACTOR(10) could directly reflect the contents of Pandora's Box, *i.e.* the original cultural package with which Anatomically Modern Humans left Africa c. 80 ka BP. In my approach, Heaven has been proposed as a product of CITI V (Central Asia, Upper Palaeolithic, c. 20 ka BP, when naked-eye astronomy emerged along with a general verticalisation of the world-view, the role of the shaman, and social hierarchy; the invention of Heaven was a requisite for the installation, implied under the same CITI of the mytheme of the Separation of Heaven and Earth, which as a central cosmogonic concept came to supplant the hitherto dominant idea of the Separation of the Primal Waters and the Emergence of the first Land. With Separation came the idea of CONNECTION and RE-CONNECTION (NarCom 2), the central themes of CITI V. The vertical world-view cast a new light on the great luminaries Sun and Moon, which here appear as aspects of FACTOR(10). With the notion of Heaven, the beginning of transcendence as a state fundamentally different from life here and now is emphasised<sup>263</sup> – Paradise is the articulation of such a state, and there is evidence to suggest that, in addition to the idea of an Underworld the idea of Heaven as paradise was widespread in the Upper Palaeolithic and persisted into historical times.

*I therefore propose one continental epicentre for this theme, Central Asia c. 20 BP, a time window early enough to ensure the demic diffusion of FACTOR(10) to the New World and inside the New World, and to allow for overland further diffusion within the Old World, without a substantial role for Sunda model. Yet it is not impossible that Sunda played a role in the further distribution of this factor once it has emerged in Central Asia.*

<sup>263</sup> Although that possibility has already been implied for all language use: a standard lexicon available for general use and capable of being applied to specific situations here and now – but also to discuss far away and non-existing situations that only exist in language, in the mind. Further reflections on the world history of transcendence in van Binsbergen 2012a, 2018.



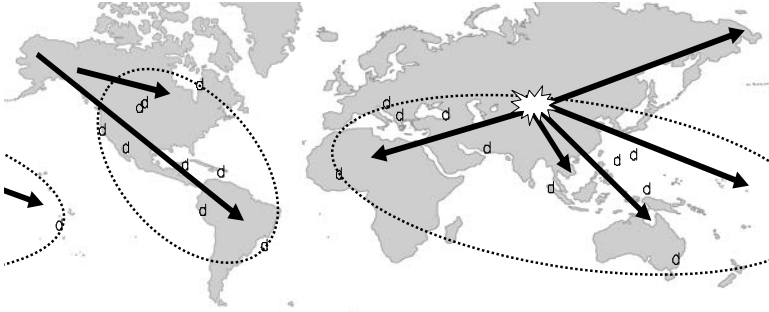


Fig. 10.20. *FACTOR(10) HEAVEN, LUMINARIES, CONNECTION, PARADISE: Central Asian epicentre*

However convincing the Central Asian paradigm is on systematic and empirical grounds, yet it is remarkable that in the Old World, all attestations in the upper quartile of *FACTOR(10)* lie in the postulated path of extended Sunda (extended, *i.e.* including the Bight of Benin, the Ancient Near East, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea). Oppenheimer does have a point when he proposes to attribute the Old World distribution of this theme (which, of course, in his 1998 work appears in a slightly different form) to westbound Sunda expansion. This might lead us to the proposal of a Sunda primary epicentre, American secondary epicentre.

However, for *FACTOR(10)* the same argument applies as given above for *FACTOR(9)*: Sunda can only have recycled what was already fully present in the Central Asian paradigm, and the New World attestations of *FACTOR(10)*, however important to read the Flood stories in continuity with their Old World counterparts, do not rule out the fact that ultimately we are dealing here with an Old World, Upper Palaeolithic to Mesolithic phenomenon. So we stick to the historical reconstruction of Fig. 10.20.

### 10.2.13. *FACTOR(11) HEROIC COMBAT*

Our next factor is *FACTOR(11) HEROIC COMBAT*. The theme of heroic combat has been recognised to constitute one of the most persistent and widespread themes in comparative mythology (Fontenrose 1957). As has already been remarked in the discussion of the earlier factors, conflictive relations shaped after the model of human interaction were already implied in some of the NarComs in Pandora's Box: NarCom 13 'The Cosmic / Rainbow snake' (as Adversary of Rain / Lightning), and probably also NarCom 15, 'The Spider' (both weaving, and killing its prey – and its mate). The last theme can also be detected after the Exodus out of Africa, in NarCom 5 'The Mantis (CITI II), whereas also NarCom 6 'Escape from the Ogre' (CITI III) is one of heroic confrontation of the confining and consuming Ogre, by the young hero (often accompanied by his mother / lover). When, therefore, in the context of the Flood myth analysis, I added a new NarCom 28 'Games contests combats', this mytheme had long and complex antecedents in the global history of mythology. That I yet opted for

combat as a NarCom in its own right, despite the conflictive elements in the already existing NarComs just mentioned, was because I detect a new element in the combats in the Flood context which went beyond the primary dissociation implied in the pre-existing NarComs: the combat is waged with the use of weapons; its protagonists are anthropomorphic and more or less each other's match; they tend to be of an heroic / demiurgic rather than divine nature; and the beginning of a ritualisation of the combat situation is noticeable, with a well-defined beginning and end.

*All these elements are well in line with the emergence of the idea of the Separation of Heaven and Earth – hence the emergence of the Demiurge / hero as the obvious connection between Heaven and Earth, and also the articulation of the terrestrial state, outside Paradise, as an apt definition of the human condition. I therefore propose to situate the emergence of NarCom 28 'Games contests combats' under CITI V (Central Asia 20 ka BP); this allows us a time window early enough to ensure the demic diffusion of FACTOR(10) to the New World and inside the New World, and to allow for overland further diffusion within the Old World, without a substantial role for Sunda.*

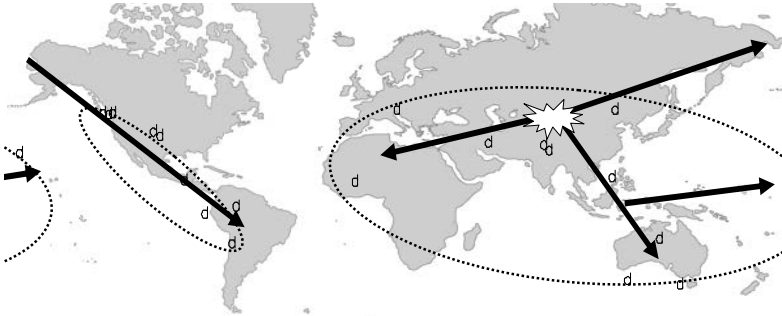


Fig. 10.21. FACTOR(11) HEROIC COMBAT: Central Asian epicentre

#### 10.2.14. FACTOR(12) NUMBERS

Our twelfth and final factor is FACTOR(12) NUMBERS. Amazingly, this factor brings together various input variables which all have to do with elements of a numerical and countable nature – in other words, a numerical rationality. The transition from the One to the Many is a common theme in wisdom texts from the Extended Fertile Crescent, from Ancient Egypt and Greece (e.g. the Pythagorean tetractys, Orphic mysticism, and Plato) to Chinese Taoism. Although here the principal point is to evoke mystery and the initiate's insight in the existential unity underlying all diversity, it is also the basis for numerical rationality, and indeed, for mathematics. A progression towards plurality can also be noticed in the early NarComs that we have managed to identify. Among the NarComs reconstructed to have been in Pandora's Box, most imply fundamental unity, which may be expressed by the NarCom 4 'Lightning Bird'; NarCom 9 'The Moon; NarCom 10 'The Earth as primary'. NarCom

12, 'The tree', NarCom 12 'The Cosmic / Rainbow Snake (as long as it is not yet in combat with Lightning), and 15 'The Spider' (as long as it is not hunting its prey, or mating and consuming its mate). The latter theme reappears with the Mantis (NarCom 5). With NarCom 6, 'Escape from the Ogre', we have for the first time the dissociation from the One (the Ogre with all that is inside it – at one level undoubtedly to be interpreted as the original Chaos of non-Being), to the Two (the hero) or Three (the Hero with his mother, also a dissociated duality from an implied former unity namely the pregnant mother), or Many (the other people and things imprisoned inside the Ogre). In the subsequent CITIs we mainly see variations on the theme of dissociation from One to Two: NarCom 11 'The Primal Waters and the Flood' (CITI IV); NarCom 1, 'The Separation of Heaven and Earth' (CITI V); the Cosmogonic Virgin and her Lover / Con (CITI VI). Other NarComs celebrate the recombination of duality or even plurality back into One (NarCom 2, The Re-connection of Heaven and Earth, while one NarCom seems content to declare duality without resolving it into unity: NarCom 14 'Twins, Two children, Duality', (CITI VI), which returns as NarCom 14a 'Fundamental Duality' in CITI VIII.

Archaeologically, tallies (presumably with an astronomical and calendrical reference) are first noticeable in the Upper Palaeolithic (Marshack 1972). In fact, the development of naked-eye astronomy under CITI V seems the appropriate context to situate the emerging numerical rationality of FACTOR(12).

*I therefore propose one continental epicentre for FACTOR(12): Central Asia c. 20 BP, a time window early enough to ensure the demic diffusion of this factor to the New World and inside the New World, and to allow for overland further diffusion within the Old World, without a substantial role for Sunda.*

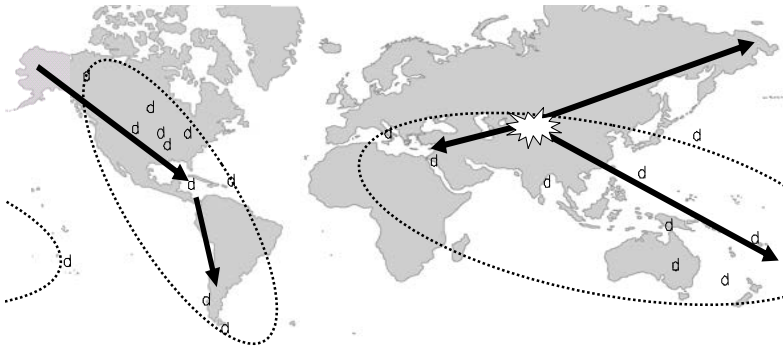


Fig. 10.22. FACTOR(12) NUMBERS: Central Asian epicentre

### 10.3. *The composite history of Flood myths worldwide*

A careful consideration of the results of the quantitative analysis on a 20% sample of Isaak's extensive collection of Flood myths worldwide, yields the following conclusions.

In general this analysis splendidly confirms my earlier analysis that the origin of the worldwide distribution of Flood myths lies in Central Asia, c. 30-20 ka BP. Of our twelve factors / themes, the distribution of ten may be explained on the basis of a model of such Central Asian origin. For two factors (FACTOR(3, 8)) we had occasion to also contemplate an origin in the New World; however, also for these factors the Central Asian explanation remains possible, and in fact (for systematic reasons), superior. For four factors (FACTOR (3), FACTOR (6), FACTOR (8), and FACTOR (10)) we could contemplate a Sunda effect, but only secondarily so, after and in combination with a Central Asian origin of that factor – or perhaps, for FACTOR(3) and FACTOR(8), a New World origin. So Oppenheimer may be congratulated on what turns out to be a genuine insight (a minority of aspects of Flood stories turn out to be probably distributed under Sunda influence), yet his grossly exaggerated claims as to the significance of Sunda in Global Mythological history (the Special Sunda Hypothesis) must be dismissed on the ground of the data and analysis presented in the present chapter, Sunda was merely the recycling and redistribution point of pre-existing mythical material. In the process, we had occasion to apply, specifically and at length, the Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology, and the consistent and illuminatory discussion to which this led for all twelve factors considered, is an extra reassurance of the explanatory value and the competitive validity of that Model.

	proposed origin		Sunda epicentre and spread (Oppenheimer)	New World epicentre
	place	time		
FACTOR(1)	Central Asia	25 to 12 ka BP	distributionally possible but improbable in view of the systematics of the Aggregative Diachronic Model	no
FACTOR(2)	Extended Fertile Crescent	Neolithic to Bronze Age	no	distributionally possible but improbable in view of the systematics of the Aggregative Diachronic Model
FACTOR(3)	Central Asia	20 ka BP	probable but only secondary	despite Modern Old World influx, yet possible, with subsequent Sunda effect
FACTOR(4)	Africa, subsequently mediated via Central Asia	>80 ka BP, subsequently 20 ka BP	very unlikely	very unlikely

FACTOR(5)	Central Asia	30 ka BP	no	no
FACTOR(6)	Central Asia	20 ka BP	probable but only secondary	no
FACTOR(7)	Central Asia	30 ka BP	no	no
FACTOR(8)	Central Asia	20 KA BP	possible but only secondary	possible, with subsequent Sunda effect
FACTOR(9)	Central Asia	20 KA BP	no	no
FACTOR(10)	Central Asia	20 KA BP	possible but only secondary	no
FACTOR(11)	Central Asia	20 KA BP	no	no
FACTOR(12)	Central Asia	20 KA BP	no	no

N.B.: Unless explicitly discarded as not applicable (marked by –), the Central Asian Upper Palaeolithic model is – because of its systematic nature in the context of an overall model of demic diffusion for the cultural history of Anatomically Modern Humans before Neolithic times – always superior to the alternatives shown in the columns to the right.

Table 10.4. Summary of multivariate results, Approach 2

#### 10.4. *Despite the above quantitative analysis, yet a partial vindication of the Sunda Hypothesis in the field of comparative mythology*

Is my analysis then the end of any application of the Sunda Hypothesis in the mythological field? That would hardly seem likely, considering – as we have seen – the great explanatory power we demonstrated for the General Sunda Hypothesis for such fields as genetics and comparative ethnography. I believe to have successfully contested the claim of a Sunda origin of the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East and the Bible, which in many ways are constitutive of Judaeo-Christian-Islamic culture and its global ramifications. Yet, however important, those core mythologies are only a tiny section of the wealth of mythological material circulating in the Old World.

Yuri Berezkin (personal communication 2007), on the basis of his incomparable insight in the world distribution of a very large number of narrowly and sharply defined mythemes (the result of his painstaking work at St Petersburg over decades), after the presentation of an earlier version of the present argument at the 2007 Edinburgh conference, made an excellent suggestion that allows us both to appreciate the residual mythological potential of the Sunda Hypothesis, and the specific outcome of the present analysis. While agreeing with me that the Ancient Near East core mythologies are not Sunda, Berezkin proposed that many of the mythological themes of popular Christianity and Islam<sup>264</sup> *have in fact preserved Sunda elements coming in from South East*

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<sup>264</sup>And we may add popular Judaism; cf. Ginzberg 1968; and Landa 1919, where for instance a non-Biblical variant of the Biblical Flood myths (the giant Gog – apparently an undomesticated, destructive force who might be considered a discarded, older god of creation, but who in popular traditions is often identified as one of the – typically Indo-European speaking – peoples of the Ancient Near East –

*Asia* – the latter elements (but that is my own interpretation again) taking, as is often the case in folklore and myth, a refuge in peripheral locations that are beyond the control and censorship of the dominant ideological traditions of a particular region and period; in other words, they take shelter where the religious authorities (the church hierarchy, the *ulamā* of formal Islam) and the state cannot reach them.

On this positive note, we are now almost ready to conclude the first Part of our argument, and to proceed to a another leg of our assessment of the utility of the Sunda Hypothesis as an heuristic device: the analysis of East West parallels, between on the one hand South East Asia / the Indo-Pacific / Oceania, and on the other hand the western Old World, in such fields as comparative mythology and comparative ethnography, Such parallels are amazingly abundant – we have already encountered several examples. Can we explain them by an appeal to the Sunda Hypothesis, in other words as a result of westbound cultural and demographic, maritime expansion of Proto-Indonesian inhabitants of the East on the run for the flooding of their home country with the rise of the ocean level? However, before we can turn to Part II with these questions, let us take the opportunity to continue our discussion of Flood myths a bit longer, and now from a qualitative rather than quantitative perspective.

### 10.5. *African myths of Flood and Tower*

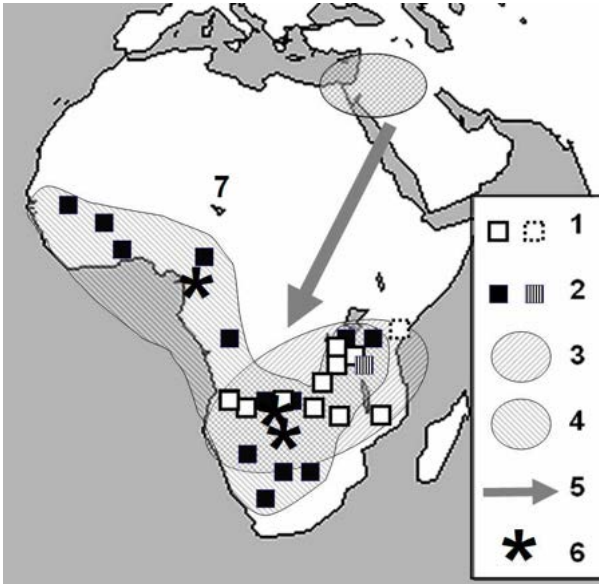
My work in progress on world mythology made me aware

1. that the Nkoya myths on Flood and tower, although not exactly unique within Africa
2. yet belonged to a class of relatively rare African cases, whose distribution was far too erratic and sparse than that it could be attributed to the 'Out of Africa' (Pandora's Box, 80 ka BP) or to the 'Back-into- Africa movement (15 ka BP), both of which factors, if at all applicable, should have led to a dense scatter of such myths all over Africa; Flood and Tower myths in Africa, therefore, might well be related to the other Sunda traits I began to see among the Nkoya and especially at their royal courts; and elsewhere in Africa.

Whereas, as we have seen, Frazer (1918: 328) had claimed that Africa yielded no Flood stories, and many comparative mythologists (most of them strangers to the African data) had believed him (*e.g.* Oppenheimer 1998; Witzel 2001) I could trace nearly two dozen of such stories. However, their distribution remained puzzling (van Binsbergen 2006a, 2006b) – until I set myself to the multivariate analysis of a sample of Flood myths worldwide, on one of whose major outcomes I have reported in the preceding part of this chapter.

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riding on top of the Ark and thus escaping from the Flood) are an excellent example of the general principle mentioned by Berezkin.



Source: van Binsbergen 2019a: 41

1. Tower mytheme attested (dotted outline = conjectural); 2. Flood mytheme attested (crosshatched symbol = conjectural); 3. African distribution of (1); 4. African distribution of (2); 5. surprising gap; 6. attestations of the name Mbedzi as mythical being.

The gap (5) made it – until recently – unlikely that borrowing into Africa took place from South West Asia where both mythemes occur together; however, the work by Dierk Lange (2004, 2012a, 2012b) has now established beyond doubt a substantial cultural borrowing from West Asia to West Africa in the mid-1st mill BCE. This figure after van Binsbergen 2006: 329, Fig. 4); sources include Frobenius 1931: Introduction and pp. 166 f, 169; van Binsbergen 1992; van der Sluijs n.d.; Isaak 2006; Hastings 1909-1921; Frazer 1918; Dundes 1988; van der Sluijs n.d.; van Binsbergen 2006, in preparation (a); Willis 1994: 273; Dolisane-Ebossé Nyambé, 2005; Kahler-Meyer 1988. A general study of tower myths departing from the Biblical Tower of Babel is Borst 1957-1961.

Fig. 10.23. Flood myths and Tower myths in Africa in connection with the Ancient Near East

Particularly fascinating is the interplay of two mythical themes which are inconspicuously intertwined in the Biblical Flood stories: on the one hand the Flood, on the other hand the Tower (notably the Tower of Babel as constructed by the first king, Nimrod, so as to challenge God). The two themes happen to combine in the Bible (*Genesis* 6-11) although not in Ancient Mesopotamia (the Flood story of the Gilgamesh epic), nor in the Qur’ān. To judge by their distribution they would appear to be independent in Africa: The Tower theme is mainly found in a wide east-west ‘Lake Belt’ largely coinciding with the Mozambican-Angolan corridor, whose Sunda connotations we have already repeatedly highlighted); in that corridor the Tower theme coincides with the Flood theme, but the latter has a much wider distribution in Africa, especially in Southern and West Africa; this in itself argues rather against the suggestion (Farmer 2005, 2007) of massive Judaeo-Christian-Islamic ‘contamina-

tion', at least as far as these African data are concerned.

1. The Tower mytheme is also known from the Indo-Pacific realm and South Asia, among Austric (*e.g.* Austronesian and Austroasiatic) speakers. Here it is usually part of a Flood myth. In general, of course, the Tower is just one special case of the very widespread NarCom 2 'The Re-Connection of Heaven and Earth', which I propose emerged in CITI VI (proto-Neolithic, c. 12 ka BP), and hence was also introduced to sub-Saharan Africa in the course of the 'Back-into-Africa' movement; incidentally, NarCom 2 is also conspicuous in Flood stories from the New World. In East Africa, the Tower motif largely follows the Lake Belt and the Mozambican-Angolan corridor. In general the distribution of the Tower mytheme coincides with the distribution of sacred kingship in Africa:<sup>265</sup> another Re-connection of Heaven and Earth, which likewise may have sprung from CITI VI but whose specific form in Africa may have been secondarily mediated through Sunda (from c. 7 ka BP).
2. The Flood mytheme, by contrast, has a very wide distribution globally. In Africa, this mytheme seems to follow the coast (especially the Atlantic coast) rather than an inland trajectory. There are a number of explanatory possibilities:
  - a. The north-western half of the African distribution area of the Flood mytheme coincides with what I have termed (inspired by Frobenius 1933 / 1954) 'pristine Africa', where it would appear as if the heritage of Pandora's Box is best preserved. This would suggest that Flood myths were in Pandora's Box, and that we find its traces here. However, most African attestations are not in this north-western section, and we have more general reasons to assume that Flood myths were not in Pandora's Box but only emerged in Central Asia 30 ka BP. So this explanation does not convince.
  - b. Another possible explanation for the specific distribution of Flood myths in Africa is that such myths are directly indebted to the Ancient Near East. This is quite likely in one or two individual cases such as the Flood myths of the Maasai, which are closely parallel to the Nuahite model; there are many more traits in Masaai religion and mythology that suggest close ties with the Ancient Near East (Julien n.d. and references cited there). However, for the other African Flood-myths attesta-

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<sup>265</sup> In the context of this monograph the obvious question at this point would be: whether sacred kingship can be counted among the traits globally distributed under Sunda influence. The institution certainly occurs in present-day Indonesia (*e.g.* Pleyte 1903) and is frequently attested along the postulated Sunda trajectory, including Ancient Egypt, South Central Africa, etc. To what extent can we maintain that the kingship in Ancient Egypt, or Ancient Mesopotamia, was sacred in the *sense* found in sub-Saharan Africa (*e.g.* Lloyd 1960; Kaplan & Edouwaye 2000; Tcherkézoff & Thom 1987) or in Frazer's *The Golden Bough*? Some specialists have tended towards an affirmative answer (*e.g.* Schwaller de Lubicz 1981; Frankfort 1948), and a Sunda effect may be postulated. Yet the conceptual pressures towards sacrality in the kingship seem to be so much inherent to the institution of kingship and to the nature of the sacred, that it may be naïve to expect one identifiable geographic epicentre from where it may have spread over the world at a specific point in time. My own intuition is that sacred kingship is a particular phase of the shaman's transformation into ruler, in an Upper Palaeolithic context to which I would attribute a time scale of 10-20 ka, much older therefore than Sunda's proposed dating.



tions these parallels are not in evidence. Yet the recent work of Dierk Lange has substantiated the African/Ancient/Near East link beyond doubt.

- c. The predominance of African west-coast attestations is in principle in line with the early spread of Christianity with Portuguese expansion from 1500 CE, *i.e.* might be interpreted as recent contamination; however, if this were the correct explanation one would expect much more massive attestations, especially in Mozambique and up the Zambezi, where other early Christian influences have been attested; also cf. Christian Ethiopia.
- d. Some of the west-coast attestations, and some of the East African ones, could be interpreted as Islamic contamination from 7th c. CE on, but again, given the fact that half of Africa is under strong Islamic influence, if this were the explanation one would have expected more massive attestations
- e. The African attestations of Flood myths simply testify to the general cultural including mythological continuity between sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of Eurasia, due to the 'Back into Africa' movement. I have repeatedly defended such a continuity, especially van Binsbergen 2010a, and Appendix 2 in the present monograph. However, this explanation does not convince here either, because it would make us expect many more African attestations, particularly in Central and East Africa.

Yet it is remarkable that the Biblical Flood myth occurs in a context where also quite a few likely Proto-Bantu traces can be pointed out. Is this pure coincidence? Is the Bantu reminiscence merely spurious? Did Bantu (as most linguists would take it) originate in the Lake Chad region 8 ka BP, and did this language from there actually filter into the Near East, bringing perhaps some Flood mythology with it? Or is the direction reverse, in the sense (which I very much favour, in the wake of Trombetti 1923) that these linguistic elements, along with Flood myths, passed through the Near East and left traces there, in their way to Africa in the context of the Back into Africa migration?

- f. The African Flood myth attestations bring out a pattern of continuity similar to that apparent in the distribution of geomantic divination, divination bowls (which, I suggest, found part of their origin in East Asian nautical instruments), and perhaps the name of Mbedzi / Mwvetsi, which is a clan name among the Venda people in Zimbabwe and adjacent South Africa,<sup>266</sup> proba-

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<sup>266</sup> Cf. Frobenius 1931 and n.d., who claims that Mwvetsi is the name of a large, foreign-led empire in Southern Africa (the recent literature – *e.g.* Hromnik 2019; Thornton 2019, and references cited there – would stress a link with Indian prospecting for gold), dating from far before the North Atlantic-dominated colonial period – Breuil (who although a specialist in Franco-Cantabrian rock art had acquired a taste for Southern African palaeoanthropology) 1933 contested this view; Ralushai & Gray 1977. According to Blacking 1998 (citing van Warmelo 1940: 106):

'The people of Luvhimbi (...) are rain-makers of the Mbedzi clan, who are said to have come from Rhodesia [Zimbabwe] and to have the crocodile as their totem...

bly 'Moon'<sup>267</sup> (but by a remote possibly also a rendering of the name of 'Buddha') in some Asian language<sup>268</sup> 'Buddha') as a mythical ancestor / divine saviour. All this suggests that the African Flood myths, with their strikingly lopsided distribution leaving so much of the African continent uncovered, are relatively recent (Neolithic, Bronze Age or even Iron Age) maritime imports, possibly also in some Sunda context, yet different from the Tower myths – as the two separate distributions suggest. If Tower myths and Flood myths then appear to be associated with different Sunda waves that may be up to several millennia apart, I suggest that the Flood myths came first to Africa, and only secondly the Tower myths (which appear to be associated with the rise of kingship in East and South Central Africa, in the last one or two millennia).

### 10.6. From African Flood stories, to the distribution and historical reconstruction of Flood stories world-wide

Let us now make the step from African Flood myths to Flood myths worldwide (Fig. 10.24).<sup>269</sup>

Largely due to the immense influence of *Genesis 7 f.*, on Judaeo-Christian-Islamic (!) culture, and the fact that most comparative mythologists come from a Judaeo-Christian background, Flood myths are comparative mythologists' pet topic. Hundreds have been recorded and analysed from all over the world.

Flood myths and the NarCom under which they are subsumed (NarCom 11: 'The Primal Waters and the Flood') happened to be the first motif complex upon which I

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<sup>267</sup> Cf. Venda *mwedzi* 'Moon' (Murphy 1997); Pende *muezi*, 'clair de lune' (Gusimana 1972); Luba *muenji*, 'lune' (Clerqueville n.d).

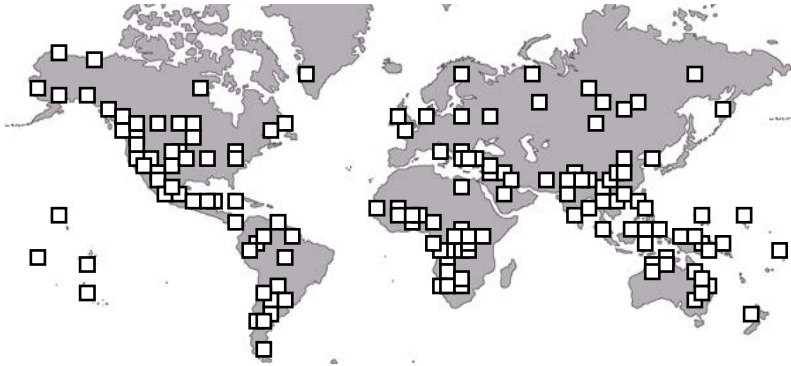
<sup>268</sup> This is however quite unlikely. In Indonesian the name of Buddha is used in a form identical to the South Asian original (Anonymous, Buddha). The common Chinese rendering of 'Buddha' is *Fò* 佛 (which also surfaces in Madagascar; Middleton 1994). In Japanese the name of the Buddha is rendered as *Budsu*, cf. the common mantra entitled 南無阿彌陀仏, *Namu Amida Budsu*, 'The name of the Celestial Buddha'.

<sup>269</sup> Incidentally, it is a source of great puzzlement that Madagascar (which is preponderantly mtDNA Type B), yet scarcely seems to have yielded any Flood myths. A number of different explanations present themselves:

1. There is no connection whatsoever with mtDNA Type B, my whole argument to that effect is spurious.
2. The connection between mtDNA Type B and Flood stories remains but may have resulted from several successive waves in the spread of Sunda culture,
  - a. The first wave, ca. 5 ka BP, bringing Flood stories to West Asia and Africa, but without stopping by Madagascar
  - b. The second wave, which populated Madagascar a few ka later, could no longer derive from this font of Flood stories, and hence did not bring any; this would mean that Flood stories in Oceania would belong to the first wave, and not to the second

In this connection we must realise that the hypothesis of the colonisation of Madagascar from Indonesia has a very different degree of certainty than the hypothesis of postulated Sunda migration to West Asia; the Madagascar scenario is not in the least controversial, but the Sunda scenario still is.

tried to apply the notion that the early (Palaeolithic) world distribution of Narrative Complexes might have largely resulted from demic diffusion, on the wings of the ramification and spread of mtDNA Types.



Sources include: Hastings 1909-1921; Frazer 1918; Dundes 1988; van der Sluijs n.d.; van Binsbergen 2006; Isaak 2006 (with extensive references, which are selectively included in van Binsbergen with Isaak 2008.)

Fig. 10.24. Narrative complex 11 (the Flood): main attestations, all types combined

My rule of thumb for the dating of NarComs suggested the possibility that NarCom 11 might originally have been part of Pandora's Box: the spread in historical times was almost worldwide, and there were attestations in Africa, Australia, New Guinea, and the Andaman Isl. However, what made me doubt this assumption was the absence of Flood myths in North Africa (which generally tends to display very archaic layers of mythemes), and the fact that in sub-Saharan Africa and in Europe Flood myths, although far from absent, appeared to be in part fairly recent imports from (proto-)historical times. Wherever mtDNA Type B occurred dominantly, both in the New World and in East and South East Asia and in Oceania, Flood myths were very much in evidence, and this brought me to the hypothesis that Flood myths, and NarCom 11 in general, had an origin where mtDNA Type B originate: in Central Asia 30 ka BP. The subsequent spread of this NarCom 11 in East and South East Asia, in Oceania, and throughout the New World, could largely be attributed to demic diffusion of mtDNA Type B. However, this could not in itself explain the presence of Flood myths in western Eurasia and in Africa. For the latter regions:

1. My standard explanation was in terms of the overland westbound Back-into-Africa movement, which had taken place from 15 ka BP and which had brought into Africa, from Asia, mtDNA Types M1 and R (or the closely related U6: Underhill 2004)<sup>270</sup> as well as many Asian NarComs; the movement skirted Europe

<sup>270</sup> The genetic relationship between mtDNA Types R and U6 is not quite clear from the specialist genetic literature at my disposal, probably because I cannot read it with a specialist eye. Underhill 2004 sees U6 and M1 as the principal mtDNA Types responsible for the 'Back-into-Africa' movement, one from

and is likely to have left both genetic and mythological traces in eastern and southern Europe, which subsequently will have spread all over the European continent. Here the cultural movement was still supposed to be based largely on demic diffusion (from Asia into Africa); but the mtDNA Types moving back into Africa (notably M1 and R / U6) were not (at least, in terms of my reconstruction) the original owners of this NarCom; M1 and R / U6 must have acquired this NarCom through cultural transmission from a mtDNA Type B population, in Central Asia.

2. However, Oppenheimer's Sunda model offers an alternative to (a): the presence of NarCom 11 in Africa and Europe would then have primarily resulted from cultural (and some demic) diffusion from Sunda people in the course of their westbound intercontinental maritime travels. Incidentally, the Sunda model could also take care of the attestations of NarCom 11 in Australia and the Andaman Isl.: not as traces of the Out-of-Africa Exodus and of Pandora's Box, but of indirect and much more recent cultural diffusion from a Sunda source.

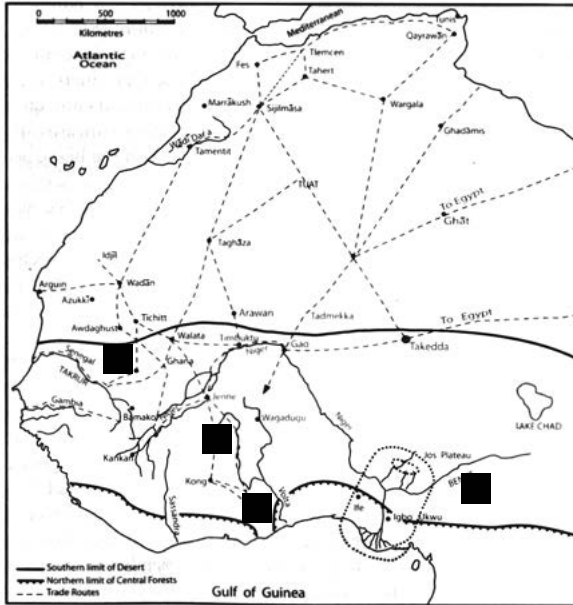
Since 2005, my data on Flood myths in Africa have considerably expanded because I had the benefit of Isaaq's (2005) large collection of hundreds of well-documented Flood myths from all over the world. Although this had made the distribution of these myths on the African continent appear less one-sidedly concentrated on the Atlantic coast, I began to realise that their distribution might be to some extent explained in terms of Oppenheimer's hypothesis of Sunda expansion, even without invoking a direct overland influence from West Asia.

Of course, since Nuaḥ is mentioned in the *Qur'ān*, there is also the expansion of Islam to be reckoned with, from the late first millennium CE. However, this largely followed the trade routes (see Fig. 10.25) most of which have largely avoided the African regions where Flood myths have been attested.

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East Asia and the other from West Asia. With Forster 2004 these appear as M1 and R. He presents R and U as always closely adjacent, and as having emerged from N in West Asia, 60-30 ka BP. Then U soon expanded into South East Europe, and the Iranian highlands; between 30 and 20 ka, R expanded to the Iranian highlands and U, whilst remaining in South East Europe, also took up position in North West India; there it was followed, 20-15 ka BP, by R, whilst U moved on to North East India; from 15 to 2 ka BP, R moves west to South West Arabian peninsula, and from there into Africa; U moves on to Finland; and M1 emerges in South West Arabian peninsula and moves into Africa. Maca-Meyer *et al.* 2003 take a somewhat different view:

'The most probable origin of the proto-U6 lineage was the Near East Around 30,000 years ago it spread to North Africa where it represents a signature of regional continuity. Subgroup U6a reflects the first African expansion from the Maghreb returning to the east in Palaeolithic times. Derivative clade U6a1 signals a posterior movement from East Africa back to the Maghreb and the Near East This migration coincides with the probable Afroasiatic linguistic expansion. U6b and U6c clades, restricted to West Africa, had more localized expansions. U6b probably reached the Iberian Peninsula during the Caspian diffusion in North Africa. Two autochthonous derivatives of these clades (U6b1 and U6c1) indicate the arrival of North African settlers to the Canarian Archipelago in prehistoric times, most probably due to the Saharan desiccation. The absence of these Canarian lineages nowadays in Africa suggests important demographic movements in the western area of this Continent.' (Maca-Meyer *et al.* 2003)



the black squares indicate: 'Flood myth attested'; cf. Fig. 10.23; Apart from the Flood myths, source of this map: Dick-Read 2005: 166 after Levtzion & Hopkins 1981.

Fig. 10.25. Ancient trade routes in West Africa, and the incidence of Flood stories

The distribution of cowries as currency, of musical instruments, of ecstatic cults, of divination systems (Dick-Read 2005; van Binsbergen, 1996a, 1996b, 2012a), has been argued to have largely followed a route from Indian Ocean / Southern Africa / Bight of Benin. I propose that the same logic applies in the case of Flood myths.

However, under Oppenheimer's Sunda Hypothesis, Sundaland is the origin of NarCom 11 specifically of Flood stories (for such stories are held to record the actual historical flooding of Sundaland). This has the very awkward implication that attestations of NarCom 11 in Central, Eastern, and Southern Asia and in the New World must be reinterpreted, under the General Sunda Hypothesis, to be, not demic diffusions from some very ancient origin in Central Asia, but non-demic, cultural diffusions (in other words, 'contaminations' or 'intrusions') from 'Sundaland' from 7 ka BP onward. Especially the prevalence of NarCom 11 in the New World poses a huge problem if it is to be interpreted in Sunda terms. More Flood stories are found in the New World than anywhere else in the world. Could these all be due to Sunda expansion? And suppose they were, could they be argued to be identifiable transformations of the same putative Sunda Flood stories that, according to Oppenheimer,

ended up among the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East and of the Bible? New World Flood stories come in a great variety. A minority are unmistakably indebted to recent cultural diffusion of the Biblical Nuaḥite model ('a Flood Hero in his ark as an ally of the Supreme God') in the context of Judaeo-Christian-Islamic proselytising, but most of them are not (as have argued above on the basis of statistical analysis). Many depict a dazzlingly kaleidoscopic struggle in which an a-moral Divine Trickster / Demiurge, totally beyond good and evil, and with animal rather than human characteristics, may be the Flood Hero but may also trigger the Flood at the same time. In the New World Flood myths, also the motif (*cf.* Villemms 2005) of the Earth Diver is very much in evidence: a rodent, aquatic bird or other animal which, often at the instigation of the Flood Hero, dives into the Flood to bring up the first clod of dry land – thus re-enacting, after the Flood, the cosmogonic Separation of Land and Water.

Incidentally, I take it that the bird<sup>271</sup> which Nuaḥ sent out to ascertain if the Earth had actually dried, is a transformation of the Earth Diver. However, one can take the analogy further, and consider the Ark as the quintessential First Land defying the Flood, hence as the equivalent of the Earth Diver's dry clod – which would make Nuaḥ himself the structural equivalent of the Earth Diver. New World Flood myths are often situated at a time when the inhabitants of Earth and therefore the Flood protagonists were, not humans, but animals – ancestors of later human clans. Other NarComs transpire in the New World Flood myths which I did not consider before because they were not conspicuous in the data set on African cosmogonic myths which brought me to formulate my Aggregative Diachronic Model in the first place. These new NarComs include: The Trickster (NarCom 23), the Combat (NarCom 28), The Fire (NarCom 36), and the volcanic Earth Dragon (NarCom 37). Many of these additional NarComs have an extensive distribution also outside the New World, often even including sub-Saharan Africa. An extensive multivariate contents analysis of Isaak's collection of Flood stories worldwide, including the many American cases, has now been undertaken, and helps us decide, if we must, between the overland and the Sunda model for the world distribution of NarCom 11. Meanwhile, although we have seen above (section 4.3) some indications of African-New World continuities to be explained by a shared origin in Central Asia in the Upper Palaeolithic, there are only few concrete indications of Sunda effects in the New World during the Holocene:

1. possibly the trading and raiding North West Coast cultures of North America, whose originally community-based potlatch could be seen as an transformation of the kind of community competition elsewhere channelled into megalithic practices; this might be taken as the far end of Pacific Sunda expansion;

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<sup>271</sup> Although ultimately probably another example of a primal god (here, in bird shape) being harnessed in a subaltern role with the advent of a new and more successful religious dispensation – she Sky God and his human ally the Flood Hero (the former no longer in recognisable bird shape; but *cf.* *Genesis* 1:2, 'And the Earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved [ as in bird shape ] upon the face of the waters.'). In Nkoya mythology, both the High God Nyambi, and the latter's Child, Mvula / Rain, are considered birds.

2. also on the American North West coast: the phenomenon of the neckring, which in all other respects is confined to the Old World, mainly Eurasia with some cases in Southern and Central Africa
3. and perhaps the indications of pre-Columbian Trans-Atlantic transmission of American food crops and associated mythical and religious aspects also indicate that the Southeast of North America, and the adjacent part of Meso America, formed the far western end of Sunda expansion towards the Atlantic.<sup>272</sup>

But certainly the evidence does not warrant the assumption that the majority of non- Judaeo-Christian-Islamic Flood stories in the New World, are Sunda-derived.

Nor can this be all there is to say about the mythology of Water and Flood, from an Africanist perspective. We have already seen that the world-view of Nigercongo (> Bantu) speaking Africa is thoroughly aquatic – geography is hydrology, spirit provinces have their centre in streams and their spirits, not unlike the Graeco-Roman ancient landscape (where stream gods and najads / nymphs abound, and where even gods not generally recognised for their aquatic connotations, such as Athena / Minerva,<sup>273</sup> on closer scrutiny turns out to be primarily aquatic and another transformation of the Mother of the Waters, like Neith and her sisters all over the Extended Fertile Crescent), or the Syro-Palestinian landscape (with traces of protoBantu) where Jacob wrestled with the Angel / Stream God. Frazer was clearly wrong when he denied the presence of Flood myths in Africa; but he was obliquely following an essentially correct intuition that in sub-Saharan Africa, water is cosmologically so central that it cannot be adequately rendered in terms of Flood myths alone. One of the most elaborate and convincing evocations of this quality of the African landscape is in the Grahamstown (South Africa) PhD thesis of the Zimbabwean / South African anthropologist Penelope Bernard (2009), *Messages from the Deep: Water Divinities, Dreams and Diviners in Southern Africa, I-II*. Her strength lies not so much in her own fieldwork on Southern African spirit mediums (*sangomas*) whose ritual and mythical life world displays the same water-centred orientation; nor in the analytical acuity she brings to her argument (*e.g.* she seems to accept uncritically *sangomas*' claims to the effect that in the context of their training they spend days even weeks under water in sacred pools, without any breathing aids), but particularly in her painstaking perusal and synthesis of the vast protoacademic and non-academic relevant literature, where water spirits (reminiscent of the West African Mami Wata, and the Graeco-Roman Najades / nymphs) are finally brought out as the *fait social total* (Mauss 1960 / 1923-1924) which they must have been for millennia without ever surfacing as such in their full glory in the academic discussions. The figure

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<sup>272</sup> Since they are keen to stress independent African initiative in global cultural history, Afrocentrists would be scarcely thrilled by the proposal of such a West-East Trans-Atlantic connection. However, they have insisted on another Trans-Atlantic connection: the one putatively contributing to the Olmec culture, with its huge statues in which an African physiognomy may be detected (van Sertima 1976). Among mainstream anthropologists and historians, Ortiz de Montellano 2000 has been a vocal critic of such views. I think they deserve the benefit of doubt.

<sup>273</sup> On this crucial point, see van Binsbergen 201f. Also the Homeric hero Achilles (Homer, *Iliad*) turns out to be mainly a sea god in the Black Sea region (Volkman 1977). On water divinities in comparative religion in general, cf. below, and James 1921.

of Mwendanjangula, essentially a Water Dragon, thus appears against its proper, comprehensive background.<sup>274</sup> No doubt there is considerable continuity here with prehistoric worldviews as mediated in rock art and myth – not only in Africa but (since much of this appears to predate the Out-of-Africa Exodus) world-wide.<sup>275</sup>



Source: Pinto 2013, redrawn by Thomas Dowson

Fig. 10.26. A landscape of aquatic divinities: The so-called 'Meermaid Scene' in rock art at Ezeljagspoort, Western Cape, South Africa

### 10.7. Flood myths as touch stone of the Sunda Hypothesis

The above has brought out the central role that Flood myths play in comparative

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<sup>274</sup> Wrigley 1988 essentially hit on the same point when, in a critical discussion of my PhD supervisor and close friend and colleague the late lamented Matthew Schoffeleers' tendency (1985, 1992) to mistake ancient myth for recent history (a fallacy which I myself also temporarily committed, 1992; for an autocritical reflection *cf.* van Binsbergen 2010a) he reminded us of the immense mythical importance of water spirits in South Central Africa.

<sup>275</sup> Are we to conclude that in sub-Saharan Africa the older, water-focused, cosmogony of the Separation of Water and Land has survived to a considerable extent, whereas especially in Eurasia the more recent cosmogony of the Separation of Heaven and Earth has taken precedence, and has helped to create the conditions for the emergence of the logocentric worldview with writing, the state, organised religion, and proto-science? If this is correct, then my long-standing disagreement with Michael Witzel as to the unfortunate Laurasian / Gondwana distinction between northern and southern mythologies would have to be reconsidered rather in his favour. But let us not rush to precipitate conclusions: the Nkoya may occupy a somewhat exceptional position, with their mythology straddling both African and Eurasian orientations (van Binsbergen 2010a), but – as Appendix 2, below, brings out convincingly – also, more in general, the continuity between Eurasian and African mythologies is far greater than would justify the anachronistic, *potentially* racialist, absolute reification of their difference, as in Witzel's hands.



mythology, and their strategic methodological position especially in the context of the Special Sunda Hypothesis. Could I systematically interpret Flood myths on the basis of my ‘Aggregative Diachroni’ Model of World Mythology? And if so, would my conclusions corroborate, or contradict, those of Oppenheimer?

Oppenheimer suggests that the historical flooding of Sundaland 7.5 to 5.5 ka BP was the original, concretely historical origin of Flood stories the world over. Flood myths are, to him, the enshrinement of tangible historical collective experience – a recollection of an actual event. He makes such a claim in a long tradition, ranging

- from several millennia of fundamentalist, literal, interpretation of the *Bible*,
- to the work of the archaeologist Woolley, who in the 1920s believed to excavate the geomorphological evidence of the actual historical Flood;
- the never-ending search for the Ark of Noah on the slopes of the Caucasus;
- and the prominent rock art specialist Anati (1999) who, in order to explain Flood stories, appeals to the same global rise of the sea level, but several ka earlier.

When preparing for the 2006 conference on comparative mythology, in Beijing, I found (*cf.* Dundes 1988; Isaak 2006) that the world distribution of Flood myths (Fig. 10.24) was by no means confined to South East Asia and the Ancient Near East, but encompassed most of the Old World, Oceania, and of the New World.

Attestations in Australia and New Guinea were there, but probably were no indication of Flood myths belonging to Pandora’s Box; rather, they might well be attributed to secondary, cultural diffusion.

It was a real eye opener for me to find, in the account at the 2006 Beijing conference, of Philippines Flood myths by the Chinese mythographer / anthropologist Shi Yang (2006; *cf.* Demetrio 1968), a package that contained all the elements of the ‘elaborate Flood myth’ familiar from the Ancient Near East: the connection of Heaven and Earth in the form of: a bridge; creation; paradise; the discovery of sexuality which given the minimal composition of humanity at the time inevitably had to be incestuous; the Fall of Man; the Flood as punishment; the destruction and post-Flood re-creation, and re-erection of the bridge (*cf.* Tower) between Heaven and Earth. Could Stephen Oppenheimer have a point, after all, even with his second, mythological Special Sunda Hypothesis? Was this the kind of Sunda myth that would confirm his thesis? Or was Steve Farmer right (2006, 2007) in sardonically stressing the fact that, down the hill of the Philippines site, there was a Christian missionary outpost, and that it had been there, or somewhere near, for five centuries – implying that the Philippines Flood myth was not a cognate, but a descendent of the Judeo-Christian-Islamic Flood myth, in other words a form of contamination?

Even more important than the possibility of interpreting the world distribution of Flood myths in Sunda terms, was the realisation that in this elaborate Philippine package, as in *Genesis*, the Flood myth did not stand on its own but formed part of an extensive cosmogony – which in fact, in the case of *Genesis*, extends through the first 12 chapters of that *Bible* book. That cosmogonic cycle ranged from the original

coming into being of the world, via destruction, to a second creation, which is the present world order. Such a cosmogonic package including a type of Flood story I propose to call 'elaborate'.

Struggling to fit world distributions of mythological traits into my emergent model of Narrative Complexes and CITs, I found it made some sense to distinguish between at least two may types of creation stories:

1. the Separation of Land and Water
2. the Separation of Heaven and Earth.

### *10.7.1. Type 1 Creation Stories: The Separation of Land and Water*

*The Separation of Land and Water:* In earlier instalments of my approach I have called this mytheme: NarCom 11 ('The Primal Waters, and the Flood'). A Narrative Complex that sees creation as the establishment of cosmic order through the process of separation of the chaotic Primal Waters (perhaps personalised by their Mother / Mistress - cf. Tiamat, Thetis, Neith etc.; white aquatic birds are often her symbols) and the emerging first land (perhaps personalised as the Mother's / Mistress' son and / or lover: Kingu, Achilles, Horus / Sobek, etc.); this is a horizontal process in that it does not involve the notion of transcendence or verticality (Heaven). *If Separation of Land and Water means cosmic order of creation, then annihilating such separation means dissolving the cosmic order, in other words the end of the world.* The idea of a global Flood is thus a cosmoclastic statement, and the restoration of the world and of life after the Flood is a second creation. No historical Flood ever need to have occurred - Flood stories are in my view, I repeat, merely ancient thought experiments in thinking through, to their extreme consequence, the perceived foundations of the cosmological order. In fact, the world distribution of such Flood stories suggests that they emerged in Central Asia c. 30 ka BP, within the population carrying mtDNA Type B (which had then recently developed out of mtDNA Type N, the latter constituting, with type M, the first mtDNA Types that emerged among Anatomically Modern Humans upon the L-types that had effected the Out of Africa Exodus). It is the descendants of these type-B people who subsequently populated East and South East Asia, Oceania and Madagascar, and part of the New World. Demic diffusion seemed to go a long way to explain the global distribution of Flood stories. But I still had to assess whether in more recent cultural history (from the proto-Neolithic onward), such Flood stories may not have spilled over (by non-demic, cultural diffusion - probably aided, demically, by the Back-into-Africa migration) to other mtDNA Types including those inhabiting the Near East, Africa, and Europe.

### *10.7.2. Type 2 Creation Stories: Creation as the establishment of cosmic order through the process of Separation of Heaven and Earth*

In earlier instalments of my approach I have called this mytheme: NarCom 1 ('The Separation of Heaven and Earth'). Here, as compared to the scenario of the Separation

tion of Land and Water, the gender dynamics are reversed in that the Land / the Earth now appears as the junior agent, and female. We cannot be sure that (2) was a transformation of (1). Yet (2) seems to some extent to have incorporated and transformed (1); and the gender inversion typical of (2) has often also been communicated to the remnants of (1), so that Neith becomes eclipsed by Ḥorus (as testified by the marital politics and the funerary patterns of first dynasty Egypt – several in-marrying royals from the Delta, and funerary human sacrificial victims, carrying theophoric names on Neith) and then Re<sup>c</sup> (from the 5th dynasty, Re<sup>c</sup> as Sun god becomes the dominant god in the Egyptian pantheon, and Neith is demoted to the status of funerary goddess, with only a trickle of mythological indications to remind us of her former paramount status); and so that a male Poseidon (but still associated with white – horses, especially, which throughout the Upper Palaeolithic still appear as emblems of the Creatrix – and with the sea) replaces the Mother / Mistress; Athena as Poseidon's puzzling and oblique Athenian partner retains something of that Mother / Mistress), etc. (*The whiteness, maleness, yet utter dependence of Nuaḥ himself can be seen as a complex transformation of (1): originally, Nuaḥ could have been another Primary God of (Second) Creation; then he may have become the junior male element in the horizontal Primal Waters / Land creation story (and so may be the Ark, as pars pro toto for the emerging land); however, the senior, female Creatrix element of (1), in the Nuaḥite Flood story, is dissociated into two components:*

- a. *an inimical but impersonal Flood element,*
- b. *and a male, vertical, Heavenly creator protector god.)*

In type (2) creation stories, emphasis is on verticality. I take this Narrative Complex to have arisen 5 to 10 ka later than (1), but still in Central Asia, with later ramifications all over the Old World and part of the New World. This type (2) cosmogony seems to be associated with the emergence of other themes of verticality: naked eye astronomy, shamanism (i.e. inventing the notion of the world axis so central to naked eye astronomy, and spiritually travelling up and down along that axis), and social inequality leading to kingship which is probably an elaboration of shamanism. Cosmogonic conception (2) has become dominant throughout the Old World. By feed-back, it has greatly altered the shape of the earlier Flood stories. The latter, however, had constituted such a key cosmological idiom that they survived in many places even if obsolete, utterly transformed, and deprived of their original sense.

So far this was mere speculation, albeit systematic speculation in the light of an abundance of distributional and mythemic data, which I had struggled to fit into a reasonably coherent model.

If I were on the right track, then Oppenheimer's Sunda claims (in which Separation stories of either type but especially of the Heaven / Earth type do play a major role) for the mythology of the Ancient Near East including *Genesis* would not survive any quantitative test involving a representative sample of all Flood myths of the world – for in my model Flood myths would be much much older, lacking a historical occasion, and having a near-global distribution centring on Central Asia c. 30 ka BP.

However, if Oppenheimer were right, his claims would survive such a test; in that case I would have to greatly revise my Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology, but I would still have gained: I would be a lot closer to understanding the ethnicity of the Sea Peoples and many other aspects of the Bronze Age Mediterranean and Ancient Near East, as well as the distribution of Flood stories in Africa, as so many aspects of relatively recent Sunda cultural expansion, which may or may not have left demic (genetic) traces.

In order to be able to go on with my work and finish my book projects, I needed to ascertain, urgently, whether the General Sunda Hypothesis was a viable theory or just a red herring, and whether – if viable in the general sense – it could also be applied in the mythological field, in the form of the Special Sunda Hypothesis. It was passionately and impatiently, but with a totally open mind as to the expected or preferred result, that (moderately well-trained and experienced in multivariate statistics) I found the method to approach the problem of competitive explanatory power of the two approaches.

### *10.8. Back to the Nuaḥite Flood story – the possibility that it, too, was partly shaped by Sunda effects, after all*

Meanwhile, if for the Narrative Complexes specifically singled out above, and probably for a few more, it is true to say that they existed long before Sunda but yet were innovated, transformed, and subsequently transmitted in the Sunda context, then we must give further thought to the question as to whether this also applies to the Narrative Complex (11) of the Primal Waters and the Flood, to which the Nuaḥite Flood story belongs.

There is no doubt as to NarCom's presence within the Sunda orbit. Would it be the only NarCom that escaped the power of Sunda to innovate, transform and subsequently transmit NarComs that had been in wide circulation in the Old World for tens of ka? When we look at the African, partly littoral, distribution of Flood myths, there seems to be some Sunda effect there – but it is probably much younger than the oldest attestation of the Nuaḥite Flood myth model in the Ancient Near East. My statistical analysis suggests that the Nuaḥite model was an invention of the Ancient Near East and from there spread all over the world, including South East Asia. The statistical analysis also shows us that the unity of the Nuaḥite model ('The man who survived the Flood in his Ark, as an ally of the Supreme God') is only apparent: there are strong mathematical indications to the effect that, both in the Old World and in the New World, Flood myths taken together are composed of at least a dozen independent strands, several of which taken together constitute the Nuaḥic combination – while several more in combination make up most of the mythological contents of the first eleven books of *Genesis*. This was certainly not all Sunda and nothing more (as I have argued at length in the preceding chapters, *pace* Oppenheimer), neither was all of this originally Ancient Near East and nothing more – and that means that there remains a distinct possibility that some of the

transformations and innovations that no doubt were effected upon NarCom 11 ('The Primal Waters and the Flood') in the Sunda context, yet somehow were brought by Sunda expansion to the Ancient Near East and there (but only there) contributed to the unique combination that the Nuaḥite narrative presents.

In other words, the merits of Stephen Oppenheimer's *Eden in the East* go further than just putting the General Sunda Hypothesis on the map. Although his approach to comparative mythology is idiosyncratic, his book has considerable merit in that field too, and not just for asking the right questions, but also for providing already a partial answer.

Flood stories in their most general form are based on a cosmological schema, which we can still attest in historical times *e.g.* in the Ancient Near East and the Bible World. In the oldest form of such Flood stories we do not yet see the vertical layeredness of the world which would be quite dominant later (after the rise of shamanism, c. 20 ka BP in Central Asia, and from there further spread all over the world especially by or under the influence of mtDNA Type B populations). In the layered version, we have three superimposed layers: the Underworld of the dead; the visible world of the living, and the upper world of the gods. In this respect my initial 2004 characterisation of 'what is in Heaven' was fundamentally anachronistic, on second thought: Heaven had not yet been invented. Later, especially in South East Asia and Oceania (again: mainly among mtDNA Type B populations) the number of layers might become as high as five or even seven. But this was preceded by a much simpler schema, in which the constituent distinction was between Water and Land. Water is everything that is not Land: Above (the sky), aside on the same level as speaker (Ocean), and Below (the Underworld)); and the distinction between the three locations of the water were not of great importance: birds were fishes of the Waters Above, fishes were birds of the Waters Below, and a Supreme God, probably primarily thought as female or else bisexual, rules over all that water:

The original chaos consists in a condition where there is nothing to contrast with, defy, differ from, the Primal Waters. In many ancient cosmologies, that difference emerges with the emergence of land from among these Primal Waters:

- the myth of the Earth diver (a coot or rodent diving up a small lump of Earth from the bottom of the Primal Waters), widespread (in a manner investigated in detail by Richard Villems 2005) in northeastern Eurasia and northern N. America
- the Ancient Egyptian myth of the emergence of the first land, in the form of the Primal Hill, emerging from the Primal Waters – as site for the Cosmic Egg to be laid, or for the Original Lotus to unfold itself
- the Maori myth of the primal land being fished up from the primal sea, with parallels not only elsewhere in Oceania but also in the Ancient Germanic world

However, when c. 10 ka BP the polar caps came to melt at the end of the last Ice Age, that basic idea was already in place, and it could be further elaborated into something that does deserve the name of 'Flood myth'.

That process especially entailed the following. The image of the point conception of the Earth, separated from the Water, dry, bounded, phallic, was further elaborated (and that only required a small step) to become the Ark on the waters of the Flood. From the beginning the image of the Ark is implied in the idea that the Separation of Water and Land is the central comogonic event – the Earth is the Ark (like in much modern science fiction on galactic travel etc.).

### *10.9. Implications of the Flood myths discussion for the Sunda Hypothesis*

*Oppenheimer's central point of reference is the (unmistakable) flooding of the South East Asian subcontinent at the beginning of the Holocene. Hence he is inclined to attribute great importance to the Sunda factor in the global distribution of Flood stories. I cannot share that opinion. My multivariate analysis of Flood myths as presented in the first two-thirds of this chapter, indicate that within the dominant mythical complex of Flood myths worldwide, Sunda has played only a minor role. Flood stories are much older than the Holocene, and their distribution (especially in the New World) can scarcely be understood by reference to such a relatively recent phenomenon as the flooding of the Sunda subcontinent. Meanwhile it is not impossible that, once Flood stories were firmly established in global mythology, Sunda has been instrumental in the further spread of the elaborate type of Flood stories to East, South and West Asia (West Asia comprising the Bible world, among other regions and periods), and to sub-Saharan Africa.*

### *10.10. Despite the above quantitative analysis, yet a partial vindication of the Special Sunda Hypothesis in the field of comparative mythology*

Yet this cannot be the end of any application of the Sunda Hypothesis in the mythological field? That would hardly seem likely, considering – as we have seen – the great explanatory power we demonstrated for the General Sunda Hypothesis for such fields as genetics and comparative ethnography. I believe to have demonstrated the regional, Ancient Near East origin of the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East and the Bible, which in many ways are constitutive of Judaeo-Christian-Islamic culture and its global ramifications. Yet, however important, those core mythologies are only a tiny section of the wealth of mythological material circulating in the Old World.

Yuri Berezkin (personal communication 2007), on the basis of his incomparable insight in the world distribution of a very large number of narrowly and sharply defined mythemes (the result of his painstaking work at St Petersburg over decades), after the presentation of an earlier version of the present argument at the 2007 Edinburgh conference, made an excellent suggestion that allows us both to appreciate the residual mythological potential of the Sunda Hypothesis, and the specific outcome of the present analysis. While agreeing with me that the Ancient Near East

core mythologies are not Sunda, Berezkin proposed that many of the mythological themes of popular Christianity and Islam<sup>276</sup> *have in fact preserved Sunda elements coming in from South East Asia* – the latter elements (but that is my own interpretation again) taking, as is often the case in folklore and myth, a refuge in peripheral locations that are beyond the control and censorship of the dominant ideological traditions of a particular region and period, in other words, that take shelter where the religious authorities (the church hierarchy, the *ulamā* of formal Islam) and the state cannot reach them.

On this positive note, we are now ready to conclude the first Part of our argument, and to proceed to a another leg of our assessment of the utility of the Sunda Hypothesis as an heuristic device: the analysis of East West parallels, between on the one hand South East Asia / the Indo-Pacific / Oceania, and on the other hand the western Old World, in such fields as comparative mythology and comparative ethnography, Such oparallels are amazingly abundant. Can we explain them by an appeal to the Sunda Hypothesis, in other words as a result of westbound cultural and demographic, maritime expansion of inhabitants of the East on the run for the flooding of their home country with the rise of the ocean level?

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<sup>276</sup> Cf. note 264, above.





**PART II. EAST-WEST  
PARALLELS BETWEEN  
OCEANIA AND THE WESTERN  
OLD WORLD**

**THEIR SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE VINDICATION  
OF THE SUNDA HYPOTHESIS AND AS POINTERS  
TOWARDS THE EMERGENCE OF A GLOBAL  
MARITIME NETWORK**



# Chapter 11. Introduction to Part II

## East-West parallels and the emergence of an intercontinental nautical network from the Early Bronze Age onwards

### *11.1. The probability of the emergence of a multicentred, multi-directional intercontinental maritime network from the Early Bronze Age on*

There is one very important lesson we have to learn from our argument on the General Sunda Hypothesis, affirmative though it has been. *Similarity, even argued and demonstrated identity, does not in itself mean borrowing, let alone that it automatically reveals the direction of possible borrowing.* In other words, the fact that we have, in Africa and elsewhere along the postulated westbound Sunda trajectory, traits that could be argued to derive from Sundaland (although we do not have any direct evidence on the nature of the original Proto-Indonesian Sunda society before its supposed disruption by dramatic flooding – we are in the dark concerning its culture, mythology, or even language!), should not prevent us from investigating the other four (!) possibilities inherent in such a situation:

1. The claimed similarity is genuine, but the cultural movement has been eastbound, towards Sundaland – the resulting pattern of similarities would be the same

2. The claimed similarity is genuine, but the cultural movement has been *from a third common source* (for instance, Central Asia) to both Sundaland and to Africa, the Ancient Near East, and Europe – once more, the resulting pattern of similarities would be the same
3. *The claimed similarity is genuine, but the cultural indebtedness is far from monodirectional – initiated by westbound Sunda expansion or by any other cause still to be identified and argued, what we have had, from the Early Bronze Age, is an extended intercontinental maritime network, in which cultural influences have circulated so freely, multidirectionally, and multicentredly, from the extreme east (Oceania and Indonesia) to the extreme west (West Africa and the Mediterranean, possibly even the Atlantic coast of Europe and North-eastern North America), and everywhere in between, that 'Sunda' can no longer be the designation of a localised cultural source to be identified somewhere in South East Asia, but can only apply to this proto- globalised, non-local network in all its extensions.*<sup>277</sup>
4. The claimed similarity is spurious and does not deserve serious investigation.

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<sup>277</sup> This paradoxical, virtualised way of conceptualising transcontinental indebtedness has been a constant in my work ever since *Religious Change in Zambia* (1981a), when I interpreted the cults of affliction in South Central Africa 19th-20th c. CE not so much as *brought* by trans-continental long-distance trade, but specifically as an *expression* of the experience of such trade – as expression of the essence of translacality. When in this Part II of our monograph we consider, on the one hand, the rise of a global maritime network from the Bronze Age on, and on the other hand repeatedly hit on amazing correspondences in format and conceptualisation between cults of affliction all over the Old World, I believe that our conclusion should be

- not that such cults have a concrete Sunda origin in South East Asia and from there were transmitted on the wings of Sunda expansion –
- *but that these cults (whose dominant image is 'wind' – as in sailing!) in their very essence express the transcontinentality which, with the rise of such a network, was becoming the global implicit norm, the largely subconscious framework beyond the obvious local horizon of thought and action.*

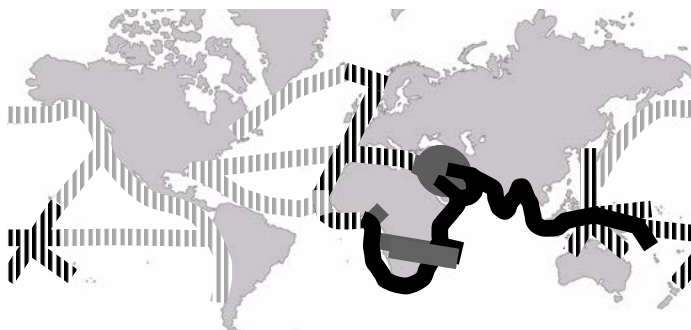
Having personally studied cults of affliction in North Africa (with extension through library research and supervision into Saharan and Hausa contexts as well as Medieval and Early Modern Europe – Vandenbroeck 1997 – and the New World – Bernadina 1982), Benin, Zambia, Botswana, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and Bali (Indonesia) – with extensions into continental South East Asia through library research – , I have always been struck by the amazing similarities of such cults' belief systems, and bodily stances and motor patterns in dance and trance. Seeing them ultimately as offshoots of global shamanism, which I consider an Upper Palaeolithic complex, I hesitate to invoke Sunda influence to explain such transcontinental continuity. Yet also in this connection Sunda (as an aspect of the emerging multicentred, multidirection maritime network) may have played the role of re-circulating older cultural material. At least two dominant imagery registers exist in cults of affliction worldwide: that of (a) horse-riding (the adept appears as a horse ridden by the possessing deity), and (b) immersion through swimming or sailing. Thus around 1970 CE, the inhabitants of Jumiyya, NW Tunisia (van Binsbergen 1971 and in prep. (h), described their trance as 'swimming in the sea', and brought forth their trance by singing and dancing to the following hymn to Sdi ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Jilani or -Jilali (founder, at medieval Baghdad, of the Qadiriyya brotherhood, and the principal saint of North African popular Islam):

<i>Enta Baba Jalul</i>	You are Father Jalul
<i>Enta Ras al-Baḥarin</i>	You are the Leader of the Navigators
<i>Attīni al-muftèḥ</i>	Give me the Key
<i>Hal al-bāb ali</i>	And open the Gate for me

In the local context such Navigators are meaningless; could they (like the boat motifs in Early Dynastic Egypt, and in the interior of Bronze Age Europe) be another distant echo of Sunda's 'phantom voyagers'?

I think, in the light of the evidence adduced in this book, point (4) can be discarded as extremely implausible. Examples of explanation (3) we have already encountered repeatedly, when I have highlighted Central Asia c. 30-15 ka BP (the CITIs IV, V and VI) as a likely course of communalities between South East Asia, on the one hand, and Western Asia, Africa, and Europe on the other – and very prudently we might even suggest to include the New World in this list of continents.

For the last few millennia, beginning with the Early Bronze Age, much better than the monocentric approaches that have so often turned out to fail in cultural history it is model (3) that in my opinion has the greatest chance of corresponding to historical reality. Oppenheimer himself tends to this conclusion, and I think it is an excellent one. In the early 20th century the idea of such a Bronze Age intercontinental nautical network was quite popular among Manchester diffusionists (Elliot Smith, Perry), but they favoured a monocentric, Egyptocentric model, with 'Children of the Sun' divulging their solar cult of Rêc eastward and westward; more recently we have seen Bernal's *Black Athena* thesis, claiming monocentric Egyptian (ultimately even sub-Saharan African) impact on the Aegean in the Bronze Age. Because it implies movements back and forth from any place in the network to any other place, thus being essentially multicentred and multidirectional, the idea of an intercontinental maritime network from the Bronze Age onward would, for instance, account for several parallels, some of them well-known, and most of them explicitly discussed by Oppenheimer, between Aegean and Oceanian mythology, and even Germanic and Oceanian mythology, without the necessity of postulating actual sea links connecting, in one voyage as it were, the western and eastern extremes of the postulated maritime intercontinental network:



the solid, thick black lines indicate the outlines of the network as established in the present argument; hatching indicates lesser certainty; lesser contrast indicates even lesser certainty for Trans-Atlantic sections of the proposed network; solid grey is used to indicate the Mozambican/Angolan corridor, the Bight of Benin/Western Grassfields corridor, and the Mediterranean connections with the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, all of which obviously are not maritime trajectories

Fig. 11.1. A provisional proposal for the intercontinental, multicentred, multidirectional maritime network from the Early Bronze Age onward (also see end of chapter 12)

- The mytheme of protagonists who rescue the land by fishing it up (like Thor and Hymir in Nordic European myth (Fig. 11.2; Willis 1994: 199); or Maui in Maori myth, New Zealand (Fig. 7.1; Willis 1994: 42), and elsewhere in Polynesia (Tangaroa and Turi-a-faumea, who fished the sea monster Rogo-tumu-here up and hacked it to pieces, after it had swallowed Tangaroa's daughter-in-law (elsewhere named as Hina-a-rauriki)
- The cosmogonic mytheme of blockage through incessant copulation, a mytheme we may summarise as follows:

In the beginning Heaven and Earth were so incessantly making love that the children in Earth's womb (the second generation of divinities) could not be born so as to effect the event of creation; only because one of these children separated their parents forcibly

could they be born.

This is recorded both from Polynesia (*i.e.* New Zealand, Tuamotu Isl., Hawaii and Tahiti<sup>278</sup> and from Ancient Greece, for Uranus and Gaia (Willis 1994; Hesiod 1914, *cf.* Solmsen 1990), with an echo in Egyptian Shu, separating Heaven Nut and Earth Geb, who however were not his parents but his children; a further inversion is effected in this Egyptian rendering in that Nut is female and Geb male. Interestingly, this story also has a Nigerian version, right on the Bight of Benin which we have already identified as scoring high in terms of Sunda associations, *e.g.* in terms of head-hunting. It is on this variant that we shall now concentrate.

Although Oduduwa (*cf.* Awolalu 1979) is generally known among the Yoruba people today as their male apical ancestor and first king, there is also a tradition which attaches the name Oduduwa to the goddess of Earth who is also the goddess of love:

'Oduduwa (Odudua, Oduwa) is the chief goddess of the Yoruba, the creator; she represents the Earth. She is the wife of Obatala, but she is contemporary with Olurun [the Yoruba Lord of Heaven, also called Olofin-Orun and Olodumare – WvB] – not made by him, as was her husband. She came from Ife, the holy city, in common with most of the other gods. Obatala and Oduduwa represent one androgynous divinity, an image of a human being with one arm and leg [another version of the Luwe motif – WvB ], and a tail terminating in a sphere. But generally, Obatala and Oduduwa are regarded as two distinct persons. Oduduwa is both a primordial divinity and a deified ancestor. Oduduwa was the creator of the Earth and its inhabitants as a result of Obatala's failure through drunkenness to carry out Olodumare's injunction. Obatala and Oduduwa, or Heaven and Earth, resemble two large cut-calabashes, which, when once shut, can never be opened. The shape of the universe is depicted by two whitened saucer-shaped calabashes, placed one covering the other, the upper one of which represents the concave firmament stretching over and meeting the Earth, the lower one, at the horizon. According to a myth, Oduduwa is blind. At the beginning of the world, she and her husband, Obatala, were shut up in darkness in a large, closed calabash, Obatala being in the upper part and Oduduwa in the lower. [Several applications of the ogre motif – WvB ] They remained there for many days, cramped, hungry, and uncomfortable. Then Oduduwa began complaining, blaming her husband for the confinement, and a violent quarrel ensued, in the course of which, in a frenzy of rage, Obatala tore out her eyes, because she would not bridle her tongue. In return, she cursed him, saying, "You shall eat nothing but snails."<sup>279</sup>

Oduduwa is [nonetheless – WvB ] the patroness of love. She was once walking alone in the forest when she met a hunter, a man so handsome that the temperament of the goddess at once took fire. The advances that she made to him were favorably received, and they gratified their passion on the spot. After this, the goddess became still more enamored; unable to tear herself away from her lover, she lived with him for some weeks in a house that they constructed of branches at the foot of a large silk-cotton tree. At the end

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<sup>278</sup> *Cf.* Willis 1994: 294; Cotterell 1989: 148, 164, 241f., 244.

<sup>279</sup> This initial quarrel between the primal divine couple is reminiscent of the quarrel between the Japanese primal gods Izanami and Izanagi after the birth of Kaguchuci / Fire, which caused Izanami's death

of this time, her passion had burned out, and, having become weary of the hunter, she left him, but before doing so she promised to protect him and all others who might come and dwell in the favored spot where she had passed so many pleasant hours. In consequence, many people came and settled there, and a town gradually grew up, a town named Ado, to commemorate the circumstances of its origin.<sup>280</sup>

This is one of the few times in this book that we look at a somewhat complete myth and not just at constituent components shared between myths. The temptation is great to fully explore the many layers of reference and meaning in Oduduwa's myth, but that is beyond our present scope and also (since I lack the required linguistic skills in Yoruba) beyond my competence. Let me merely indicate a few themes. They are very illustrative for one of the basic lessons which my Aggregative Diachronic Model of World Mythology has to deliver: *in the context of new Contexts of Intensified Transformation and Innovation (usually coinciding with the emergence of new modes of production and new language families), new Narrative Complexes arise as transformation of older Narrative Complexes, but instead of completely eclipsing their predecessors, they interweave and interfere with one another to bring about bizarre combinations which only make sense poetically, once one dissects them according to some analytical logic, for instance that of my Aggregative Diachronic Model.* In this story, Oduduwa appears as a primary creation goddess, barely subjugated to the state of feminine submissiveness which (in many societies past and present) social rules between humans would expect from an adult woman; and barely able to conceal her fundamental independence from, and seniority *vis-à-vis*, the male creator Olodumare. The story is, at one level, a tale of female creation censored through masculinisation. Although in many ways Oduduwa plays the role which I have reconstructed in general as that of the Mother of the Primal Waters, this version of the story is conspicuous for the absence of any reference to the sea and other surface waters – however, such reference may be implied, for with this story we find ourselves in a part of the world where the cult of the mysterious watery goddess ('Mami Wata') is a major theme of popular religion. Another echo of female submission to male dominance and control, present mainly through comparison and implication in the Nigerian variant, can be noticed in what appears as an afterthought to the myth proper: the episode of the stranger hunter; this is a common theme in Nigercongo speaking Africa,<sup>281</sup> known for instance from the *Sunjata* epic of West Africa, and especially elaborated in South Central Africa, where the cycle of the female royal Luwēji ('Royal Moon') and the stranger hunter Chibinda<sup>282</sup> circulates

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<sup>280</sup> Scheub 2000: 197 *f.*, after Ellis 1894: 41 *f.*, also *cf.* Awolalu 1979: 25 *f.*; Idowu 1962: 22 *f.*, 27.

<sup>281</sup> To which also the Yoruba language belongs.

<sup>282</sup> Chibinda means 'Hunter'; the name appears without a royal prefix; in an astronomical context it may have solar connotations complementary to the lunar / menstrual connotations of Luweji. The obvious identification of Moon and menstruation in many cultures (based on their objective similarity in time period; in women's cosmologies and subjective experience the impact of the Moon may go much further than that) is explicitly made by South Central African actors. *E.g.* in the Nkoya language one says of a menstruating woman *balina ngonda*, 'she [honorific] has the Moon'. Hence the

widely (Turner 1955; Hoover 1980); in one respect a common type of astronomical etiological narrative, it is also a foundation myth of male kingship, for, introducing new and foreign notions of purity and pollution (van Binsbergen 1992; Turner 1955), Chibinda manages to usurp Luwēji's kingship under the pretext (reflecting the contradictions of South Central African menstruation and other gender attitudes noted above and suggested to have a transcontinental explanation) that her monthly period means a disgrace and pollution to so lofty an institution. In the Chibinda character we see not only a reference to a solar cult which, as we have seen, as a rather exotic element in sub-Saharan Africa may well have Sunda connotations especially in the sphere of kingship – but also an insistence on cosmological purity and dualism which (often in combination with male genital mutilation) might also be taken as an oblique reference to Sunda influence. At another level the Nigerian Oduwa myth contains an echo of the halfling – the strange being that has only one side to his body (cf. von Sicard 1968-1969, where he appears under one of his generic names, 'Luwe') and that appears all over Africa as an old god of hunting !), the weather, metallurgy and pastoralism (note the bizarre, anachronistic mixture of modes of production!), terrifying those who come upon him unexpectedly, but ready to bestow great riches and powers upon them if they show themselves master of the situation (cf. van Binsbergen 2011c).<sup>283</sup> Finally, the imagery of the two calabash

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story of Chibinda and Luweji has obvious astronomical connotations: if Luweji is the Moon, then Chibinda must be the Sun. Yet the semantics cannot be purely astronomical, for due to the diurnal rotation of the Earth, the apparent daily movement of Sun and Moon seems to be of the same order. If anything, not the Sun but the Moon should be considered the faster one of the two, the hunter, because it traverses the celestial, zodiacal lunar houses in one month, whereas it takes the Sun a year to do more or less the same. Hence the interpretation of Graeco-Roman Iapetus (cf. Biblical Japhet) in lunar terms, and his association with the lowly pigmented Caucasian somatic cluster.

<sup>283</sup> A theme that is often overlooked in the discussion of Flood stories world-wide is the following, here exemplified (Isaak 2006) for a deity or queen Manenga in South Central Africa (she also features as a queen in the Nkoya collection of oral histories *Likota Iya Bankoya*, but not with this particular story). An old woman comes to a village and demands a service from a young man, notably to be carried across a river. The service is denied and the old woman, revealing herself as supernaturally powerful (she is the Mother of the Waters), in retaliation unleashes the Flood which destroys the entire village. The story occurs as a Buddhist tale (Chödzin & Kohn 1977: 24 f., 'useless work'). The same story, but severely distorted, comes up in a Chinese version involving Kuan Yin (Kendall & Yao-Wen Li 2007: 23 f.); further, in a story of the Transylvanian Gypsies (von Wliskoeki 1886); while also Hera initially tests her protégé Jason with a similar request before sending him across the Aegean and the Black Sea to Colchis in order to retrieve the Golden Fleece (*Argonautica*, Apollonius Rhodius 1959; Tripp 1974, s.v. Jason, pp. 329 f.). One is distantly reminded, not only of the Christophorus theme of Christian tradition, but especially of Jacob's wrestling with the Angel / stream god at the Jabbok stream (*Genesis* 32:22 f.); the Proto-Bantu connotations discovered in the latter connection prepare us for the surprise to see the same theme applied to the queen or goddess Manenga in South Central Africa. I suspect that in most or all these cases, we are dealing with essentially the same goddess, a transformation of the Upper-Palaeolithic Mother of the Waters, with perhaps the astronomical connotations of the Morning-star (Proto-Bantu –tond ; among the Nkoya, Manenga is centrally associated with the Mutondo kingship), or the Evening-star. The astronomical identity of these two stars was not generally known before Roman Antiquity. Aegean Hera and South Central African Manenga not only feature in a similar test episode with a junior male protagonist, but may also be construed as associated with the Evening star: since Hera is associated with Colchis, her name may be analysed as deriving from Kartvelian \*čwēr-, 'to be suspended, to sink (also of



halves graphically brings out what has been the central cosmological theme in global mythology ever since CITI V: the Separation of Heaven and Earth in a vertical perspective. Even so we see implied in the anguish of the two protagonists when locked up in the darkness of the not-yet separated universe to be, the chaotic pre-existential condition of non-being, which is particularly expressed in the Narrative Complex 6 of the Ogre (CITI III).

The Nigerian variant seems to settle the case one-sidedly in favour of East-West borrowing along Sunda lines. However, we could also invoke the ancient tradition (recently confirmed by state-of-the-art genetic research; cf. Arnaiz-Villena *et al.* 2001) as to provenance of a significant portion of the Greek population from sub-Saharan Africa,<sup>284</sup> and then the Nigerian version might appear, not as a Sunda outpost on the story's way to Greece, but as a Western outpost on the story's way to the East.

But let us continue our listing of possible East-West parallels.

- Creation of humankind from Earth or mud (*Genesis*, Egypt (Hnum), South East Asia, South China, Oceania (Willis 1994: 22, 91)
- Probably a red herring (but we shall return to it in chapter 13) is the parallel between the Tamazigh (Berber) giant Anti (known in Greek myth as Antaeus, son of Poseidon and Gaia, and a formidable adversary of Heracles

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the Sun)' (Starostin & Starostin 1998-2008, 'Kartvelian etymology') – hence 'setting Sun', or (by an astronomically unwarranted jump) 'Evening Star'. Next to Proto-Bantu roots *-man-* L 'know, 4.1', and *-mang-* 'bind, 4.3', Meussen lists the root *-manik-* L 'hang up, fasten, attach 4.1', which is semantically close to the above Kartvelian root (again we are reminded of the plausibility that Nigercongo is merely a form of Super-Nostratic), and would also allow us to consider Manenga is a similar light as Hera, with whom she shared the characteristics of mature femininity anyway. In Nkoya the name Manenga could be associated with the verbal root *-man-*, 'to end', + *ergativum -eng-* with potentially similar connotations as the setting Sun and the Evening-star. If we agree that the unilateral being Mwendanjangula (cf. van Binsbergen 201c) has the conceptual makeup (although not compellingly the features) of a Water Dragon (perhaps with Chinese antecedents, as a trace of prehistoric Chinese influence on South Central and Southern Africa?), then the whole complex also reflects on the conditional test to which Mwendanjangula is reputed to subject whosoever encounters it in the deep forest: if one is the first to greet, incomparable riches and powers will be bestowed upon one, but in the opposite case, one will be destroyed. *Unraveling all these strands and their implications will take another book and is out of the question in the present context, but leaving them unmentioned seems regrettable.* Bernard 2009: 224 f., however, adduces reasons (from Callaway 1970 / 1885 and Berglund 1976; none too convincing to me against the ethnographic background of South Central Africa) to consider Mwendanjangula as a transformation of the cosmic pair of Mother and Daughter, cf. Demeter and Persephone / Kore in Graeco-Roman mythology (which however is in itself a Greek adaptation of the peregrinations of Isis in search of Osiris' remains after the latter was murdered by his brother Set).

<sup>284</sup> The mythical elaboration of such a claim is considerable, and touches on the figure of the Levantine Kadmos; on Aeschylus' play *Suppliants*; on the traditions of Helen being hidden in Egypt (in the Isle of Pharos, with the minor sea god, shapeshifter and diviner Proteus) while only a dummy of her is present at the Trojan war; the African appearance of Silenus; and the traditions (still alive around the turn of the Common Era) that link the Spartans to Palestine. The reverse model, according to which some African groups (e.g. the Akan and the Yoruba), had originated in Greece, and have travelled to their present locations via Libya, was still taken seriously in the middle of the 20th century (e.g. Graves 1964, 1988), but has since been shelved as a result of the *Black-Athena* debate and of the general aversion vis-à-vis diffusion.

because he cannot be vanquished if in contact with his mother, Earth) – and *Anti* as divine ancestral category on the Gilbert Islands (Cotterell 1989: 50). However, possible Sunda connotations of Heracles (and by implication of his adversaries) come to mind, once we remember the possibility (considered above) that Heracles' companion Iolaos has Sunda implications; when we see the parallels between the Heracles character with his club, and the Luwe halfling who either directly or through the pole which is his principal attribute represents the celestial axis and whose spread may to some extent be due to Sunda influence; and when we remember that, like Sesostris / Senwosret, Odysseus, Dionysus and Iskander, also Heracles (especially in the Italic / Etruscan version as Hercules, but also in Herodotus, *Historiae*, 4, 8) features in a topographical narrative that encompasses both the northern and the southern shores of the Mediterranean, and in which the appropriation of cattle (so dear to Indonesian and Sunda-influenced African royals – never mind that cattle's Underworld connotations) plays a major role.

Meanwhile a note of caution is needed here concerning the composite and kaleidoscopic nature of Heracles as a mythological figure. This is nowhere better expressed than by the poet and disreputable comparative mythologist Robert Graves (1988: 124):

'Hercules is a word of very many meanings. Cicero distinguishes six different legendary figures named Hercules; Varro, forty-four. His name, in Greek Heracles, means 'Glory of Hera', and Hera was an early Greek name for the Death-Goddess who had charge of the souls of sacred kings and made oracular heroes of them. He is, in fact, a composite deity consisting of a great many oracular heroes of different nations at different stages of religious development; some of whom became real gods while some remained heroes. This makes him the most perplexing character in Classical mythology; for the semi-historical Pelopid prince of the generation before the Trojan War has been confused with various heroes and deities called Hercules, and these with one another.

Hercules first appears in legend as a pastoral sacred king and, perhaps because shepherd welcome the birth of twin lambs, is a twin himself. His characteristics and history can be deduced from a mass of legends, folk-customs and megalithic monuments. He is the rain-maker of his tribe and a sort of human thunder-storm. Legends connect him with Libya and the Atlas Mountains; he may well have originated thereabouts in Palaeolithic times. The priests of Egyptian Thebes, who called him 'Shu', dated his origin as '17,000 years before the reign of King Amasis'. He carries an oak-club, because the oak provides his beasts and people with mast and because it attracts lightning more than any other tree. His symbols are the acorn; the rock-dove, which nests in oak as well as in clefts of rock; the mistletoe, or loranthus; and the serpent. All these are sexual emblems. (...) This Hercules is male leader of all orgiastic rites and has twelve archer companions, including his spear-armed twin, who is his tanist or deputy. He performs an annual green-wood marriage with a queen of the woods, a sort of Maid Marian. He is a mighty hunter and makes rain, when it is needed, by rattling an oak-club thunderously in a hollow oak and stirring a pool with an oak branch — alternatively, by rattling pebbles inside a sacred colocynth-gourd [ **check** ] or, later, by rolling black meteoric stones inside a wooden chest — and so attracting thunderstorms by sympathetic magic...'

- Spider gods (see van Binsbergen 2020d).

Apart from the anti-Eurocentrist lesson in geopolitical humility, the discovery of the Sunda East-West effect is probably less important than the recognition of the existence of such an intercontinental maritime network per se, and the awareness that it would be essentially multicentric and multidirectional.

It is important to stress that, in the last analysis, Sunda must stand for a type of relationship and a type of maritime network, more than from the specific provenance in the partially submerged Sunda subcontinent. Of course, once the transcontinental maritime network was established, other branches would be plugged into it and could, presumably, freely travel along the network. This makes it conceivable that ultimately Philipinians, Chinese, Koreans and Japanese, as well as New Guineans and Melanesians, perhaps even Micronesians and Polynesians, ventured west, perhaps never further than Malacca (*cf.* Meluhḫa?), but perhaps as far as the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea and Madagascar, perhaps a good deal further. By the same token, Scandinavians, other North Sea and Baltic dwellers, Basques, Minoans, Mycenaean, Egyptians, Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Leleges, Tyrrhenians, Carians and Etruscans, as well as African coastal dwellers (Bijagos, Manding, Swahili *etc.*) may have ventured east along the same intercontinental maritime network. The scenario appears to go some way towards explaining the origin of the Maori of New Zealand. Even extensions to, and from, the Pacific and Atlantic coasts of the Americas cannot be excluded *a priori*.



Source: Willis 1994

Fig. 11.2. An amazing parallel between eastern and western mythologies: The Maori culture hero Maui fishes up the world (a, left), and so do Thor and Hymir in Germanic myth (b, right)

There is a case (Solheim 1996) for a maritime trading network of the Nusantao boat

people, extending from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Rim. This is one of the few archaeological arguments of Oppenheimer to survive, but it is a major point: we may not yet be able to advance all cultural, linguistic and archaeological evidence to prove that the transcontinental maritime network we were looking for in connecting of the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, Africa, the Mediterranean and Northwestern Europe, actually extended to these places, but at least it existed *in nucleo*, in South East Asia and Oceania, with the Nusantao boat people.

Once such a network is in place, even if we grant initial Sunda initiative to establish it, it is clear that throughout *historical* times (from 5 ka BP) *the evidence of west-east movement has been equally impressive as the other way around*. Needham with Wang Ling (I, 1961) lists nearly a hundred traits which travelled from China to the West in the last few millennia – mainly over land but no doubt also over sea. In the other direction, Hellenistic culture (Gandhara sculpture, astrology, cult of Dionysus in India<sup>285</sup>, Hinduism, Christianity (the cult of St Thomas in India), Islam, without a doubt are examples of such West-East movement, and they have determined the present face of South East Asia including Sundaland to a considerable extent. The dominant mythical cycles now circulating there (*Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, the *Iskander Saga*) have ended up in South East Asia due to the same movement. Another example is to be found in the extensive discussion, which was waged by Orientalists from the middle of the 19th century onwards (Steinschneider, Schlegel, and many others), on the transcontinental continuity or, alternatively, the isolated local nature of the astrologies of China, India, the Ancient Near East, and Graeco-Roman Antiquity; here Pingree's work has demonstrated how Mesopotamian astronomy / astrology, honed to perfection in Graeco-Roman Antiquity, subsequently travelled East and formed the basis of Indian astrology,<sup>286</sup> although the connection between Chinese and Ancient Mesopotamian astrology / astronomy appears to be both older and more direct (Ungnad 1932).

Admittedly, the movement of myths could have been from East to West (half of my argument seeks to state the case for the General Sunda Hypothesis – my doubts only concern its specific mythological application to the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East), but there is great need for caution, especially when we are postulating movement of intellectual products, not from one comparable, literate, state-associated elite to another across the Old World (like in the cases indicated in the previous paragraph), or from a highly developed society to one of hunter-gatherers,

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<sup>285</sup> Cf. Pingree 1978; Harrigan 1997. Even in imperial China, Graeco-Roman mythological themes reverberate (Fontenrose 1980), and echoes of the cults of Heracles (Maenchen-Helfen 1935) and of Dionysus might be discerned: while Dionysus' chariot was drawn by leopards, the Chinese Emperor's chariot was adorned with leopard tails and some of the military ranks were named after that animal (*bào*, 豹); I am grateful to Dr Haifang Liu for this information (personal communication 2003). Meanwhile, the leopard symbolism in India (in connection with such major gods as Indra – with archaic shamanistic overtones –, Durga and Śiva) makes it conceivable that this is an Asian trait not indebted to Greece. Cf. van Binsbergen 2003b, 2004n, and in prep. (j).

<sup>286</sup> Whitney 1874; Pingree 1978; Biot 1969 / 1962; Steinschneider 1864; Schlegel 1875.

but the other way around.

When contemplating such transcontinental connections, we are also reminded of:

- Proposals to interpret megalithic petroglyphs from the Bronze Age as nautical maps for intercontinental travel (de Jonge & IJzereef 1996) also amount to claims of such an intercontinental maritime network.
- In fact the early studies of intercontinental diffusion (Elliot Smith, Perry), rather than continuing to be ridiculed as fantastic and unscientific, could now be seen as amazingly sensible statements concerning such a network, albeit that in their time monocentrism (especially Egyptocentrism, and a racialist Eurocentrism enhanced by the initial apparent success of the colonial project) reigned supreme, so that the only conceivable direction of cultural movement was from west to east and from the moderate zone to the tropics; moreover, that older literature has often been chided for misconceptions concerning the unicity of megalithic practices, and for exaggeration concerning the solar religious complex.
- Even in the esoteric writings of Blavatsky, Churchward, Temple *etc.* with their wild phantasms of intercontinental continuity especially of the community of initiates into secret lore, and in the inveterate Atlantis tradition since Plato, we could now detect a distant and distorted echo of the tangible reality of such an intercontinental maritime network.

Inevitably, this opens the door again for the pet ideas of classic diffusionists, who saw Indian games and colour symbolism in Meso America,<sup>287</sup> a common code of for instance lunar symbolism on the Pacific seaboard (Hentze 1933), and megalithic practices spreading from Egypt as one coherent global Sun cult; and more recently, the ideas of Afrocentrists like van Sertima and Clyde Winters (1979a, 1979b, 1983), who propose that major linguistic and cultural intercontinental influence *from* Africa was brought by African navigation to Olmec America,<sup>288</sup> South India, Ceylon and Shang China; as well as recurrent claims of Chinese and Japanese influence on Madagascar (Raison-Jourde 1994). There appears to be no limit to the possibilities, once the idea of global connectivity from the Bronze Age onward is accepted in principle:

‘In his book on pre-Polynesian astronomy *Star Trek to Hawa-iʻi* (1991; cf. 1979) [Homer Hostetter, a honorary professor of journalism at an American university] believes he has identified the symbols on an Ancient Middle Eastern copper bowl purchased in an open-air *suq* market) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia) as having an astronomical significance and he has also traced the use of these astronomical symbols through the Batak culture in Sumatra to the culture of the early Hawaiians.’ (Thompson, 2001 / 2004)

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<sup>287</sup> Tylor 1865, 1871, 1879, 1880, 1882, 1896; cf. global distribution maps of colour symbolism in Frobenius 1929: 323 and the discussion in Campbell 1992: 84.

<sup>288</sup> Incidentally, some food for Afrocentrist thought is provided by the high incidence of Rh-cDe gene in the South West of N America; as Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994: 336 admit, this gene is usually a sign of Negroid, *i.e.* sub-Saharan African admixture, but they are at a loss to interpret this finding because they cannot contemplate pre-Columbian Trans-Atlantic navigation from Africa.

We have already encountered, in the course of this book's argument, the linguist Joseph Karst, in the 1920s-30s professor of historical linguistics at the university of Strassburg, France, and a pioneer of long-range studies combining linguistic and ethnic research. His main analytical tools included, among others (notably his excellent and lasting idea of Bronze Age socio-political organisation as hierarchically superimposed ethnico-linguistic layers), the following two hypotheses:

1. names of deities and the narratives of their exploits invariably invoke, in some oblique and veiled way, the historical experiences of ethnic groups; and
2. proper names, which thus virtually coincide with ethnic names, have – I would say: like most formal systems – a tendency to persist and to remain more or less recognisable through time and space, no matter how many boundaries they have crossed of a linguistic, ecological, geographic or socio-political nature (Karst 1931a). This, he believes, allows him to claim empirically verifiable connections between the Biblical Hanoḥ [ Enoch – WvB ] and (changing the ḥ's into k's) the Kanakians of Tahiti (Karst 1931b: 85).

In the absence of a viable dominant paradigm, half a century ago, such claims could only have met with the same ridicule that greeted Schliemann's belief (however justified, as he was to prove) in the historicity of Homer's Troy, but today many such claims may perhaps be given the benefit of the doubt. If Sunda seems so clearly associated with a Moon cult, could that not be the reason for recurrent lunar symbolism all around the Pacific rim? If the solar cult played such a major role in the intercontinental maritime network initiated by Sunda, this means that solar cults were transmitted along that network, although probably not extensively let alone exclusively in the West-East direction suggested by the early diffusionists' Eurocentrism and their infatuation with Ancient Egypt. *And it is a pity that the excellent scholarship of an Afrocentrist writer like Winters had to be eclipsed by the fact that he has been pioneering a new paradigm which is implicitly Sunda as much as it is Afrocentrist.*

More in general, given the fact that the Earth is a sphere with a radius of scarcely 6,000 kilometres and a circumference of just 40,000 kilometres (a distance which an able-bodied adult human pedestrian can cover in three years, and a sailing boat with a multiple crew in much less time!), what is so intrinsically unbelievable and nonsensical in such arguments? The only reason why, at the time, such ideas were dismissed to the realm of fantasy was that they ran across the geopolitical ideology dominant in the North Atlantic region during and shortly after the age of colonialism – a neat compartmentalisation of the world into continents, each with its own historical distinctiveness and historical destiny, under White, Christian, Indo-European-speaking North Atlantic domination. However, intercontinental navigation has been a technological possibility and occasional fact, since the Middle Palaeolithic, and simply a mildly-attested fact, since the Early Bronze Age. *In our present age of globalisation (through unprecedented achievements in the technologies of locomotion, communication and information) we had better admit the reality of proto-globalisation during the last few millennia, and even long before*

### 11.2. Formal systems (music, mathematics, divination, myth, language) as privileged evidence of long-range contacts

One of the principal lessons of my *mankala* and geomantic explorations in the 1990s has been that formal cultural systems (such as languages, writing systems, divination systems, myth, counting systems, board games, musical instruments and musical forms) *often display a remarkable tenacity and constancy, capable of crossing cultural boundaries and adapting to new cultural environments yet remaining surprisingly recognisable*. They have more or less a life of their own; and (contrary to the delusions of total local cultural integration (implied in classic structural-functionalism) are not totally reducible to the socio-cultural environment in which they find themselves at a particular moment in time. This is why myths are such a wonderful tool to trace intercontinental continuities. It is remarkable that some of the best evidence of Sunda westbound expansion comes from formal systems, such as myth, art, and music (Dick-Read 2005; Jones 1964). Language – as Anatomically Modern Humans' most complex formal system – may also be considered in this connection: as a complex that, whilst tending to localisation, yet always also tends to cross ecological, geographic, social and political boundaries, retaining in its lexicon, phonology and semantics the traces of the complex trajectories its has traversed.

### 11.3. Further genetic indications of an intercontinental maritime network

Elsewhere (van Binsbergen 2019d) I have critically discussed (while admitting my non-specialist status) the genetic indications which Oppenheimer has advanced for his General Sunda Theory. While finding fault with some of the genetic markers he adduces for this purpose, I did find other markers that met his requirements, and by and large the genetic case for Sunda connections seems fairly solid. In addition, we may mention here the following indications of an intercontinental maritime network from the single-gene maps in Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994.

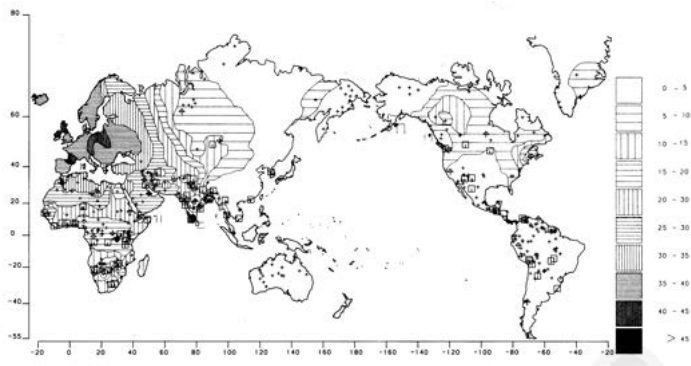


Fig. 11.3. Cavalli-Sforza *et al.*'s single-gene world distribution of RH\*cdE

*RH\*cde* (Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994: appendix map 88): this single gene has long been recognised to be particularly associated with the Basques, and more in general with Europids – to such an extent that its presence in other continents is often seen as a sign of (pre-modern and Early Modern) Europid intrusion (Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994: 336), *e.g.* in North-eastern America. The latter finding is, incidentally, in accordance with my own reconstructions of mythological relationships in North-eastern America, which seem to show European influence. Remarkable is the relative high in the Mozambican-Angolan corridor, as if European / Basque intrusion may be hypothesised as an alternative to Sunda expansion. Of course, there was considerable diffusion of Portuguese genes here in early-modern times in the context of long-distance trade by Portuguese, and especially by Africans of mixed Portuguese descent. Could then the global distribution of *RH\*cde* be read as evidence of a global maritime expansion, not from South East Asia towards Europe via Africa, but the other way around – as European expansion to South East Asia, hence as an inversion of the General Sunda Hypothesis? Or, better still, as a further indication of the multicentredness and multidirectionality of this intercontinental maritime network, once established? Also in their discussion of *RH* distribution in Asia Cavalli-Sforza *c.s.* (1994: 247) signal some strange effects which they propose are best explained by assuming African influence on Asia – presumably (otherwise this claim would be trivial) at a point in time much later than the Out-of-Africa migration *ca.* 80-60 ka BP (which had already been formulated in 1987 but which scarcely penetrated to Cavalli-Sforza *et al.*'s 1994 argument, based the latter was on an earlier paradigm of classic genetic markers). This comes some way towards a reversal of the General Sunda Hypothesis, and requires further research.<sup>289</sup>

A similar pattern can be observed in the distribution of *HLAB\*12*:

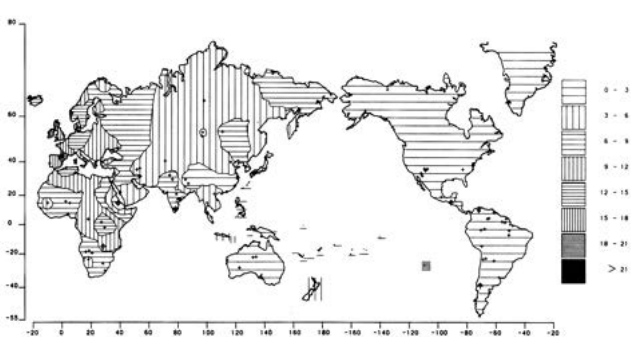


Fig. 11.4. World distribution of *HLAB\*12* (Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994: appendix map 43)

<sup>289</sup> Towards such further research, I may suggest that 'Sunda' must no longer be exclusively sought in South East Asia and the Indo-Pacific region, but may be extended to include India, Nepal, Tibet, the Persian Gulf, the Mozambique-Angolan corridor, the Tanzania-West-Africa corridor, the Basque country, the British Isles and the Baltic region. But that would lift the Sunda Hypothesis to a new level of virtuality and invisibility.



*HLAB\*12* (Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994: appendix map 43): Manifestly an indicator of Basquoid connotations, with an high exclusively in Basque country, and very low values wherever Sunda influence is to be expected – as if Sunda and Basque were opposite factors.

*However, all this emphasis on multicentric cultural exchanges within a intercontinental maritime network should not obscure the fact that the specific evidence adduced above for the most recent two or three millennia often suggests more specific one-directional borrowing, e.g. Indonesian xylophones and Indonesian forms of royal court culture in Africa.*

#### *11.4. Theoretical implications of the attempt to identify Sunda traits: Sunda as localised in South East Asia, ‘Sunda’ as a virtualised and globalised package circulating along an intercontinental multidirectional and multicentred network, and the global history of NarComs as a sobering reminder of the recycling nature of ‘Sunda’*

In the first place, we have to confront the ambiguity which has crept into the argument: initially we were inclined to treat Sunda as if it were a clearly identifiable package of linguistic, cultural and mythological traits deriving from South East Asia as from 7 ka BP. It is in this way that we could look for Austric etymologies, funerary themes such as second burial, and a reed complex. Also the consideration of distributions indicative of a gene flow from Indonesia to South and West Asia, Africa, and the Mediterranean was predicated on the idea that there once has been a localised gene pool with an associated, distinct Proto-Indonesian culture and language, and that in a westbound, seaborne migratory movement, both genes and culture and language had moved, in a process of demic diffusion, to other places in ways that presumably left demonstrable traces. However, we have gradually drifted away from this axiom of initial well-defined localisation of Sunda, for several reasons:

- a. both the empirical fact of the elusive nature of such traces (or else the General Sunda Hypothesis had been canonised as mainstream a century ago), and
- b. the theoretical realisation that, if Sunda really led to the establishment of an intercontinental maritime network from the Bronze Age onward, before long mariners with a Sunda background would not be the only ones to travel along that network, and not all displacements along that network would be westbound – in other words, we could expect the resulting intercontinental network to be both multidirectional and multicentred in ways that would soon play havoc with the localisation and culturo-linguistic distinctiveness of Sunda.

I have tried to acknowledge (b) by distinguishing between Sunda as originally localised in South East Asia, and ‘Sunda’ as evoking this image of a multicentred, multi-directional network in which whatever original Sunda input had ever been put in, necessarily would be creolised, virtualised, globalised – usually to such an extent

that the carriers of 'Sunda' would no longer be aware of any Sunda background or implication in their cultural practices, mythological concepts, and in-group language use, and often also to such an extent that we, as distant analytical observers, would be hard put to detect any Sunda in 'Sunda'. This presses all the more, since the postulated, original Sunda culture in South East Asia, Oppenheimer's Eden in the East, has disappeared, cannot be retrieved, and (whatever Oppenheimer adduces to the contrary) has left practically no archaeological traces – at best it can be argued to live on in the images of a lost home, a lost paradise, percolating in Oceanian myths as well as in the literature and religious representations of the West. We are, then, really in the realm of Dick-Read's *Phantom Voyagers*, and we will never know for sure whether the idea of Sunda westbound expansion (apart from Madagascar, which is an undisputed case) is not just a figment of the scholarly imagination. This need not worry us – exactly the same could be said for the atom, for the COVID-19 virus, for the Oedipus complex, for the rediscovery of Sumer, and for the multiple nature of the bright star Sirius. Ultimately the whole of science, however painstaking and intersubjective our methodologies, is a card house of intuitions and hypotheses mutually supporting each other, but so constructed and so remote from direct sensory observation (which Kant (1931a) has taught us to consider as deceptive anyway) that all we can aspire to is plausibility, never certainty, while the best that can happen to the scientific plausibilities of today is that they will be radically superseded by the greater plausibilities of tomorrow.

Once we realise that what we would like to call Sunda is in fact something totally different, 'Sunda', we are up against a second problem. This is best brought out by reference to one of the traits we thought we could identify as Sunda: regicide, which I briefly explored for both South Central Africa and the Mediterranean. A further step is to realise that the killing of the king is scarcely an original Sunda invention – it is another instance of Sunda recycling, for under NarCom 2 (the Reconnection of Heaven and Earth), the king and the Demiurge are among the principal forms in which this reconnection is realised; and if the Demiurge's fate is to be killed for the salvation (foremost: the daily food, the daily bread – cf. Jesus, Chihamba, Cassara, several Meso- and several North American culture heroes, etc). then it is likely that the king is also to be sacrificed – as is the central theme of Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, but also of Sabazius, Tammuz, Adonis, Osiris, Dionysus, Heracles (who is killed and dies on a pyre, but also in a context of initiation in the scenes evoked by Graves), etc. If the Egyptian king is to be turned into Osiris, this is to emulate the widespread example of Demiurges: to give his own life so that others may live and prosper. Even the South Asian (subsequently East Asian) theme of the Bodhisattva falls in this category, for rather than completing his life cycle towards Nirwana this type of saint sacrifices his life's fulfilment for the interest of others. This is all within NarCom 2, which I believe arose under CITI VI (proto-Neolithic Extended Fertile Crescent, c. 12 ka BP). Sunda shared in this NarCom 2, and no doubt helped to spread it around the globe. This means, for the specific theme of regicide, that further research is needed before we can pinpoint what exactly could have been the specific .

And before our analysis in the present book can be said to be satisfactorily con-

cluded, we will have attempted to situate in the global history of NarComs, over the 200 ka of the cultural history of Anatomically Modern Humans, all the traits now proposed as Sunda. For each such trait we have to ask ourselves whether it can be subsumed under one of the NarComs distinguished so far, or whether it prompts the definition of a new NarCom; after which we have to see how the Sunda trait constitutes a specific, and possibly innovative, application of such a NarCom. We are likely to end up with the same conclusion as chapter 12: Sunda as recycling and redistribution, but perhaps we will discover something new in the process.

### 11.5. Further theoretical and methodological observations towards Part II

So we are struck by a considerable number of striking apparent parallels when we compare the mythologies of (a) the western Old World on the one hand, (b) South East Asia and Oceania on the other hand (the cultural continuity within (b) is sufficiently indicated by the shared linguistic phylum Austric (composed of the largely continental Austroasiatic phylum and the largely insular Austronesian phylum). Such apparent East-West parallels are of great theoretical and historical significance. In the first place we need to ascertain whether they are not spurious products of our scholarly misperception. And even when we are satisfied that some of these apparent parallels have a genuine factual basis, their interpretation poses considerable problems. Are they indications of a very old, near-global mythological substrate encompassing the entire Old World (and perhaps spilling over into the New World)? Are they manifestations of recent transcontinental intrusions and borrowings, either from the West or from the East? Are they the results of such episodes of cultural, and possibly demic, expansion as have been recognised for

- (a) the Middle Palaeolithic (the Out-of-Africa migration by which Anatomically Modern Humans spread to the other continents; *cf.* Cann *et al.* 1997; Forster 2004);
- (b) from the Late Palaeolithic on: the Back-into-Africa migration, by which traits from especially South East Asia and Oceania ended up again in Africa, skirting West Asia and Europe in the process (Hammer *et al.* 1998; Coia *et al.* 2005; Cruciani *et al.* 2002; Underhill 2004); and
- (c) the Sunda westbound expansion, as postulated in recent decades by Oppenheimer (1998) / Dick-Read (2005) / Tauchman (*cf.* van Binsbergen 2019d), – in fact a special case of (b)?
- (d) Or are they merely cases illustrating the fundamental unity of humankind (and *a fortiori*, of Anatomically Modern Humans), which may be supposed to produce converging results in different regions and periods, independently and without genuine historical connections leading to such parallels as claimed?

After setting out some of the theoretical and methodological background of these questions (but most of the required background has already been presented in Part

I), I shall present three tabulated and reasoned overviews of the available data in (1) the mythological (2) the general ethnographic and (3) the analytical / historical field, after which we shall be in a position to make up our minds as to the factuality of the apparent parallels, and the probable impact, in these various cases to be considered, of the Sunda effect and the main other explanations. To strengthen the argument at the required level of analytical sophistication, we need to go into considerable detail concerning the specific mythological, cultural and historical (and hence: bibliographical) data concerned.

As a very young man I dabbled in Graeco-Roman mythology and its afterlife in modern European *belles lettres*,<sup>290</sup> and soon the study of saints' legends in North African popular religion (van Binsbergen 1971, 1980, 1985 and in prep. (h)) brought me to engage with the theory and methodology of myth analysis – shunned (as a forbidden fruit of the structuralist approach) by the Amsterdam University anthropology department where I took a first and second degree, but constituting a major link with the Leiden anthropological and Africanist environment where I soon ended up, and which was to remain my main institutional basis over the decades, until recently. It was as a Leiden Africanist that I entered, early in the new millennium, the field of comparative mythology, initially dwelling mainly on the mythological data I had collected, since 1972, among the Nkoya people of Western Zambia, South Central Africa (cf. van Binsbergen 2010a; van Binsbergen & Venbrux 2010).

When, in the early 2000s, I read the book *Eden in the East*, by the British paediatrician turned leading geneticist Stephen Oppenheimer, I had just made my entry into the New Comparative Mythology that was then emerging under the stimulating influence of the Harvard (formerly Leiden) Sanskritist Michael Witzel (2001, 2012). My attention was principally drawn to Oppenheimer's claim to the effect that the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East and the Bible World, especially those set out in the first books of *Genesis*, were not originally at home in West Asia, but should be considered transformed scraps of Sunda mythology, brought by long-range mariners fleeing their flooding homelands when all over the world the sea level was rising by 200 m as a result of the melting of the polar caps at the end of the Ice Ages. Combined with some submerged strands of a Jewish cultural ideal that formed part of my family history and of my home town, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, I was brought up as a Christian and was intimately familiar with the narrative material targeted by Oppenheimer; moreover, I had gained some specialist insight into the mythology of the Ancient Near East, and of Assyriology's and Bible Studies' modern approach to it, as a full-time member of the Working Group on Religion and Magic in the Ancient Near East, convened by the Assyriologists / Bible scholars Karel van der Toorn and Tzvi Abusch at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences, Wassenaar, 1994-1995 (cf. van Binsbergen & Wiggermann 1999). In 2006, in Beijing, I became a co-founder and director of the International Association for Comparative Mythology, and at the First Annual Meeting that organisation, in Edinburgh, Scotland,

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<sup>290</sup> For a long time, such afterlife was a cherished theme among art historians and comparative mythologists. Cf. Panofsky & Saxl 1933; Rosenberg & Baker 1984; Culianu & Cook 1987; Claes 1981.

UK, 2007, I presented an extensive critique of Oppenheimer's comparative-mythological claim. Oppenheimer, although not a member, had acquired permission to be present, and passionately defended his point of view. My paper, with the collaboration of Mark Isaak who had diligently provided the data on hundreds of Flood myths world-wide on which my quantitative argument was based, was published in 2008. I adduced extensive qualitative, methodological and especially quantitative data to prove that the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East including the Bible World did not have an original Sunda background even though, once established in Western Eurasia as cornerstones of three world religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) such mythologies may have secondarily and selectively drifted to South East Asia. An interesting serendipitous finding of my quantitative analysis was that some themes in the Flood stories might originate not in the Old World but in the New World. It was not out of emotional or religious attachment to the Biblical heritage or to European identity that I had to reject Oppenheimer's claim: his counter-hegemonic, anti-Eurocentric stance was very much my own (as is manifest from my decades of work on the *Black Athena* debate, Afrocentricity and African philosophy), and it was half a century since I had lost my Christian faith and only slightly less since I had, selectively and situationally, embraced African and Asian religious alternatives instead.

Yet, my 2007 argument on Oppenheimer was not to be the last word on the matter. Once focused on possible mythological parallels between the western Old World and South East Asia / Oceania, in subsequent years I was often struck by *many more unexpected cases*. Meanwhile Dick-Read's visionary book *The Phantom Voyagers* (2005) had convinced me that, even if Oppenheimer could be proven to be wrong in the specific case of Biblical narratives and their regional counterparts, the idea of extensive South East Asian / Oceanian cultural and demographic influence upon the Western part of the Old World including Africa increasingly appealed to me. Examples started to accumulate and demanded an explanation. As a social scientist I suspected that socio-political and economic patterns accompanied, facilitated, and perhaps caused, this parallelism, and that they might offer explanations for the puzzling situation of two parallel clusters of mythical imagination separated by half the Earth's circumference.

The aim of my argument on East-West parallels, which makes up this Part II, is relatively modest:

- (a) to document (in tabulated form) the most obvious data indicative of unexpected East-West parallels in the mythological field, and
- (b) to ascertain whether such parallels maybe explained in terms of the Sunda Hypothesis.

Thus designated, the topic brings to mind the book *East-West Parallels* (1964) by the late lamented Wim Wertheim, in the 1960s my principal teacher of South, South East and East Asian sociology and of a Marxist approach to history. The restricted nature of our present task should be clear from the fact that the merits of the Sunda Hypothesis in general are not at stake here: these have been amply argued and

demonstrated elsewhere, by Oppenheimer and Dick-Read in the first place, and also by myself in the preceding Part I and in a number of papers (van Binsbergen 2007e, 2019a,) despite my initial rejection of Oppenheimer's claims in the mythological field (van Binsbergen with Isaak 2008). Even so, the scope of the present Part II is considerable, for we shall have to investigate the possible Sunda factor in dozens of mythological, ethnographic, and historical contexts.

Admittedly a serious, conclusive explanation would require a fuller arsenal of theory, method and ethnography that I can deploy in this limited scope. Yet the present argument will achieve a considerable level of conclusiveness, and its results will be slightly disappointing for those (like Oppenheimer) seeking in the Sunda Hypothesis a major key to the understanding of modern patterns of comparative mythology at a global scale – or even, *a fortiori*, as the key to global cultural history. But they will also be extremely gratifying, for the Sunda Hypothesis will be confirmed, albeit on a rather more modest scale.

In the present analysis of my data on possible mythological parallels between Oceania / Indonesia on the one hand, and the western Old World on the other, I appeal to a number of such historical reconstructions, notably on the mythological traits set out in Tables 11.1-2.

1. the leg child	vents their children / crea-	the sea
2. a fish-like culture hero (Oannes)	tion to come forth from the womb; this	14. the cosmos is layered
3. legendary voyages, especially by sea	proto-cosmogonic condition ended in the Separation of Heaven and Earth	15. throwing stick / boomerang, and specifically its loss through a hole giving out to the Underworld (see item (a) below
4. the ogre	9. the deity (male or female) is killed and from the body food crops sprang forth	16. solar hero with miraculous works
5. the theft of fire	10. Moon is male and Sun is female	17. the invention of sails
6. the Elaborate Version (Type 3) of the Flood myth, complete with transgression, hero, warning, Ark, rainbow, and tower / bridge	11. Anti / Antaeus as a divine name	18. twins complex
7. the creation of humanity from dust or Earth	12. spider is Supreme God and creator	19. horse and sea theme
8. incessant mating between the first divine pair pre-	13. through divine intervention, land emerges from	20. quest for immortality
		21. protector gods of seamen
		22. confusion of nations and languages
		23. the Cosmic Egg

Table 11. 1. Mythical themes for the assessment of East-West parallels

Initially I had listed here as an item: 'the Sea as adversary and enemy', which is quite important in the western Old World

- Willis 1994: 51 The Ennead, with Ptah, must pay tribute to the Sea, Astarte takes it to the Sea, but Sea wants her, she is the woman of Seth, and Seth comes to do battle with the Sea [ seems relevant for Sea Peoples but also for maritime intrusion from SE Asia
- In the Ancient Near East and the Bible World, the sea (Yam, Leviathan, Tiamat, Mht-Wrd, Neith) appears as the ultimate enemy

but which does not seem to have an East, Oceanian / South East Asian counterpart – for people taking to the sea as their ultimate refuge, the sea is unlikely to be represented as a mortal enemy. I have therefore omitted this item from the Table.

In addition I shall consider a number of non-mythological ethnographic and other traits which help to put the data in relief. These are:

a. throwing stick / boomerang	h. male genital mutilation	type
b. head-hunting	i. sea gods are exceptionally prominent as a possible indication of Sunda nautical influence	n. sign systems (1)
c. megaliths		o. sign systems (2)
d. mankala	j. the honey and mead theme	p. Austric linguistic elements
e. the skull theme; feet of the deceased rest on skulls	k. dominant iconography of statuettes depicting a squatting human	q. references to a maritime power that could be Sunda related; and that, from the perspective of established ancient states and people, could appear as inimical and intrusive
f. royal court culture in which xylophone orchestra is central	l. transcontinental maritime contacts	
g. the initiation headdress is a very tall cone moulded upon head	m. possible references to South East Asian physical	

Table 11. 2. Non-mythical themes for the assessment of East-West parallels

All these traits will receive an initial, summary discussion when they appear in the three Tables below that bring together the empirical data for our interpretation of East West parallels in Sunda terms. In addition, a few traits will be specifically discussed below (chapter 12 and 13) under separate headings, where referenced distribution lists, distribution map, and tentative historical reconstruction will be given. Of course there are limits to the amount of detail and depth one can hope to achieve, with, in my present case, many other current projects waiting to be definitively published, and aging and declining health making all scholarly work a race against the clock.

### 11.5.1. *The question of contamination, especially in the context of world religions*

In the assessment of East-West parallels, with or without the aid of the Sunda Hypothesis, an important question is that of the extent of contamination (also see above), specifically by such world religions as Christianity and Islam. *E.g.* in Micronesia: the Isle of Guam was already visited in 1521 during Magellan's circumnavigation of the globe, in a time when Europeans considered the forceful propagation of their Christian faith their sacred duty. The impact of Christianity therefore would be an obvious possible explanation to explain some of the mythological parallels between Oceania and the western Old World, especially those having to do with Flood myths, and with the *Genesis* mythology in general:

Cotterell 1989:50: 'On the Gilbert Islands, for instance, the notion that death came to the world as a consequence of the first people damaging a sacred tree has clearly Christian overtones.'

However, in view of the fact that the Gilbert Isl. also have a tree goddess Ne Te-reere, the ancestress of humankind (*cf.* the NarCom 'From the Tree'), the claim of Christian contamination is rather facile and probably unjustified. But on the other hand:

Cotterell 1989: 139: 'The Biblical Flood story has clearly been entwined with both Melanesian and Polynesian legend, but there is reason to believe that the deluge myth existed in the Pacific before the arrival of Christian missionaries'

### 11.5.2. *Far-flung possibilities of Sunda influence*

While processing and analysing the available distributional data, and seeking to interpret them in Sunda terms, a number of additional problems crop up.

Are we to assume some Sunda influence upon Australia? We have to give up the thought that Australia is culturally a fossil monolith. At least three waves of immigration may be distinguished, of which only the first (Nigrito-related) is very old, c. 60 ka BP. The distance between Australia and Indonesia is slight. Although genital mutilation is widespread in Australia, it could very well be a recent phenomenon that has circulated in that continent for only a few millennia under the hypothetical influence of Sunda expansion; to my (admittedly non-specialist) knowledge there are no Australian rock paintings of patently high age which offer evidence of circumcision or subincision; *cf.* Mulvaney & White 1987; van Binsbergen 2018: 141).

There are other far-flung cases that stimulate the imagination. *E.g.* occasionally we have reason to propose that exceptional and isolated attestations of mythemes in the Americas might be attributable to transcontinental intrusion by means of sea voyages; thus for instance a case of head-hunting in Peru.

Perhaps also the following is such an isolated transcontinental case:

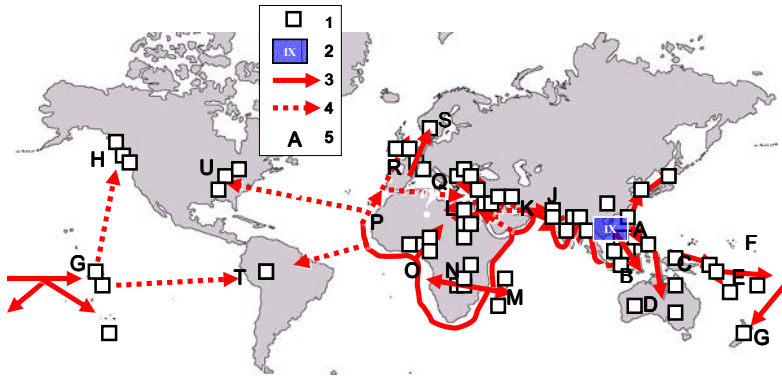
Cotterell 1989: 181: Patagonia: El-lal, hero; ogre: father, wishing to eat him, torn his from his mother's womb (*cf.* Oceania, Greece). Saved by Rat in hole. inventor of bow and arrows, killed a giant by taking the form of a gadfly; rises to Heaven on the wings of a swan....

Of course, we cannot be expected to provide ready answers for such far-flung cases. We would already be very happy if the bulk of the material can be interpreted in terms of the applicability, or not, of the Sunda Hypothesis. For that purpose I have ordered in data into three extensive Tables, on which our analysis and assessment I will soon concentrate.

### 11.6. *Tempting apparent East-West parallels inviting interpretation in terms of the Sunda Hypothesis*

The apparent East-West parallels are rather numerous, and if they could be interpreted in a Sunda light, they would give the Sunda Hypothesis a considerable boost. Here I am thinking particularly of many mythemes, listed in the table, that are not specifically mentioned by Oppenheimer, but that are yet combining attestations in both the western Old World and South East Asia / Oceania.

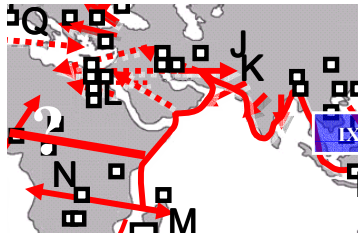




1. any of the traits 1-22 (fictive examples for demonstration purposes only)
  2. CITI IX, Sunda, c. 6 ka BP
  3. possible Sunda transmission of these traits across the globe
  4. even more conjectural Sunda transmission than the rest of the proposal:
  5. region possibly Sunda or affected by Sunda influence:
- |                              |                                      |   |   |   |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| A: Taiwan                    | Coast cultures (including the Nkoya) | O: Bight of Benin, Nigeria, Cameroonian Western Grassfields | Q: Mediterranean (> Aegean, Crete)                | Isles   |
| B: Indonesia                 | J: Indus civilisation                | P: West Africa including Bijagos and                        | R: Western European coast, North Sea, and British | S: Scandinavia and Baltic Sea                             |
| C: New Guinea                | K: Persian Gulf, Sumer, Dilmun       |   |   | T: Incas, Peru  |
| D: Australia                 | L: Ancient Egypt                     |   |   | U: Northeastern America, including Algonquians (> Ojibwa) |
| E: Melanesia                 | M: Madagascar                        |   |   |   |
| F: Micronesia                | N: South Central Africa              |   |   |   |
| G: Polynesia                 |                                      |   |   |   |
| H: North American North West |                                      |   |   |   |

Fig. 11.5. Suppose Oppenheimer's Sunda Hypothesis could explain all East-West parallels under consideration in the present argument

A crucial section of the previous map is between the Indus Valley and Ancient Egypt – for it is on this part of the Old World that we have the oldest documentary data, and that major innovations in cultural history have been attested (the emergence of writing, the state, organised religion, and proto-science):



legend: as previous Figure

Fig. 11.6. A crucial region in the assessment of the Sunda Hypothesis: the Ancient World between the Nile and the Indus



Fig. 11.7. Cosmogonic reed...: The reed-dominated human environment of Southern Mesopotamia today

*11.7. Tabulated presentation of the principal data suggestive of East-West mythological parallels*

*11.7.1. The principal mythological data on East-West parallels*

A. theme	B. SE Asia, Oceania	C. Europe and West Asia	D. Africa	comments, especially concerning the place of this mytheme in the 'NarCom overview and implications for East-West parallels (N.B. Sunda could be Proto-Pelagian)	summary interpretation: Sunda effect ?
1. leg child		see van Binsbergen 2020f			VERY UNLIKELY
2. fishlike culture hero	South Asia: Matsya as Vishnu avatar saving Manu in Flood)	Cannes, Dagon, Enki / Ea	Mami Wata is fish-shaped	the entire complex may be interpreted as a manifestation of Sunda influence, although it could also be attributed to a West Asian epicentre in its own right	POSSIBLE
3. legendary voyages, especially by sea	travels of Maui? traditions of strangers arriving from overseas?	Gilgamesh Argonauts Odyssey Aeneid St Brendan; Dilman Cottrell 1989: 145: Osiris as culture hero: he abolished cannibalism and taught weaving. Then Osiris left his land to civilise the world (cf. Osiris as culture hero). Also Dionysus went out to make war, notably to India, and could be considered a culture hero – invention of alcoholic drink		long-distance sea voyages became an aspect of the mythology of Western Eurasia in the Early Bronze age, when Sunda (which in itself catalyzed such voyages) had presumably been in effect for nearly half a dozen millennia. We may attribute this complex to an original West Asian epicentre, or to the Western effects of Sunda	POSSIBLE
4. ogre		see van Binsbergen 2020g			LIMITED
5. theft of fire <i>cf.</i> Ions 1980: 293:	Maui, a Polynesian culture hero Malay peninsula: Willis 1994: 304 a Prometheus-like myth from hunter-gatherers of Malaysia: the origin of fire and night among the Chewong people: a boy loses his knife through a hole to the Underworld   <i>cf.</i> Gilgamesh; throwing	Prometheus, in a rathlex (reed)		this is a common mytheme in North and Meso America, South Asia, Western Eurasia, and Oceania; <i>cf.</i> Anonymus, ' theft of fire'. Although its apparent absence from South America is remarkable, and although the mytheme was not initially singled out by me as belonging to Pandora's Box, this is	VERY UNLIKELY

<p>6. specific Type 3 Flood stories, complete with transgression, hero, warning, Ark, rainbow, and tower/bridge</p> <p>van Binsbergen 2010b</p> <p>van Binsbergen with Isak, 2008</p> <p>van Binsbergen &amp; Woudhuizen 2011: chapter 6</p> <p>POSSIBLY A TRANSFORMATION OF NARCOM 11</p> <p>but we must be careful. Cotterell 1989: 225. Sberan hero Nani, Flood + ark, also god of underworld – Ahaia: I so it looks as if Sunda influence in spreading this specific Flood story was not confined to courtesans on the sea side; alternatively, there was no Sunda element involved here</p>	<p>stick / boomerang; there he descends and learns about night and fire, he brings back fire in a bamboo [cf. Prometheus, in a reed, narhex]</p> <p>Oceania. SE Asia. Cotterell 1989: 235. Rokola. Fijian more or less Neath a builder of boats</p> <p>another parallel between West Asian (specifically Egyptian) and SE Asian / Oceania myth is that the Flood followed brother / sister incest; in Oceania myth it is specifically the first woman who constructs the genitals of the first man, from natural materials</p> <p>Gavendish c.s. 1991: 281 punishment for early Brother-Sister incest is an important theme in Melanesian (including New Guinea) mythology.</p> <p>Cotterell 1989: 139; also in Hawaii: Nui, as another Neath; Flood, mountain, rainbow, same on Bank Isl (Melanesia, where Nui = Qat</p>	<p><i>Bible</i> (<i>Genesis 5 f</i>)</p> <p>Deukalion and Pyrrha (not the complete Flood-myth package) (Ovid, Metamorphoses)</p>	<p>some African attestations</p> <p>van Binsbergen 2008a</p> <p>Flood myths in Africa</p> <p>There is a major Ancient Egyptian Flood story recorded as the Book of the Heavenly Cow on the walls of several royal tombs, but the destruction remains incomplete due to a miss, and there is no Flood hero to be salvaged</p>	<p>where I now think it should be added, which means that the theme is too old and too universal to be attributed to either Pelagian or Sunda.</p> <p>POSSIBLY</p> <p>Flood stories may be reconstructed to emerge by the Late Palaeolithic, some 20 ka BP. The elaborate type of Flood story was only attested in the Early Bronze Age, and may or may not have been a transformation under Sunda impact but more likely Pelagian transmission. The discovery of sexuality as a rationalisation is not evidently Ancient Isrealite (yet cf. Sodom and Gomorah, <i>Genesis 13</i>) but appears in some early Christian writers. It is marked in Occanian versions, perhaps because the Elaborate type of Flood story failed from there? as Oppenheimer claimed, 1998 and <i>pace</i> my own criticism of him? I tend to the view that Sunda expansion did play a role (relatively late, ca. 5 ka BCE) in the transmission of Flood stories to the ANE, and Egypt – after all, Egypt is recognised to have undergone considerable cultural and political influence from Sumner in Late Prehistoric times; and Sumner may be surmised to have undergone Sunda impact</p>	<p>UNLIKELY</p>
<p>7. humankind created from Earth / dust / clay</p> <p>cf NARCOM 10: -From the Earth</p> <p>also South American. Inca (Viracocha)</p>	<p>South East Asia;</p> <p>China: Willis 1994: 91 just like Oceanian gods. Nu Wa created humans from mud, she closed the hole in Heaven through which fire and water came down, and she installed the tortoise to carry Heaven.</p> <p>Willis 1994: 22 SE Asia: creator god makes first humans from Earth (cf Bible), and</p>	<p><i>Genesis 2:7</i></p> <p>Quran 23:12 f</p> <p>Ancient Egypt (Hnum, god in the shape of a potter)</p> <p>Edda</p> <p>Prometheus (Apollodorus)</p>	<p>Okinawa (Yondu)</p>	<p>The Earth as primary is a very old NearCont. in Pardon's Box. The global distribution does not strongly suggest Sunda expansion, despite Oppenheimer's claim that <i>Genesis</i> mythology (including creation from dust) came from South East Asia</p>	<p>UNLIKELY</p>

<p>8. incessant mating between the first divine pair prevents their children/creation to come forth from the womb; this proto-cosmogonic condition ended in the Separation of Heaven and Earth</p> <p>This mytheme is possibly a transformation of the ogre theme, NARCOM 6: any birth is escape from a confined space....</p>	<p>breathes life into them; Hawaii; Maori</p>	<p>Sumer Babylonia Pawati creating Ganesh</p>	<p>Oudiniwa and Obatala (Yoruba, Benin / Nigeria) (Schubert 2000) Shu (fertility) separates chthonic Geb and celestial Nut, who were twins and already in the womb had sexual intercourse</p>	<p>In many cosmogonies worldwide the separation of opposites is the moment of cosmogony; the specific version to concretise this as the incessant intercourse of Heaven and Earth, and their forced Separation so that reality could come into being is a rather predictable elaboration of this general idea ( Leeming c.s. 1995). Yet given the enormous variation, even when metaphors from the human body are being used, it is likely that the various regions displaying this myth are historically connected. Interesting is the attestation in Nigeria. Hutton (1946) sees Nigeria as the recipient of considerable Sunda influence, including head-hunting. In that light the explanation for the Oceanian / Aegean parallels may be Sunda rather than Pelagian. Given the Egyptian narrative of Geb and Nut it is quite possible that ultimately also the Oceanian version derives from Ancient Egypt, but equally that Egyptian attestation is ultimately Sunda-derived</p>	<p>FAIRLY PROBABLE</p>
<p>Oceania; Willis 1994: 294; Polynesia (including Maori): Heaven and Earth were driven apart so that their children could be freed from their mother's womb</p> <p>Cotterell 1989: 164 Polynesia: the children of Rangī (Heaven) and Papa (Earth) were trapped in the womb of the earth goddess until Rangī was pushed upward by the forest god Tane-mahuta to form the sky; – cf. Kronos / Gaia ];</p> <p>Cotterell 1989: 148; the Separation of Heaven and Earth; Maori, also Hawaii, pushed apart by their son Tanemahuta</p> <p>Cotterell 1989: 241; Maori: Tane-mahuta, Lord of the forests, son of Heaven and Earth, pushes them apart;</p> <p>Cotterell 1989: 242; Tachin-wa-kea, Maori, stormgod, son of Heaven and Earth, tried in vain to prevent the Separation of Heaven and Earth;</p> <p>Cotterell 1989: 244; Maori: Papa and Rangī, so tightly coupled that their children could not break from the darkness of the womb</p>	<p>Willis 1994: 42; / Hesiod: Uranos and Gaia were mating so incessantly that Gaia's children could not leave the womb; hence Kronos needed to separate his parents by emasculating Uranos – thus effectively separating Heaven and Earth; so that Kronos = Shu. These images are also widespread in the Pacific ( Maori, Tuamotu Isl, Hawaii, Tahiti ),</p>	<p>Odudiniwa and Obatala (Yoruba, Benin / Nigeria) (Schubert 2000) Shu (fertility) separates chthonic Geb and celestial Nut, who were twins and already in the womb had sexual intercourse</p>	<p>In many cosmogonies worldwide the separation of opposites is the moment of cosmogony; the specific version to concretise this as the incessant intercourse of Heaven and Earth, and their forced Separation so that reality could come into being is a rather predictable elaboration of this general idea ( Leeming c.s. 1995). Yet given the enormous variation, even when metaphors from the human body are being used, it is likely that the various regions displaying this myth are historically connected. Interesting is the attestation in Nigeria. Hutton (1946) sees Nigeria as the recipient of considerable Sunda influence, including head-hunting. In that light the explanation for the Oceanian / Aegean parallels may be Sunda rather than Pelagian. Given the Egyptian narrative of Geb and Nut it is quite possible that ultimately also the Oceanian version derives from Ancient Egypt, but equally that Egyptian attestation is ultimately Sunda-derived</p>	<p>FAIRLY PROBABLE</p>	

<p><b>9. deity (male or female) is killed and from the body crops sprang forth / or even the entire world</b></p>	<p>Willis 1994: 117 both in Japan and in Indonesia we have the myth (perhaps after a SE Asian prototype) of a goddess who was killed and from whose body food crops sprouted. Japan = Ogetsu, Indonesian = Hanuwele; Gilbert Isl also have a tree goddess Ne Te-reere, the ancestress of humankind (from the tree ) Chinese P'an Ku 盤古 is also a case in point. Blazek 2010 sees here a West Eurasian origin</p>	<p>Dionysus, Aegean (killed by the Titans); Osiris, Egypt (killed by Set); N.B. an Austic etymology of the name Osiris is within reach Tammuz, Adonis I already made a table of possible Austic etymologies of Osiris / Wsr 𓂏𓅓 and other pivotal names in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean (van Binsbergen &amp; Woudhuizen 2011; also in the present monograph)</p>	<p>This is a very much wider theme than Oceania and Western Eurasia alone. Especially the Hanuwele theme, first introduced by Jensen (1939/ 1978), has given rise to a voluminous literature covering the comparative literature of the entire world – including North America The scholarly designation of this my theme as Hanuwele, by an East Indonesian name, is in itself of course not sufficient reason to attribute the spread of this theme to Sunda expansion. However, we have the same dilemma that has arisen several times in this monograph, both a West Asian and a Sunda origin could be contemplated as explanation for the global distribution, but with the distinct possibility that the West Asian epicentre may ultimately turn out to be Sunda-derived.</p>	<p>POSSIBLY BUT NOT VERY CONVINCING</p>
<p><b>10. Moon is male and Sun is female</b></p>	<p>Oceania Also Metevelis (in the wake of Okuyashu (e.g. 1960) and Frobenius 1923) recognise an ancient Eurasian cultural substrate – surfacing sporadically in South and East Asia – where Sun is female and Moon male</p>	<p>Ancient Crete; Nordic female gender for the Sun is an undocument throughout Indo-European – but not in the Ancient Near East nor in Ancient Egypt (Dexler 1984) Rappengluck, 2005 believes that the well-known Japanese myth of the Sun goddess Amaterasu temporarily hidden in a cave and coaxed by lewd dancing to come out, has a far wider application in space and time. He is right: the theme of the hidden Sun is important in comparative mythology</p>	<p>An ancient cultural substrate throughout Eurasia attributes female gender to the Sun. It may secondarily have been spread under Sunda impact but seems much older, while West Asia and Egypt in many other respects function as credible end stations of Sunda impact, in these parts of Western Eurasia the Sun is generally considered to be male</p>	<p>POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY</p>

11. Anti / Antaios as a divine name	see chapter 13			POSSIBLY BUT UNLIKELY
12. spider is Supreme God and creator	van Buisbergen 2020d			VERY UNLIKELY
13. through divine intervention, land emerges from the sea	Willis 1994: 297: Maui (Maori, New Zealand) pulls the land out of the sea	Willis 1994: 199: Thor fishes with giant Hymir for world snake [ in West Asian / European tradition, land may be made from body parts of deflated sea monster, e.g. Tinnat, Hymir ]	In the Upper Paleolithic in the Old World, two major cosmogonies seem to have followed each other: first that of the Separation of Water and Land, with a horizontal perspective on the world, soon (after c. 5 ka) followed by the cosmogony of the Separation of Heaven and Earth. The fishing of the land is, like the Earth Diver, a specific application of the cosmogony of the Separation of Water and Land, and needs no Sunda transmission to be encountered transcontinentally. The Earth Diver myth is an ancient cosmogony found throughout the Northern circumpolar region world, and a prototype for the fishing up of land mytheme	UNLIKELY
14. the cosmos is layered	Willis 1994: 303 Central in SE Asia is the idea of a layered cosmos, up to 5 to 7 layers	Heaven / Earth / Underworld, in Aegean and Nordic world view	NB: this is a very old (> 20 ka) shamanic theme and has far wider distribution than Western Eurasian and Oceania alone. Far too old to be principally distributed via Pelagian or Sunda transmission	UNLIKELY
15. throwing stick / boomerang, and specifically its loss through a hole giving out to the Underworld	see chapter 13			UNLIKELY
16. solar hero with miraculous works	Maui (New Zealand)	Herakles Cú Chulainn (Ireland)	There was a time when comparative mythology, especially at the instigation of Max Müller, believed to perceive solar heroes in all periods and regions, making them the corner stone of world mythology (Dorsón 1955; Carroll 1985; Littledale 1985).	LIMITED AND SECONDARY

<p><b>17. the invention of sails</b></p>	<p>Oceanian culture hero: Cotterell 1989: 230: Pakaá in Hawaii, cf. Daedalus / Crete: alleged inventor of the sail, Sunda?</p>	<p>Daedalus (Pausanias, XI)</p>		<p>There is a considerable puzzle here: in the Western Old World, solar gods are not absent, but they usually occupy a subaltern place in the pantheon: not so Ra (Ancient Egypt) and Slemesh (Ancient Mesopotamia), however, but certainly so in Graeco-Roman and Germanic mythology. The prominence of Nyambi in West and Central Africa as potentially a solar god (spider related), does not preclude the ambivalent attitude of Africans towards the Sun: perhaps because of its excessive heat, it tends to be shunned as well as venerated. Nyambi appears to be related to the cultivation of yams, with the remote possibility of a Sunda background. In North America, meanwhile, the Sun cult is conspicuous and central. I take it that there is a very ancient (Upper Palaeolithic, or older) substrate worldview in which the Sun and the Moon play a major role, but (contrary to the Moon) the Sun does not even qualify, on the basis of comparative data, to be counted as belonging to Pandora's Box mythology. I do not rule out the possibility that Sunda was instrumental in spreading and / or reinforcing solar cults, but apparently upon a much older substrate.</p>	<p>POSSIBLY BUT INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE</p>
				<p>The oldest archaeological attestation of sails is from Rummia / Ukmira / and Iraq , 6th mill BCE. Both in space and in time this is not incompatible with the hypothesis of sails as a Sunda in vention in the Early Holocene, nor with more or less Pelsagian transmission to South East Asia in the Neolithic.</p>	



<p><b>18. twins complex</b></p> <p>I listed (2006a) twins as one of the basic Narrative Complexes of global comparative mythology (2006) but could not bring myself to situate twins in Pradon's Box – instead I opted for the relatively late CIII-VII (Neolithic or Bronze Age)</p>	<p>Australia : twin lizards equivalents of Castor and Pollux (alpha and beta Gemini) ; also the Pleiades are included in this narrative</p> <p>Melanesia: twin brothers: To Kabirana and To Karuvuv, of which the latter is notorious for his stupidity, deeds with disastrous consequences</p> <p>Cottarell 1989: 95, twins, see index: fits again entirely in the Sunda pattern. 1989: 50 (New Hebrides twins) ; 1989: 170 (Melnesia: To-Kabirana and To Karuvuv – the latter notorious for his stupid deeds with disastrous consequences) and moreover Egyptian, Fon, Gwek, Hindu, Iminian, Polynesian, Roman, Scandinavian ;</p>	<p>Dioscuri; Asvins Esau and Jacob (Bible, Genesis) Romulus and Remus Apollo and Artemis Alarinn and Alurn Mazda Helena and Chytemestia Amphion and Zethus (founders of Thebe) Menclauns and Agamemnon</p>	<p>Worldwide, about 1 in every 80 human births produces twins. Twins have special social and ritual significance all over the world, there is no reason to see the Oceanian stories as more original than those in the Western Eurasia. Yet considering the conjectured dating of this trait, Sunda may have been instrumental in further spreading the twins complex – <i>a fortiori</i> so because in South Central and West Africa the cult of twins is especially found in regions – such as the East-West corridor from Mozambique to Angola, where also the Nkoya and Yaka are found</p>	<p>POSSIBLY</p>
<p><b>19. the horse and sea theme</b></p>	<p>see chapter 13</p>			<p>POSSIBLY BUT UNLIKELY</p>
<p><b>20. quest for immortality</b> <i>cf.</i> Anonymus, List of people claimed to be immortal</p>	<p>in the Marshall Islands the creator god Loan produces from leg. e.g. hero Edao, whose concern for mortality comes very close to that of Gilgamesh</p>	<p>Gilgamesh; (failed) in his quest Herakles (ended up immortal) Glaukos Qin Shi Huang, the first historic emperor of China (3rd c. BCE) (failed)</p>	<p>Mythical narratives of quests for immortality appear to be largely confined to literate cultures, where the philosophical problem of death may be more articulate (Anon. mus. List of...). Yet all people die regardless of literacy, and most people prefer a longer life. I submit that the one case from the Marshall Islands is probably a distant echo from the Eurasian continent, having reached Oceania by Palaeogian transmission, and not an authentic Sunda input spread globally.</p>	<p>UNLIKELY BUT POSSIBLE</p>
<p><b>21. protector gods of seamen</b></p>	<p>Cottarell 1989: 165: Tuan; Tibet / North India: mistress of boats Tibet, evenens lctayrouwe van pacifier of the waters; she ended up as Tibetan goddess, ancestress of all</p>	<p>Cottarell 1989: 240: Si Mary, als Stella Marys – Tam, Zuid Azië en Tibet, evenens lctayrouwe van zeeleiden (this is strongly)</p>	<p>Just as in the 'horse and sea theme', item 19 in this Table (which may have the same background, after all) we have here the puzzling situation of maritime protective</p>	<p>POSSIBLY</p>

Table 11.3. Apparent mythological parallels between Western Eurasia and Oceania / Indonesia, an attempt to interpret each case in terms of the Sunda Hypothesis

### 11.7.2. Corroborative evidence regarding non-mythical parallels

At this point, we widen our analysis to include, in addition to the mythological themes considered above, also non-mythical parallels between Oceania / Indonesia on the one hand, and the western Old World on the other. The following table offers a listing and discussion of the most promising cases.

A. theme	B. SE. Asia, Oceania	C. Europe and West Asia	D. Africa	comments, especially concerning the place of this mytheme in the NatCom (=NatCom) overview, and implications for East-West parallels (N.B.Sunda could be Proto-Pelagian)	overall Sunda interpretation: + / ? / -
1. head-hunting		see chapter 12			YES BUT LIMITED
2. megaliths		see chapter 13			POSSIBLY BUT LIMITED
3. mankala		cf. van Binsbergen 1997/c reprinted 2011, 2012f, 2012a			CONSIDERABLY
4. skull theme: feet of the deceased rest on skulls	in burial, feet of the deceased rest on skulls; this is an iconographic convention from the Marquesas Isl, deep into Oceania; Ions 1980: 294		in burial, feet of the deceased rest on skulls; Nkoya and Ila (author's field notes)	all human bodies include a skull which may be incorporated in cultural practices and representations; so the skull theme is inevitably world-wide. See my discussion of head-hunting in chapter 12. However, Nkoya and Ila are recognised populations for considerable Sunda impact, even though deeply in the African interior	POSSIBLY
5. royal court culture: in which xylophone orchestra is central	Indonesia, South and South East Asia		Nkoya on Ila, and much of Western Zambia, but with extensions all over Niangongo speaking Africa	cf. van Binsbergen 1992, 2000 and in press (b); for the African attestations of bonglass drum, the xylophone, and the gong a Sunda impact turns out to be a sensible conclusion	LARGELY CONFIRMED
6. initiation headress very tall cone (hair-slay) moulded upon head	Melanesia		Nkoya and Ila,	too few cases to reliably interpret possible Sunda effect (most likely), or coincidence, or persistence of Upper Palaeolithic initiation trait	DIFFICULT TO DECIDE
7. male genital mutilation		see chapter 13			POSSIBLY



8. honey and mead theme	mead central cultural theme in Madagascar (Beaujard 1994)	Neith, <i>nswt-hwt</i>   bee central also on Crete (Woudhuizen 2011) mead central Germanic, Celtic and Irish cultural theme Cotterell 1989: 246. Varuni or Mada [ <i>cf.</i> mead, mead ] : Indian god of intoxication, emerging at the churning of the sea <i>cf. soma</i> in the South Asian context	mead central cultural theme in SC Africa	The honey bee was originally domesticated in South and East Asia, but apiculture has a long history also in Western Eurasia. Wild honey already played a role in the Lower Palaeolithic in Africa (Reichholf 1991: 224, 243 f.). In South Central Africa, the infatuation with mead may have a Sunda background, but (since it is particularly court-related, especially among the Nkoya) it is more likely to be an echo of Indo-European / Indian practices. Mead-related traits among Ancient Hittites, Celts, Germans, could conceivably be attributed to these people being situated at the Western end of the proposed Sunda trajectory, yet apiculture seems to be rather older than Sunda	POSSIBLY BUT SOMEWHAT UNLIKELY
9. dominant iconography of statuettes depicting a squatting human	yes	yes	yes	Lommel 1976	PROBABLY
10. the trumpet	see chapter on additional relevant traits				POSSIBLY

Table 11.4. Corroborative evidence for possible Sunda effects from non-mythical parallels

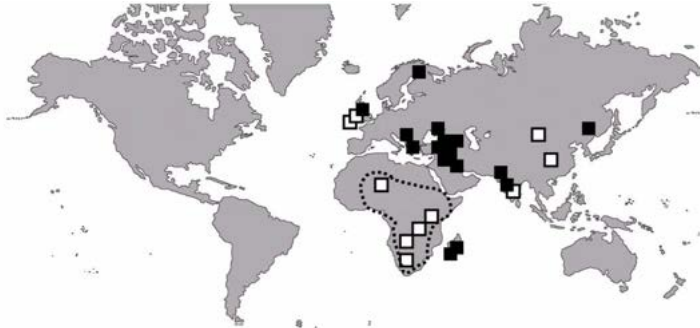
At this point it is relevant to consider a wider set of indicators which are not culturally embedded but only exist at the analytical level, popping up under the analyst's observing eye.

A. theme	B. SE Asia, Oceania	C. Europe and West Asia	D. Africa	comments, especially concerning the place of this mytheme in the NarCom (=NarCom) overview, and implications for East-West parallels (also taking into account the possibility that Sunda could be Proto-Pekabgian)	overall Sunda impact
1. transoceanic maritime contacts	see the entire present monograph, and especially the last few chapters			LIMITED	LIMITED
2. possible references to South East Asian physical type	<p>Willis 1994: 289: both in Micronesia (Gilbert / Marshall Isl.) and in Polynesia (Hawai, Samoa etc.) emphasis in myths is on the arrival of strangers from overseas [ this looks like an Eurocentric argument to enable us to explain East-West parallels as diffusion from an epicentre in the Western Eurasia, and not one in Eastern Eurasia; however, Melanesia was only populated from Taiwan or Indonesia, 2000-2000 BCE; after which followed, gradually, the peopling of Oceania, until by 1000-1300 CE all major Polynesian islands were populated. This time scale suggests that Oceania cannot readily have been a source of East-West parallel themes in Western Eurasia, some of which were already attested in the Bronze Age. However, Oppenheimer's claim focuses not on Oceania but on Indonesia, and then the recent nature of the peopling of Oceania is immaterial</p>	<p>Cotterell 1989: 241: Takes many of his (givenly Zoro to Europa to grand Cret; he traded rocks at the Argonauts; he was killed by Peers with a narrow; Takes could have been a deserted memory of brass-coloured navigators from South East Asia reaching the Aegean</p> <p>Willis 1994: 181: overview of the alleged invaders in mythical Ireland: <i>The Book of the Congress of Ireland</i> or <i>The Book of Leabhar</i>, including Partholon, descendant of Aephestos of North, 300 years after Flood; his enemies are the Fionnians; descendants of Hanson of Neak, so by traditional implication dark-skinned; They are supposed to have only one leg; and one arm; can count as another manifestation of 'Lowe'</p>	<p>Other, more current interpretations of the Fionnians; Fionnians; Africa; or Fionnians (cf. Totten 1903) are in terms of 'Hamitic' [ i.e. Afroasiatic-speaking]; African or Iberian overseas immigrants; but this does not entirely preclude a Sunda connection; when I started to consider possible Sunda impact on Western Eurasia reckoned with the possibility of Sunda penetrating the Mediterranean, the British Isles, Scandinavia, and possibly the Baltic Sea</p>	<p>Other, more current interpretations of the Fionnians; Fionnians; Africa; or Fionnians (cf. Totten 1903) are in terms of 'Hamitic' [ i.e. Afroasiatic-speaking]; African or Iberian overseas immigrants; but this does not entirely preclude a Sunda connection; when I started to consider possible Sunda impact on Western Eurasia reckoned with the possibility of Sunda penetrating the Mediterranean, the British Isles, Scandinavia, and possibly the Baltic Sea</p>	UNLIKELY
3. sign systems (1) megaliths				de Jonge & Haverf 1996: Bronze-Age megalithic navigational systems?	POSSIBLY BUT NEEDS FURTHER

	see chapter 13	PROOF UNCON- VINCING  UNLIKELY
4. sign systems (2) Rapanui/ Indus		
5. Austric linguistic elements	<p>plausible Austric etymology for the name 'Osiris' and several other pivotal names in the Bronze Age Mediterranean; for Niah and other Bornean etymologies appear to be more convincing) (van Binsbergen &amp; Woudhuizen 2011)</p>	<p>argued in length for Indo-European by Pedersen n.d. (but may be due to common origin of both Indo-European and Austric in *Borean)</p> <p>Belonging to the Peripheral Branch of desintegrating *Borean Austric elements identified in the Central or Continental Branch, such as Indo-European, would stand out as alien intrusions; but the time scale would situate such effects in the Upper Palaeolithic, way before the proposed date of Sunda expansion</p>
6. references to a maritime power that could be Sunda related; and that, from the perspective of established ancient states and people, could appear as inimical and intrusive	<p>Willis 1994: 51 The Emead + Peah, must pay tribute to the Sea, Asente takes it to the Sea, but Sea wants her, she is the woman of Seth, and Seth comes to do battle with the Sea, possibly relevant for Late Bronze-Age Sea Peoples and also for maritime intrusion from South East Asia</p> <p>Plato's Atlantis (Plato 1975: <i>Timaeus, Critias</i>)</p> <p>Kaest 1931: Leleges etc. in Aegean; also on basis of the <i>Eusebius Chronicle</i>: succession of thalassocrasies</p>	<p>connotations of alienness adhere to some of the notorious pirate peoples of Antiquity, such as the Leleges, and the Carians. The hypothesis of Sunda impact entering Europe via the Persian Gulf (cf. Phoenicians) and the Red Sea is based on nothing but fragments of circumstantial evidence, yet may be retained for further testing</p>

Table 11.5. Objective, non-cultural indicators of possible Sunda effects

In these Tables, mention is made of the *Luwe* mythical character. *Luwe* is the generic name adopted in the scholarly literature for a widespread mythical figure whose main characteristic is that it is *unilateral*: it has only one side to its body. Its world-wide distribution was extensively discussed by the Swedish comparative religionist and Zimbabwe ethnographer Harold von Sicard (1968-1969). Among related studies (also cf. van Binsbergen 2010b) I mention Schoffeleers 1991. As Schoffeleers has indicated, the mytheme of the unilateral being reflects on fundamental existential dilemmas of the human existence; in the West, the philosophical antecedents of this problem go back at least to Plato, and they have been explored with reference to more recent philosophers (Hegel, Levinas) by Steffen 2013. *Luwe* beliefs also occur prominently among the Nkoya people of Zambia, and throughout South Central and Southern Africa, and I have interpreted them in the context of comparative mythology world-wide (van Binsbergen 2010a; where also a global distribution map is given). My distributional analysis suggests that *Luwe* beliefs are part of the Pelasgian culture complex, which especially after the Late Bronze Age spread in all directions, and potentially world-wide (van Binsbergen 2010b). Since there are no major attestations of the mytheme in the Indo-Pacific region nor in Oceania, the distribution could scarcely be attributed to Sunda impact, and need not be considered in our analysis of mythological East-West parallels.



Source: van Binsbergen 2010b, cf. 2010a, with extensive references

- von Sicard's (1968-1969) attestations of the unilateral figure outside Africa
- attestation of the unilateral figure from other sources than von Sicard 1968-1968;
- ⊙ generalised extent of von Sicard's numerous African attestations of the unilateral figure

Fig. 11.8. Global distribution of the belief in a unilateral mythical being ('*Luwe*')

Whereas most of the relevant comparative data have been pressed into the preceding three Tables, in some cases a much more comprehensive discussion is available and required, where a mytheme is introduced in its comparative context, and extensive references are given to back up the distribution maps and the historical reconstructions based upon the latter. Therefore I have devoted a separate chapter (12) to head-hunting and another (13) to some of the remaining mythemes and non-mythical comparative themes.

# Chapter 12. Head-hunting: From global distribution of traits to conjectural global cultural history

## A methodological and theoretical exercise

### *12.1. Introduction: Possible Sunda connotations of head-hunting*

Death / killing and the human head are both obvious foci of ritual actions and conceptualisation, so it is not impossible that head-hunting (as the combination of both) has been a parallel invention in various periods and regions. Extensive sources on head-hunting practices are listed below. A look at the global distribution map suggests, with the exception of South America, that the distribution is amazingly well interpretable in terms of the General Sunda Hypothesis. Head-hunting is one of the cultural traits that display East-West parallels, and therefore relevant for the present Part II of this book. I have an ulterior reason to include this discussion here: it invites me to discuss many aspects of method, illuminating the complex and contentious procedure that allows us to proceed from the sheer contemplation of the global distribution pattern of a trait, to a provisional historical reconstruction. We need a specific case on which to demonstrate these procedures, and that is why, of all the many traits that

display East-West parallels, head-hunting has to be one of the few that receive a detailed discussion and a chapter of its own here.

My point of departure is the global distribution of head-hunting and other cultural practices-relating to the human skull. After setting out the reasons to revive this apparently obsolete and antiquarian topic and pointing out its heuristic value for the construction of long-range cultural pre- and proto-history, I present the worldwide distributional data and their bibliographical background, arranging the data into three major categories: head-hunting (purposeful violent acquisition of human skulls), the skull complex (practices after acquisition), and (as significant subset of the latter) drinking from skulls. The transition from distribution to conjectural world history of these traits is informed by a number of explicit underlying hypotheses, whose bibliographical background is briefly outlined and which are, in turn, also secondarily underpinned by the outcomes of the present analysis. These hypotheses are:

- (a) the Out-of-Africa Hypothesis;
- (b) the Back-to-Africa Hypothesis;
- (c) the Oppenheimer-Tauchmann-Dick-Read 'Sunda' Hypothesis, stressing widespread demic and cultural diffusion resulting from the flooding of South East Asia at the onset of the Holocene;
- (d) the Pelasgian Hypothesis, stipulating a South West Asian Neolithic origin, subsequent Westbound spread and transformation into the Mediterranean during the Bronze Age, to be followed by transmission into the four directions (Mediterranean and Western Europe, possibly with Trans-Atlantic extensions; Northbound to Central and Northern Europe; Eastbound across the Steppe Belt to East and South Asia and beyond, to South East Asia, Oceania, perhaps even the New World; and Southbound into Africa) from the Late Bronze Age on.

Next I set out a set of more than ten rules of thumb that are to govern the transition from global distribution to conjectural world history; the most important among these are:

1. diffusion takes precedence over parallel invention,
2. the technological feasibility of global diffusion since Middle Palaeolithic times, and
3. the multicentred, multidirectional nature of that process.

On this basis, the three distributions of our skull-related traits may be convincingly understood as sustained historic processes.

4. The Pelasgian Hypothesis is shown to account fairly well for the distribution of 'drinking from skulls' and the 'skull complex' in general – as it has been shown to account for a great many other trait distributions discussed in de-



tail elsewhere. For head-hunting in the narrower sense the Pelasgian Hypothesis might be invoked as well, but in fact

5. a more satisfactory model turns out a *combination of a Pelasgian and a Sunda model*.

Thus, beyond the specifics of skull-related practices (which despite the recent reviving of decapitation in the context of militant Islamism could be considered to be of only limited specialist interest) the present argument is particularly interesting as a theoretical and methodological exercise towards the construction of long-range cultural pre- and proto-history on a global scale.



source: Cavaille 2014

Fig. 12.1. A Dayak head-hunter under his trophy tree, Borneo, Malaysia

‘Cross-cultural’ or intercultural comparison has been a constant aspect of my research ever since my first published monograph, *Religious change in Zambia* (1981a) – where I tried to reconstruct the most recent half millennium of South Central African religious history, mainly a pre-literacy period that produced no local records, by a close reading of disparate ethnographic data and the tracing of ethnographic distributions, against the available external sources as well as against an elaborate innovative Marxist / materialist theoretical framework informed by the paradigm of the articulation of modes of production. In more recent decades, I have combined the methods pioneered then with the techniques of proto-historical reconstruction which I first employed in the analysis of my first fieldwork (1968 and 1970, on oral history and popular religion in the highlands of North-Western Tunisia), and such linguistic and statistical methods circulating in the newly revived field of compara-

tive mythology. Gradually, taking some distance from that neo-Marxist framework and exploring alternative theoretical perspectives, an approach emerged where long-range conjectural history of mythemes, other ethnographic traits, and the associated social, ethnic and political social formations, was written on the basis of global distributions in combination with a handful of explicit, overarching hypotheses concerning global cultural history since the Middle Palaeolithic onward. Such approaches have enabled me, over the last few years<sup>291</sup>

- to advance new and fairly convincing suggestions concerning the ethnic and cultural identity of the Sea Peoples who played havoc in the Eastern Mediterranean at the end of the Bronze Age (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011);
- to argue (van Binsbergen 2010a) the fundamental continuity between the Nkoya of South Central Africa and the cultures of Eurasia in terms of comparative mythology;
- to challenge (van Binsbergen with Isaak 2008) Oppenheimer's suggestion as to the South East Asian Early Holocene origin of the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East, and
- to argue (van Binsbergen 2012a) the existence of a transcontinental substrate of cyclical transformative element cosmologies, in Eurasia, Africa and North America, which have surfaced, *e.g.*, in East Asian, West Asian, African and European systems of geomantic divination, in African clan systems, in the four-element cosmology which was (myopically and anachronistically) attributed to the Greek Presocratic philosopher Empedocles and which subsequently spread world-wide and was a vital factor in the development of global natural science.

Further work along these lines is in preparation or in prep. now, *e.g.* (as in prep. (f) on the connections between the Ancient Egyptian god Ptah and the Ancient Greek god Hephaestus; and, as part of a comprehensive study *Our Drums Are Always On My Mind* (in prep. (c)) of history and society of the Nkoya people of Zambia, South Central Africa, on the Nkoya's Asian dimensions (also see above, chapter 4). In these studies in progress, reconstruction of the long-range global history of specific mythemes and ethnographic traits is playing an important role: as well-researched and referenced modules in themselves (and as such sometimes already posted on the internet in pre-publication versions), they are indispensable for the underpinning of the steps in my long-range empirical and theoretical arguments.

## 12.2. Head-hunting

In my current research on patterns of transcontinental continuity between South Central Africa and South, South East and East Asia ('East-West parallels'), the trait 'head-hunting'

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<sup>291</sup> The studies listed in the next few paragraphs have already provisionally traced, for whatever it is worth, the conjectural world history of such traits as 'male genital mutilation', 'spiked wheel trap', 'mankala', 'the unilateral mythical character', 'geomantic divination', 'the Cosmic Egg', 'Flood myths', and 'the White Cosmogonic God'.

emerged as of potential heuristic value, since the corresponding practices are found in both continents. However, the term has a suspect hegemonic ring about it and is typical of a condescending, stereotyping and pejorative mode of representing foreign and ancient cultural practices. It has gained perhaps new relevance in relation to the amply publicised and discussed decapitation practices of present-day extreme forms of radical Islamism. It is, all in all, an unsavoury topic with which a self-respecting modern anthropologist / intercultural philosopher like myself would only reluctantly engage. If I yet do so engage, it is because the theoretical rewards in terms of transcontinental insights are considerable.



source: Maspero *et al.* 1903; vol. IX

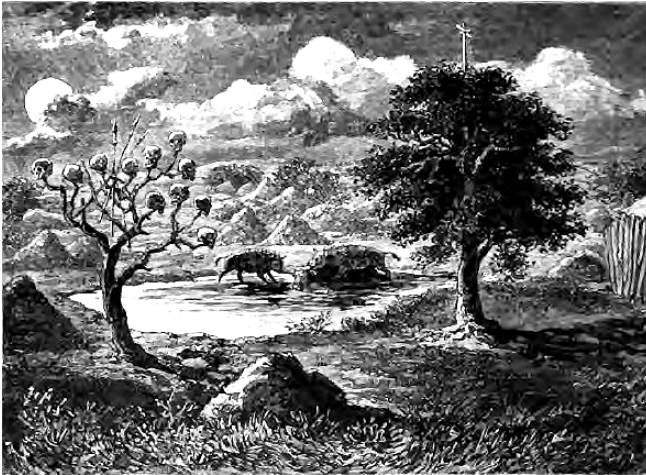
Fig. 12.2. Head-hunting by the Ancient Assyrians

As a topic in comparative ethnography, head-hunting clearly presents major puzzles. Once proverbial for the deplorable state in which colonised ‘primitive peoples’ (outside the European, urban middle classes) were supposed to find themselves, the concept carries all the burdens of an antiquated scientific approach and an obsolete, hegemonic and Eurocentric perspective. Was head-hunting – and the same reproach has been brought against that other hobby-horse of early European expansion: cannibalism / anthropophagy – perhaps a non-existent practice invented by administrators, missionaries and scholars in colonial times in order to express the utter primitivity attributed to the colonised transcontinental other? On the other hand, serious scholars have maintained that head-hunting, as the institutionalised, systematic collection of human heads through life-terminating violence, constituted not so much a North Atlantic racist myth but rather an actual practice, extending

into the 20<sup>th</sup> century even in parts of the North Atlantic region,<sup>292</sup> – a practice so widespread that the 1937-1950 Cambridge professor of anthropology John Henry Hutton could maintain:

‘Head-hunting, therefore, has been world-wide. It was associated with tribes still living in the stone ages, and may even go back to Palaeolithic times; as in the Azilian deposits at Ofnet in Bavaria, heads were found carefully decapitated and buried separately from the bodies, indicating beliefs in the special sanctity or importance of the head.’<sup>293</sup>

Against this background, suggestive of an almost unlimited distribution in space and time, one would not readily engage in a distributional and historical analysis of head-hunting and related institutions. On the other hand, Hutton’s emphasis on Nigerian-Indonesian continuities is excellent for our present purpose. Let us therefore reluctantly examine the empirical distribution of head-hunting in space and time, and try to propose a provisional world history on that basis.



This image (most probably drawn in Europe on the basis of Holub’s oral directions, unsupported by any photographs – so with a high degree of artistic freedom) appeared in Holub’s book on his expedition to the Ila (Holub 1890; Holy 1975); but although the practice of head-hunting did exist among this people (Smith & Dale 1920: I, 177; Muntemba 1977), and piles of enemy skulls have been reported notably in the context of *Lozi* raids upon the Ila (Smith & Dale 1920: I, 44), the mounting onto a tree is not recorded in the standard Ila ethnography, and may be apocryphal (van Binsbergen 2014b).

Fig. 12.3. Artist’s impression of a human-skull-trophy tree among the Ila / Mashukulumbwe of Central Zambia

<sup>292</sup> Montenegro and other parts of the Balkan, 1912; Ireland, into the 20<sup>th</sup> century; even USA soldiers in World War II; Hutton 1961; Anonymous, ‘Head-hunting’.

<sup>293</sup> Hutton 1961: 295. *Azilien* is considered a form of Mesolithic, dated between 13 and 10 ka BP (Orliac 1997) and famous for its painted pebbles (Masset 1997). However, Masset’s precise dating of *Azilien* is contested by specialists.

Before we can trace a distribution, we should be clear about the categories in which we divide and recognise our data. In the voluminous literature, a selection from which appears in Table 12.1, the topic of head-hunting is mainly presented under three different headings:

- a. *head-hunting*: where the emphasis also on the active, usually violent even murderous, acquisition of skulls as trophies
- b. *skull complex*: where the emphasis is on the procedures executed on or with the skull, once acquired
- c. *drinking from skulls* as a typical aspect of (b).

Since all people die and have skulls, skull-related ritual practices in general are likely to be very widespread and to have a rather different distribution from the more specific trait 'head-hunting' in the narrower sense. For instance, for the Nkoya of Zambia, South Central Africa, we have only the drinking from enemy skulls on record but not specifically the violent and purposeful acquisition of skulls in its own right (as among the Nkoya's Eastern neighbours and kinsmen, the Ila); therefore, it seems better to examine the 'drinking from skulls' variables separately.

### 12.3. Head-hunting: Distributional data

The global data on head-hunting at my disposal have been compiled and referenced in Table 12.1.

no.	<i>ethnic group / country / period (Roman figures indicate century CE, or if negative BCE)</i>	<i>references</i>	<i>a = head-hunting: emphasis also on active acquisition b = skull complex c = drinking from skulls: typical aspect of skull complex</i>
1	Abipones, Paraguay	MacCulloch 1908-1921; Dobrizhoffer 1822: II, 408	b
74	Amazon region, Brazil / Peru	de Graff 1923	a
2	Ambon Isl., Indonesia	Anonymous, 'head-hunting' [ 2013]	a
3	[ Ancient ] Arabs	MacCulloch 1908-1921	c
4	Ashanti / Tshi	MacCulloch 1908-1921	b
5	monsoon Asia' / South and South East Asia	Watson Andaya 2004; Waterson 1996; Keane 1908-1921; Hastings 1908-1921: VI, 852, IV, 443, VII, 242; Anonymous, 'head-hunting' [ 2013]	a
6	Asmat, New Guinea	Zegwaard 1959	a
72	Assam, N.E. India	Hodson 1909; von Heine-Geldern 1917; Hutton 1928	a
7	Ancient Assyrians	MacCulloch 1908-1921; Bienert 1991	b
8	Azande / Niam-Niam, Congo	MacCulloch 1908-1921	b
9	Ancient Babylonians	MacCulloch 1908-1921; Bienert 1991	b
76	Ancient Balkan	Durham 1923	a
10	Bijagos?	rumour; author's fieldnotes	a
11	Bontoc, Mountain Province,	MacCulloch 1908-1921; Hastings 1908-1921: X, 650	b (head enhances farm

	Philippines;		success)
12	Borneo ( <i>cf.</i> Dayaks, Iban)	Hastings 1908-1921: II, 239-240; MacCulloch 1908-1921; Roth & Low 1896; Hose & McDougall 1912	a
68	Ancient Bulgaria	Anonymous, 'skull cup'	c
73	Burma	von Heine-Geldern 1917	a
13	Celebes	MacCulloch 1908-1921; Grubauer 1913	a; b
14	Ancient Celts / Irish / Gauls	Cotterell 1989:79; Cisalpine Celts: Livy, <i>Ab Urbe condita</i> , XXIII, 4; Cassius Dio, <i>Historia romana</i> , XV, 3.2.; Diodorus Siculus, <i>Bibliotheca historica</i> , V, 2; MacCulloch 1908-1921; <i>Encyclopaedia Britannica</i>	a; c; b
15	Ancient China, notably 秦朝 Qin dynasty	Anonymous, 'head-hunting' [2013]; MacCulloch 1908-1921; 史記 <i>Shiji</i> 123; Chavannes 1895-1905: V, 185n-186n. 43	a; c
16	Congo	MacCulloch 1908-1921	a; b; c
17	Dahomey / Benin	MacCulloch 1908-1921	b
19	Dayaks, Borneo	MacCulloch 1908-1921; Hastings 1908-1921: VI, 84-86, 534-535; also in collusion with USA and British troops World War II, Anonymous, 'head-hunting' [2013]	a; also: b
75	Ecuador	Karsten 1923	a
19	Ancient Egyptians	MacCulloch 1908-1921; Renggli 2000; Stricker 1963-1989; Capart 1898	b
20	Ancient Elymians, Sicily	Ions 1980: 147	a
21	Fijians	MacCulloch 1908-1921	c
22	Flores, Indonesia	Barnes 1993	a
23	Ancient Germany	MacCulloch 1908-1921	skull buried in horse stable; pigeons thrive by; c
24	Haida, Kwakiutl, and neighbours N.W. Coast, Canada	Collison n.d.; Curtis 1914	a
25	Iban, Malaysian Borneo / Sarawak	Haddon 1901: 325, 394 <i>f.</i> , and <i>passim</i>	head trophy prerequisite for marriage; allegedly a institution no more than 200 years old here; very elaborate b
26	Ila, Zambia (XIX-XX)	Smith & Dale 1920: I, 177; Shimwaayi Muntemba, personal communication, 1977	human head trophy prerequisite for marriage; c
27	Ilongot, Luzon, Philippines (XIX-XX)	Rosaldo 1980	a
28	Ancient Iranians / Persians	MacCulloch 1908-1921	b
29	Israelites Ancient Israelites (-X)	MacCulloch 1908-1921; Bienert 1991	b
30	Ancient Japan	Nelson 1993	a
71	Kafiristan, N.W. India	Hutton 1961	a; b
31	Ancient Karmanians, S. Iran	MacCulloch 1908-1921; Strabo, <i>Geographica</i> , XV, p. 727	b

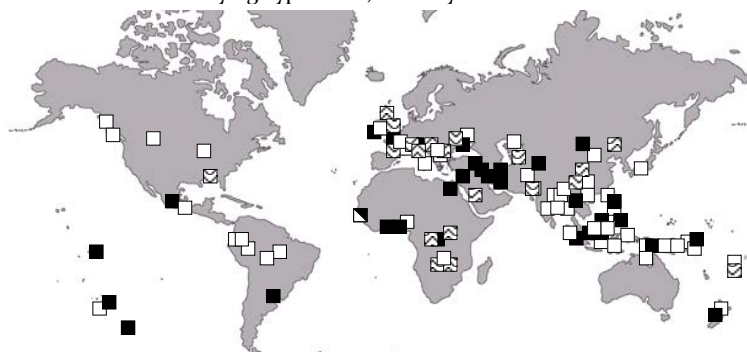
32	Khasi tribal people, N.E. India	Hastings 1908-1921: I, 241	a
67	Ancient Kingdom of Kiev (X)	<i>Russian Primary Chronicle</i> ; Anonymous, 'skull cup'	c
33	Kiwai Island and surroundings, Fly River, Papua New Guinea	Haddon 1901: 107; Riley 1925	a
34	Kukis / Lushei (N.E. India / Bangladesh / Burma)	MacCulloch 1908-1921	a
35	Lakher / Mara hill tribe, NE India, SE Burma, etc.	Lorrain n.d.	a
36	Ancient Ligurians, S. France / Basque country	Ions 1980: 147	a
69	Ancient Lombards, N. Italy (V)	Anonymous, 'skull cup'	c
37	Luzon, Philippines	MacCulloch 1908-1921	a
38	Maori (XVIII-XIX)	MacCulloch 1908-1921; Anonymous, 'head-hunting' [2013],	b
39	Melanesia, cf. Solomon Islands, New Guinea, etc.	van der Kroef 1952; Rivers 1922	a
40	Ancient Meso America, cf. Mexico (X-XV)	Ortiz de Montellano 1983; Miller & Taube 1993	a
41	Ancient Mexico	MacCulloch 1908-1921	b
42	Ancient Mongolians	MacCulloch 1908-1921	b
43	Mushkogeas, S.E. Woodlands USA	MacCulloch 1908-1921	c
44	Naga, N.E. India	Hastings 1908-1921: IX, 124; von Fürer-Haimendorf 1939	a
45	New Caledonia	MacCulloch 1908-1921 [ 'Head' ]	a
46	New Guinea (XIX-XX)	Hastings 1908-1921: IX, 340-341, 349, 352; van der Kroef 1952; MacCulloch 1908-1921	a; b
47	Nias, Indonesia	Modigliani 1890	a
48	Nigeria, Bight of Benin (Ibo, Kagoro) (XIX-XX)	Hutton 1946, 1961; Tremearne 1912; Anonymous, 'head-hunting' [2013]; Wilson-Haffende 1930 Hutton 1946, 1961 'strongly suggests Indonesian culture': associated with crops, marriage, victim's service in afterlife	a
49	Nkoya, Zambia (XIX-XX)	Samson 1972	c
50	Polynesians (XIX)	MacCulloch 1908-1921	b
51	Quecha Lamistas, Peru	Anonymous, 'head-hunting' [2013]	a
52	Scots (W Highlands)	MacCulloch 1908-1921	c: of suicide
53	Scythians (-V)	MacCulloch 1908-1921; Herodotus, <i>Historiae</i> , IV	b, c
54	Shuar people, Ecuador / Peru	Anonymous, 'head-hunting' [2013]	a
55	Solomon Islands (XVIII-XIX)	MacCulloch 1908-1921; Hastings 1908-1921: XI, 684	a; b
56	South America, cf. Shuar, Abipones, Quecha Lamistas	MacCulloch 1908-1921	a
57	Sumatra, Indonesia	MacCulloch 1908-1921	b ( head dried)
58	Sumba Isl., Indonesia	Hoskins 1993	a
59	Tahiti	MacCulloch 1908-1921	b

60	Taiwan / Formosa (XVIII-XIX)	MacCulloch 1908-1921; Anonymous, 'head-hunting' [ 2013]; Pickering 1898	a; also: b
61	Timor, Indonesia	Middelkoop 1963	a
62	Torres Strait	MacCulloch 1908-1921; Haddon 1901: 394	a
63	Ancient Turks	MacCulloch 1908-1921	b
64	Uganda	MacCulloch 1908-1921	c
65	USA soldiers, World War II (XX)	Anonymous, 'head-hunting' [ 2013]	a
70	Uzbekistan	Anonymous, 'skull cup'	c
66	Wa people, Upper Burma / China (XIX)	Hastings 1908-1921: III, 27; MacCulloch 1908-1921	a; b

Table 12.1. Distribution of head-hunting according to type, location, ethnic group, and period

#### 12.4. Theoretical background: From global distribution to conjectural world history with the aid of specific hypotheses

Over the years, I have gained some experience with the (nonetheless extremely risky) attempt of building up a historical reconstruction concerning the origin and spread of an ethnographic trait, on the basis of distributional data. Here I have learned to apply several rules of thumb, whose shaky validity is based – for whatever that is worth – on a wider theoretical and analytical framework set out and developed in my work on comparative mythology since the mid-2000s. These 'rules' in fact amount to basic underlying hypotheses, and may be summarised as follows:



□ 1 ; ■ 2 ; ■ 3 ; ☒ 4

1. head-hunting – emphasis on (violent) acquisition; 2. (1) but uncertain; 3. skull complex: skull-related ritual practices; 4. drinking from skulls as a form of (3)

Fig.12.4. The global distribution of head-hunting and related traits.

1. the 'Out-of-Africa' Hypothesis (Forster 2004, with extensive references): *if a trait has the appearance of a universal of the culture of Anatomically Modern Humans (e.g. marriage, kinship, divination; cf. Brown 1991), or at least occurs*



*in sub-Saharan Africa, the Andaman Islands, New Guinea and Australia*, it is likely to have belonged to the original cultural heritage ('Pandora's Box') of Anatomically Modern Humans, as initiated and developed within Africa between c. 200 and 80 ka BP, and subsequently spread to all continents.

2. the 'Back-into-Africa' Hypothesis: from c. 15 ka BP, when traits from Pandora's Box had been extensively transmitted to Asia and subsequently developed, differentiated and innovated there, a perceptible population movement back into Africa (and skirting Europe) brought about the *demic diffusion*<sup>294</sup> of such new Asian traits into sub-Saharan Africa<sup>295</sup>
3. the Oppenheimer–Tauchmann–Dick–Read 'Sunda' Hypothesis<sup>296</sup> specific traits developed in the easily accessible, not-yet-insular subcontinent ('Sunda') of South East Asia, but at the massive flooding of that region resulting from the rapid melting of the polar caps at the onset of the Holocene, these traits (and the populations that carried them) were transmitted through demic diffusion both to other parts of South East Asia and Oceania, and Westward along the Indian Ocean shore, e.g. to the Indus Valley, the Persian Gulf, perhaps indirectly to the Mediterranean, and at a much later stage and very well attested, to Madagascar and the Comoros Islands – and most probably also to continental sub-Saharan Africa, not only along the Indian Ocean shores, but even beyond the Cape of Good Hope, along the Atlantic Ocean shores – *possibly even all the way to the Strait of Gibraltar, into the Western Mediterranean, and the shores of Western and North-Western Europe. The tell-tale distributional indications of a Sunda diffusion would be: perhaps historical attestations in South East Asia, ramifying into East Asia and Oceania, and / or into the shores of the Indian and Atlantic Ocean, possibly spilling over into the Mediterranean, the North Sea and the Baltic. But again I have to stress that traits such as presumably diffused to Western Eurasia and Africa after the beginning of the Holocene, need not correspond with present-day cultural traits in South East Asia / Indonesia – across a time lapse of 7 or more millennia, the postulated original Proto-Indonesians may not have left any detectable traces in the subcontinent of their origin!*

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<sup>294</sup> 'Demic diffusion' was defined in a footnote above; the alternative is 'cultural diffusion', where traits are transmitted through a social communication process between different populations, without any noticeable population movement being necessarily involved.

<sup>295</sup> Hammer *et al.* 1998; Cruciani *et al.* 2002; Coia *et al.* 2005; Underhill 2004; van Binsbergen 2019d.

<sup>296</sup> van Binsbergen 2019d with references; Oppenheimer 1998; Dick-Read 2005.



source: Hall 1992: 264

Fig. 12.5. Representation of the first Japanese emperor gloating over the collection of enemy skulls mounted in his garden

4. my own 'Pelagian' Hypothesis:<sup>297</sup> on the basis of thinking through the remarkable distribution of such traits as *mankala* (a board game), geomantic divination, the spiked wheel trap (a hunting device), and the belief in a unilateral mythical being with only one side to its body, I have proposed a cultural complex that is supposed to have emerged and developed in South West Asia in the Neolithic, and from there to have selectively diffused into the Mediterranean in the Bronze Age, after which its traits have further spread through both demic and cultural diffusion in all four directions, following a pattern which I have called the 'cross model':
  - West throughout the Mediterranean and Western Europe (and possibly across the Atlantic)
  - North into Central and Northern Europe
  - East into Central, South and East Asia, with extensions into South East Asia, Oceania, and possibly the New World
  - South into sub-Saharan Africa.

*Again, the tell-tale indication of a Pelagian effect is that its data points are mapped despite the remarkable, and otherwise counter-paradigmatic, diversity of these four groups of locations.*

5. Throughout this exercise we must realise that the origins of our three skull-related institutions are lost in the mist of prehistory, and that often we shall be unable to tell the difference between relatively recent transmission along our familiar two models of the Pelagian and the Sunda Hypotheses – and a far more ancient substrate going back to 20 ka BP or more. The intricate intermeshing between the Pelagian and the 'Sunda' effect is one of the most striking outcomes of the present analysis of the restrictive trait of head-hunting in the narrower sense, and one that lends that analysis a theoretical and methodological relevance beyond this one mere ethnographic trait.

Meanwhile, the proposed long-range historical analysis is predicated on a few fur-

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<sup>297</sup> van Binsbergen 2010a, 2011f, 2012a, and in prep. (e); van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011. A complicating factor in the naming of this mechanism is that Ancient writers and modern linguists (e.g. Kretschmer 1911; van Windekens 1954, 1960; Neumann 1979; Myres 1907; Woudhuizen's individual contributions in van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011; Lochner-Hüttenbach 1960; Lepsius 1842; Karst 1930, 1931; Hester 1965; Georgiev 1950-1951; Cosmopoulos 1999; Cooper 2000; Briquel 1984; Benloew 1877; Atkinson 1961; Abel 1966) usually depart from the assumption that *Pelagoi*, *Pelagikos* (in a way that would deviate from nearly all other Ancient toponyms and ethnonyms; cf. van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: ch. 2, where the analytical problems of ancient ethnonymy and toponymy are extensively discussed) have been meaningful, clearly demarcated, unequivocal concepts consistently utilised by Ancient historical actors in the Aegean and wider Ancient Mediterranean region – whereas for me, 'Pelagian' is merely the nominal designation of a postulated historical cultural complex that I have constructed myself for analytical purposes, and that is only partially and inconsistently perceived by the Ancient actors – while the latter are intrinsically inconsistent in their application of the term anyway – in the hands of the historic actors, whenever and wherever, *ethnic classification only works because the historical actors apply it situationally and inconsistently* (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: chapters 2-4)

ther assumptions or rules of thumb, which remain largely implied and which I cannot argue in detail in the present context. Even though they are counter-paradigmatic from the point of view of classic and post-classic, modern anthropology, they yet sit rather more comfortably with modern archaeology and comparative linguistics, while they are more recently borne out by the postmodern, neo-diffusionist approaches that have emerged, since the 1980s, in the context of globalisation studies.<sup>298</sup> These points are the following:

6. Without denying the tendency for individual cultural traits to be integrated in, and adapted, in form and content / meaning, to, the local and regional socio-cultural context in which they are attested in space and time (I am referring here to the structuralist-functionalist hobby-horse of classic anthropology and sociology of the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century CE), yet such *traits are often originating from outside that specific local and regional socio-cultural context, and, once consolidated, have a tendency to spill beyond the narrower local and regional spatial boundaries and to be transmitted to the near and remote future*. In other words, we need to appreciate a continuous oscillation between translocal transmission and integrative *localising transformation*. In the course of the latter side of the process, a trait is likely to be reshaped and transformed in accordance, more or less, with the local socio-cultural context in which it is about to be received – yet remains more or less recognisable as belonging to the larger, spatially more extended family of traits.
7. *The extreme fragmentation of the classic ethnographic view of the world as a patchwork quilt of separate ethnic groups, each with their own distinctive, integrated culture, is therefore largely an artefact of anthropological and (colonial) administrative conceptual impositions, which subsequently have tended to be appropriated by local actors so as to be build into their own self-construction and ethnicisation* (van Binsbergen 2003a, 2008a, with extensive references).
8. *Ethnographic traits, therefore, need to be considered, in the first place, within a long-range perspective of cultural complexes extending widely in space and time*
9. *Therefore, geographic distributions of traits may be read as manifestations of frozen cultural history: if the same trait occurs in geographically adjacent areas, we may assume that these areas belong to a historically continuous cultural region; and if the same trait occupies a more or less continuous extended belt on the map, we may assume that it has been transmitted along that belt.*
10. Technological conditions for such transmission are provided both by humankind's ubiquitous tendency to geographic displacement, in the first place on foot, but soon aided by such technological means as navigation, horse

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<sup>298</sup> E.g. Amselle 2001; Fardon *et al.* 1999; van Binsbergen & van Dijk 2003; with references to the vast literature.

riding and the chariot. Although anthropologists, blinkered (since c. 1930 CE) by their dominant paradigm of separate, bounded local cultures, have tended to underestimate such technological factors, archaeology (especially the work by Bednarik)<sup>299</sup> has established beyond doubt that maritime navigation across considerable distances of open sea has been a factuality since the Middle Palaeolithic (when New Guinea and Australia were thus populated), while horse and chariot were the great locomotion-instigating achievements of Neolithic and Bronze Age Central Asia. As a result, I have proposed (also above in the present book) that in fact since the Bronze Age a multicentred, multidirectional, transcontinental maritime network has effectively connected all continental shores of the world, while the Old World has been internally opened up by relatively easy and relatively rapid communications using hippic technologies.

The multicentred, multidirectional nature of this postulated global maritime network means that the unidirectional vector arrows we tend to attach to diffusion processes, also in the Sunda context, should be taken with a pinch of salt: in fact the direction of transmission is seldom completely unidirectional, except perhaps when initial spread from an epicentre is involved.

- ii. Constituting the dominant paradigm of an earlier, pre-classic phase of anthropology in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century CE, diffusion (usually only acknowledged as a despicable and obsolete ideology: ‘diffusionism’) has become counter-paradigmatic with the rise, from c. 1930 onwards, of the classic, structural-functional model of integrated, bounded, distinct individual cultures, each culture being the distinctive characteristic of a distinct ethnic groups (van Binsbergen 2003a, 2019a). This has led to a situation where mainstream classic and post-classic anthropology has tended to interpret obvious parallels between traits widely distributed in space and time, in terms of *parallel invention* (under implicit reference to the postulated converging tendencies build into the equally – but rightly – postulated universal identity of the human mind, or at least of the mind of Anatomically Modern Humans who have existed since 200 ka BP and have been the exclusive form of humankind for the past 20 ka). *In other words, where obvious parallels appears in space and time, these should be in the first place explained by reference to genuine historical links, and only as a last resort as a result of the converging human mind, or of coincidence.*

What emerges from the above set of postulates is a totally different picture: *not parallel invention but diffusion through cultural or demic transmission*<sup>300</sup> becomes the

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<sup>299</sup> Bednarik 1997a, 1997b, 1997c, 1999a, 1999b, 2003.

<sup>300</sup> Including, probably in many cases, the possibility of ‘stimulus invention’, i.e. when not a particular trait has been transmitted in itself, but merely the knowledge or rumour that such a trait exists elsewhere, which local people then seek to emulate on the basis of their own technological and cultural resources (Kroeber 1940).

*default explanation for parallels between traits through space and time, and only when there is explicit documentary evidence of parallel invention, or proven technological impossibility of historic contact, may we reach for the alternative explanation of parallel invention.*

### 12.5. Drinking from skulls



The bowl replaces the occiput of a slave killed for the purpose at the Kazanga harvest ritual, as was the custom up to around 1900 CE. Note the shape of the axe blade, which has Indonesian and Scandinavian parallels and, in Oppenheimer's non-specialist opinion (1998) suggests Sunda influence. Also note the sacrifice in the form of paper money – with East Asian parallels.

Fig. 12.5a. The Nkoya king Mwene Kahare Kabambi, preparing to drink from beer contained in a Chinese enamel bowl sunk into the ground at the foot of a temporary royal ancestral shrine at the Kazanga Annual Festival, Kaoma District, Zambia, 1992.

Let us first consider the distribution of the trait 'drinking from human skulls'. Although occurring in rather different parts of the world over time, this trait is remarkably rare. This suggests that the idea of using a human skull for a drinking cup may not be so obvious as to be reinvented time and again throughout global history. We may not be unjustified to treat the distribution as if it were reflecting one coherent historical process. The distribution of this

trait is largely confined to the Western part of the Old World, and it is possible to satisfactorily account for the recorded occurrences with a Pelasgian model that does not involve Sunda transmission but instead assumes a West Asian, Neolithic epicentre.



Despite the exoticising effect of the facial tattooing, the overall physiognomy is strikingly reminiscent of North-western Eurasia

Fig. 12.6. A 19<sup>th</sup>-c. CE depiction of a Maori chief on display at the Okains Bay Museum of Maori Culture, Akaroa, Southern Island, New Zealand (2010)

Also in the fields of mythology and comparative religion there is ample evidence of a 'skull complex' stretching from West Asia to East Asia across the Eurasian Steppe, with extensions into the Ancient Mediterranean – as I found out when investigating the transcontinental ramifications of the Nkoya myth of *Mwene Kayambila* 'Who Thatches with Skulls' (van Binsbergen 2010a: 193 *f.*).

In Fig. 12.7 the only outlying cases out are the woodlands of South-East North America, and the Western Pacific. In both cases a distant and indirect West Eurasian provenance may be suspected. This would be a moot point for the American case (Trans-Atlantic crossings notably by the Vikings have been acknowledged, but rather in the North-Eastern part of the American Atlantic seaboard – whereas the many claims of other Old World, especially Phoenician, intrusions into the New World (see elsewhere in the present book) have by and large not received the benefit of the doubt from mainstream scholarship. The suggestion of specific continuity between Western Eurasia and the Maori along the Pelasgian transmission lines seems less preposterous, given for instance the parallels between Maori and European Bronze-Age spiral ornaments and offensive weapons, and the Maori's general somatic appearance (especially their leaders', as depicted in early portraits, is strongly reminiscent of Western Eurasia). However, let us admit that Fiji (where our trait has been attested) is not New Zealand; and that the limited number of attestations of the 'drinking from skulls' trait render all historical interpretation highly conjectural anyway.

The restricted trait 'drinking from skulls' is a good example of a distribution that largely conforms with the Pelasgian Hypothesis, – as implied aspect of the head-hunting complex. The distribution is given in Fig. 12.7.

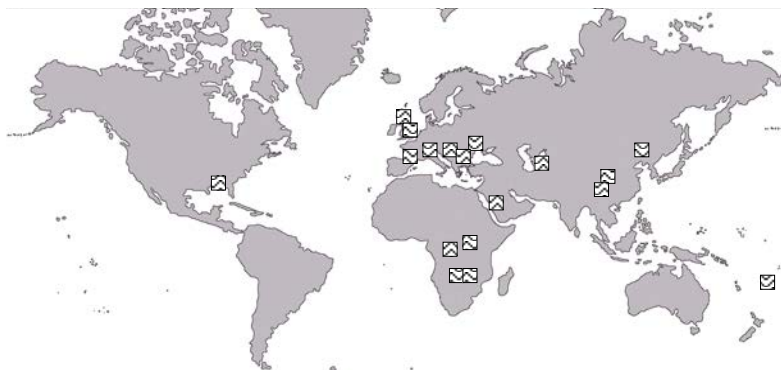


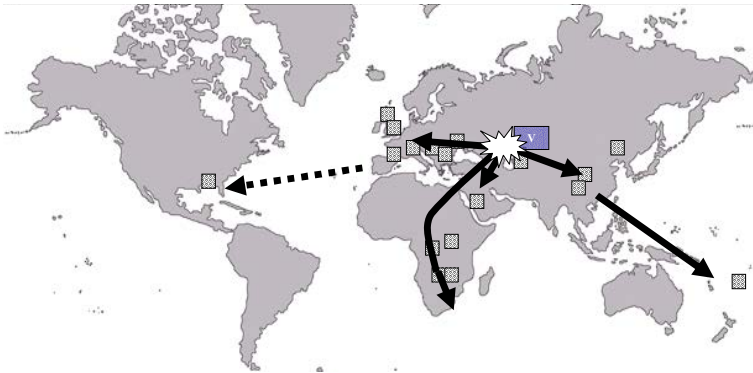
Fig. 4

Legend as in Fig. 12.4

Fig. 12.7. Distribution of the restricted trait 'drinking from skulls'.

When we apply the Pelasgian Hypothesis in the case of Fig. 12.7, what emerges is Fig. 12.8 as a plausible historical interpretation of this distribution:





Legend as in Fig.12.4, to which is to be added: 5. proposed spread; 6. highly conjectural proposed spread; 7. proposed epicentre of origin

Fig.12.8. Proposed historical reconstruction of the restricted trait 'drinking from skulls'

### 12.6. The skull complex



source: Hall 1992: 25

Fig. 12.9. Worked skull from Neolithic Jericho

From Early Modern times on, Africa and Africans have been subjected to essentialising 'othering' on the part of inhabitants of the North Atlantic region, including scientists. This tendency has been noticeable, for instance, in the field of comparative religion, where already Frazer (1918) put Africa in an exceptional position by claiming that the, otherwise ubiquitous, Flood myths did not occur in Africa; and the statement was frequently copied until quite recently, including in the work of the *doyen* of present-day comparative mythology, the otherwise immensely inspiring Sanskritist Michael Witzel. Frazer was wrong of course, as I maintained on several occasions – Flood myths do occur in Africa, some even remarkably close to the elaborate format familiar from the Ancient Near East. Being unwilling to invoke the notorious, hegemonic / racist 'Hamitic Hypothesis'<sup>301</sup> as an explanation, I have been occupied with the attempt to understand the peculiarities of the African distribution of Flood myths ever since.<sup>302</sup> In this context I undertook an ambitious attempt, in the late years 2000, to trace as much as possible the transcontinental correspondences and resonances of the mythemes I had found, over the decades, in the myths of the Nkoya people and their neighbours in Western Zambia (van Binsbergen 2010a). This made me explore the many attestations and the vast literature on what I then called 'the skull complex' – constituting mainly a belt – which the inventions of horse-riding and the spoked-wheel chariot has unified into one extensive cultural<sup>303</sup> area – stretching from the Celts in Westernmost Eurasia, via the Scythians, 'Mongols', and the entire Eurasian Steppe belt, to the Pacific, where it is found in Japan and Taiwan – further ramifying into the well-known head-hunting practices of especially insular South East Asia (e.g. Borneo and the Philippines). An early attestation of the skull complex is the plastering of human skulls in the archaeological context of Neolithic Jericho (Syro-Palestine).

The skull complex may be said to encompass all skull related practices (including skull deformation, trepanation, display of ancestral or enemy skulls, *etc.*), short of drinking from skulls, and acquisitive head-hunting. By the data listed in Table 12.1, the distribution of the skull complex is as in Fig. 12.10:

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<sup>301</sup> Cf. Aaron 1995; Seligman 1913; Sanders 1969; Sharp 2004; Zachernuk 1994.

<sup>302</sup> I was finally able to clinch the argument with the aid of Dierk Lange's discovery – empirically well grounded (Lange 2004, 2009, 2012) – to the effect that massive demic and cultural diffusion had taken place between the Ancient Near East and West Africa. See: van Binsbergen 2012a: 71 *f.*, Fig. 2.16, with mapped distribution, data points, and references; and 2019: Introduction.

<sup>303</sup> And even linguistic area: much of this region is characterized by the Altaic linguistic phylum, comprising such linguistic families as Turkic, Mongolian, Korean and Japanese. With such linguistic phyla as Uralic, Indo-European, Kartvelian, Dravidian, Chukchee-Kamchatkan and Eskimo, Altaic constitutes the Eurasiatic macro-phylum, extending from Bretagne throughout Eurasia via North America to Greenland. Relevant literature includes: Baldick 2000; Asheri *et al.* 2007; Corcella 1984; Grousset 1948; Henschen 1966; Gahs 1928,

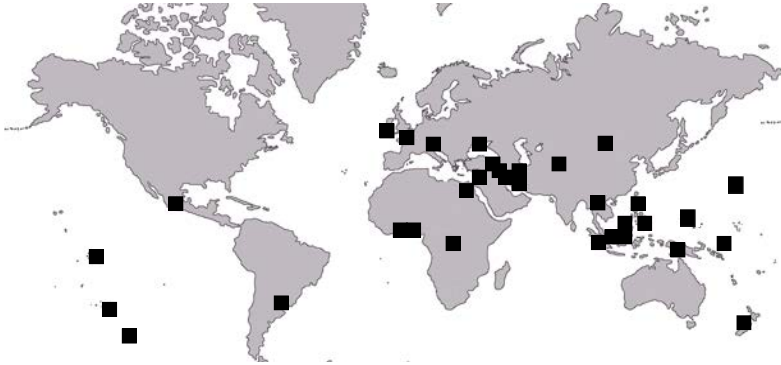


Fig. 12.10 Distribution of the restricted trait 'skull complex'

Also for Fig. 12.10, the attestations concentrate in the Western part of the Old World, although they are not absent from South East Asia and Oceania. This distribution pattern could very well be explained with the Pelasgian model – so much so that I do not even see the need to try out the alternative, Sunda model for this distribution. However, given most scholars' reluctance to accept Transatlantic pre-Columbian contacts the South American attestation may be considered a case of independent parallel invention; and so could be the Meso-American (Aztec) case – despite the many indications (colour symbolism, board games, pyramids, circular calendar, purple snail utilisation – as already stressed over a century ago by diffusionists (Tyler 1879, 1880, 1896, 1948; Nuttall 1901, 1909; Frobenius 1923, 1929) – of direct Trans-Atlantic transmission from the Ancient Near East via the Mediterranean.

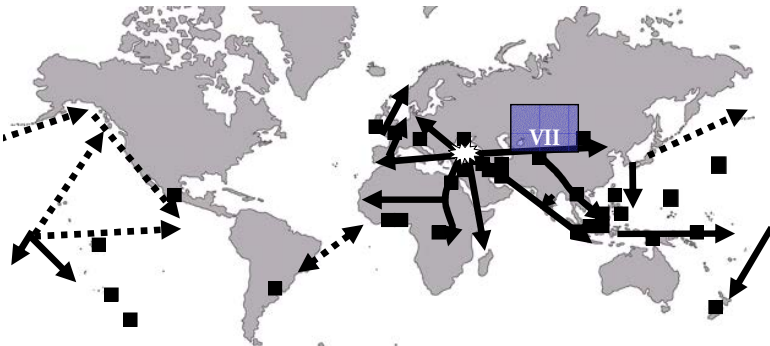


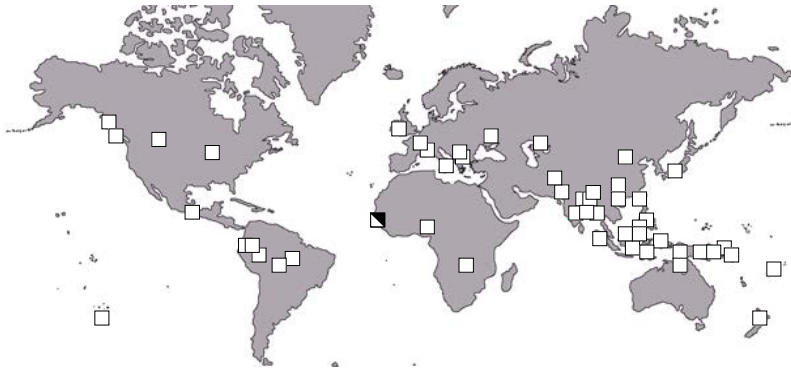
Fig.12.11. Proposed historical interpretation of the distribution of the restricted trait 'skull complex': Pelasgian

### 12.7. *Head-hunting in the narrower sense*

The Sunda model however needs to be invoked for the distribution of the most frequently attested trait within our data set, notably ‘head-hunting in the narrower sense’

Despite its obvious connections, in symbolism and ritual practice, with the other two traits (‘drinking from skulls’, and ‘skull complex’), for the restricted trait ‘head-hunting’ in the narrower sense the attestations in the Eastern part of the Old World are so overwhelmingly numerous that the Pelasgian model does not satisfy here. I submit that ‘head-hunting’ is best regarded as having emerged in South East Asia (CITI IX) and having spread from there on the wings of Sunda expansion (Fig. 12.13). A strong advocate of this view has been Hutton (1946, 1961), who not only pinpoints three essential traits in Nigerian head-hunting among the Kagoro and Moroa ‘strongly suggests Indonesian culture’:

- (a) the practice is associated with crops,
- (b) it is a prerequisite for marriage (on which especially the young women insist), and
- (c) the victim is supposed to be reduced to service in afterlife.<sup>304</sup>



The case in westernmost West Africa is uncertain.

Fig. 12.12. Distribution of the restricted trait ‘head-hunting in the narrower sense’

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<sup>304</sup> Incidentally, also in the case of the Zambian Ila these three points seem to apply; Muntamba 1977.

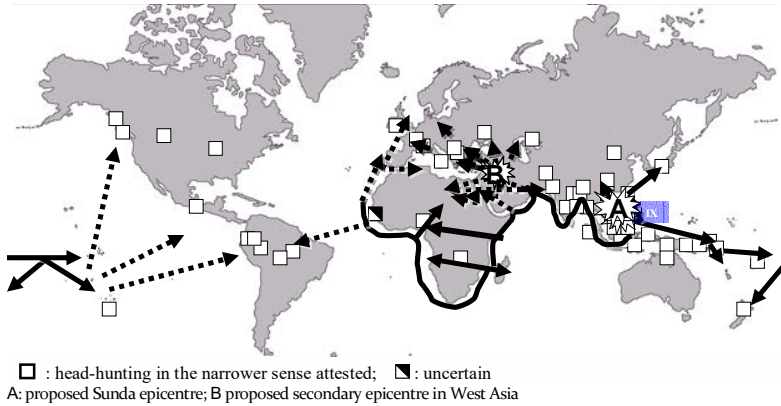


Fig. 12.13. Proposed historical reconstruction of the restricted trait 'head-hunting in the narrower sense' in combined Sunda and Pelasgian terms

When we compare the diagrams for 'drinking from skulls' and 'head-hunting in the narrower sense', we would still stick to the Sunda interpretation in the latter case, but are tempted to see the conceptual transformation which produced that trait in CITI IX, as a reinterpretation of the older trait of 'drinking from skulls' in CITI V and the skull complex in CITI VII.

### 12.8. Conclusion of the argument on head-hunting

In this Chapter I have examined the distribution of head-hunting and other cultural practices-relating to the human skull. I have presented the worldwide distributional data and their bibliographical background, arranging the data into three major categories: (a) head-hunting in the narrower sense ('purposeful violent acquisition of human skulls'), (b) the skull complex (practices after acquisition), and (c) (as significant subset of the latter) drinking from skulls. The transition from distribution to conjectural world history of these traits is informed by a number of explicit hypotheses and rules of thumb, which are briefly discussed and which are, in turn, also secondarily underpinned by the outcomes of the present analysis. On this basis, the three distributions of our skull-related traits may be convincingly understood as sustained historic processes. The Pelasgian Hypothesis is shown to account fairly well for the distribution of 'drinking from skulls' and the 'skull complex' in general – as it has been shown to account for a great many other trait distributions discussed in detail elsewhere. For head-hunting in the narrower sense, the Pelasgian Hypothesis might be invoked as well, but in fact a more satisfactory model turns out a combination of a Pelasgian and a Sunda model.

We shall now proceed to the discussion of a small number individual mythological

Sunda pre- and proto-historical continuity between Asia and Africa

and general ethnographic traits that require rather more commentary than can be accommodated within the overview tables of East-West parallels, yet do not warrant a separate chapter of their own.

# Chapter 13. Discussion of relevant additional traits conducive to East-West parallels

**Megaliths; horse and sea / Poseidon;  
Anti-Antaios-Antaeus; male genital mutilation;  
the trumpet; transcontinental maritime contacts;  
sign systems; the throwing stick / boomerang**

After our tabulated overviews of possibly Sunda-related East-West parallels in the beginning of this book's Part II, and the extensive empirical and methodological discussion concerning head-hunting in the previous chapter, the present chapter is reserved for a few relevant mythemes and ethnographic traits that could not be adequately covered in the restricted space of the tables.

## *13.1. Megaliths*

Until the mid-20th c. it was fashionable to consider the many megalithic expressions all around the world as belonging to one globally distributed megalithic culture, whose heyday was supposed to be situated in the Neolithic and especially the Bronze

Age.<sup>305</sup> From the 1970s on this paradigm was supplanted by a localising one, that shunned all transregional considerations and insisted that megalithic expressions had to be interpreted within a strictly local framework (e.g. Renfrew 1967, 1976a, 1976b, 1983). Renfrew has for decades been the leading British archaeologist, and one would not dream of taking his assertions lightly. Yet I submit that his insistence on narrow local horizons (for which he even designed a special mathematical approach, e.g. Renfrew 1979) has an ideological dimension – as an English Lord and Peer of the Realm he is very much a keeper of local cultural traditions, which he apparently does not want to see adulterated by foreign elements. I am myself only a mere archaeological gate-crasher from a popular neighbourhood in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Yet, as one who has encountered megalithic expressions in Portugal, in North Africa (where popular religion, although nominally Islamic, has incorporated and preserved unmistakable megalithic elements to such an extent that I could personally participate in them; van Binsbergen 1971 and in prep. (h)), in Java (Indonesia; where a similar situation obtained as in North Africa), and Sri Lanka, and who knows the international literature on the subject to some extent, I have repeatedly expressed my personal opinion that the hypothesis of a globally distributed megalithic complex, while counter-paradigmatic at present, is not totally absurd (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011 – where also a much simplified global distribution map is given; also cf. van Binsbergen 2018: 255n-256n and *passim*). In the 1990s two Dutch archaeologists (one a part-time university professor and driving force behind the Archaeon archaeological theme park in Alphen aan de Rijn, the Netherlands) presented an elaborate theory (de Jonge & IJzereef 1996) claiming that the inscriptions found on many megalithic monuments constituted transcontinental nautical directions. The near-global distribution of megalithic phenomena can only be explained by maritime contacts (although there are significant inland manifestations, such as across the African Sudanic belt, many are conspicuously concentrated at the ocean coasts), the Bronze Age is generally considered as the period *par excellence* for megalithic constructs, so the nautical interpretation of megalithic signs is in principle not incredible.

Yet there is a counter-paradigmatic element here to be appreciated. In anthropology, the early decades of the 20th c. CE was the age of extreme diffusionism, in the hands

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<sup>305</sup> The literature on megalithic constructions and practices worldwide is extensive. My sources for the distribution include: Burbridge 1925 (Zimbabwe); Renfrew 1967, 1976a (general), 1976b, 1983 (Western Europe); Wellhausen 1927 (Arabian peninsula); Lewis 1917, Middleton 1994 (Madagascar); Jensen 1936 (Ethiopia); Cottrel 1963 (Sumatra); de Vaux 1986 (Palestine); Phillipson 1993 (Senegal, Mali, Ethiopia.); Thilmans 1980 (Senegal); Azais & Chambard 1931 (Ethiopia); de Maret 1985 (Angola); Jensen 1939 (Zimbabwe); Jettmar 1960 (Kashmir); Perry 1918 (Indonesia); Vatter 1931-39 (Flores); Arndt 1932 (Flores); Führer-Haimendorf 1943 (Orissa); Hämmerle 1984 (Nias); von Heine-Geldern 1928 (South East Asia); Viaro 1984 (Nias); Colani 1935, (Laos); Thomassen à Thuessink van der Hoop 1932, (South Sumatra); Kaudern 1938; Camps & Camps-Fabre 1964 (Algeria); Riesenfeld 1950 (Melanesia); David 1982 (Central African Republic); Daniel 1967 (Western Europe); Thom 1967 (Western Europe); Thom & Thom 1978 (British Isl. and Brittany); Daniel 1958, (Western Europe); Bradley 1989 (megalithic art); Shee Twohig 1981 (Western Europe); Sherratt 1990 (North West Europe); Byon Kwang-Hyon 1997-2001 (Korea, East Asia, and global); De Valéra & Ó Nualláin 1961, 1964, 1972 (Ireland); Barns 1928 (Angola and Bight of Benin); Kagamiyama 1955, Gowland 1907 (Japan); Kondrjakow & Valganov n.d. (Western Caucasus); Anonymous, Place of power (Baltic).



of such authors as Grafton Elliot Smith and William Perry. They sketched a picture, since greatly ridiculed, of Ancient Egyptians setting sail to distant lands especially the Pacific, perhaps even the New World, in order to spread their so-called ‘Helio-lithic’ (*i.e.* megalithic Sun cult) religion and world view, in which megalithic phenomena were supposed to play an integral part. Within decades, such diffusionism was supplanted (especially in the United Kingdom whose approach to anthropology became standard in the Netherlands, South Africa, Australia and other intellectual centres) by the paradigm of now classic anthropology: stressing cultural integration within narrow horizons of space and time, and adopting prolonged participant observation (‘fieldwork’) as the standard method of knowledge construction. Diffusionism was viciously hunted down ever since, so that anything remotely reminiscent of it (like the contemplation of the possibility of trans-local megalithic complexes) became largely unacceptable (see my various contributions to van Binsbergen 2019a); and the tragic fate that book met when submitted to the proclaimedly mainstream institution (the ASC) that had initiated, financed and commissioned it).

Provided one is prepared to brave the accepted scholarly wisdom which claims that megalithic practices through space and time cannot be conflated into a single type,<sup>306</sup> a single distribution map (Fig. 13.1) may be drawn up, which can be read

1. in terms of Sunda (Fig. 13.2),

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<sup>306</sup> Cf. Miksic 1991, who restates the commonly held specialist view. The main argument for this consensual view is that modern dating techniques have shown ‘megaliths’ to belong to widely different periods, whereas the megalithic structures of Atlantic Europe, previously considered to be peripheral and crude emulations of Ancient Egyptian pyramids, proved in fact considerably older than these (Renfrew 1976; already in 1929 Baumgärtel had suggested a similar relationship). However, if Sunda was essentially an intercontinental maritime network, multcentred and multidirectional, then one would expect all sorts of phase differences, feed-back effects and interferences, making not only for a great deal of variation but also for great time lags between the various cultural products realised and circulating within such a network. Another bone of contention is whether there is such a thing as ‘megalithic culture’. Although I do not use that term explicitly, my lumping together megalithic practices as part of a proto-globalisation package suggests that I see unity and consistency in ‘megalithic’ practices over vast stretches of space and time, which would be in line with a notion of ‘megalithic culture’. My fieldwork on present-day (post-) megalithic practices in Ħumiriyya (North-western Tunisia), and more superficial acquaintance with such practices in West Java and South-western Sri Lanka (which lends a real-life dimension to my understanding of megalithic practices which no archaeologist can equal on the strength of her or his own disciplinary methods), suggests a few recurrent features which we may begin to discern as elements in a hypothetical megalithic culture: the concentration of ritual attention around large natural boulders systematically put in place by humans; the burning of candles and incense, and the presentation of other minor offerings (textile, oil, water, rudimentary ritual earthenware, broken utensils) at these spots; the ritual office of the site guardian; the functioning of these practices as public foci and emblems of the local, typically agricultural, community – and their use for the contradistinction (through prestigious megalithic ritual architecture) from adjacent, rival communities. (van Binsbergen 1985b, 2017; in prep. (h)) There is little in this package that suggests that it to be re-invented, time and time again, as an inevitable, compelling product of the allegedly converging universal human mind; on the contrary, it is very much an invention, specific in time and place, in other words a cultural trait. ‘Megalithic culture’ is a term used unabashedly by Middleton (1994: 13), who studied modern megalithic practices in Madagascar. Like political correctness, paradigmatic correctness should not prevent us from seeing what is before our very eyes, in this case long-range megalithic connections in space and time.

2. counter-Sunda
  3. reversing the arrows of (2) – this is Elliot Smith and Perry: the hypothesis of an intercontinental movement emanating from the western Old World (specifically Egypt) and ending in the Indo-Pacific
  4. non-Sunda
- Our best bet seems to be: 4 with a fair helping of 2 for the later periods (Fig. 13.5).

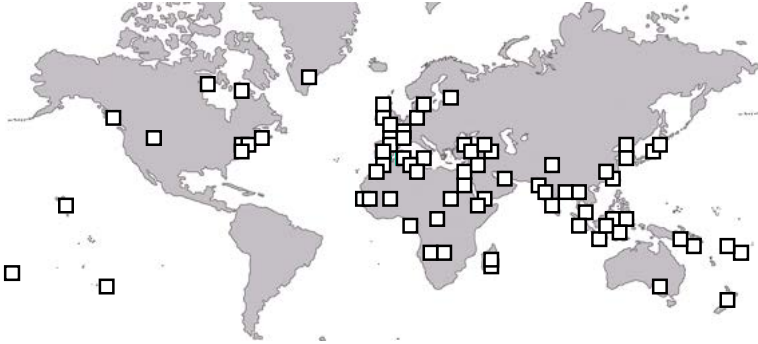


Fig. 13.1. Global distribution of megalithic practices (a) distribution (all categories lumped together)

Clearly, this global distribution has a few epicentres, one along the Atlantic coast of the Western Old World, another in West Asia, and a third in South East Asia. From the transcontinental perspective central to this book's argument, one would not dream of denying the possibility of all sorts of trans-local continuities. It would be little convincing to attribute the entire world distribution to diffusion from a South East Asian epicentre, as in the following figure

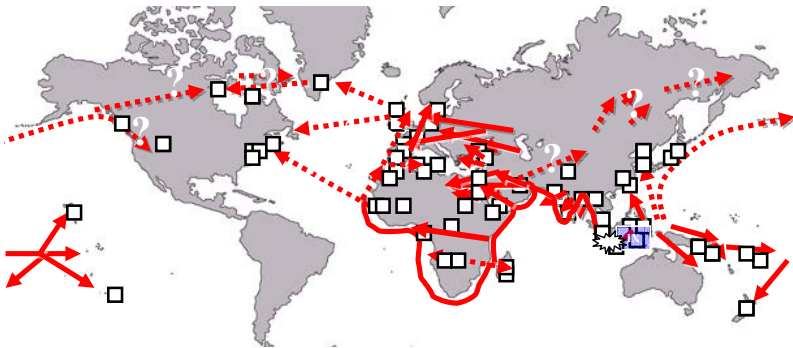


Fig. 13.2. Tentative historical reconstruction of megalithic phenomena (all categories lumped together; broken lines = conjectural): (a) Sunda epicentre

We might contemplate a 'Counter-Sunda model, where megalithic phenomena are not

emanating from South East Asia but instead have been taken there in the course of centuries – a model articulated by the British archdiffusionists Elliot Smith and Perry in the early 20th c. CE. The status of the Atlantic cluster is particularly dubious here, because with the  $C^{14}$  revolution in dating (Renfrew 1976) these constructions turned out to be older than their apparent homologues (the pyramids) in the Middle East.

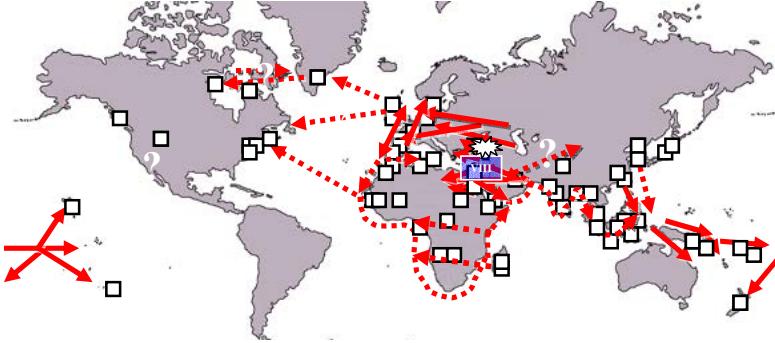


Fig. 13.3. Tentative historical reconstruction of megalithic phenomena (all categories lumped together): (b) West Asian epicentre, counter-Sunda diffusion (broken lines) in other words: Sunda is not origin but destination

Fig. 13.3 seems preferable over opting for the largely (apart from Madagascar ) non-Sunda model of the following figure:

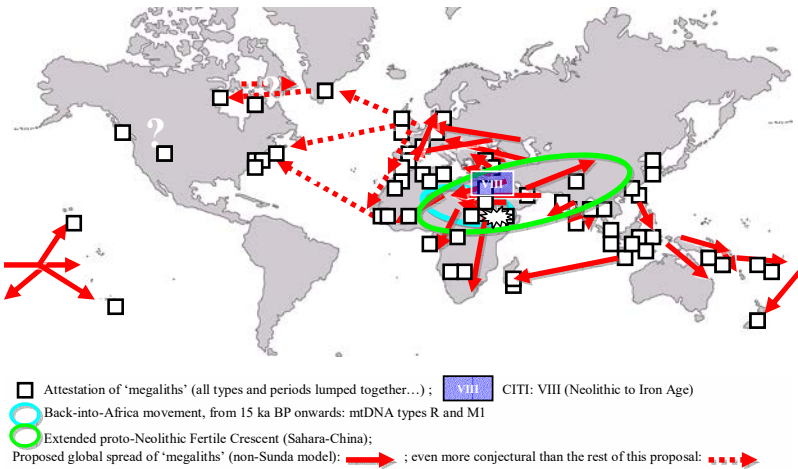


Fig. 13.4. Tentative historical reconstruction of megalithic phenomena (all categories lumped together): (c) West Asian epicentre, no major Sunda effects acknowledged.

I propose that a combination between a West Asian and A South East Asian epicen-

tre, and thus a limited Sunda diffusion, would produce the most convincing results:

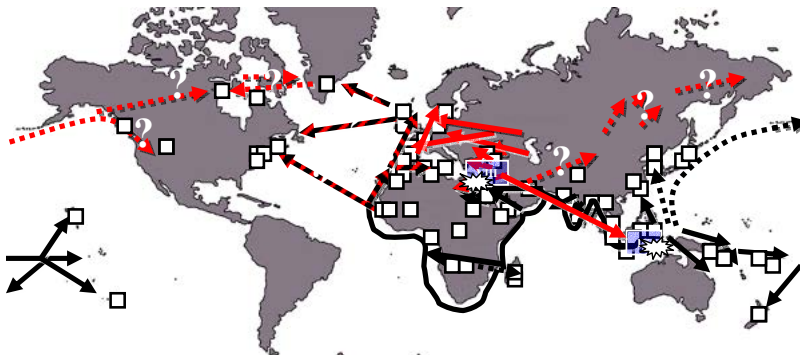


Fig. 13.5. Tentative historical reconstruction of megalithic phenomena (all categories lumped together): (d) West Asian (grey arrows) and secondary Sunda (solid black arrows) epicentre

In this way it becomes attractive to claim a limited Sunda effect upon the global distribution of megalithic practices.

### 13.2. Horse and sea / Poseidon

The next topic in our overview Table relates to the sea and the horse, and centres on the mythical figure of Poseidon. Given the prevalence of the primal god Vishnu in Hindu expressions in Indonesia c. 1000 CE, it is possible that Vishnu's fish-shaped avatar Matsya (cf. Oannes) also formed part of the hypothetical westbound Sunda complex. Admittedly, this is not very likely, because Hinduism only arrived in Indonesia several millennia after the postulated initial Sunda emigration wave. A fishlike god dominated religious representations in Ancient West Asia (Oannes – in whom Oppenheimer sees a Sunda element –, Ea / EN.KI; Levantine Dagon). A Greek homologue of Oannes seems to be Glaucus (= 'grey-green', i.e. colour of the sea – which is also in Ancient Egyptian the expression for the sea), one of whose four identities is that of a fisherman who became immortal when eating a certain plant – cf. Gilgamesh; Glaucus of Corinth owned the winged horse Pegasus (son of Poseidon); horses (cf. Poseidon) trampled another Glaucus, and it was Laocoon, the Poseidon priest at Troy who welcomed the Wooden Horse that allegedly was to be the city's doom. In the contested, allegedly traditionally Celtic story of Niam the sea god's daughter, Ossian was taken to a fabulous island in the eastern ocean, and returns by magic horse. In East and Central Asia, the shell-born demon Hayagriva 'horse-necked' protects horses but threatens the world order – a proper avatar of Poseidon, 'the Earth-Shaker'. It was on a river horse that Fu Xi discovered the eight trigrams that were to be the basis of Chinese cosmology. The forms of Mami Wata in West African cultures especially coastal ones, may be somehow related to this. However, there seems to be a modern bias here: not unlike the *sangoma* cult of Southern Africa (cf. van Binsbergen 2003,

2005), the Mami Wata mythical figure is particularly related to transregional, even transcontinental, contacts, the money economy, and commoditification.<sup>307</sup>



Fig. 13.6. Some attestations of the horse in rock art worldwide

Minos's bull (the Minotaur; *cf.* Cotterell 1989: 81) is from Poseidon;<sup>308</sup> that Bull was supposed to be sacrificed by Minos to Poseidon, but instead his Minos's wife Pasiphae makes love to the Bull. She is the Sun or the Moon – ‘the one who shines on all’ which also suggests the Heavenly connotations of the Bull – and of Poseidon as Lord of the Waters, also of the Waters Above. The link between Crete and Sicily is clear from the link Daedalus / Minos / Cocalus. There is a suggestion (particularly with Pausanias, *Descriptio Graeciae*, IX.11.4.f.) to the effect that Daedalus invented, not so much wings to fly, but sails – and that would make him another nautical hero. But where was the art of sailing really invented? Probably in South East Asia / Oceania. Also think of the Bene Kokalia on the Zambezi.

It is possible that Poseidon was traditionally represented, not as *associated with* a horse, but simply as a horse. If my hypothesis is correct that he dates from long before the installation of the sky religion and long before domestication of the horse, then it must have been a wild horse, probably a white wild horse. Representations of this may be found in rock art,<sup>309</sup> throughout Eurasia and especially in the Franco-Cantabrian Upper Palaeolithic – where, however, Poseidon is not at home. Following Karst (1931a), I see

<sup>307</sup> Of the extensive literature on Mami Wata I mention: Drewal 1988a, 1988b, 1988c, 2008; Frank 1995; Gore & Nevadomsky 1997; Kendall 2008; Morrow & Vokwana 2008; O'Brien-Wicker & Opoku 2007; O'Brien-Wicker 2000; Wendl 1991. Here, like in the study of witchcraft, we note a fashionable presentist tendency among anthropologists stressing modernity as explanation (Geschiere 1997; Comaroff & Comaroff 1999; *contra*: van Binsbergen 2001) – but in fact these complexes are millennia old.

<sup>308</sup> The Minoan civilisation was not only seaborne, but perhaps also indebted to the proposed Sunda migration. The Bull of Poseidon compares with the Bull of the Celestial Waters Above; *cf.* the Bull of Heaven in the Gilgamesh epic, the Cow of Heaven (= Mht Wrt = The Great Flood = Neith) in Ancient Egypt, *etc.*

<sup>309</sup> In Franco-Cantabrian rock art of the outgoing Upper Palaeolithic, the horse is by far the most frequently depicted animal species (24%), but next in line is the bison / bovine with 15% (abstract signs are also 15% -- the three categories account for well over half of all depictions; Leroi-Gourhan 1974; *cf.* Ruez-Nieto 1999-2000).

him as hailing from Neolithic Central Asia or perhaps from South East Asia. This throws a new light on several horse shapes of deities, e.g. Kannon (the Japanese version of Kuan Yin) is often depicted with a horse head (Willis p. 123: figure of horse head with third eye). Also there is the Celtic horse goddess Epona.

Perhaps the myth of Europa being abducted on the back of a bull does not commemorate the Phoenicians (who did not gain ascendancy before the Early Iron Age) but an earlier maritime civilisation with Proto-Indonesian influence; perhaps also Crete and Corinth, and their associated legends and myths, featuring horse and Poseidon, belonged to the same hypothetical complex.

### 13.3. *Anti / Antaios / Antaeus as a divine name*


Related to the theme of the incessant embrace of Heaven and Earth, which constitutes an East-West parallel, and still reminiscent of the Sunda Hypothesis, we may mention Anti, the Berber (Tamazigh) name of the Greek mythical figure Antaios / Antaeus (cf. Fontenrose 1980 / 1959: 331 f.). Antaeus fought with Heracles, and then it was manifest that Antaeus has power only when he touches the ground, 'his mother, the Earth'. This may be understood if we see in Anti / Antaeus a survival of Heaven in incessant embrace with Earth, in other words a primal, pre-Creation force. This tallies with the fact that, in Greek mythology, Gaia is Antaeus' mother but Poseidon his father: Poseidon is a masculine transformation of the earlier mythical figure of the Mother of the Waters, and we are very clearly back at the Water-Land cosmology – cf. the cosmogony of the Separation of Water and Land. However, as a Son of the Earth Antaeus has decidedly Pelasgian traits, which as we shall see brings him close to Sunda,. Besides being invincible as long as he touches ground, two main features of Antaeus are that

- he killed passers-by to build, out of their skulls, a temple for his father Poseidon; and
- he was vanquished by Heracles.

The second point may be easy to interpret: Heracles, with his club, can be recognised as a representation of the celestial axis – he is part of the 'Invention of Heaven' which rendered obsolete the Water-Earth cosmology and its derivatives, such as Antaeus. (For despite the latter's excessive length – specified in Antiquity as the equivalent of 30 m – his gigantic nature belongs to the gigantic connotations of White Gods (cf. van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011), not of the celestial pole, which is a concept belonging to the later cosmology of Heaven-Earth-Underworld.

For the building temples from skulls, I cannot find a systematic mythological interpretation (in 2010 I discussed some parallels also from South Central Africa). However, the myth reveals Antaeus to be a ritual headhunter, and such specialty can very well be accommodated within the Sunda Hypothesis (see the preceding chapter, on head-hunting). Other places postulated to be touched by Sunda influence have similar head-hunting elements, from the Ila in South Central Africa to the Ancient Irish and the Ligurians.

This does not exhaust Anti's attestations. Anti as the name of an Egyptian Under-

world god is already attested in the Second Dynasty, when a priest dedicated to Anti occurs; Anti is ‘the Traveler (*Nemty*; Hannig 2000: 898, the hieroglyphic sign  shows a falcon in a boat, not in Gardiner 1994 / 1927), and ‘the Ferryman’, who allowed the disguised Isis to be ferried to the island where the gods held council in the context of the conquest of Lower Egypt.<sup>310</sup> Although this does not look like the Berber Anti, it could have a common source in the Sunda context: *ānti* is the word for ancestor and god in the Gilbert Islands, Micronesia, Oceania (Cotterell 1989: 50).

In a footnote to my book *Vicarious Reflections* (2015: 27 n. 46) I returned to Anti, in the following terms:


‘(...) But although an Anti / Antaeus / \*a<sup>h</sup>nti<sup>h</sup> connection may be suggested in the light of the Oppenheimer–Tauchmann–Dick–Read Hypothesis for which especially in the African context evidence is now accumulating, such a suggestion does smack of the absurdities of an antiquarian super-diffusionism. The consonantal combination \*VntV is far too common to be pressed into service for such a far-fetched claim linking the Western Mediterranean and Oceania. Besides, plenty of alternative, *and probably equally unlikely and spurious*, long-range associations could be adduced in this connection:

- Proto-Altaic \*ant’a ‘slope’, with reflexes in Tungus-Manchu, Korean and Japanese < Nostratic \*Hant.V, ‘front’, < \*Borean \*HVNTV
- Eurasianic \*anTV, ‘to join, together’, with reflexes in Altaic (‘oath, comrade, match’), Dravidian and Chukchee-Kamchatkan, < \*Borean \*HVNTV, ‘to join, together’
- Japanese \*ámá-, \*ántí ‘taste, tasty, sweet’ < Proto-Eurasianic \*xamV < \*Borean \*HVMV ‘to taste, sour’
- Japanese, \*anti, ‘kind of duck’, Proto-Altaic \*āṅatV, ‘a kind of duck’ < Proto-Eurasianic \*āṅVtV, ‘duck’
- Japanese anti, ‘plough’ < Proto-Altaic \*amča ‘plough’
- Eurasianic \*aṅTV, ‘a kind of plant’, with reflexes in Indo-European, Altaic, Uralic and Dravidian
- Uralic \*onta < Proto-Eurasianic \*yontV, ‘heat’
- Uralic \*ontV ‘root, origin’, < Proto-Eurasianic \*ṅūṅṅe.

In the Uralic attestations there may be a spurious resonance with the male personal proper name Antti, which however must be considered to be totally outside the context here considered: it is derived from Graecised Biblical ‘Andreas’. At the other end of the world, Inti is the name of the Sun god of the Incas – which might be associated with the hypothetical *Anti*-complex that I am trying to put my hands on here. ‘

We cannot dwell any longer on the theonym Anti, whose transcontinental distribution seems fascinating, but so thin as to defeat any serious attempt at systematic interpretation.

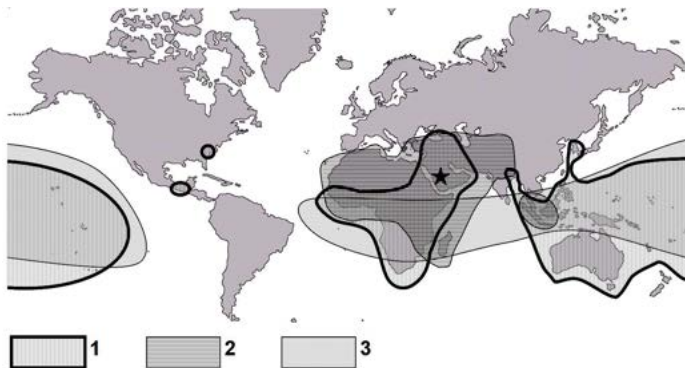
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<sup>310</sup>All this according to Anonymous, ‘Anti’ (mythology); also cf. Bonnet 1971 / 192: 38f, and Sethe 1930: § 5f. Antaeus is not just the name of an Ancient Greek mythological character, but also and especially that of an Ancient Egyptian god,,  ‘ntyw, ‘the two with claws’, in hawk shape. Apparently it was him who tried to prevent Isis’ crossing to Chemmis; she eluded him in the disguise of an old woman – probably the prototype of the stories, from Manenga to Hera, in which an old woman tests a junior male to take her across the water.

### 13.4. Male genital mutilation; with an afterthought on the female counterpart

#### 13.4.1. Distribution and historical reconstruction of male genital mutilation

At different points in space and time throughout the cultural history of Anatomically Modern Humans surgical operations have been culturally prescribed so as to make the human body (male or female) fit for full participation in adult society.<sup>311</sup> For males, this has often taken the form of various operations upon the penis, known as circumcision (affecting the prepuce) and subincision (a more comprehensive operation affecting the entire penis). The generic term 'male genital mutilation', while having the appearance of scientific objectivity, in fact conveys a modernist, dismissive, proactive view of such operations, even though, through Judaism and Islam, these have braved the millennia and are still annually performed on many thousands of males; regardless of religious affiliation, since it has become a standard so-called hygienic practice in cosmopolitan health care in the United States of America. The global distribution is analysed in van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011 (with references, as in Fig. 13.7 here).



Sources: Hastings 1909-1921 s.v. 'circumcision', notably the contributions by Gray, Spence, Foucart, Marcolliouth, Marc 1997; van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011; Lommel 1976; Anonymous, at: <http://www.circumstitions.com/Images/map-mgm66.gif>

1. Regions where male genital mutilation has been practiced 'traditionally' since pre-modern times
2. Extent of diffusion of male genital mutilation in the context of Islam, from Mecca (★), from 7th c. CE onwards
3. Distribution of hunched (bend-knee, bend-leg) statuettes (*cf.* inset; after Lommel 1976)

Fig. 13.7. Tentative distribution map of ancient male genital mutilation and of hunched statuettes

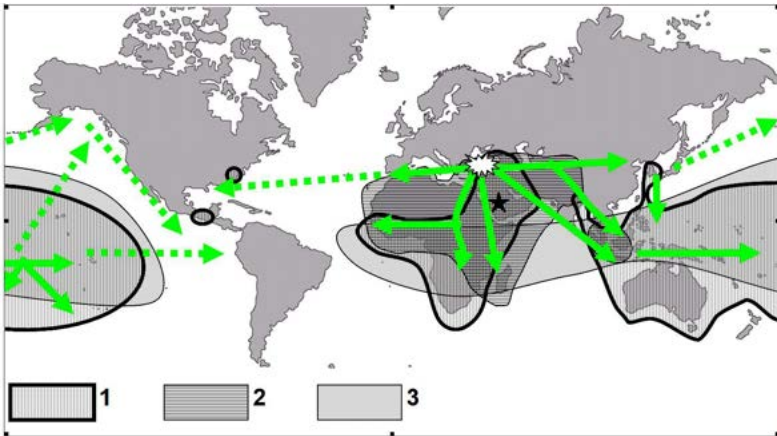
<sup>311</sup> The bibliography on genital mutilation is surprisingly extensive, and has grown substantially with the emergence of recent studies (as a new field of research open to institutional financial support) on HIV / AIDS. I have occasionally contributed to this field myself (*e.g.* van Binsbergen 1992, 1993). Nonetheless, for reasons of space I must limit myself to a bare minimum here, even though my proposal as to a Sunda connection of the institution of male genital mutilation (already made in 2007g) may constitute an original contribution to that literature.



When we look at the global distribution mapped in Fig. 13.8 below, the following observations may be made:

- a. The occurrence in 'pristine' (Atlantic) sub-Saharan Africa, Australia, and New Guinea suggests that male circumcision was part of the original 'Out-of-Africa' package ('Pandora's Box'), 80ka BP; however, the lack of report on this custom in the Andaman Islands seems to contradict this, and so does the absence of this custom in most of the New World and Eurasia.
- b. The Oceanian, Korean, most sporadic Native American, and Near Eastern pre-modern occurrences suggest links between the distribution of male genital mutilation and seafaring, notably Sunda expansion
- c. The apparent coincidence of the distribution of male genital mutilation with the Asian, Oceanian and African distribution of megaliths suggests that, much more recently, the trait was redistributed under Neolithic or Bronze Age conditions
- d. Points (b) to (d) may be considered to be in line with Oppenheimer's General Sunda Hypothesis.

If we do not take possible Sunda effects into account, this distribution pattern suggests the following historical reconstruction:



legend, see Fig. 13.7

Fig. 13.8. Tentative historical reconstruction of ancient male genital mutilation; no Sunda effect recognised

However, against the background of this book's overall argument, in which the possibility of Sunda effects is one of the major conclusions, I would prefer to revise this historical reconstruction in a Sunda sense. My specific reasons for this are several. In the first place, the proposed West Asian epicentre in Fig.

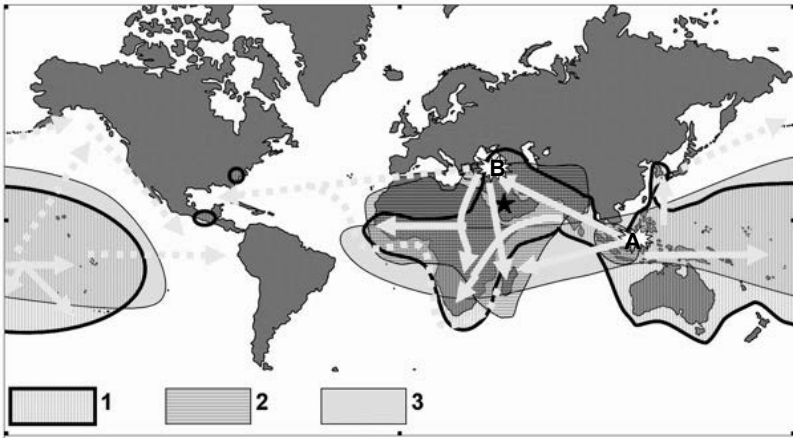
13.8 may be qualified since West Asia can also be considered a shunting station or end station of Sunda influence coming in from South East Asia; I propose not to give up the West Asian epicentre altogether, but to admit a second, possibly more primary, epicentre in South East Asia. From here, the transmission to Madagascar which we know for a historical fact, may be explicitly acknowledged. Also, the recognition of another epicentre situated in South East Asia (CITI IX), does tempt us to join the two main distribution areas:

- (a) Africa and West Asia;
- (b) South East Asia and Oceania,

and to admit massive impact from CITI IX and wider surroundings (which is incidentally a likely place of origin of Nigercongo, one of Africa's principal macrophyla, to which also the Bantu phylum belongs) upon Africa, not only from West Asia / Egypt in their own right, but especially in continuity with the Austric speaking regions of South East Asia and Oceania. Conceivably, westbound Sunda transmission across the Indian Ocean (supposedly an important element in the Back-into-Africa migration, anyway) was not limited to Madagascar but continued, rounding the Cape of Good Hope, possibly influencing Atlantic coastal Africa, the British Isles (*cf.* 'Black Irish' traditions), the North Sea, the Baltic, and perhaps the Caribbean. Finally, the distribution area of male genital mutilation coincides with that of hunched statuettes (Lommel 1976), and for the distribution of such statuettes it seems obvious that we rely on a Sunda explanation. According to such a Sunda-sensitive scenario, male genital mutilation would not have been a perennial aspect of African cultures straight from Pandora's Box, nor would it be an original Egyptian invention transmitted to sub-Saharan Africa,<sup>312</sup> but it may have been a trait in Western Eurasia since the Neolithic, and particularly be brought to both Egypt and sub-Saharan Africa through Sunda impact, from c. 6 ka BP on. The well-known attestations of male genital mutilation in Egypt (but not Libya, after which the Ancient Egyptian royal and aristocratic elite has often modelled its culture), the Caucasus, and one of the Sea Peoples (Ekwesh) at the end of the Bronze Age would then seem to fall into their proper place.

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<sup>312</sup> As claimed by Jeffreys 1949; *cf.* Bailey, 1996; Bardis 1967. What seems to contradict the interpretation of male genital mutilation in sub-Saharan Africa as the adoption of an originally Egyptian invention, is that early depictions of Black Africans in the Ancient Egyptian context may be argued to show signs of circumcision (Angulo & Garcia-Diez 2009). However, the pictorial evidence is slight and open to different interpretations, and the latter's urological argument is strikingly crude and naïve.



legend, see Fig. 13.7

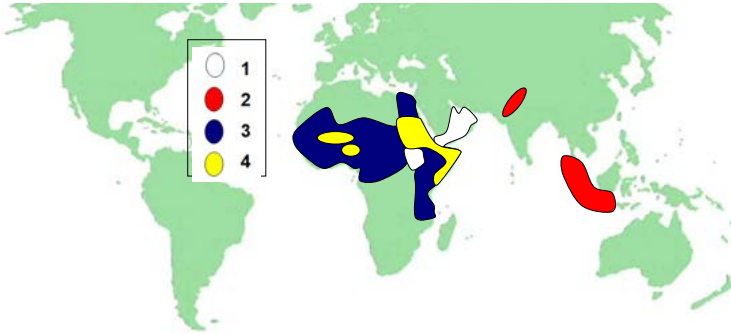
Fig. 13.9. Tentative historical reconstruction of ancient male genital mutilation; major Sunda factor (A) recognised, and subsequent secondary transmission (B) from West Asia

Fig. 13.9 displays a manifest focus on West Asia (B) as a secondary yet pivotal zone in the global distribution of male genital mutilation. But there is a lesson to be learned here. The global distributions of many ethnographic and mythological traits have focussed on West Asia, but from there they have been transmitted (largely through Pelasgian diffusion) in all directions); type cases are the global distribution of the spiked wheel trap, or the unilateral mythical figure (von Sicard 1968-1969; van Binsbergen 2010b). The case for male genital mutilation is rather different: the trait is rare, or downright absent, in most of Eurasia North of the line GibraltarMesopotamia–Korea, thus confirming West Asia not as an original epicentre but as a mere shunting spot. *Hence it is my contention that in this case, particularly, Pelasgian and Sunda transmission coincide, and that the trait is truly and originally Sunda.*

#### 13.4.2. An afterthought on female genital mutilation

We are tempted to extend our analysis towards female genital mutilation: the human genders are complementary, there is no culture among Anatomically Modern Humans among which the human genitals are not charged with great symbolic significance, so that a study of the female counterpart of male genital mutilation promises to be rewarding.

The distributional data are summarised in the following diagram 13.10:



1. Regions where some cases of female genital mutilation have been spotted (Sudan, Southern Arabian Peninsula)
2. Regions where female genital mutilation is practised by some Muslim groups (North-west India and Pakistan; South East Asia)
3. Circumcision and excision widespread in some groups (various part of Africa)
4. Regions where many women are infibulated (various parts of Africa)

Sources: Anonymous n.d. [ c. 2004 ], Incidence and Distribution of Female Genital Mutilation Worldwide; Hastings 1909-1921 s.v. 'circumcision'; Hrdy 1987; Genitalverstümmelung n.d.; also cf. Abdalla 1982; Population Council Jakarta, 2004; Anonymous, Incidence; Biology daily, 2007; Anonymous, Prevalence; Gilbert 1997; Dorkenoo 1994.

Fig. 13.10. Tentative distribution map of ancient female genital mutilation

If preliminary conclusions could be based on this distribution map, I propose the following:

1. Apart from the spread of Islam, surprisingly there seems to be no obvious connection between the world distributions of male and female genital mutilation; the two practices appear to be largely historically independent. If we see aspects of genital mutilation in Africa as related to Islam, it is important to realise that much of Islamic influence in Madagascar comes, not so much from Persia and the Arabian peninsula, but from Gujarat, and possibly also from Indonesia itself (Adelaar 1994).
2. Female circumcision in Indonesia appears to be introduced along with Islam.
3. Although the circum-Indian Ocean distribution of female genital mutilation is remarkable, yet no striking Sunda effect seems to be noticeable.
4. Elsewhere (2007c) I have raised the possibility of two Sunda waves affecting Africa: a very ancient wave associated with female genital mutilation, and a more recent one with the male counterpart; on second thoughts, no longer support this suggestion.
5. Like in the case of male genital mutilation, we must consider the possibility that its female counterpart is a very old trait, going back to Pandora's Box. Some authors in this field have actually assumed, without convincing and expert interpretation of adequate archaeological evidence, that either form of genital mutilation, or even both, go back to

at least the Upper Palaeolithic.<sup>333</sup> However, what militates against such an assumption for the female variety is the absence of attestations globally: the practice seems to be fairly absent in the Americas, Australia and Oceania, and hardly present in pre-globalisation Eurasia; it is limited to a belt from the Arabian peninsula to West Africa, and instances along the Indus valley and in Indonesia. If female genital mutilation could be argued to be a very ancient trait, a Sunda effect upon its recent transformation and recirculation might form an interesting hypothesis. Yet the subject is wrought with difficulties. What makes a Sunda dimension of female genital mutilation unlikely is the absence of female genital mutilation in the Mozambican-Angolan corridor, and elsewhere (*e.g.* much of the Mediterranean), where Sunda influence could be postulated.

### 13.5. *The trumpet*

An East-West parallel which for a long time eluded inclusion in my analysis, concerns *trumpets*. In Oceania and the Indo-Pacific they are made of large conch shells, and used in various ceremonial contexts. In South and Central Asia they are priestly attributes, especially in a Buddhist context, and again made of large shells. In the western Old World they appear in various contexts: as the large conch shell on which Triton announced the onset of the Flood in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, I; as the invention of Linus, son of Apollo (*e.g.* Woudhuizen in van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011); as an instrument of command, used and depicted in the Sea People's context at the end of the Bronze Age (for an illustration see van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: 378, Fg. 28.12); and as the Scandinavian *lurs*, with a long and thin, convoluted pipe, known from archaeological finds and rock art from the Bronze Age onward. Oppenheimer, when launching his Sunda Hypothesis, appealed to Scandinavian half-circular axe blades as a sign of Sunda impact. Personally I find that the *lurs* speak more to our imagination concerning the possible linking of Sunda and Scandinavia, although both the axes and the trumpets may be merely red herrings in the assessment of transcontinental connections.

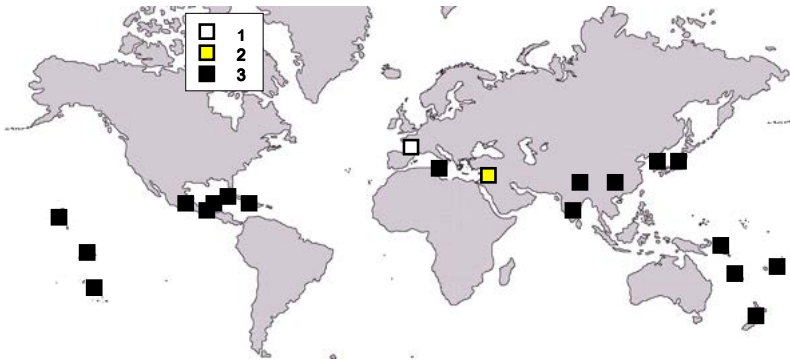
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<sup>333</sup> Cf. Willcox 1978; Verit *et al.* 2005; Angulo & García-Díez 2009. By implication, such a claim also seems to be made by the anonymous author in the 'Prehistory' special issue of *Mother Tongue* (Spring 1996), who cites male genital mutilation as a distinctive ethnographic trait of 'Afrasians', *i.e.* speakers of languages belonging to the Afroasiatic macrophylum, which may be considered to have emerged in Syro-Palestine in Natufian times, c. 12 ka BP. Such a time scale is incompatible with Sunda expansion, which – if it is not a red herring at all – could not have reached that region earlier than c. 8 ka BP, and probably only considerably later.



Source: <http://www.traveladventures.org/continents/oceania/mae-big-nambasoz.html>, with thanks

Fig. 13.11. A modern shell-trumpet / conch blower at Vanuatu, Melanesia, Oceania (2012)



Source: Anonymous, Conch

Fig. 13.12. Global distribution of the conch shell trumpet

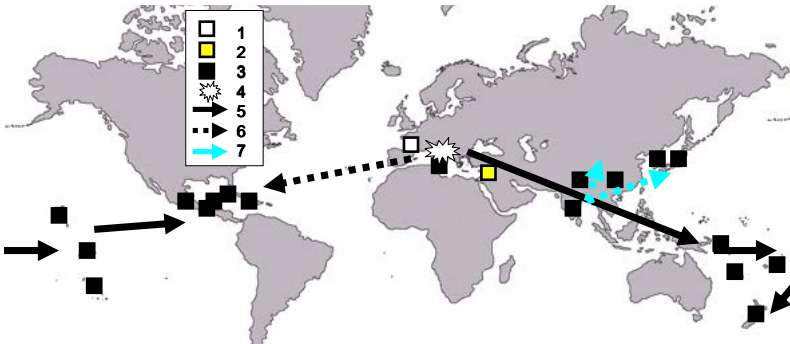


Fig. 13.13. Historical reconstruction of the conch shell trumpet (i) no Sunda

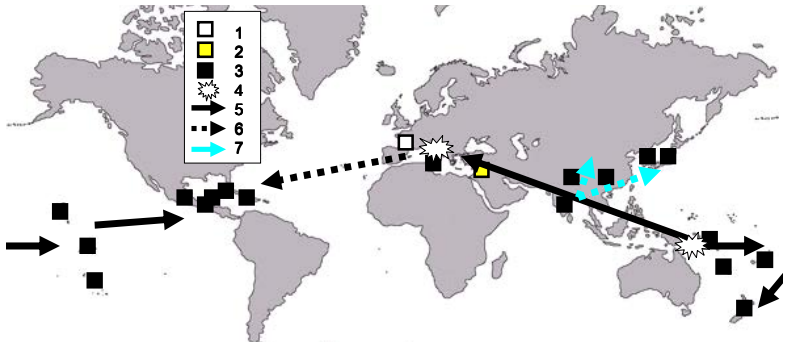


Fig. 13.14. Historical reconstruction of the conch shell trumpet (2): A. Sunda then B. South-western Eurasia

### 13.6. *Transcontinental maritime narratives*

An enormous literature, of both scholarly and fantastic / speculative signature, has grown around Plato's (late 4th c. BCE) accounts (*Critias*, *Timaeus*) of the maritime super-power of Atlantis. Plato's intimations do not stand on their own: the notion of maritime powers was prominent in traditions at the time, singling out various seafaring and pirate groups that, in succession, had held the Mediterranean in suspense: Leleges, Phoenicians / Carthaginians, Cappadocians, Cretans, Minoans, Cappadocians, Carians. In Late Antiquity, Eusebius presented a list of thalassocracies including these terrors of the sea (Burn 1927). While these groups are fairly well identified in time and place, we can still contemplate the possibility of the arrival of *uninvited guests*,<sup>314</sup> standing out by superior nautical skills or unusual physical characteristics, and ultimately candidates for identification as '*Phantom Voyagers*', i.e. westbound Sunda migrants. Karst (1931) repeatedly signals the sudden growth of nautical skills in the Mediterranean, as if they are due to an outside group arriving: Sunda? The Indus and Sumerian civilisation were connected through maritime transport (Thapar 1983; Possehl 1996; Gelb 1970), the Persian Gulf was traditionally considered the home of the Phoenicians (Katzenstein 1979: 29; Heeren 1838) – and given Oppenheimer's suggestion as to Sunda penetration to the Indus and the Persian Gulf, a distinct Sunda nautical influence may be surmised here. Also, the Neolithic Mediterranean saw the sudden emergence of major ports such as Joppe / Jaffa, and Corinth – which might also be considered, speculatively, as signs of Sunda penetration.

### 13.7. *Sign systems: Indus / Rapanui*

Up to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> c. CE, the graphic systems of the Indus Valley civilisation and those of Easter Island / Rapanui have often been considered to be significant terms of the kind of East-West parallels we are investigating here. Discovered at Rapanui / Easter Island (the easternmost inhabited spot of Polynesia) in 1868, the so-called *rongorongo* script has continued to puzzle archaeologists and linguists ever since. In the early decades of the 19th c. CE, the Indus Valley civilisation had been discovered, with such type sites as Harappa and Mohenjo Daro, and although its graphic signs<sup>315</sup> have so far not been deciphered convincingly despite courageous attempts and bold claims in that direction (Parpola 1994; Winters 1981; Jha & Rjaram 2000), similarities

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<sup>314</sup> In van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011, in connection with the Mediterranean Bronze Age, I speak of 'uninvited guests' to designate local groups that stand out by somewhat exceptional genetic, linguistic and/or cultural traits in discontinuity with their immediate surroundings and particularly in variance with scholars' dominant paradigms. A good example is the presence of Proto-Bantu-speakers in Syro-Palestine, as manifested by the hydronym Jabbok, which lacks a convincing Afroasiatic etymology but means, most appropriately, 'fordable river' in Proto-Bantu.

<sup>315</sup> I consistently refer to 'graphic signs' and not to 'script', because some authors have cogently argued that by a number of criteria (e.g. *the attestation of longer texts*), the Indus corpus cannot be called 'a script' (Farmer *et al.* 2004).





### 13.8. Possible Sunda connotations of throwing-sticks and boomerangs – not confirmed, on closer scrutiny

Human beings seem to have invented throwing spears rather before the rise and spread of Anatomically Modern Humans: dates between 120 and 400 ka have been suggested.<sup>316</sup> However, throwing spears are not throwing-sticks. At first glance, throwing-sticks and boomerangs (assuming they may be lumped as one type) would appear to provide an excellent Sunda case, with attestations all along the proposed Sunda trajectory:

1. There is the obvious link of the boomerang with Australia. Of the three migration waves constitutive of Australian populations and cultures, only the most recent one, producing the Carpentarians, is Indonesian-derived; therefore, the Sunda effect on the boomerang is likely to be slight.
2. In Canto XII of the Babylonian version of the Gilgamesh epic (which is only imperfectly connected with the narrative of the preceding Cantos) Gilgamesh loses what is usually translated as a drum with drumstick<sup>317</sup> but what might also be a throwing-stick such as were repeatedly recorded in the Ancient Mesopotamian literature.<sup>318</sup> The object falls into the Underworld through a hole, and when his friend Enkidu goes after it, he is trapped there forever (de Liagre Böhl 1958).
3. A similar story among the Chewong people, a hunting-gathering people from the Malay Peninsula (Willis 1994: 304): another sign of the postulated Neolithic / Bronze Age transcontinental maritime network; but the initial indebtedness is not necessarily, not even likely, from hunter-gathers (Malaysia) to one of the first complex<sup>319</sup> societies in world history (Ancient Mesopotamia), but rather in the reverse direction. The story is extremely interesting: the Chewong boy descends to the Underworld, learns about night and fire, and brings back the latter in a reed – and the latter has a parallel in the Greek myth of Prometheus (who brought fire from Heaven concealed in a *narthex*, i.e. reed stalk; Hesiod, *Theogonia*); however, the story also has a parallel in recent ethnographic practice: among Australian Aborigines elderly women still have to carry and tend their fire-sticks from camp to camp in the 20th c. CE (Tindale c.s. 1978).
4. The spinning-woman who drops her shuttle by the spring, North-western Europe

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<sup>316</sup> Holleman 1998: 62; the oldest date mentioned here is fairly well established for the Lower Palaeolithic hunting spears from Schoeningen, Germany: Thieme 1997.

<sup>317</sup> Fontenrose (1980: 172):

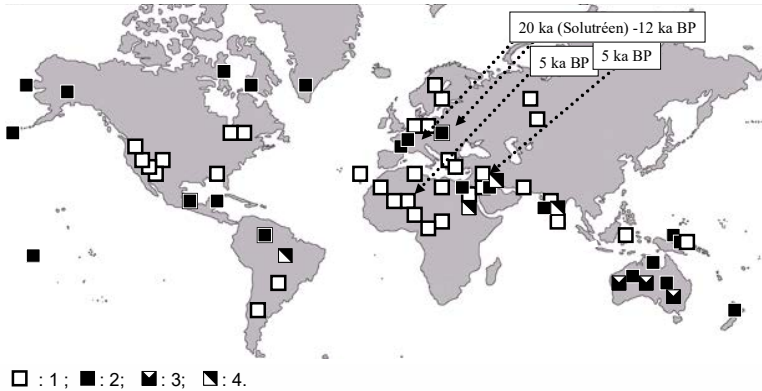
‘Then Gilgamesh and his companions cut down the tree. From the wood Inanna made a *pukku* and *mikku* (drum and drumstick?) which she gave to Gilgamesh.’ (Kramer 1938, 1944)

<sup>318</sup> Cf. Bermant & Weitzman, 1979: 44 (the name of the town of Ebla mentioned in the context of the purveyance of dozens of ‘woods’, with further references to Pohl 1937; Landsberger 1939).

<sup>319</sup> By ‘complex’ I here denote the presence of the decisive *logocentric* cultural package of writing, the state, organised religion, and (proto-)science, which (notwithstanding Chinese and Meso American indications to the same effect) first emerged in the Ancient Near East including Ancient Egypt, and which was to largely determine the further course of world cultural history.

(‘Frau Holle’, Grimm, Aarne-Thompson: ATo480).<sup>320</sup> Like any surface water (sea, river, stream, well, even<sup>321</sup> water closet), the spring is an entry to the Underworld, where the dead and the ancestors abide according to widespread beliefs; the spindle or shuttle is a woman’s implement par excellence, feminine homologue of the masculine throwing-stick; moreover, the shuttle is also thrown)

5. Thor’s hammer (Ancient North-western Europe) is also some kind of throwing stick
6. Throwing sticks / boomerangs also in Ancient Libya / Egypt; for the Ancient Egyptians such weapons were the hieroglyphic sign (𓏏); Gardiner no. T14) for foreign peoples, and effectively used as determinative in that connection.<sup>322</sup>
7. Magic clubs, probably throwing-sticks, constitute the Canaanite Ba’al’s weapons in his combat with Yam / the Sea (Fontenrose 1980: 130)
8. An underlying model: The Demiurge falls from Heaven and, murdered on Earth (often: because he is to be eaten as a food crop), falls into the Underworld; this is the model for many Demiurges all over the world, and is really another application of the NarCom 2: the Re-connection between Heaven and Earth.



Sources: mainly Lench 1947; *atlatl* from Hrdlicka 2004)

1. ‘throwing stick’ unspecified
2. ‘throwing stick’ = *atlatl*
3. returning boomerang
4. returning boomerang claimed but doubtful

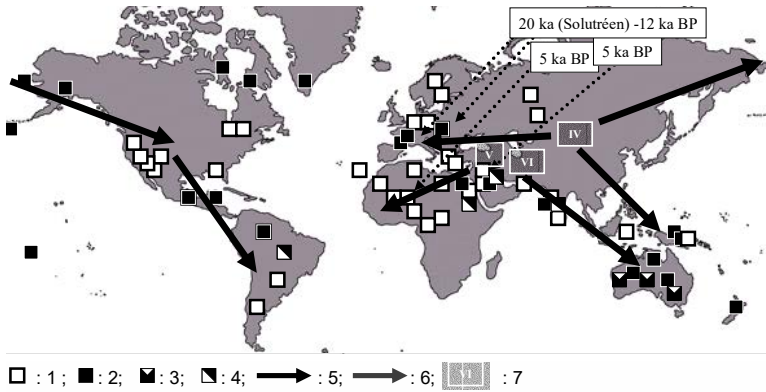
Fig.13.16. Global distribution of throwing-sticks and boomerangs

<sup>320</sup> Since the early 20th century, a common system of classification in the study of myth has been that of the Finnish folklorist Aarne, half a century later revised by Thompson, and only very recently renewed by Hans-Jörg Uther.

<sup>321</sup> Cf. Sengers 2003, with reference to women’s life world in Egypt today.

<sup>322</sup> E.g. ‘Libya’, *Thnw*, 𓏏, *Pyramid Texts* variant 𓏏𓏏𓏏 : Gardiner 1994: 513.

The relevant distribution in space and time is relatively well studied: Hrdlicka 2004 and Lenoç 1949, cf. Heitmann *et al.*, n.d.; Franz 1928, who reminds us that Virgil (1886) makes mention of the *cateia*, which a gloss by Servius (cf. Ernout & Meillet 2001 s.v. *cateia*; Servius 1826 / c. 400 CE) interprets as a throwing-stick; so does Isidorus of Sevilla (1850 / c. 600 CE, *Etymologia*), specifying that it is curved, which suggests a boomerang. Franz also points out the attestation of the throwing-stick in Darfur, Western (modern) Sudan, which scarcely supports the idea of a Sunda connection although it might be considered to be situated due north of one of the apparent East-West Sunda corridors through the African continent: one from Kenya / West Africa, and another from Mozambique to Angola.



LEGEND as previous figure; 5. Diffusion from IV; 6. diffusion from VI; 7. CITI

Fig. 13.17. Tentative historical reconstruction of throwing-sticks and boomerangs: non-Sunda

By and large I tend to the conclusion that the global distribution of throwing-sticks and boomerangs scarcely manifests signs of a Sunda effect.

This concludes our inspection of various additional traits which required more discussion than could be accommodated in our large overview tables of East-West parallels. We may now proceed to the consideration of a global maritime network (in which ultimately all one-directional Sunda arguments may be dissolved) and to the conclusions, both on East-West parallels and on the overall assessment of the Sunda Hypotheses as a whole.

# Chapter 14. *One World, in proto-globalisation*

## **Towards a global maritime network from the Bronze Age onward**

### *14.1. Introduction*

Towards the end of this monograph, it turns out to be necessary to adopt a radical change of perspective. So far we have explored empirical indications for one-directional Sunda influences on the Western Old World. But is this not, subconsciously, a further application of the pernicious, hegemonic idea (which for instance had an enormous impact on anthropology) that the world was utterly fragmented into unconnected parts, until the light of European expansion, colonisation and imperialism united the world and gave it its present shape? The mathematics of the situation are clear and compelling: whosoever starts out from any particular spot on the Earth's surface, and steadily keeps the same course, will go around the world and return to the point of departure. The spherical form of the earth, and the technological requirements for transcontinental travel (mainly navigation) imply that unidirectional transmission of ideas, goods and people can only be an initial stage, inevitably followed by multicirectional, multcentred transmission. Sunda may be an apt metaphor of more general transcontinentality, but it cannot be one of monocentred onedirectionality.

After preoccupying myself for a quarter of a century with, among other things, transcontinental continuities such as became manifest in my fieldwork data from various locations in Africa (later also Asia) and in library research on the global history of geomantic divination systems, leopard-skin symbolism, and other aspects of comparative mythology, I have become convinced *that from the Early Bronze Age onward, a transcontinental global maritime network has emerged, with minute beginnings at first, but gradually, with the growth of technology and navigational experience, extending and reinforcing so as to finally encompass the entire globe.* The explanatory potential of such a model – provided it can be substantiated in the first place! – are obvious: amazing and persistent parallels (such as we have studied in Part II of the present book) between continents, in the fields of genetics, demography, comparative ethnography, comparative religion and comparative mythology, no longer need to be attributed to chance nor to the alleged converging workings of the universal human mind, but can be understood on the basis of plain mechanisms of communication commensurate to the level of technology of the periods involved.

One major implication of the idea of such a network is that all transcontinental continuities in principle extend in all directions across the full width and height of the globe.

The great advantage of a global network is that insights and connections understood at one end of the network, may – with sufficient care – be taken and applied to explain phenomena at a very different end of the network. For instance, the symbolic function and narrative connotations of a mythical wagtail bird surfacing in a Japanese cosmogonic myth (*Kojiki*, Philippi 1968; Chamberlain 1982) where the primal gods and siblings Izanami and Izanagi learn from the bird's movements the secret of human sexual intercourse, may in principle be invoked to shed light on a cosmogonic myth from South Central Africa in which, apparently out of the blue, the same bird appears (van Binsbergen 2010a; Jacottet 1899-1901).

Another implication of this postulated world maritime system amounting to a *network* is that in principle, strictly unidirectional movements are to be considered exceptions, and movements in all directions the normal situation. The network allows for the percolation of narratives, ideas, objects, institutions, people, without enabling us to point out any very definite origin and definite destination. *In this light the analysis of Sunda effects in our preceding examination of East-West parallels needs to be reconsidered with great caution, and on many points its suggestion of unidirectionality to be corrected.* If in Nigeria, Polynesia, and Ancient Greece, the mating of the two primal gods is thought to have prevented reality to be born because the birth channel was obstructed, such a myth need not have travelled from A to B to C, but it may in the first place be considered the shared transcontinental mythical package derived from an unknown context to which all three attested cases may be indebted. We may exert great efforts to identify that unknown context, but it could be anywhere in space (as long as we stick to terrestrial space – Temple's 1976 appeal to extraterrestrials must be rejected) and time, considering the fact that basic knowledge of human and mammal obstetrics is inevitably universal among Anatomically Modern Humans, Even among non-human Primates senior females act as midwives / birth attendants.

But can such a model of a global maritime network be substantiated at all?

The series of world maps presented here offer a graphic representation of this model, according to which a global maritime network began to establish itself in the Early Bronze Age, and gradually expanded and contracted and closed into itself so as to become a coherent system of transcontinental connections in subsequent millennia – the last phase being attained with European mercantile expansion in the Early Modern Age. A widespread scholarly contention (represented, among others, by Witzel 2012) is that preciously little is known with certainty about transregional and transcontinental contacts in prehistory; hence Witzel's strategy, when unfolding his argument in his 2012 magnum opus on the *The Origins of the World's Mythologies*, to dispense with the consideration of transcontinental continuities in their own right, ignore such equitemporal horizontal transcontinental exchanges as no doubt – to judge by the data adduced in the present book – have taken place, and instead to give precedence to such genetic reconstruction as the retrieval of the human genome in recent decades has made possible. Needless to say that by doing so, Witzel had to ignore one of the fundamental principles of the anthropological discipline (to the effect that culture is emphatically not anchored in the genes but acquired and transmitted through a social communicative learning process, that may well transcend the – usually merely statistical, dynamic, imperceptible – boundaries of a local or regional gene pool. He also had to ignore (as he was bound to do, as essentially a *Geisteswissenschaftler* who has no personal, independent access to genetics and its advanced statistical techniques) the fact that recent molecular-biological reconstructions of the genetic history of Anatomically Modern Humans invariably involve such enormous error functions that any attempt to use such reconstructions as inputs in qualitative analyses such as comparative mythology, is bound to be based on sand, on mere reified analytical artefacts, handled by a sorcerer's apprentice.

Despite Witzel's ignoring of transcontinental continuities, rather the opposite is the case (also cf. Mair 2006). As I will demonstrate below, the relevant scholarly literature is extensive, but since the hypothesis of a gradually unfolding global maritime network is relatively new and counter-paradigmatic, little of that literature – written with very different world models in mind, e.g. Eurocentric hegemonic expansion and domination – can be directly pressed into service to substantiate that model. As a result I cannot claim that the following discussion does effectively and totally underpin the validity of the model of a transcontinental maritime network evolving since the Early Bronze Age. All I can maintain is that the existing literature suggests such a model to be very plausible. This is really as far as I can go, and need to go. As a retired Africanist anthropologist *cum* intercultural philosopher I largely lack the knowledge, the facilities, the funding, and the institutional support to bring such an enormous, world-wide task of substantiation through library research to a good end – I gladly leave that task to others. In fact, part of that task has already been completed by others.<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>323</sup> E.g. in the work of Philippe Beaujard (2010); Beaujard & Fee 2005; Bodomo 2001. Ackermann *et al.* 2008 (on maritime trade routes 1st c CE, Africa / Asia, 2008: I, 24; 1st c. CE: I M24; 2nd mill BCE,

## 14.2. Genetic indications

Shortly after the discovery of blood groups and Rhesus factors, and the mapping of other genetic markers, it was realised that these markers could be used to gauge transcontinental contacts. The Australian-born, South African-based physical anthropologist Raymond Dart (famous for his crucial discoveries in the field of the *Australopithecus* early hominids in Southern Africa) pioneered such transcontinental links using blood groups and other classic genetic markers. A quarter of a century ago, when – just before genetics made the paradigm shift towards molecular biology – the leading Italian geneticists Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* (1994) published what may be regarded as the swan’s song of that classic genetic paradigm, the numerous global and continental maps they constructed may largely be read as evidence for the emerging transcontinental contacts – often overland but also maritime. This is the type of material which Stephen Oppenheimer used in his seminal formulation of the Sunda Hypothesis (1998). Especially various types of thalassaemias (hereditary anaemic conditions) play a large role in his argument. Meanwhile, as a mere gate-crasher in genetics,<sup>324</sup> I have argued (van Binsbergen 2019d) that the evidence from thalassaemias is less than totally conclusive, but that other markers support Oppenheimer’s findings nonetheless. One particularly striking genetics finding I found the following: Arnaiz-Villena *et al.* 1999 sought to determine the origin of the (present-day) Cretan populations as determined by characterization of HLA alleles. They found that the Indo-European-speaking Greeks were relative newcomers in the Mediterranean (another one of their studies assigned a transcontinental, probably African origin to them; Arnaiz-Villena *et al.* 2001),

‘...while all other studied Mediterraneans (including Cretans) belong to an older substratum which was present in the area since pre-Neolithic times. A significant Turkish gene flow has not been detected in the Greek or Cretan populations, although Greeks and Turks have two high frequency HLA-DRB-DQB haplotypes in common. It is proposed that Imazighen (Caucasoid Berbers living at present in the North African coast and Saharan areas) are the remains of pre-Neolithic Saharan populations which could emigrate northwards between about 8000-6000 B.C., when desert desiccation began. They also could be part of the stock that gave rise to Sumerians, Cretans and Iberians; this is supported by both linguistic and HLA genetic data’.

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Central Mediterranean, I M8)); Early Modern period, South East Asia and Japan (2008: III); Harley & Woodward, I-II) bring together a splendid overview of the global history of cartography, indispensable for our present topic; equally entertaining is Lester 2011 / 2009. Africa’s transcontinental connections are traced, *e.g.* in Mitchell 2005; van Binsbergen 2019a. Moreover, entire libraries have been filled with travel reports, studies and commentaries relating to the European Age of Discovery, Early Modern times. I mention a mere selection: Amherst & Thomson 1901; Burney 1803; Prévost *et al.* 1746; Hakluyt 1905 and many dozens of publications by the Hakluyt Society; Harrisse 1890, 1892; Murray 2001. Interesting further steps in the production of a global maritime history leading towards an early maritime network, would be: McLaughlin 2010; Stearns 2001; Christian & McNeill 2004; Park 2012; Harley & Woodward 1987; de Silva Jayasuriya & Angenot 2017; and, especially from an African perspective, Mitchell 2005.

<sup>324</sup> As part of my undergraduate training in anthropology at Amsterdam University in the 1960s, I did a mere field – including genetics – with the physical anthropologist R.A.M. Bergman, a vocal advocate (like Lévi-Strauss, and Ashley Montagu) of the total abolition of the concept of race from the canon of science.



*Sumerians, Cretans and Iberians*,<sup>325</sup> whatever their Saharan affinities (which I doubt) constitute an unexpected chain of peoples who, if the Sunda Hypothesis were to be taken literally, would serially have undergone Sunda impact. Since Arnaiz-Villena *et al.* seem to be largely unaware of the Sunda implications of their findings, one could scarcely have hoped for a more convincing genetics confirmation.

Looking at Africa, we may detect a few East-West / coast-to-coast corridors of genetic markers (e.g. of the Rhesus-D gene), which may well be tell-tale signs of Sunda impact: from Mozambique to Angola, and from Kenya / Tanzania to the Bight of Benin. Another African feature is the remarkable resistance to malaria among the Fulani cattle-herders – probably due to their carrying the gene responsible for alpha-thalassaemia, which reaches global heights in New Guinea, continental South East Asia, Iran, the Arabian peninsula (where the Fulani claim to originate) and Central West Africa (the Fulani's present home area; do we encounter here descendants of a Sunda invasion cluster? It is quite likely: Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994 also draw the Phoenicians within this orbit. Even the Greeks – so pivotal in the hegemonic construction of European cultural and racial superiority since Early Modern times; Bernal 1987 – have been demonstrated to have not a local but a transcontinental origin (Arnaiz-Villena *et al.* 2001) – the displacement of entire peoples was a time-honoured political strategy in the Ancient Near East, and part of the alleged Egyptian-Greek continuity which has been the bone of contention in the *Black Athena* debate, may have its roots in this strategy (another part may still be explained, as Martin Gardiner Bernal initially maintained with limited plausibility, in terms of downright colonisation of the Aegean by Egyptians in Old Kingdom times).

### 14.3. *Sunda: Indications from comparative mythology and comparative ethnography*

Much of the present book, and particularly the extensive discussion of East-West parallels in Part II, deals with the empirical substantiation, if any, of one particular kind of transcontinental contact: the Sunda Hypothesis (General, or in the specifically mythological Special variant). Oppenheimer, Dick-Read and Tauchmann (with Hutton 1946 as a major predecessor) have insisted on the relevance of Sunda demic or cultural diffusion, by maritime means, from the Indo-Pacific / Oceania to (among other destinations) the coasts of the Indian Ocean. The viewpoint is relatively new in the light on the much older, and better established, studies of East Africa as the scene of the transcontinentally-produced Swahili identity,<sup>326</sup> in which Austric /

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<sup>325</sup> *I.e.* 'Iberians of the West': Spain and Portugal – with established affinities with the Eastern Iberians of West Asia, who have recognised Sinocaucasian linguistic associations. Elsewhere in this book the Uralic and Austric affinities of the Ancient Sumerians have been briefly considered.

<sup>326</sup> Chittick & Rotberg 1979; Middleton 1991; Horton & Middleton 2000; de Vere 1992; Horton 1986; Nurse & Spear 1985; Prins 1967; Vérin 1989; and, as an unfortunately hegemonic statement slighting African initiative, Hromník 1981.

Austronesian elements have seldom been recognised.<sup>327</sup>

In connection of the Indian Ocean, Oppenheimer stressed the impact on Asia (Indus Valley,<sup>328</sup> Persian Gulf (where many scholars situate the Sumerians<sup>329</sup> mythical

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<sup>327</sup> To the once Leiden professor of African linguistics, Thilo Schadeberg (1994) I owe the – apparently contentious – observation to the effect that in the East African Bantu language Mukuwa, as in Sotho / Tswana, peculiar features occur which he was inclined to interpret as evidence of a Madagascar substrate, i.e. as Austronesian < Austric. Much later I conducted my own statistical analyses of the reconstructed proto-lexicons of the world's macrophyla including Nigercongo (> Bantu), which led me to recognition of a Peripheral Branch as one of the two Branches (the other being the Central or Continental Branch, with Eurasian, Afroasiatic and Sinocaucasian) into which the hypothetical \*Borean language form disintegrated in Central to East Asia during the late Palaeolithic (cf. above, Table 4.4; and Fig. 4.5 in van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: 77; van Binsbergen 201f; van Binsbergen, in prep. (b)).

<sup>328</sup> The rise of Early Dynastic Egypt (from c. 3100 BCE) occurred a millennium before the rise of the Indus civilisation; the latter was in relatively well documented maritime contact (Thapar 1983) with Sumer on the mouth of the rivers Euphrates and Tigris. The impact of Sumer upon Early Dynastic Egypt, e.g. in terms of writing system and architecture is generally accepted (Rice 1990; Mark 1998). Various authorities (Cornelius 1957; Stricker 1963-1989, especially vol. V: Conclusion) have stressed the continuity between Ancient Egyptian religion, and that of Hinduism especially among Dravidian-speakers now concentrated in South India. While rejecting the sweeping Heliolithic Hypothesis of Elliot Smith and Perry (also cf. Rivers 1915), there is certainly a case for the maritime transmission (and overland transmission via Mesopotamia, for that matter) of Egyptian religion and other aspects of culture, to South Asia of the late 2nd and the 1st mill BCE. Religion tends to be a domain of culture where extreme cultural inertia tends to manifest itself – largely because of the formidable structures of institutional power, social control, and supernatural sanctioning surrounding and underpinning that domain, and rendering it less prone to change and cultural drift. This makes it possible for Tamil-speaking Hindu religious practice in South India today to be still strikingly reminiscent – as I could personally witness during fieldwork in 2012 – of Ancient Egyptian religion as massively documented in ancient sources, and studied in numerous Egyptological monographs.

<sup>329</sup> Sumer deserves to occupy a key position in Sunda discussions, since the Persian Gulf (at the mouth of the rivers Euphrates and Tigris) is supposed to be the site of the landfall of Sunda influence in West Asia (Oppenheimer 1998; Temple 1976). Nonetheless it is doubtful whether we may situate here the emergence of nautical skills that were to inspire the western Old World in subsequent millennia: as Tom Vosmer (1997) declared: 'no ancient wreck of a vessel indigenous to the western Indian Ocean has ever been found'. Forgotten for over two millennia, the Sumerian language, polity and culture were rediscovered by modern North Atlantic scholarship in the course of the 19th c. CE; despite the immense difficulty of early cuneiform writing the language has now been fully understood; but Sumerian's comparative classification continues to present difficulties. Striking affinities between Sumerian and Munda (< Austroasiatic < Austric, by today's terminology) were claimed by Rivet (1929) and confirmed by the more recent leading linguist I.M. Diakonov (I owe this reference to Vaclav Blažek); cf. Manansala (n.d. and 1995). This is an additional argument for a Sunda connection of Sumer. The big problem with all such affinities is that they need not be explained from horizontal borrowing across language (macro-)phyla at a given moment in history (at time  $T_1$ ), but often may be explained more plausibly, under conditions of the disintegration of a hypothetical but reliably reconstructed parent language \*Borean (and its lower-level derivatives), as different reflexes from the same higher-level etymon having ended up in different phyla and different parts of the globe, in other words: as two lexical forms, wide apart in space and time, yet having a common origin in the remote past, i.e. at  $T_0$  ( $T_1 \gg T_0$ ). Our linguistic long-range methodologies are not always powerful enough to reliably distinguish between two such situations. The same problematic of course rises when we believe to discern Austric lexical elements in Indo-European or in Afroasiatic (Pedersen n.d., who explicitly applies Oppenheimer's Sunda Hypothesis in order to 'explain' his claimed findings (risking to render them cyclical and tautological).

island of Dilmun, e.g. Bahrayn; Alster 1983 – and from there possibly to the Red Sea, Egypt, and Phoenicia<sup>330</sup>) and Dick-Read and Tauchmann especially the impact upon Africa including Madagascar (cf. Vérin 1975; Madagascar, as Birkeli 1936 claims, may have been populated not directly from Indonesia, but indirectly via continental Africa). Dick-Read, and in his footsteps I myself, insisted that the Sunda influence was not limited to the Indian Ocean but spilled over into the Atlantic Ocean; there are some indications that from there it may even have penetrated to the Mediterranean, the North Sea, and the Baltic Sea. Many more cases could be made for other regions, and for other mechanisms of transmission than Sunda. But again, the counter-paradigmatic nature of this line of transcontinental research (often ridiculed as an ‘antiquarian’ form of ‘diffusionism’ (cf. Cazeau & Scott 1979: ch. 1) has ensured that few mainstream studies actually provide the empirical discussions so much needed on this point.

Meanwhile we must not overlook the extent of uncontested Sunda influence eastward upon Oceania, where due to relatively recent immigration (mainly during the last handful of millennia) virtually the entire Pacific Ocean region shares the same substrate culture, religion, and linguistic sub-macrophylum (Austronesian; cf. Bellwood 1991; Blust 1995).

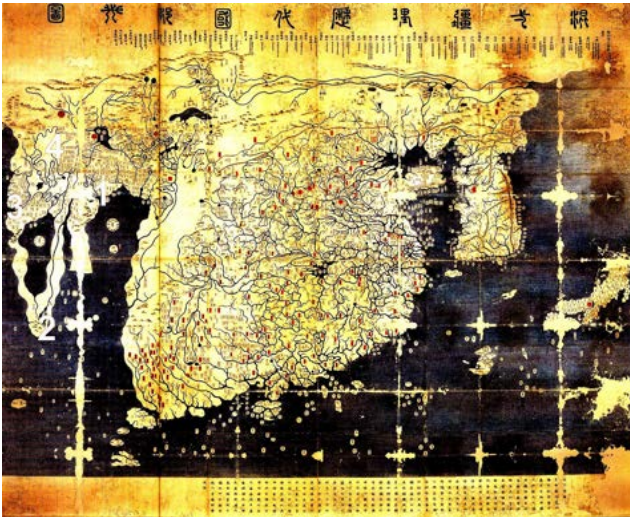
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<sup>330</sup> Cf. Curl 1885, whose argument on Phoenician Polynesia however does not rise above the simple comparison of a few graphic signs. Much more serious and convincing is Harrison 1875 on Phoenician characters from Sumatra. Since much of the gold of the western Old World from the Early Bronze Age on derived from either Sumatra or Zimbabwe, the presence of West (and South) Asian prospectors and traders in Indonesia (and in South Central and Southern Africa, for that matter) need not surprise us. The Phoenicians became the main navigators of 1st mill. BCE Western Eurasian Antiquity, serving a series of West Asian kings over the centuries, and their hypothetical Sunda connection may have acquired another role to play when the prominent philologist-Europeanist Waddell (1925) claims a Phoenician origin for the British – albeit in a study that has since generally been rejected (but see Bernal 1987, where the 18th c. CE idea of the Phoenician origin of the British is extensively discussed). Meanwhile the focus in British-origin studies has shifted towards the Basques (Oppenheimer 2006) which may not be an entirely different cup of tea, considering that the now obsolete Strassburg-based Armenologist Karst was not only among the advocates of a North Caucasian / Sinocaucasian-speaking origin of the Basques (Karst 1954; underpinned by recent molecular-biology genetics, Forster 2004) but he also saw the Basques as involved, subsequently, in an eastbound return migration along the full axis of the Mediterranean in the Middle Bronze Age, so that Basque seafaring skills could be imparted to the people of the Levant – foremost the ancestors of the Phoenicians. In Karst’s work, Sunda themes mainly come to the fore in connection with the notorious, and presumably largely imaginary, *Atlanteans*, popular among Theosophists and Anthroposophists around 1900 CE, and allegedly involved in a westbound civilising across the Old World. Had Karst had access to the Sunda Hypothesis, then he might have solved his puzzle concerning the rise of nautical skills in the Ancient Mediterranean in a more recognisable (although still contentious) way: he would have attributed such skills to Proto-Indonesians sailing west.



Source: Cazeau & Sott 1978: Fig. 1-1, p. 21. Mason 1957: 22 f. already presented an overview of the New World's postulated transoceanic connections, most of them contextualized, some illuminating

Fig. 14.1. American-origins theories: A network of alleged interhemispheric voyages in prehistoric times



with indication of the major regions for the historical use of divining bowls: (1) Mesopotamia; (2) Vanda (3); Bight of Benin; (4) Ancient Greece.

Source: van Binsbergen 2017: 363, with references

Fig. 14.2. The Korean Kangnido map (1402 CE)

In this field, zoogeography and phytogeography are useful branches of scholarship, testifying to the transcontinental transmission of domesticated cattle, chickens (Storey *et al.* 2007; Carter 1971), etc., and of such food plants as cloves, sesame, banana, taro, – sometimes overland but often overseas (Anonymous, *Movements*; Brand 1971; Carter 1950, 1964, 1971; Mindzie *et al.* 2001; Mundkur 1980 – the latter a contribution to a debate, protracted across decades, on the pre-Columbian presence of maize in Asia and Africa, *cf.* Jeffreys 1971, 1975; Mundkur 1980; Johannessen & Parker 1989; Dick-Read 2005). The fact that the North American Ojibwa, near the Great Lakes, cultivate rice and cherish cowries (Landes 1957; Anonymous, ‘cowry’;<sup>331</sup> Jeffreys 1938) – makes us wonder about their possible transcontinental connections. A related field is that of medical geography, where *e.g.* the hypothesis of a Polynesian origin for African elephantiasis (Laurence 1968) seems to contain a further corroboration of the Sunda Hypothesis. An unexpected application of the Sunda idea (*avant la lettre*) is from Chatterji (1945; *cf.* Hembram 1982; Manansala 1995, 2006), who claims to perceive a Polynesian basis for Indian civilisation and thought. Such a model would throw new light on the similarities (admittedly very slight) between the graphic systems of the Indus Valley and of Rapanui / Easter Island, discussed elsewhere in this book (de Hevesy 1938; the similarity was first pointed out by the controversial French-British Sinologist Terrien de Lacouperie c. 1880).

Gradually it dawned upon me that, regarded from their apparent ultimate destination (*e.g.* sub-Saharan Africa) it may not have been very relevant to distinguish between South Asia, South East Asian, and East Asian sources of transcontinental impact. As various surviving maps demonstrate eloquently, the West African coast was essentially known to Chinese cartographers (either directly, or from hearsay) from the early 2nd mill. CE on.

Among the Manjacos of Guinea-Bissau, and among the Bamileke of the Western Grassfields, Cameroon, my fieldwork made me aware of extensive traces of likely Chinese cultural impact: irrigated rice cultivation and isolated words in the former case, the (Taoist!) key concepts of medical cosmology in the latter case (van Binsbergen 2017a and in prep. (g)). Even in the African interior, notably among the Nkoya people of Zambia, Chinese influence may be detected notably in the specifics of the Nkoya catalitic-orientated clan system (van Binsbergen 2012a) By the same token, I suggest that we also apply the term ‘Sunda’, in a very broad sense, to *all* traces of South Asian influence in Africa, *e.g.* in the form of royal institutions (often of a Buddhist signature), royal orchestras (for which particularly a South East Asian detour seems to be preferred), ecstatic cults, and the localised veneration of Hindu gods (Wuaku 2013). Hornbill veneration (Waterson 1989), and (as discussed elsewhere in this book) head-hunting, may also be mentioned in this connection of Sunda continuities in sub-Saharan, especially West, Africa.

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<sup>331</sup> In the course of the 2nd mill. CE cowries were massively, and through European mercantile nautical intervention, imported from the Indian Ocean to West Africa, where – like in Ancient China, where the cowry sign 貝 (modern Beijing Chinese: *bèi*; Preclassic Old Chinese: *pāts*) still stands for ‘money’ – they constituted an important currency. Incidentally, shell fragments virtually indistinguishable from Oceanian shell money were found in the royal graves of Sumer – which Oppenheimer (1998) advanced as a sign of Sunda influence. Such shell currency is also known from Korea – also a likely candidate for Sunda influence. For a depiction of relevant shell moneys, see above, Fig. 7.1.a.

#### 14.4. *Besides Sunda*

Apart from the Sunda context on which the present book focusses, there have been other large areas of the Earth's surface allegedly involved in long-range intracontinental and transcontinental continuities, usually supported by maritime technology. The *Circum-Pacific region*, ranging from the Indo-Pacific to the Bering Strait and then again South along the American west coast to Peru and Chile, and hinging on Beringia and the Aleutian Islands where even modest nautical technologies and skills already may ensure transcontinental maritime continuity, has long been recognised as such a contiguous area.<sup>332, 333</sup> Partly overlapping with the proposed Sunda region, one may expect interesting feed-back phenomena here, Sunda elements being carried far forward along the Pacific coasts, and vice-versa. The renowned polar ethnographer Birket-Smith (1935) even mentioned what struck him as a remarkable continuity between Eskimos and Melanesians. Elsewhere,<sup>334</sup> I have extensively discussed the so-called *Pelasgian Realm*, a complex and extensive bundle of cultural and political traits, which, emerging in Neolithic West Asia, diffused and transformed in the Bronze Age Mediterranean (especially in Syro-Palestine and Egypt), and from there was transmitted, sporadically, and often by maritime means, in all four directions: Western and Northern Europe, subSaharan Africa, West, Central, East, South and South-East Asia, and ultimately even into Oceania and the New World. When diffusion was still the standard paradigm of anthropology, in the early 20th c. CE, two Manchester researchers (the Australian anatomist cum Egyptologist Grafton Elliot Smith, and the British anthropologist William Perry) were of the opinion that Ancient Egypt, as the centre of the Ra<sup>c</sup> Sun cult and of colossal architecture, by maritime means<sup>335</sup> had sought to disseminate its Sun cult to other continents notably to the Pacific. This postulated '*Heliolithic*' (megalithic Sun cult) *movement* was thought to coincide more or less with the alleged dissemination of a *megalithic ideology*, whose alleged material signs were claimed to be recognisable all over the European and African Atlantic coast, in the interior of Africa, in West Asia, and along the Indian and Pacific Ocean coasts to India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Korea,

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<sup>332</sup> Heine-Geldern 1937; Hentze 1933; Matsumura 2010; Needham & Lu 1985; Dart 1957; Ekholm 1964; Tezuka 1998; Leroi-Gourhan 1946; in this connection especially animal symbolism was studied by Kelley 1960.

<sup>333</sup> Nonetheless, crossing from East Asia to the New World at Beringia, however well studied and found to have been a complex and repeated to-and-fro process (Tamm *et al.* 2007) is not the only thinkable transcontinental connection linking the Old and the New World. Stanford & Bradley 2004 have argued the case for 'The North Atlantic Ice-Edge Corridor', not necessarily involving navigation. Heyerdahl (1952, 1975) sought to reverse the equation and saw Native Americans in the Pacific. Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994 believed they could endorse his hypothesis with genetic data; also *cf.* Hurler *et al.* 2003. Yet the comparative study of decoration styles, political leadership, boat construction, would lead one to suspect, in addition, a significant flow from the tropical (West) Pacific to North-West Coast America.

<sup>334</sup> van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011; van Binsbergen in prep. (a)

<sup>335</sup> Which in themselves are well documented – we have numerous Ancient Egyptian documents and temple reliefs representing ships and transcontinental expeditions *e.g.* to the land of Punt (often equated with Somalia).

and selected Oceanian islands. In present-day archaeology, the idea of one nearly global megalithic movement encompassing all remotely megalithic structures and practices is no longer the dominant paradigm (Renfrew 1967, 1976b, 1983; Miksic 1991). Which makes it all the more remarkable that two Dutch senior archaeologists, de Jonge and IJzereef, in 1996 came up with a totally new interpretation of signs often found at megalithic monuments: as nautical maps assisting Bronze Age (human) transcontinental navigators. However, the substantiation of this imaginative hypothesis is still far from convincing, and anyway it overlooks the most conspicuous megalithic markings: the *cup-ring marks or cupules*, whose arrangement may sometimes be reminiscent of stellar maps,<sup>336</sup> but whose application is far too general and apparently too decorative to impress us as nautical charts. A final context of transcontinental navigation may be found in Chinese navigation especially from the Tang dynasty onward (from the 7th c. CE on).

The Chinese invention of the lode compass reveals a keen interest in seafaring, and in fact Chinese ships in the Late Middle Age were the largest and most accomplished of their time world-wide (*cf.* Needham with Wang Ling & Lu Gwei Djen 1971). For a long time scholarship has been familiar with the figure of the Eunuch Admiral 鄭和 Zheng He who in the early 15th c. CE sailed the Chinese Sea and the Indian Ocean with a large fleet of huge ships, reaching Indonesia and Zanzibar, and bringing envoys and exotic mammals from the African coast back to China (Davidson 1959; Duyvendak 1939, 1949). The British submarine commander Gavin Menzies fell into the groove of the unmistakable chauvinistic trend among Chinese historians and archaeologists, by publishing a series of books claiming that Zheng He did not only visit Indonesia and East Asia, but on the basis of the Chinese's superior nautical and navigational skills managed to sail to all continents, including Oceania, the New World, and West Africa, allegedly leaving everywhere material and linguistic, perhaps even genetic, traces of the passing of his enormous fleet. It is not difficult to find fault with the overall argument and with many details of Menzies's synthesis (for extensive critical assessments, *cf.* Finlay 2004; van Binsbergen 2012e). Some of Menzies's more spectacular claims, such as the alleged presence of elephants in Meso and South America, and the invention of the sail, had already extensively been treated by earlier authors (*e.g.* Buckland 1885;<sup>337</sup> Henshaw 1880-1881; Putnam 1885).

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<sup>336</sup> There is an enormous literature on cupules, but even the most cursory discussion would be beyond our present scope. In van Binsbergen 2018: 277 *f.* I discuss, with careful attention to the complex astronomical realities involved, a Neanderthal (70 ka BP) arrangement of cupules from Mousterian France as a stellar map; this is to replace a far more extensive but astronomically less sophisticated earlier discussion (van Binsbergen with Lacroix, 2000).

<sup>337</sup> Buckland claimed (1886: 12) that one and the same lexical root is used for 'elephant' all across the Pacific-Ocean region from Japan to Central America. Bearing the hallmarks of its time, such a claim – involving three different linguistic macrophyla, Eurasiatic (> Altaic > Japanese), Austric (> Austronesian), and Amerind – is inherently implausible. Yet it is not completely impossible: dozens of comparable (near-) global etymologies have been attested (Bengtson & Ruhlen 1994; van Binsbergen 2018: Appendix III, IV, pp. 531 *f.* presents additional global etymologies for 'speckledness / leopard' and for 'human / Earth / bottom'. Moreover (as Frans Wiggermann reminds me, 1994), geographically widely-ranging lexical

But with all justified criticism, as a sustained exercise in innovative counter-hegemonic (amateur) historiography (a characterisation reminiscent of the work of Oppenheimer and Martin Gardiner Bernal) Menzies' work deserves considerable sympathy, without reaching the same high level as Dick-Read (2005)

#### 14.5. *The silence of traditions, as a against the eloquence of artefacts and formal systems*

Whenever we approach to study of transcontinental continuities, we are confronted with the following problem: *there is in most cultures a premium on autochthony; to be able to claim local origins has often higher status than to claim immigrant descent, and as a result memories of alien origin tend to be suppressed from consciousness* – often they are enshrined in oblique myths which need to be methodically and intersubjectively decoded so as to spill their historical contents if any. Foreign origins therefore are often suppressed or forgotten. By contrast, some special categories of the population (e.g. priests, healers, rulers<sup>338</sup>) may thrive on emphasising their

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continuities may be found in connection with major cultural inventions and their trans-continental diffusion, such as agriculture and animal husbandry. Thus, although of course many lexical alternatives remain in the various macrophyla and phyla, the word for 'cow, cattle' is recognisably cognate over much of the Old World including Africa (e.g. Indo-European \*g<sup>w</sup>ow-; Proto-Afroasiatic: \*nagʔ- (?), \*ʔV-bVʔ-; Proto-Sinocaucasian (?): \*HimcÓ (< \*Borean HVMCV, 'meat'?); Chinese 牛 (modern Beijing Chinese niú; Preclassic Old Chinese: 𠂔𠂔); also with loans into Austroasiatic; in Khoisan languages: Proto-Ju: \*gumi ~ \*gome, and Proto-Khoe: \*gôé; Proto-Bantu -gŌmbĚ 9/10 'cattle' 849 (Guthrie) / -komo 9 'cow, ox', 5.1. (Meeussen) – data largely from Starostin & Starostin 1998-2008). However, also see the case against global etymologies: Picard 1998. Meanwhile the fact that the animal family in question, *Elephantidae*, is scarcely endemic in the vast Circum-Pacific region (it only occurs in South East Asia, and further West: India, sub-Saharan Africa) makes Buckland's claim so implausible that I have not even bothered to check it lexically. Even so, the more general claim of East Asian influence on Meso America has been with us as a leading idea ever since the writings of the pioneer British anthropologist Tylor on games (Tylor 1865, 1880, 1882, 1896). Von Heine-Geldern, during the mid-20th c. CE a leading author on trans-continental continuities especially in art (in 1966 he generously discussed the links between Chinese and Maori art, New Zealand), authoritatively assessed the case for Trans-Pacific influences on Meso America (von Heine-Geldern 1964, 1964-1967). More recently, Meggers (1975) claimed 'the Trans-Pacific origin of Meso-American civilization'. A heated debate on such a transcontinental continuity was waged in *Current Anthropology* (Cheek & Mundkur 1979). In his 1980 article, Mundkur came back to the question of elephants in Meso America. By and large, the evidence is far less clear-cut than one would expect, on the contrary it is surprisingly checkered, and we should not rush to conclusions. Of course, like the horse, the elephant / mammoth was once endemic in the New World during the Upper Pleistocene / the Upper Palaeolithic, but became extinct more than a handful millennia BP, so that its presence in living Native American memory is rather unlikely.

<sup>338</sup> Among the Nkoya people of Western Zambia, attachment to the ground is more limited than one would expect among petty cultivators. Their principal self-identity is still that of hunters, until recently their land was thinly populated, land was not in shortage, and bickering about land was 'not done.' Between birth and death people would change their place of residence regularly, circulating from village to village and from one kinship patron or spouse to the next, within a radius of a few hundred kms. In such a context one expects the (globally usual) negative sanction upon strangerhood to be slight. Yet slaves (usually committed to slavery after capture in war and especially failure to pay fines



strangerhood. Now, whereas human oral testimonies are totally dependent upon the capricious mechanisms of transmission, retention and revision, material artefacts and formal systems (that as integrated and functioning wholes are likely to retain their foreign traits more or less intact), are much easier to recognise als non-local, and, as the case may be, as transcontinental. Throughout the Old World, astronomies, astrolgies, divinatory systems, writing systems, other graphic signs of recording and transmission, decorative patterns, myths<sup>339</sup> and fairy tales, tend to display two features which make them particularly useful as testimonies of transcontinental contacts:

1. an amazing inertia in withstanding the universal pressures towards (local) loss of (translocal) meaning, and towards cultural drift
2. the capability of transgressing, more or less intact and still functioning, boundaries of a cultural, linguistic, class, religious or political nature.

Much of the argument on transcontinental continuities has to be based on the observation of artefacts (including downright works of art) and of formal systems, and they spell out what the local historical consciousness cannot elucidate for us anymore. Hence much of the argument on transcontinental continuity, may be based on analyses in the field of art history, *e.g.* the Indo-Pacific bead;<sup>340</sup> the iconographic convention of the hunched figure (Lommel 1976, as an indication of Sunda impact); the bicephalous

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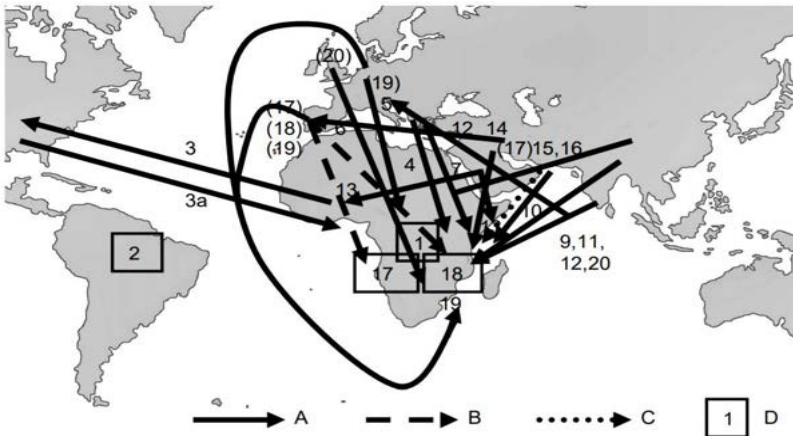
imposed after killing – slavery was officially abolished here in the early 1900s CE but implicitly continued to play a social role throughout the 20th c.) carried a very heavy stigma, not so much because slaves were known not to be of strictly local origin (like most others, after all) *but because they had nowhere else to go*. In this context, it is remarkable that a few traditions do reveal the founder of the Kahare dynasty to have come from far: from a legendary land ‘Kola’ (whose semantic and geography we have explored above); the throne name Kahare is explained by the Nkoya keepers of oral history as deriving from an alleged root (which I personally never attested in 20th-c. CE Nkoya) *ku hala*, ‘to uproot’ – so: ‘I am Kahare, the Uprooted One’ (van Binsbergen 1992: 259). I suspect that in this popular etymology as circulating among Nkoya courtiers – who are no longer aware of transcontinental, specifically Indian, connections of part of their language and culture. Rather an echo is at stake here, of Sanskrit हारि *hari*, ‘charming, beautiful’; Monier-Williams 1899: 1175) or हार हारा *hāla* ‘plough’, in other words, an implement that uproots (Monier-Williams 1899: 1167). A related Nkoya tradition sketches how the stranger prince Kahare, travelling through the forest at the head of his orchestra and retinue in single-file (as is still the standard royal protocol), so captivated a local female ruler with the alien, enchanting music from his xylophone, that (with the characteristic – but perhaps somewhat anachronistic – prowess on which Nkoya royal women still pride themselves...) she married him on the spot.

<sup>339</sup> The transcontinental transmission of myths and other narratives is a specialist field in its own right, and one extensively covered in the present book especially in connection with East-West parallels. Yet the leading scholar in today’s New Comparative Mythology, the German-born Harvard Sanskritist Michael Witzel, denies the importance of transcontinentality in this connection. Others in his circle, *e.g.* Berezkin and myself, have often argued the opposite. *Cf.* Thompson 1919; Berezkin 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006; van Binsbergen 2010a, 2010b, 2012a.

<sup>340</sup> Wood 2011; Abraham & Christie 2010; Thornton 2019; van der Sleen 1958; meanwhile, the bead trade to Southern Africa from the Mediterranean should not be overlooked, *cf.* Saitowitz & Reid 1996.

image (or even forked branch), as an indication of Eurasian / American links (Abrahamian *et al.* 1985; the forked branch is a major shrine form in Africa, van Binsbergen 1981a); representations of the dragon as indicative of old World – North American continuities (Barbeau 1952; Beyer 1908; Smith 1919); and the lunar motifs indicative of circum-Pacific continuities (von Heine Geldern 1937, 1964, 1964-1967, 1966; Hentze 1933).

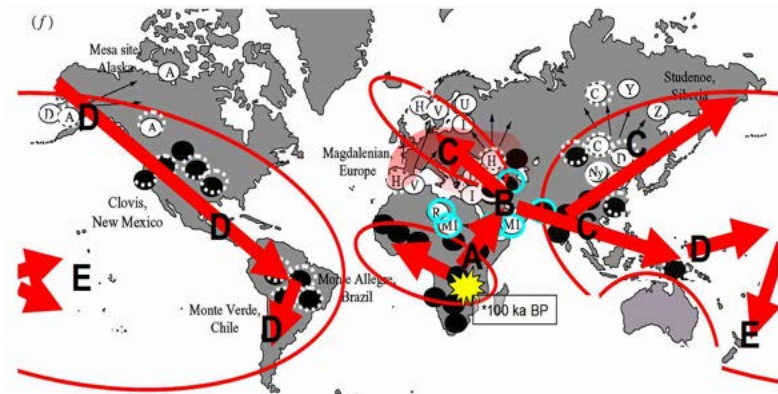
Weapons and musical instruments are particularly interesting as indications of transcontinental maritime contacts, for these artefacts – in ways that do not apply to works of art, where the flight of imagination may be limitless – have to operate within very narrow practical, mechanical and cultural constraints, and therefore tend to be culturally inert and rather impervious for localist transformation over wide distances of space and time. In the course of the present book's argument, musical instruments have served as cases in point (Prologue, with attending references, including Jones 1974). The case of the throwing wood / boomerang is likewise discussed in another chapter; for the blow gun and its transcontinental ramifications, see Jett 1991; also Oppenheimer 1998 touches on this topic. From a viewpoint of diffusion studies, the analysis of such an apparently abstruse topic as fish poisons has also been instructive though controversial (Quigley 1956).



A: proposed direction of borrowing; B: only partial borrowing; C: conjectural; D: local motif, numbering as in Table 1




Source: van Binsbergen 201b (*q.v.* for the Table 1 to which reference is made), on the basis of Werner 1968 / 1933.

Fig. 14.3. Transcontinental trajectories of selected African stories



on the basis of data in Graebner 1909, against the background of the history of mtDNA Types according to Forster 2004; source: van Binsbergen 2020a. The capital letters A-E refer to successive stages in the reconstructed global history of this artefact. The lightly-shaded area in Southern Europe and adjacent West Asia refers to Neanderthals in the Upper Palaeolithic. For other map details see my 2020a discussion.

Fig. 14.3a. Origin and global transmission of the so-called Melanesian Bow

Another example of a tell-tale weapon is the Melanesian hand-held bow, whose global distribution and affinities were studied by the once leading German anthropologist Graebner (1909), with surprising results: these affinities turn out to extend to West and Central Africa, part of the New World, the Balkan and the North Sea region – but not to Egypt (even though a bow is the emblem of the major goddess ,  or  Neith, for whose name we may advance (among other possibilities) an Austric etymology); and the latter already brings out that with our idea of Sunda expansion in mind, we would expect a rather different pattern, and the likely conclusion is that this type of bow was not diffused transcontinentally by any maritime Sunda effect but that the affinities (if they are not mere spurious artefacts of method) go back much further in prehistory, to demic diffusion patterns in the Upper Palaeolithic, when (see Table 4.3 above) Central to East Asia was the scene of \*Borean disintegrating into a Peripheral Branch ultimately ending up in the New World (Amerind), Africa (African languages), and South East Asia / Oceania (Austric > Austronesian). For a fuller analysis of Graebner's data on the Melanesian Bow, the impossibility to read it as evidence of Sunda, and the amazing conclusion that this bow type must have been invented in sub-Saharan Africa 100 ka BP, see van Binsbergen 2020a from which also Fig. 14.3a is derived.

Such connections are not only to be gauged from the lexical residues / reflexes detectable in reconstructed proto-forms of the present-day world's macrophyla. Elsewhere in this book, particularly in the discussion of East-West parallels in the mythological and ethnographic field, we have encountered several tell-tale indications of cultural continuities that are apparently peculiar to the speakers of the Peripheral

Branch as one of the two branches into which \*Borean has disintegrated over 20 ka BP. The work of C. Schuster (1951, 1949) on 'joint-marks' shows that this iconographic / decorative convention is distributed exactly as the macrophyla of the Peripheral Branch, hence suggests this motif to have been a substrate in Austric-, Amerind-, and African-languages-speaking cultures since the Upper Palaeolithic. A similar example that comes to mind is that of the *lightning bird* – a motif attested in both sub-Saharan Africa and North America (Thurber & Thurber 1959; Schlosser 1972, 1992). Even wider global distributions, suggestive of the entire scope of the \*Borean realm, appear to be associated with the *swastika* (Wilson 1973 / 1896; needless to say that the 20th c. CE appropriation of this very ancient symbol by the German Nazis has made it unfit now for objective research), the spindle whorl (formally similar in shape, and partly coinciding with the swastika), and the symbolism of *speckledness* (van Binsbergen 2004a, 2018: 531*f.*, and in prep. (j)).

Across a distance of thousands of kms, artefacts (both on Rapanui / Easter island and in Chilean graves) indicate the extent of prehistoric nautical contact in the Pacific (Aichel 1925; Heyerdahl 1975). When the lotus is venerated, not only in Ancient Egypt and in Buddhist South and South East Asia, but also during male puberty rites at the Solomons Islands (Blackwood 1935; von Heine-Geldern 1937); or when remarkable Indo-Pacific / Oceanian features appear in the centre of the African continent (such as head-hunting and the elongated headdress of the Ila; or the very ethnic name Tonga, familiar from Oceania but of multiple use in South Central Africa; Mitchell 1964; cf. the Yao, both in continental South East Asia – where the name has the connotations 'dog', which – as we have seen above – also in Ancient Mesopotamia seems to mark Sunda influence – and in Malawi (Mitchell 1971 / 1956; remarkably such potential East-West parallels never caught the eyes of the Manchester School) – we may reach for the kill-sports of coincidence or the converging workings of the human mind (after all, Tonga is a very simple word that may pop up independently in many of the world's languages) – but as an historically and intellectually more attractive explanation, transcontinental diffusion cannot be ruled out offhand.

The extent to which an adversary paradigm may blind us for obvious continuities in the transcontinental domain, may be clear from Franz Boas' – the leading North American / German anthropologist of his generation – comparative treatment of North American stories concerning the origin of death. This is one of the principal, and probably one of the oldest, African mythical themes (Berezkin 2006), with Sunda parallels which Oppenheimer (1998) has argued extensively in the wake of Frazer 1918 – but the idea of conducting myth comparison between continents was apparently so anathema to Boas that he did not even consider the possibility.

From Early Modern times on, the history of the Americas has largely been one of trans-continental immigration combined with the subjugation and extermination of local populations and their cultures. In such a context one would expect studies of maritime transcontinentality to be a well-established local industry – but perhaps it was again the shameful connotation of the admission of immigrant status which thwarted such an industry. Instead, the insistence on this topic has largely remained a counter-paradigmatic minority expression among American scholars. Claims of Trans-Pacific and Trans-Atlantic continuities have been numerous<sup>34</sup> but they have

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<sup>34</sup> e.g. Hittite influence: Campbell 1881; Phoenician: Gordon 1968 (*pace* Cross 1968) and Nuttall 1909,

failed to affirm themselves as mainstream, and have occasionally been combated viciously (e.g. Ortiz de Montellano 2000; Ortiz de Montellano, *et al.* 1997).

From the mid-20th c. CE on, the rise of Afrocentrism as a rallying point for counter-mainstream Black scholars gave rise to new claims of maritime transcontinentality. Van Sertima<sup>342</sup> contested the conventional wisdom that Columbus discovered the New World in 1492 CE, and instead edited arguments (to which also left-wing White researchers such as Basil Davidson and Martin Gardiner Bernal contributed) claiming that both in Europe and in the Americas the African demographic and cultural element had *always* been considerable, and decisive. The American Afrocentrist writer Clyde Winters, holder of a PhD in Education, advanced (1981, 1983a, 1983b, 1988) controversial but peer-reviewed linguistic and epigraphical arguments claiming a West African (Manding) impact upon Nubia (present-day Northern Sudan), the Dravidian-speaking world of South Asia, China, and Japan – all implying massive maritime transcontinentality.

#### 14.6. *The evidence from world religions; forced transcontinental migration in the context of slavery*

For the two or three most recent millennia, archaeology and documentary historiography has advanced numerous instances of linguistic, cultural, and religious evidence of trans-continental navigation and the ensuing networks. Buddhism spread to Sri Lanka (an island), Indonesia, China, and Japan largely by maritime

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who found evidence of major *Phoenician* cultural traits including purper industry on the Pacific coast of Mexico; moreover: *Assyrian*: Kadmin 2015; *Viking* (Ingstad 1964, 1969; Skelton *et al.* 1971); *Welsh* (Burder 1922); *West African*: Van Sertima 1985; Wiener 1919-1922. Slight suggestions as to *North European* nautical influence (the theme of the 'bearded White man') upon Peru also formed one of the initial inspirations of Heyerdahl's Kon-Tiki Hypothesis (Heyerdahl 1952; Melander 2020). Also see Fig. 14.1 above, after Cazeau & Scott 1979. Many studies have claimed continuity between individual Amerind languages and phyla or individual languages of the Old World, e.g. Californian and Uralic (von Sadovszky 1996); Jett 2002 cites many more specific examples of this phenomenon, with references. *The interesting point about Trans-Atlantic connections in the most recent millennia is that they make it much easier for us to understand the often uncannily close similarities between Native American, and African, artefacts and institutions, pointed out in section 4.3 above. I have listed a few of these in my book Before the Presocratics* (2012a): divination tokens, game tokens, female puberty rights, basketry, etc. – to which we may add vegetation myths, apparently intimately related to the cultivation of specific American crops in themselves (maize, particularly). There is, admittedly, a point in remote cultural history where the cultural and linguistic strands of sub-Saharan Africa come together with those of the New World, and of Oceania: Central Asia in the Upper Palaeolithic, within the Peripheral Branch of disintegrating \*Borean, from which Austric, Amerind and African languages began to develop each in their own direction. Such communality could well be invoked, for instance, to explain the preponderance of *bark cloth* as traditional clothing material in both sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. But one would need to appeal to a remarkably high degree of cultural inertia to explain far more complex cultural traits to remain recognisable across 15 ka, and across half the globe – much more recent contacts, in the last few millennia, would do a better job on this point.

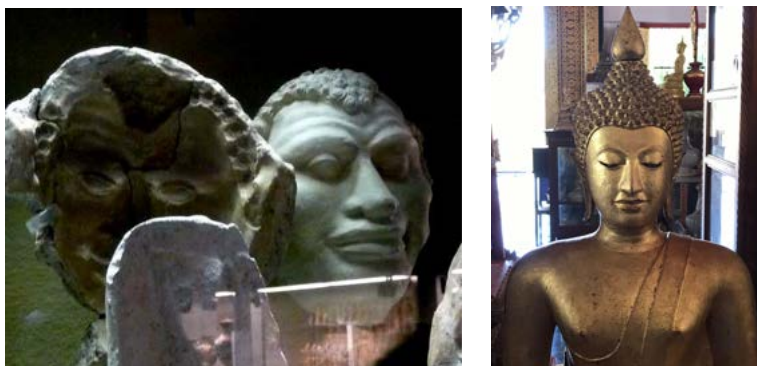
<sup>342</sup> van Sertima 1976, 1985; for converging, non-Afrocentrist views cf. Gilmore & McElroy 1998; Jett 1983; Riley *et al.* 2014; Sorenson & Johannessen 2004 / 2006.

means. The same holds true for Christianity, not only in regard of the same Asian regions, but especially in regard of Africa and the New World.<sup>343</sup> By the same token, Islam spread to the Iberian peninsula in medieval times, to South East Asia, and to a more limited extent to East and Southern Africa, largely by maritime means. Recent research found that the Berbers and agriculture may have reached the Maghreb by maritime means (Arnaiz *et al.* 1999a). Boivin *et al.* 2010 have looked at the history of seafaring around the Arabian peninsula; *cf.* Haurani 1951. The institution of the pilgrimage to Mecca as one of the five pillars of Islam brought millions to transcontinental travel, where overland routes (*e.g.* from Benin and Sokoto) tended to be linked to maritime routes (*e.g.* across the Red Sea). The travels of Ibn Battuta (first half 14th c. CE; Dunn 2012) show us the width and depth of these intercontinental nautical contacts in his time. The rise of an intensive commercial and cultural field of interaction across the full width of the Indian Ocean (Patnaik 2003; Ray 2000; Mookerji 1912; Reade 1996) brought not only manufactured products such as luxury ceramics and beads to African coasts in exchange for gold, cattle, slaves, but also political, musical, cosmological systems such as a Hindu, Buddhist and Taoist inspiration (van Binsbergen 2017a: 361-412), ecstatic healing cults (in East and Central Africa, the South Asian background of such cults has become increasingly manifest (*e.g.* Bulmer 1894; Alpers 1984; van Binsbergen 2003: ch. 8), divination systems (Nettleton 2001; van Binsbergen 2012a; Davis 1955); games (van Binsbergen 1997c reprint 2011, 2012c), musical instruments and their cognitive frameworks, today somewhat difficult to retrieve from the overlays of subsequently African transformative localisations, yet increasingly manifest (van Binsbergen 2019a). Forced transcontinental migration in the context of slavery (*e.g.* for the Indian Ocean and China, <sup>344</sup> created the tragic conditions for an enormous volume of population, cultural, religious (in the form of ancient African religious forms subsequently transformed and revitalised in the New World), and linguistic movement across the Atlantic Ocean, and to a more limited extent across the Indian Ocean, all the way to India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, the Philippines (Aiyar 1934-1935; Asuncion 1964), and China.

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<sup>343</sup> Much as world religions may be a context for transcontinental connections, they may also obscure such connections as actually may have been there on the ground. For instance, when in the Gilbert Islands, Micronesia, Oceania, a Tree Goddess mythologically features as the origin of humankind, one wonders whether this may be a vague echo of *Genesis* mythology: Christians already reached the island early in the 16th century CE. However, since the mytheme 'From the Tree' appears to have constituted a NarCom in its own right ever since Pandora's Box, I would much rather consider the Gilbert case an authentic manifestation of that mythemen its own right.

<sup>344</sup> *Cf.* de Silva Jayasuriya & Angenot, 2017; de Silva Jayasuriya 2019; Mann 2012; Wilensky 2002; Harris 1971; Irwin 1977 (according to whom the abundance of Black slaves in China led to the rise of a peculiar literary genre of picaresque Black heroes); Gerbeau 1978. The large literature on the Trans-Atlantic slave trade is sufficiently accessible, *cf.* Davidson 1980; Lovejoy 1982; Rawley & Behrendt 2005; Curtin 1972; Eltis & Richardson 2008; Postma 1990; Uya 2007.



Graeco-Roman Ancient casting-mould for a Negroid mask on display at the Archeological Museum, Siracusa, Sicily, Italy, 2017

Buddha statuette on display in the major Lamphun temple, near Chiang Mai, 2020

Fig. 14.4. Peppercorn hair as an iconographical convention in Buddhism and Graeco-Roman Antiquity

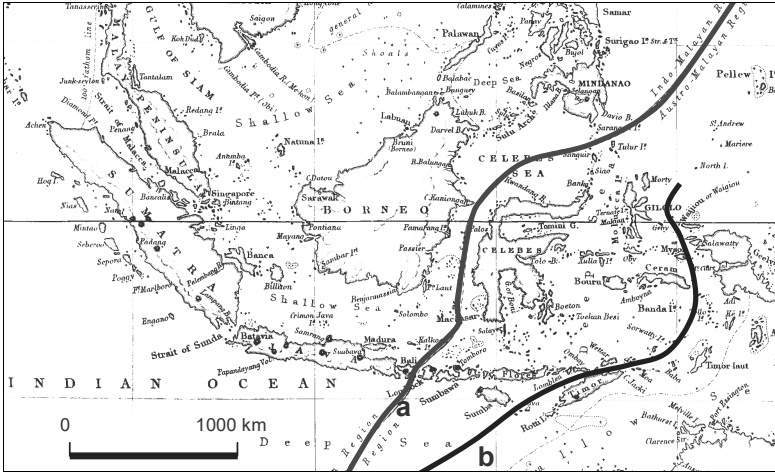
Forced transcontinental migration often goes hand in hand with the spread of conspicuous somatic characteristics: relatively high or low skin pigmentation, facial architecture of nose and eyes, lank-haired, curly and dotted hair structure. Initially, such somatic characteristics were selectively privileged as a result of regional climatic conditions (a desert, tropical, mountaineous, maritime, *etc.* environment), but once established, they came to function as a socially recognised marker of gene-pool in-group belonging, hence (after displacement across substantial distances) as a sign of alienness in the eyes of locals. Since much social exclusion and discrimination has, since times immemorial,<sup>345</sup> attached to such characteristics, they are now rightly

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<sup>345</sup> 'Black' people have been reported, in Ancient Western Eurasia, from Ireland to Colchis (the Caucasus; Pindar, *Pythian Ode*; Anonymous, Abkhazians; Jairazbhoy 1985). Elsewhere (van Binsbergen 2018: 348n, in a section entitled '#50. High Skin Pigmentation In Western Eurasian Prehistory: An Afrocentrist Perspective') I state my contention, with some supporting arguments, to the effect that the populations of Western Eurasia were originally far more highly pigmented, and that the Early Modern (pre-20th-c-CE globalisation) situation world-wide, with highly pigmented populations being confined to the Southern and Eastern fringes of the Old World (sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, the Andaman Islands, New Guinea, Australia, Melanesia) was the result of actual, deliberate exclusion, expulsion and genocide on the part of less pigmented population groups, not just since Early Modern times (as myopic optimists like the Sinologist / self-styled Ancient Historian Martin Bernal Gardiner (1987, vol. I) and the African American physical anthropologist Snowden (1970, 1989) would have it), but since Early Neolithic times. Most unfortunately, ethnic colour blindness is clearly not the default feature of the mind and perception of Anatomically Modern Humans, but a painfully, inconsistently achieved and often failing condition only attained among privileged pockets of the world's population during the last three millennia. Whenever a local society has more than the minimum level of somatic heterogeneity and complexity, a 'somatic normative image' (Hoetink 1967) tends to develop reflecting the bodily ideal of what is, or was in the recent past, its most privileged segments. Whatever today's political correctness which expects us to be totally blind to the somatic appearance of others, and to censure all reference to somatic appearance from polite conversation, the fact is that such features cannot go unnoticed and are likely to be taken into account by local actors involved in social interaction; after all, a very substantial part of the human brain is reserved for facial recognition.

being recognised as being conducive to racist hatred and violence. Therefore the anti-hegemonic scholar cannot simply take such somatic characteristics for granted as legitimate inputs in scientific research; yet it is unmistakable that they are the tell-tale signs of past transcontinental displacement, often by maritime means.

### 14.7. The Middle Palaeolithic evidence for human sea-faring



Source: van Binsbergen 2019: 36, Fig. 1.2; after Wallace 1863; at no point in human history the Sahul line had less than 70 kms of open sea, which necessitated seafaring in order to populate New Guinea and Australia by c. 60 ka BP

Fig. 14.5. The Wallace line (a) and the Sahul line (b)

When considering somatic traits in transcontinental perspective, one of the many puzzles is peppercorn hair as an iconographic convention for the Buddha's hair style, especially in Thailand and other Theravada-Buddhist regions. It is a hair style reminiscent of the highly pigmented inhabitants of sub-Saharan Africa and migrant populations originating from there. The birth home of the most recent, historical Buddha Siddharta Gautama Shakamuni has been identified in Southern Nepal near the present-day Indian border (Allen 2002) – not a region generally known for any very highly pigmented population. Where does the Buddhist peppercorn-hair tradition come from? Does it keep alive (like temple shell trumpets?) a dwindling knowledge of a postulated, highly pigmented substrate population throughout Eurasia – the ancestors of the dark inhabitants of Southern India, and of the darker people of the Caucasus? Does it store the memory of highly pigmented 'phantom' navigators from Sunda or Africa?

In addition to the Sunda complex, a number of recognisable situations clearly stand out as unmistakable evidence of transcontinental navigation. In the first place, human



navigation has been found to go back to at least the Middle Palaeolithic.<sup>346</sup> At no point during the history of Anatomically Modern Humans (with a time depth of 200 ka), or even during the history of Humans in general (with a time depth of some 4,000 ka) has there been less than 70 kms of open sea to cross between South East Asia and its former subcontinental extension all the way to Sumba, on the one hand, and Flores, Timor, Australia, and New Guinea on the other (Birdsell 1977). If this so-called Sahul Line divide (close to the famous zoogeographical Wallace line between Bali and Lombok; cf. Jones 1989) was crossed c. 60 ka BP (as is archaeologically undeniable; Roberts *et al.* 1993) the Anatomically Modern Humans at the time must have had navigation at their disposal – not long after their Exodus out of the African continent in which their genes and cultural achievements had evolved and circulated since 200 BP.

Whether such sea voyagers were undertaken deliberately, or were merely accidental, remains a moot point – Andrew Sharp's (1964) defence of the latter view is still contested (Golson 1972). Anyway, the solid finding of undeniable sailing across the Flores trough must be taken as the starting point for any argument concerning the growth of navigation and the emergence of closing of maritime networks in subsequent millennia. Archaeological attestations are much more recent: Mesopotamia and Kuwait, c. 7000 BCE,<sup>347</sup> boat depictions on cylinder seals; a precocious plank boat in Abydos, Early Dynastic Egypt (Ward 2006). Notwithstanding the mythical claims which we have seen above for Daedalus (Minoan Crete / Ancient Greece) and for the Polynesian / Hawaiian culture hero Pakaá, Barnett (1958) believed that the sail was invented in the Nile Valley, and points at the Cheops boat in the Sphinx temple.<sup>348</sup> Also cf. the Pesse dug-out boat from the Netherlands Mesolithic (early 8th mill BCE; Anonymous, Pesse canoe). Early depictions of ships abound throughout prehistory, from Scandinavia to Southeast Asia (Ballard 2004); even in

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<sup>346</sup> Bednarik 1995, 1997a, 1997b, 1999a, 1999b, 2000b; cf. Finney 1982; Hambruch 1908 (*non vidi*); McGrail 1991.

<sup>347</sup> Administration, n.d. [ 2007 ], Boats of Early Mesopotamia, at: <http://historyhuntersinternational.org/index.php?page=153>. Strasser declared in 1996:

'It has been received wisdom for nearly half a century that 6th-millennium BP models, discovered at Eridu in southern Mesopotamia, are the earliest direct evidence for sailing-boats. [ present-day displays and depictions of the models are usually artificially completed so as to enhance this impression – WvB ] Yet certain features of the models, and their contexts, identify them instead as spinning bowls used by weavers.'

<sup>348</sup> Also cf. Jenkins n.d.; Kadry 1986; O'Connor 1995. Is the sacred nature of the boat in a culture – such as Early Dynastic Egypt – scarcely depending yet on international seafaring an indication of the foundational impact of navigators, in other words of Sunda presence? Such sacrality is certainly not a sufficient condition for this question to be answered affirmatively, but in combination with a few other indicators a firmer case begins to shape up: the plausible Austric etymologies of key Egyptian names such as Neith, Min / Menes, and Osiris; the firmly established Sumerian influence on Early Dynastic Egypt; the extensive Pelasgian element which plausibly may be considered to be continuous with Sunda; the Sun cult which, initially inconspicuous, (Kaplony 1963) gained great ascendancy from the 5th Dynasty on – so that in fact the vector posed by Perry and Smith (from Egypt to Sunda) may have to be reversed: from Sunda to Egypt.

Bronze-Age, land-locked Central Europe they constitute a conspicuous theme (for examples cf. Goto 2005; van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: 356 f., Fig. 28.5), suggestive of an ancient boat cult and perhaps – by a very long shot – of Sunda influence.

#### 14.8. Prehistoric growth of the transcontinental maritime network

Already during the Neolithic exchanges of domesticated mammals (bovines, especially) and food crops (e.g. sesame) were the archaeologically attested objects of transcontinental maritime trade between South Asia and Africa (Rowlands 2019; Darlington 1969). It is in this period<sup>349</sup> that, somewhat enigmatically as if out of the blue, maritime trade begins to be perceptible on the Western coast of the Black Sea, and that the first major shipping harbours on the Mediterranean emerged: Joppe in Syro-Palestine, and Corinth on the Aegean. In prehistoric Jericho, one of the oldest settlements of the world, Kenyon (1957) found an approach to skulls (separated from the bodies, second burial practices) reminiscent – at least, in my own eyes – of Sunda patterns; as well as evidence of a substrate population who were dwelling in round houses like those in Pre-Pottery Neolithic B (PPNB) Anatolia, where indications (at Göbekli Tepe) of elongation of the labia suggest Proto-Bantu affinities (cf. van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: 86; Hawkes with Trump 1977). Scholars like Joseph Karst have often wondered what instigated this rise of maritime elements in the Ancient Mediterranean, and whereas he laid much stress on the hypothetical factor of a Basque nautical back-migration eastward along the axis of the Mediterranean, I think that precisely in this case the Sunda Hypothesis could have been pressed into service.

In the Early Bronze Age a transcontinental network begins to shape up, e.g. between the Indus Valley and the Persian Gulf, and between Egypt, the Aegean, and the whole of the Central and Eastern Mediterranean. The Sea Peoples's Episode, which brought down the Hittite Empire and permanently damaged the Egyptian Empire, testifies to the enormous importance seafaring had taken on in the course of the Bronze Age; the Trojan war – regardless of its historic or mythical status<sup>350</sup> – brings out the same. In subsequent centuries, the Aegean and surroundings would be plagued by a variety of marauding / pirating peoples in succession (Leleges, Carians, Teucrians, Philistine, Cappadocians, Cretans, Phoenicians), whose linguistic and ethnic status is not always clear and whose possible Sunda associations remain to be further investigated. By the same time, navigation from India and China begins to develop, and before long the two processes meet --- as is clear from the very substantial volume of Greek and Ro-

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<sup>349</sup> 5th mill. BCE; Ivanova 2012; Perlès 1979 goes back all the way to the earliest Holocene in considering Mediterranean navigation; much later, the narratives of the exploits of Odysseus (Homer, *Odyssey*) and of the Argonauts (Apollonius Rhodius 1912 / 3rd c. BCE) celebrate Bronze Age navigation in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea)

<sup>350</sup> In van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011: 91 f. the case is presented for a non-historical, mythical reading of the story of the Trojan War.

man trade on the Indian Ocean (borne out by shipping handbooks (e.g. Casson 1989, 1987; Miller 1839; Picard 1982; Schoff 1912); by Roman coins widely dispersed all over the Indian Ocean region); the consumption of Chinese trade goods (especially silk and spices; Innes Miller 1969; McLaughlin 2010; Warmington 1974 / 1928) by the Roman elite of the early Imperial period, etc. After the Sea Peoples Episode (ca. 1300 BCE) the Phoenicians, with a traditional home in the Persian Gulf, increasingly dominate the Mediterranean navigation and commerce, ramifying all the way to the British Isles and Cameroon, and circumnavigating Africa; soon they founded Carthage (Picard 1982), which half a millennia later has to succumb to Roman expansion. After the Greek and Roman navigation handbooks, around the year 1000 CE we see nautical descriptions of the Indian Ocean and the Chinese Sea in Arabic and Chinese, as a sign of intensive maritime contact (Ahmad 1989; Chau Ju-Kua 1911). But more than half a millennium earlier the Chinese monk 法顯 Fa Hsien (having arrived in India on foot) had already sailed back from to China (via Ceylon) with a load of precious Buddhist literature (Giles 1923).

*Thus our attempt, throughout this monograph, to give pride of place to the formative influences that are likely to have reached the Western Old World from South East Asia more than half a dozen millennia ago, leads us to a total revision of the world picture, in which the a priori unity of humankind has been acted out, in concrete material movements of people, ideas and goods, in all directions and from many local and regional centres increasingly world-wide, even since the Early Bronze Age. The technological reduction of space and time which has led to today's globalisation, was preceded by a handful of millennia in which proto-globalisation was already no longer the exception, but the rule.*



# **PART III. CONCLUSION AND REFERENCE MATERIAL**



# Chapter 15. Conclusions

## *15.1. Recapitulation: A global maritime network form the Bronze Age onward*

I concede that with the densely referenced overview of evidences and indications in the previous chapter, I have not yet fully accomplished the task – rather impossible even for a nautical historian which I am certainly not – of proving beyond doubt the existence and growth of a global maritime network ever since the Early Bronze Age. However, the plausibility of such a hypothesis has at least been demonstrated, and that is all we need for our present discussion of the Sunda Hypothesis especially when applied to the many cases of East West parallels in Part II of this book.

Yet, in the process we have learned a few worthwhile lessons:

- The narrow research horizons in space and time that were the inevitable consequences of the rise of prolonged participatory fieldwork in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. CE as the main anthropological technique of data collection, have made us close our eyes for *long-range effects in cultural history, both in space and in time*
- The unmistakable empirical reality of such long-range effects reminds us that (proto-)globalisation has always been the inevitable consequence of Anatomically Modern Humans's tendency (and not only theirs!) to spatial displacement across the Earth's spherical surface, finite but endless, so closed into itself. From the last quarter of the 20th c. CE, we have seen a timely spate of globalisation studies<sup>351</sup> –

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<sup>351</sup> Harking back to topics that, to the untutored, myopic, Eurocentric, or juvenile postmodern

which among other advantages have meant a qualified rehabilitation of diffusion at least in such fields as the spread and acceptance of commodities and technological innovations. It is high time we realise that, while the globalisation based on the technological reduction of the costs of space and time to practically zero may be a postmodern phenomenon, *proto-globalisation has been of all times*.

- The vision of extreme fragmentation of the world's cultures, languages, genes, which has been a political tool for propping up delusions of White, European superiority during the Mercantile and Colonial Eras, needs to be supplanted by a *vision of unbounded connectedness, continuity, and the fundamental unity of humankind* (van Binsbergen 2015, 2020c)
- The Oppenheimer–Dick–Read–Tauchmann Sunda Hypothesis (Special, in regard of *Genesis* mythology; and General, in regard of everything else) is a useful reminder of the above and may be invoked to help explain a number of transcontinental continuities, but it *needs to be applied with reticence* for two important reasons:
  - many of the genetic, linguistic and cultural (including religious) continuities among Anatomically Modern Humans are much older than Sunda and stem from a dynamics (for instance the unfolding of global mythology; Witzel 2012; van Binsbergen 2006a, 2006b) that is much more comprehensive than the flooding of Sundaland in the Early Holocene.
  - once we have formulated and substantiated the idea of a multicentered, multidirectional global maritime network since the Bronze Age, the emphasis on unidirectional cultural and demographic indebtedness on which the Sunda Hypotheses are predicated, will have become obsolete
- The great weakness of the diffusion paradigm that ruled early anthropology a century ago, was that it had no theory of culture, and therefore could not take into account the local embedding of travelling cultural items, both at their origin and at their destination, and their localising transformation at

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mind, may have a ring of antiquarianism, such as nautical history, the study of games, head-hunting, yet my work on transcontinentality of which the present argument is a new instalment, has sprung directly from my central preoccupation with modern globalisation studies. As briefly set out in the Introduction, with the Dutch anthropologist Peter Geschiere I initiated, in the early 1990s, a generously funded national and international research project on 'Globalization and the Construction of Communal Identities' (Netherlands Research Foundation NWO / Netherlands Foundation for Tropical Research WOTRO), which constituted a network comprising dozens of senior and junior researchers both in the Netherlands, in Europe, and transcontinentally. The project ran throughout the 1990s and was administered, in addition to ourselves, by Bonno Thoden van Velzen and Peter van der Veer. Besides the four Dutch directors, it involved such leading scholars as Arjun Appadurai, Ulf Hannerz, Setany Shami, Jacqueline Bhabha, and Partha Chatterjee, to mention but a few. At the African Studies Centre, Leiden, one wing of this network was formed by the Theme Group on Globalisation under my direction. The result was a fair number of publications that reflect the international growth of globalisation studies (as well as, I am afraid, their ephemeral and theoretically somewhat isolated and barren nature); cf. Geschiere *et al.* 1995; van Binsbergen & Geschiere 2005; van Binsbergen & van Dijk 2004; Fardon *et al.* 1999; van Binsbergen 2015a.



the latter. Today we have a fairly adequate theory of culture, but it tends to make us close our eyes for *what is not yet, or no longer, embedded and integrated, and still bears the marks of long-range displacement and virtualisation in space and time* (cf. van Binsbergen 1997c, 2015a, 2019a).

- Another weakness of the old diffusion paradigm was its *tacit assumption of one-way continuities*: if trait Q at Z can be argued to have travelled from Y to Z, any effect of Z upon Y tends to be ignored. However, the idea of a global maritime network is that once a nautical trajectory has been sailed and has served as a means of transcontinental transmission, it is likely that it will also begin to serve for traffic of people, objects and ideas in the opposite direction, so that soon the direction of flows becomes blurred, indistinguishable, and irrelevant. One of the most intriguing, most irritating, and most difficult to dismiss ideas of the Theosophists and Anthroposophists (Helena Blavatsky, Rudolph Steiner *etc.*) who dreamed of a new world model even though around them North Atlantic colonialism and imperialism was only approaching its paroxysm, was the following: through space and time, all over the Old World (and perhaps even the New World) there has been, ever since the Early Bronze Age, a loose network of sages, healers, seers, proto-scientists, who secretly were in contact with one another across boundaries of culture, language and polities; for decades I have studied the history of a particularly widespread form of divination (the geomantic family) and I have often had reason to believe that I was seeing such a network in action. Or take another, less abstruse, example. If Chinese objects, practices and words turn out to have ended up in West Africa, we may patently assume (a point insisted upon by Clyde Winters) that West African counterparts ended up in China – and this has demonstrably been the case. Yet another example: if mating primal gods delay cosmogony in the Greek mythical past, and if the same is claimed in the mythology of Nigeria and of Polynesia, ultimately the question should not be ‘what was the epicentre K from which this trait travelled to L and M’, but ‘what other indications are there of the suggested continuity between K, L and M, and what is their time depth?’ *Multidirectionality* is an important feature of the global maritime network whose likely emergence we have studied in the previous chapter.<sup>352</sup>

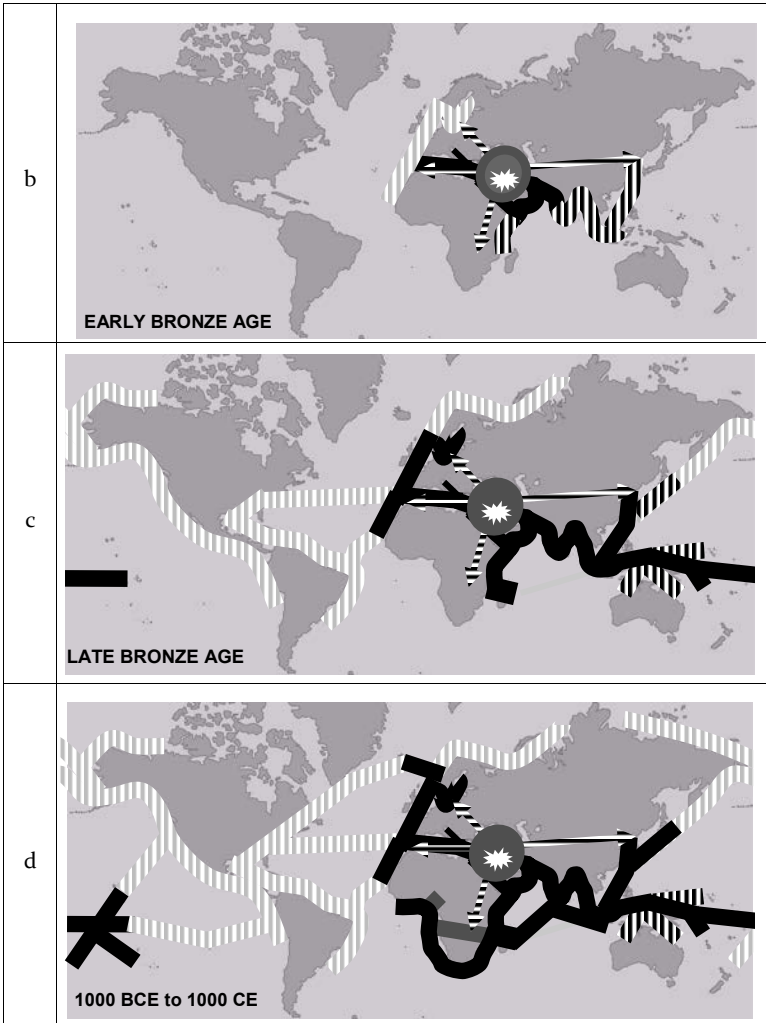
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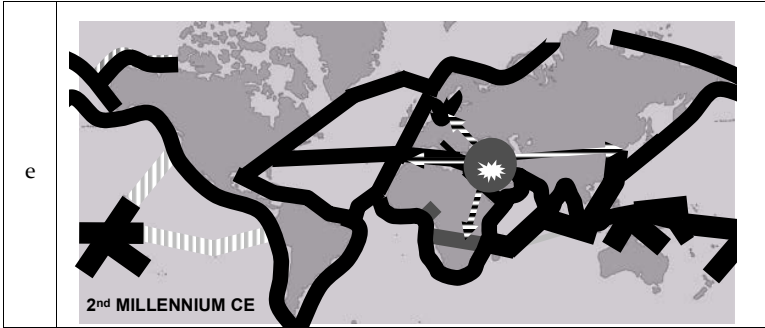
<sup>352</sup> Since formal cultural systems, such as languages, writing systems, games, divination practices, decorative styles, etc., tend to traverse, in more or less intact state, whatever boundaries in space, time, culture and polity they meet on their way, two topics that have occupied my attention for decades may be relevant in the present connection (cf. van Binsbergen 2012a, 2012c). *Mankala* / *mancala* is a board game where, by complex rules, tokens are to be circulated along a series of holes, and in the process may be captured or stored in a larger hole / bank. Its oldest archaeological attestations are in West Asia, its oldest documentary attestation is in an 8th c. CE Arabic text, but its global distribution concentrates on Africa (the founder of ‘ludology’ — the systematic study of games – Culin (1896) wrote on *Mankala, the national game of Africa*) whereas also Chinese cases have been described (Eagle 1995, 1998). That the

Let us now tentatively map the emerging global maritime network from the Bronze Age on.



game was diffused by maritime means, among others, often in connection with the migration of Africans as soldiers or slaves, is clear from its distribution in the New World, South India, Sri Lanka, and (Barnes 1975) Indonesia. Could the same Africa-centred mechanism explain the Chinese cases? Or did (what I consider most unlikely) early *mankala* emerge independently in China? By the same token, geomancy is a widespread form of divination whose distribution is remarkably similar to that of *mankala*, with transcontinental linkages both overland and maritime *e.g.* into the African interior and the New World. By means of a physical random generator which tends to be associated with the Earth (*e.g.* a stick that makes a series of indentures when its tip is swept over the ground; or tablets of ivory or wood, or four-ended divination tassels (*kpelle*), or millfoil stalks, that are thrown to the ground) the basic input in the form of a finite series of numbers is generated, and this is systematically converted into a significant pattern to be interpreted by means of a fixed, conventionalised divinatory catalogue of meanings – sometimes written, often merely from memory. The most famous system of geomantic divination is that based on the Chinese classic 易經 *yì jīng* ('*I Ching*'), which given the extensive nautical communications at the port of Basra, Southern Iraq is likely to have influenced the classic Arabic formulation of geomantic divination (*'ilm al-raml*, علم الرمل) compiled at that port c. 1000 CE. However, an inveterate tradition and various other indications (*e.g.* the alleged Berber identity of the main codifier of *'ilm al-raml*, Muḥammad al-Zanati) have insisted on the African origin of geomantic divination. The region of origin of *yì jīng* is contested, and Terrien de Lacouperie's suggestion as to a West Asian origin was ridiculed, probably too soon (van Binsbergen 2012a). A maritime and overland African impact upon either West Asia, or China, or both, in the early centuries of our proclaimed maritime network might enable us to strike a compromise between these conflicting data. There are precedents for a model stipulating cultural influence of formal systems from West Asia to China: Chinese systems of astronomy and astrology are unmistakably indebted to 1st mill. BCE West Asia and Egypt (Boll 1912; Ungnad 1932; Schlegel 1875; even their astronomical reference point can be mathematically demonstrated to be in West Asia), so the Chinese zodiacal divination bowls that seem to have been the prototypes for African divination vessels *e.g.* among the Southern African Venda and in West Africa, may ultimately have served the standard Sunda function of acting as a conveyor belt for older traits from the Ancient Near East and their Graeco-Roman derivatives (Davis 1955; van Binsbergen 2012a).





1. Proposed origin; 2. Initial expansion of 1; 3. Extent of (semi-)maritime network; 4. idem, putative; 5. idem, highly conjectural; 6. The 'cross-model': expansion of Pelasgian traits (largely overland); item (d) is in principle identical to Fig. 11.1, above, but in addition shows the overland effects of the Pelasgian cross model

Fig. 15.1. Proposed emergence of a global maritime network since the Neolithic

### 15.2. *Scope and limitations of the Sunda Hypotheses*

We must not rush to conclusions, but given the time-honoured and universally adopted methodological strategy of Occam's razor (*entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem* – in other words, keep the number of explanatory factors down to a minimum) our analysis does suggest the superior explanatory power, as far as Flood myths are concerned, of my Aggregative Diachronic Model over Oppenheimer's Sunda model as specifically applied to comparative mythology.

Yet several possible applications of a Sunda model for long-range mythologies have been acknowledged in the course of my analysis, to a limited extent even for the Ancient Near East / Biblical context, and to a somewhat greater extent for specific other mythological complexes.

We are only at the beginning of a long and difficult trajectory, in which Oppenheimer's Special Sunda Hypothesis in the field of comparative mythology may not only continue to inspire theoretical reflection and new methods of analysis, but may well be found to be somewhat rehabilitated, if applied to a wider set of mythemes than just 'The man who survived the Flood in an Ark, as ally of the Supreme God', and with yet further approaches of quantitative analysis.

*Oppenheimer's second hypothesis, concerning decisive Indonesian / Sunda prehistoric cultural influence specifically on the core mythologies of the Ancient Near East and the Bible could not be confirmed wholesale in the present analysis, although in certain, limited respects it appears to deserve the benefit of doubt and to warrant further research.* In this connection the central role was highlighted, in Flood mythologies in both the New and the Old World, of cosmogonic conceptions (notably, the Separation of the Primal Waters and the Land) argued to have informed the cosmology of

people dwelling in Central Asia in the Upper Palaeolithic (c. 30 ka BP, long before the proposed Sunda process); the mythologies reflecting that cosmogony subsequently spread over much of the globe, initially mainly through demic diffusion of populations characterised by mtDNA Type B.

*Meanwhile, however, we have Oppenheimer's first hypothesis to consider: the general claim concerning decisive Proto-Indonesian / Sunda prehistoric cultural influence on West Asia, Africa and Europe. Here the conclusion from my argument must simply be that the case for the General Sunda Hypothesis is so elaborate and so strong, that it deserves to be included among the mainstream repertoire of mechanisms available for the description and explanation of cultural processes in pre-and proto-history at the continental and intercontinental level.*

However, whilst acknowledging the Sunda mechanism, we cannot attribute to it the same unique, comprehensive formative effect on global cultural history that Oppenheimer proposes. However commendable for its counter-hegemonic and anti-Eurocentrist (but Oppenheimer assures me that it was not his intention to make an ideological and knowledge-political stance on these points...; Oppenheimer, personal communication, 2007), it is something of an exaggeration to claim, as he does, a principal and exclusive indebtedness to Sundaland on the part of the seminal cultures of the Ancient Near East from 5 ka BP on, and by implication European culture, the North Atlantic, and modern global culture as a whole. Sundaland turns out to be one, relatively recent (8 to 5 ka BP) Centre of Intensified Transformation and Innovation (CITI), next to eight others that I have identified. The other CITIs are situated in West and Central Asia and Meso America over a period from 80 to 2 ka BP. *All* CITIs, without exception, made crucial and unique contributions to world culture including world mythology. Sundaland, hitherto largely unacknowledged as a focus of cultural innovation and transmission, thanks to the efforts of Stephen Oppenheimer can now be recognised as one of these Centres of Intensified Transformation and Innovation, and one of the latest ones, absorbing the incomparable achievements that had already been attained in previous CITIs, transforming and innovating these in turn, and peddling the results over half of the world on what was, admittedly, a grand scale.

If the Ancient Near East represented a major advance in global cultural history (as one of the principal centres worldwide that saw the invention of the henceforth decisive logocentric package of writing, the state, organised religion, and science), this was in part due to the postulated Sunda influence, but also to the combination of two other auspicious historical factors:

1. The Near East was the one place outside Africa where the initial cultural package of Pandora's Box underwent the cross-fertilisation with Neanderthaloid culture for a very long time, and could further locally develop for over over 50 ka before the actual rise of the Ancient Near East cultures 6 ka BP
2. The Near East was the place where the accumulating transformative and innovative effects, over 45 ka and more, of half a dozen CITIs on Asian soil, apart from Sundaland, passed through on their way West and South,

in the context of the Back-into-Africa movement (from 15 ka BP on).

3. Innovative in food production (invention of agriculture and of animal husbandry throughout the Extended Fertile Crescent including the Ancient Near East), hence in language proliferation and overpopulation

CITI, proposed dating	location	characteristics	mtDNA type		linguistic macrophyllum
IX, c. 7 ka BP	Sunda	recycling of older NarComs; so far no compelling reason to assume the emergence of new NarComs at this CITI	B	Oppenheimer 1998: flooding of now insular South East Asia, especially 3rd flooding period 7.5 – 5.6 ka BP	Austriac
X, c. 5 ka BP?	southern North America	possibly some of the new NarComs which were suggested by the analysis of Flood myth worldwide	A, B, Central, D, X	van Binsbergen, in prep. XX	Amerind

Table. 15.1. Additional CITIs in Sundaland and Meso America, to be added to Table 4.3

### 15.3. The possible Sunda factor in East-West parallels

For a conclusion concerning the East-West parallels considered in Part II of this book, let us look once more at skeleton versions of our three central Tables

A. theme	overall Sunda interpretation
1. leg child	VERY UNLIKELY
2. fishlike culture hero	POSSIBLE
3. legendary voyages, especially by sea	POSSIBLY BUT UNLIKELY
4. ogre	LIMITED
5. theft of fire	VERY UNLIKELY
6. specific Type 3 Flood stories, complete with transgression, hero, warning, Ark, rainbow, and tower / bridge	POSSIBLY
7. humankind created from Earth / dust / clay	UNLIKELY
8. incessant mating between the first divine pair prevents their children / creation to come forth from the womb; this proto-cosmogonic condition ended in the Separation of Heaven and Earth	FAIRLY PROBABLE
9. deity (male or female) is killed and from the body crops sprang forth / or even the entire world	POSSIBLY BUT NOT VERY CONVINCING
10. Moon is male and Sun is female	POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY
11. Anti / Antaeus as a divine name	POSSIBLY BUT UNLIKELY
12. spider is Supreme God and creator	VERY UNLIKELY
13. through divine intervention, land emerges from the sea	UNLIKELY
14. the cosmos is layered	UNLIKELY

15. throwing stick / boomerang, and specifically its loss through a hole giving out to the Underworld	UNLIKELY
16. solar hero with miraculous works	LIMITED AND SECONDARILY
17. the invention of sails	POSSIBLY BUT INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE
18. twins complex	POSSIBLY
19. the horse and sea theme	POSSIBLY BUT UNLIKELY
20. quest for immortality	UNLIKELY BUT POSSIBLE
21. protector gods of seamen	POSSIBLY
22. confusion of tongues and of nations	PROBABLY
23. the Cosmic Egg	MOST PROBABLY

Table 15.2. Summary of results: Apparent mythological parallels between Western Eurasia and Oceania / Indonesia, an attempt to interpret each case in terms of the Sunda Hypothesis

<b>A. theme</b>	<b>overall Sunda interpretation</b>
1. head-hunting	YES BUT LIMITED
2. megaliths	POSSIBLY BUT LIMITED
3. mankala	CONSIDERABLY
4. skull theme; feet of the deceased rest on skulls	POSSIBLY
5. royal court culture in which xylophone orchestra is central	LARGELY CONFIRMED
6. initiation headdress very tall cone (hair+clay) moulded upon head	DIFFICULT TO DECIDE
7. male genital mutilation	POSSIBLY
8. honey and mead theme	POSSIBLY BUT SOMEWHAT UNLIKELY
9. dominant iconography of statuettes depicting a squatting human	PROBABLY
10. the trumpet	POSSIBLY

Table 15.3. Summary of results: Corroborative evidence for possible Sunda effects from non-mythical parallels

<b>A. theme</b>	<b>overall Sunda interpretation</b>
1. transcontinental maritime contacts	LIMITED
2. possible references to South East Asian physical type	UNLIKELY

3. sign systems (1) megalithic	POSSIBLY BUT NEEDS FURTHER PROOF
4. sign systems (2) Rapanui / Indus	UNCONVINCING
5. Austric linguistic elements	UNLIKELY
6. references to a maritime power that could be Sunda related; and that, from the perspective of established ancient states and people, could appear as inimical and intrusive	POSSIBLY

Table 15.4. Summary of results: Objective, non-cultural indicators of possible Sunda effects

After our our very long and complex argument, we are now finally in a position to draw a balanced conclusion concerning the validity and heuristic value of the Sunda Hypothesis towards the interpretation of apparent East-West parallels in the mythological and cultural fields. Once more, and again contrary to Oppenheimer's claims, Sunda impact does not turn out to be to all-explaining factor in the global cultural history of Anatomically Modern Humans over the last 10 ka. We had already come to that conclusion on theoretical, methodological, and empirical grounds over ten years ago, so we are neither surprised nor thrilled. Where is the reward for the very extensive efforts that has gone into our present argument?

The reward is very clear, and comes out clearly in the above summary tables. Although the Sunda Hypothesis turns out to be of quite limited applicability, it has applicability nonetheless. Many of our apparent East-West parallels in the mythological field crumble under closer comparative, methodological and theoretical scrutiny, yet in a few cases Sunda turns out to be a real eye-opener. Like Martin Gardiner Bernal's *Black Athena* Hypothesis (which, despite all the detailed, devastating criticism; Lefkowitz & MacLean Rogers 1996) however was never subjected to such an extensive and insistent comparative test as we have now applied to the Sunda Hypothesis), the Sunda Hypothesis turns out to deserve to be added to the scholarly historical canon, and to be granted paradigmatic status as an additional, sporadically applicable factor of transcontinental relationships. This is quite a different result than what Stephen Oppenheimer and I were fighting about over a decade ago. I am glad that the excessive amount of time and effort which I have now spend on Oppenheimer's seminal idea, finally has come to a balanced result, whose heuristic value will prove itself in the future, and which at least in part corroborates the intuition of a paediatrician and geneticist, whose passion drove him to reverse the habitual, implicitly hegemonic view of transcontinental relationships in cultural history.

In the process we have gained an overview of transcontinental cultural and mythological history that, if I am not mistaken, has few precedents or rivals. This monograph has become an amazing exercise in diachronic world mythology – a demonstration of what today's comparative mythology is capable of – although our focus on the Nkoya people of Zambia and on their 20<sup>th</sup> c. CE life as studied in detail during decades of fieldwork and participation, can in no way replace Michael Witzel's 2012 magnum



opus on *The Origin of the World's Mythologies*. If anything, this book is a convincing demonstration of the fundamental unity of humankind, and an antidote to the mythologies of difference, hatred and conflict that have taken over our globalised world in the last few decades.

#### 15.4. Serendipitous results

Meanwhile, our extensive attempts to put the Sunda Hypotheses to the test, have yielded, as their greatest reward, serendipitous results which have changed our understanding of transcontinental continuities beyond anything we could have derived from the Sunda idea alone.

In the first place, there is the *discovery of a multidirectional, multicentred maritime network that has expanded all over the globe ever since the Bronze Age – and which constitutes, the natural background and explanation for the many East-West parallels we have considered, whatever specific Sunda explanations, origins, and vectors we may attribute to such parallels*. In this light the bickering over specific directions of transcontinental transmission and indebtedness is reduced to the status obsolescent, pre-globalisation dregs left over in a world of globalisation. Even though most of our argument in Parts I and II is implicitly predicated on the assumption of unique origins and unidirectional transmission, the maturation of our argument towards chapter 14 has rendered that assumption a Wittgensteinian Ladder (1964 / 1922) meant to be thrown away once our goal (greater insight on humankind's transcontinental past and present) is coming into view.

While this insight may be the one lasting result of this extensive monograph, we have seen emerge, more or less in passing, a few further seminal insights that, while still requiring further testing, certainly have added life and promise to the study of transcontinental continuities in the immediate future.

Ten years ago I coined the expression '*Pelasgian Realm*' (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011; van Binsbergen 2011f, and in prep. (e)), not in order to contribute to the growing body of linguistic studies on Pelasgian as a newly discovered Indo-European language (I have claimed that Pelasgian is neither one coherent language, nor predominantly Indo-European) but in order to design a framework in which our little scraps on cultural and religious information concerning the Late-Bronze-Age Sea Peoples would be meaningfully (albeit conjecturally) interpreted. By that time I had already written the bulk of Part I of this book, had extensively engaged with the Sunda Hypothesis, and had stressed the distinct nature of Pelasgian and Sunda as alternative models of transcontinental continuity. One of the great surprises resulting from diligently reworking this draft to (I hope) a publishable level in the course of the year 2020, was that I had to admit that in fact that difference is not so great. If we take the Sunda Hypothesis seriously, and accept North-western India / Pakistan, the Persian Gulf, and the Northern Red Sea (the very epicentres of the Pelasgian realm in Neolithic times) as likely spots for the landfall of Sunda influence in the western Old World, then we cannot escape the conclusion that, when all is said and done, *Pelasgian*

*is potentially nothing but transformed Sunda.*

We have come to realise that (by analogy with such cases as Ancient Egypt, Sumer, the Indus Valley, Minoan Greece, and *pace* Oppenheimer), across half a dozen or more millennia, we cannot expect present-day South-East Asian including Indonesian cultures to be strikingly continuous with the postulated Proto-Indonesian Sunda culture which supposedly was spread west and east as a result of flooding the the Early Holocene. Yet on the basis of their distribution among cultures that lie in the postulated path of Sunda transmission, we were able to draw up a checklist of postulated Sunda traits (Table 5.8, above), we may flatter ourselves to have identified some of these traits with considerable plausibility. Other indications have been yielded by comparative mythology – e.g. the widespread mythical figure of the old woman testing a youth by requesting to be carried across the waters, occurs from Greek Hera to Manenga in South Central Africa, and seems reminiscent a of Proto-Indonesian goddess protectrix of navigators.

What emerges is a rather novel and exciting world picture, fit to replace the hegemonic Eurocentrism that has spawn and shaped modern scholarship. We are prepared to recognise and reconsider what I have called *Uninvited Guests*: linguistic, cultural, religious and even genetic traits that, on paradigmatic grounds, would seem to be totally out of place in the region and period where they are attested. In this monography I have stated in some detail the case for the presence of Proto-Bantu as an uninvited guest in Syro-Palestine and Ancient Mesopotamia. Also in sub-Saharan Africa we have come across similar apparent intrusions: extensive apparent Sunda traits among the Zambian Nkoya, Taoist traits among the Cameroonian Bamileke, Hindu gods in Ghana, etc. In fact, every continent does contain such cases, and we have selectively considered some in this book's argument. Viewed in isolation these are oddities that irrelevantly play havoc with our accepted geopolitical and geohistorical perceptions and paradigms; but taken together they testify to the fundamental unity of Anatomically Modern Humans, underpinned not only by a shared prehistoric origin but also by the immense amount of (technologically enabled) trans-continental exchanges in the most recent millennia. Proto-globalisation has been our reality since the Early Bronze Age, and the massive trans-continental migrations from the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. CE on can only be properly appreciated, and recognised as part of a historical process going on for half a dozen millennia. The very term 'uninvited guests' brings out the inherently Eurocentric and hegemonic, essentially mistaken assumptions on which the world view of the North Atlantic is still largely based.

We have had inklings of *the rise and fall of solar religion*, advancing in a westerly direction with ever greater success, up to five or four millennia BP, engulfing the Ancient Near East and Ancient Egypt, but unable to maintain its dominant position, and already yielding to the new dispensation of non-solar sky gods rising in the Late Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age. The conflict between Set and Horus may indicate an early phase in this process, of a Sun god (Horus) seeking to gain the upper hand over a terrestrial god (Set). Whenever we encounter them in the literate religions and mythologies of the Mediterranean and North-western Europe of those periods, solar gods are not exactly eclipsed, but their dominant place has been taken by storm gods, thunder gods (Zeus, Odinn, Thor) holding sway over a

pantheon in which solar gods such as Helios, Apollo, Sol, Heimdall, have been demoted to junior, subaltern or peripheral positions. The general gender shift attending the supplanting of older deities during the Bronze Age in the Extended Fertile Crescent (van Binsbergen & Woudhuizen 2011), suggests that especially solar gods were redefined to become female, but this is a moot point for perhaps they were already originally female since pre-Bronze-Age times when female gender did not imply disqualification. Rather unexpectedly (although we might have heeded the obsolete ultra-diffusionists such as Elliot Smith and Perry, one of whose book titles was *Children of the Sun*, and who emphasised solar religion in the spread of navigation) the references to solar cults appear to thicken – notably around the Talos mythical character – in the context of the oldest attestations of navigation in the Mediterranean region – as if indicative, after all, of solar religion as the hallmark of Sunda expansion. On this point much further research remains to be done.

Likewise, *we have further explored the extent to which an uninvited guest in the Mediterranean world, notably the linguistic macrophylum of Nigercongo with Bantu as one of its major branches, may have left traces in the Bronze Age Mediterranean and may begin to alter our images of transcontinental cultural history.* Jabbok and Canaan, Tiāmat, Kingu, Lot, have been important names in the study of the *Bible* and the Ancient Near East long since long before the emergence of an Afrocentrist perspective. The possibility that opens up now, of re-evaluating these names from an African, Nigercongo-speaking, perspective, is exciting as another exercise in the construction of non-hegemonic, non-Eurocentric global cultural history.

By the same token, *the amazing presence of East Asian, especially Chinese, traits in the older layers of African (and European) cultural history of the last handful of millennia has begun to manifest itself.* Like in the Bantu case, our attention was drawn to this Uninvited Guest, not so much as a result of present-day developments and shifts in transcontinental relationships worldwide under today's conditions of technological globalisation (although China does feature here, too), but by the enigmatic linguistic indications of Bantu and of Chinese as surfacing (e.g. in the Nkoya clan system as an example of a cyclical transformation of elements, with otherwise rare catalytic effect; or in the *sangomas'* ritual use of chopsticks and Black robes reminiscent of Taoists) in the ancient empirical material at our disposal.

The image of sub-Saharan Africa that emerges as a result, could not be further removed from the old patchwork-quilt model that was the main stock-in-trade of classic anthropology, when (ascerbated by colonial and racist perspectives) Africa appeared as a loose conglomerate of distinct and internally fully integrated 'tribal' entities, each with its own primordial culture and mutually unconnected except through its incorporation in the colonial state. Instead, even when leaving aside for a moment the important question as to Africa's impact on other continents, African societies turn out to have, since millennia, reflected the wider world in ways that bear witness to the *de facto* proto-globalisation in which they have been involved. In this monograph (and in much of my other recent work) we have seen at least one African society, that of the Nkoya of Zambia, to demonstrably reflect Ancient Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Mediterranean, South Asian, East Asian, Indo-Pacific and Oceanian influences as a fully-fledged part of the human world as a whole. Remotely but recognis-

ably resonating to the tunes of far-away civilisations, states, knowledge systems, world religions, the Nkoya situation – when we try to remove the veil of essentialising exoticism that has warped our image of Africa and that has even perverted Afrocentrism – is scarcely different from that of remote rural communities in today’s USA’s Midwest, in Moghul India, in classical Greece’s Euboeia, in Java under Majapahit rule, in Mexico in the fringes of the Ancient Maya state. Having long relinquished the hegemonic notion of bounded cultures integrated in themselves and fenced off from the outside world, especially students of South Asia and Meso America have struggled, already two generations ago, to formulate models that could take into account both local societies’ specificity and their loose – often unconscious, or reluctant – integration in complexes of much wider geographic and temporal scope. Fallen out of use for nearly half a century, such notions as the ‘peasant society’, conceived as a ‘part society with a part culture’, as well as attempts to understand South and South East Asia in terms of the opposition between *Great Tradition and Little Tradition*,<sup>353</sup> pointed in a direction that – if properly rephrased in terms of proto-globalisation – could still help us to conceptualise the complex Nkoya situation in terms that are rather more meaningful and substantial than just ‘recipient of transcontinental diffusion’. When we see Nkoya musicians present and preserve a musical style and musical instruments from far away; when their kings emulate models of royalty and state originally deriving from Ancient Egypt, Ashoka’s Buddhist India or – more than one and a half millennium later – Moghul India; when we encounter among the Nkoya selective patterns of female submission, male abhorrence of the normal physiology of the female body, and both the tradition of and the resistance to male genital mutilation, as if we were in a South West Asian backwater with resonances of the world religions of Judaism or Islam; if we see nonChristians celebrate Christmas and non-Muslims abstain from pork; when lotus, bee and reed take their place as powerful symbols among the Nkoya far outside their original distant contexts (be they in South Asia or Ancient Egypt); and if, whatever one’s proclaimed religious orientation, a sizeable proportion of the population engages in possession and healing cults that came blown over from far east or far north across thousands of kilometers – then the situation is very similar to that of Europe during most of the last few millennia, and amenable to description in terms of a distant *Great Tradition one does not have to consciously subscribe to in order to selectively adopt and enact it*. The notion of a global maritime network helps us understand what could have brought about such a situation; but in order to fully appreciate this situation at the level of lived and shared culture and experience, *we need to overcome the tendency towards purity, essence, localism, and presentism that has been African Studies’ perennial shortcoming*. I think that in this recommendation, and in the belligerent theoretical position it implies, lies – in addition to petty institutional power struggles and career envy – an important reason for the tribulations that have

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<sup>353</sup> Cf. Foster 1965; Obeyesekere 1963; Redfield 1930, 1947, 1952, 1955, 1956a, 1956b; Singer 1960; Srinivas 1956. My own extensive study (final version van Binsbergen 2015; ch. 1, pp. 85–168) of *virtuality* as a perspective on modern urban Africa – on which, believe it or not, most of my African fieldwork experience has focussed over the decades – goes some way towards the theoretical exploration of the Nkoya situation as summarised here, but the specific application to *the Nkoya as Sunda* still remains to be made.

spoiled the last decade and a half of my life as an Africanist breaking out of the Africanist straightjacket.

In addition to these systematic results and serendipities, this book's argument has been an exercise in *the sustained transcontinental analysis of myth and culture*, combining bibliographic and digital resourcefulness with the dogged determination to follow up every possible transcontinental connection, especially the more unlikely and counter-paradigmatic ones. Inevitably, I have often exaggerated, erred, even blundered, in this process; I hope that my own shortcomings will meet with the same understanding which guided my own passionate defense (1997 / 2011) of Martin Gardiner Bernal's innovative but flawed work, back in the 1990s.

Writing a kind of book that does not yet exist, that is original in both method, problematic, sophistication, and outcome, is enough of a tantalising challenge and of an unbearable burden, without having to fear all the time what the Jones'es were going to think about the details of my argument. In the Introduction I have allowed the reader a glimpse of what the Jones'es in my professional life did to my life's work and my career – enough never to reckon with them ever again. With all the great discomforts, pains and anxieties of growing older, there is at least this benefit (beyond the infinitely more important, daily celebration of a profoundly happy marriage, and seeing one's children and grandchildren find their place in life):<sup>354</sup> that – on the strength of decades of accumulated knowledge and experience, and *Fingerspitzengefühl* – one can simply go for the best scholarship, the best science, one could possibly produce, without having to worry about what negative career effects one's counterparadigmatic trajectory will bring about. Meanwhile, every specialist reader will rapidly perceive that even my best work is rife with errors of fact, method, and general perspective, and absolutely needs the critical reworking by others.

Throughout this monograph I have returned, time and again, to *the Nkoya people of Zambia*, on whom I have been privileged to accumulate vast and detailed knowledge in the course of half a century, and who have welcomed me in their midst first as a welcome stranger, then as a political resource, and finally as one of their own. Writing this book has forced me to further explore, and to reconsider, many aspects of Nkoya life in a new, transcontinental light, and to throw in relief implications that it had taken me literally decades to perceive and to appreciate. As a result the Nkoya have been allowed to write and rewrite world history – the Nkoya perspective adopted in the present monograph, far from remaining that of an apparently underdeveloped African backwater, has revolutionised and modernised our perspective on the world as a whole – as truly one world in history, in social and cultural forms, in imagination, and especially in future. Reading this book, and writing it, is an exercise in the fundamental unity of humankind, not only in anatomical and psychic basic makeup, but

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<sup>354</sup> Patricia, my African-born and Africanist-trained wife since 1984, and all our five children (including the eldest, Nezjma, whose great contribution is highlighted in the Introduction), need have no doubt about how indispensable they have been for my life and work, and how well I am aware of this state of affairs. This makes it possible for me to dedicate this book no to them, but to two women who have been the inspiring lights in my Nkoya research especially in the 1970s: Nezjma's mother, and Mary Nalishuwa.

especially in many details of myth and religion, and culture. I am immensely proud that such a statement could be made on the basis of, mainly, African material – as a standard upon which the fruits of world-wide erudition and digitalisation could be meaningfully suspended, conducive to deeper global understanding and motivation. By making this statement in this way, with this focus – even though it has taken me much more efforts and has taxed my diminishing health much more than I anticipated when, nearly a year ago, I decided to work up and publish a manuscript left over on the shelf since 2007 – , I hope to repay somewhat the great and lasting benefits I have received from the hands of my life-long teachers, Nkoya men and women from all walks of life but mainly from humble remote villages in practically illiterate surroundings. Over the decades, their wisdom has come to shape my life and that of my spouse and children, has inspired my empirical research as well as my excursions in academic intercultural philosophy, and as the Editor-in-Chief of *Quest: An African Journal of Philosophy / Revue Africaine de Philosophie*. I hope that the same implied lessons come across to the readers of this book, to be applied on a world-wide scale

# Chapter 16. Bibliography

## 16.1. General bibliography

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## 16.2. Anonymous *Wikipedia* lemmas

The most recent decades have brought us digital accessibility of virtually the whole range of scientific knowledge. This has opened unprecedented opportunities for interdisciplinary research, including the present book. These opportunities come at a price. The new format of scientific access can no longer be

dictated by the norms of scientific respectability hailing from 1900 CE, and necessitates new standards. *E.g.*, reference to *Wikipedia* lemmas is admittedly problematic (*cf.* reference to the disreputable mythographic work of Robert Graves): the anonymous contributions to *Wikipedia*'s collective amateur encyclopaedia are very uneven, and have in principle no accountability to a scientific forum. In practice however they often do contain valid and useful information, including further bibliographic reference to publications of impeccable scientific authority. Using the latter without acknowledging the former feels like plagiarism, which I seek to avoid by explicitly acknowledging my little debts to *Wikipedia*, even though it is never my only source. I prefer such honesty to the tacit, appropriate window-dressing which is often *Wikipedia*'s fate.

Anonymous, Abkhazians of African descent, wiki, at:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abkhazians\\_of\\_African\\_descent](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abkhazians_of_African_descent)

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Anonymous, Almazor, wiki, at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Almazor>,

Anonymous, Anansi, wiki, at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anansi>

Anonymous, Arachne, wiki, at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arachne>

Anonymous, Arachnophobia, wiki, at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arachnophobia>

Anonymous, Areop-Enap, wiki, at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Areop-Enap>

Anonymous, Athena', wiki, at: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athena>

Anonymous, Book of the Heavenly Cow, wiki, at:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book\\_of\\_the\\_Heavenly\\_Cow](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_of_the_Heavenly_Cow)

Anonymous, Buddha, wiki, at: <https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddha>

Anonymous, Chaos, wiki, at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaos\\_\(cosmogony\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaos_(cosmogony))

Anonymous, Conch (instrument), wiki, at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conch\\_\(instrument\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conch_(instrument))

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Anonymous, Skull cup', wiki, at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skull\\_cup](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skull_cup), retrieved 25-7-2012

Anonymous, Talos, wiki, at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talos\\_\(inventor\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talos_(inventor))

Anonymous, Tsuchigumo, wiki, at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tsuchigumo> Earth spider = Japanese clans that reject the sovereignty of the emperor

Anonymous, Turanism, wiki, at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turanism>

Anonymous, Vala, wiki, at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vala\\_\(Vedic\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vala_(Vedic))

### 16.3. Selected specimens of Nkoya music

Thanks to the activities of the Kazanga Cultural Society and the Zambia Broadcasting Corporation, there is no lack of recordings of Nkoya music, showing the various instruments in action, usually in accompaniment of song and dance. Much can be found on <https://www.youtube.com>. Here also the following productions of the author's hand may be found:

Anonymous, 2011, Africanist Wim van Binsbergen interviewed on the Kazanga ceremony of the Nkoya people of Zambia, at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iz6bov6vWP8>

van Binsbergen, Wim M.J., 2011, young girl emulates global pop-music stances at the 2011 Kazanga ceremony, Kaoma, Zambia, at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogppFDPzcSA>

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van Binsbergen, Wim M.J., 2011, The typical sequences of Nkoya teenage female dancing, Zambia, at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sj153Qo5gFE>

van Binsbergen, Wim M.J., 2011, Traditional court song of the Nkoya people, at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBlo\\_Col\\_Kc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBlo_Col_Kc)

van Binsbergen, Wim M.J., 2011, Final, playful part of a pubescent girl's coming-out dance among the Nkoya people of Zambia, at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXZpyqPAisQ>

### 16.4. Web sources of selected illustrations

with thanks; the copyright remains with the original sources. Illustrations © 1998 Stephen Oppenheimer and those © Cavalli-Sforza *et al.* 1994 marked as such. All other illustrations © 2007 Wim van Binsbergen

Niah cave: © Heather Angel <http://www.naturalvisions.co.uk/>

Sumerian shell money:

<http://images.channeladvisor.com/Sell/SSProfiles/10053242/Images/sumerianshells.JPG>

El Ubaid: [http://www.atlastours.net/iraq/terracotta\\_figurine.jpg](http://www.atlastours.net/iraq/terracotta_figurine.jpg)

Melanesian shell money: [http://www.janeresture.com/solomon\\_postcards2/Fine\\_Ancient\\_Solomon\\_Islands\\_Shell\\_Money\\_1.jpg](http://www.janeresture.com/solomon_postcards2/Fine_Ancient_Solomon_Islands_Shell_Money_1.jpg)

Indus: <http://www.kmtspace.com/kmt/indusz.htm>

Indus: <http://www.treasuregategallery.com/default.aspx?artpiece=05NE1142>

Nalikulanda: [http://www.nrzam.org.uk/Site\\_Resources/FederalHandbook/17.JPG](http://www.nrzam.org.uk/Site_Resources/FederalHandbook/17.JPG)

pre-hispanic Western Mexico: © Williams; Eduardo

<http://www.famsi.org/research/williams/images/Fig11.jpg>

Sumer Flood myth cuneiform: source: <http://www.schoyencollection.com/religions.htm>

Blavatsky: <http://beyond-the-illusion.com/ftp/Occult/Pictures/blavatsky.gif>

Steiner: [http://www.anthroposophie.net/steiner/Lebens-gang/bilder/Rudolf\\_Steiner\\_1901.jpg](http://www.anthroposophie.net/steiner/Lebens-gang/bilder/Rudolf_Steiner_1901.jpg)

Churchward: [http://www.zep.hu/szimbolumok/plant/james\\_churchward.jpg](http://www.zep.hu/szimbolumok/plant/james_churchward.jpg)  
von Daeniken (<http://www.fernweh-park.eu/ima-ges/pics/stars/daeniken/daenoi.jpg>)  
Velikowsky: <http://static.twoday.net/oraclesyndicate/images/Immanuel-Velikowsky.jpg>  
Temple: <http://www.robert-temple.com/crystalSunMain.htm>  
A royal orchestra, Congo, late 17th c. CE  
Sedan / litter travel, Congo, late 16th c. CE  
The University College, London (United Kingdom) gamelan orchestra from West Java: xylophones,  
gongs and drums:





# Appendix 1. Contents analysis of Flood myths worldwide

This Appendix only gives a skeleton impression of the data and analysis underlying the statistical conclusions presented in chapter 10. An extensive report of over 700 pp. was drafted in 2007-2008, and is now being prepared for publication (van Binsbergen, in prep. (k)). It also describes the construction of the vital auxiliary variable CONTAMIN.

## A1.1. Alphabetical overview of all variables in the analysis

Name, scale type, distribution (frequencies and percentages for nominal variables, descriptive statistics for interval variables)

I. VARIABLE NAME (CAPITAL), = [ description; if a number appears this is the variable number under which this variable has been discussed or analysed ]	II. type of variable: n=nominal; d=dichotomous; o=ordinal; i=interval	III. Details: value lists, range, frequencies, percentages, etc.
AGENCY = 27a Flood is stated or implied to have been due to human agency	n-d	CUM      CUM COUNT    COUNT PCT    PCT AGENCY 53        53 67.1    67.1 -1 = NO 26        79 32.9    100.0    1 = YES

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AGESOURC = Age of the source of this Flood myth in years (now = 2007 CE); this is a transformation of SORCEYR: AGESOURC = (2007-SORCEYR)	i	N OF CASES 79 MINIMUM 11.000 MAXIMUM 3007.000 RANGE 2996.000 MEAN 148.354 VARIANCE 211041.104 STANDARD DEV 459.392 STD. ERROR 51.686 SKEWNESS (G1) 5.024 KURTOSIS (G2) 24.640 MEDIAN 38.000 missing values (N=20) have been recoded to the median value
ANIMSRV = 41. Animal survivors of Flood in evidence	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT ANIMSRV 46 46 58.2 58.2 -1 = NO 33 79 41.8 100.0 1 = YES
ARKPRES = 65. Any effective rescue device ('an Ark' in the broadest sense of the word) in evidence?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT ARKPRES 14 14 17.7 17.7 -1 = NO 65 79 82.3 100.0 1 = YES
BIRDSEND = 66. Were birds said or implied to have been sent out in order to ascertain if Flood had stopped?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT BIRDSEND 71 71 89.9 89.9 -1 = NO 8 79 10.1 100.0 1 = YES
BLOW = 83. Blowing upon/ warming mud (/corpse) in evidence?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT BLOW 73 73 92.4 92.4 -1 = NO 6 79 7.6 100.0 1 = YES
CANINE = 17. Dog (wolf, coyote) in evidence?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT CANINE 66 66 83.5 83.5 -1 = NO 13 79 16.5 100.0 1 = YES
CASNUMBR = Identification number of Flood story in data set following Isaak's (2006) original order	n	actual case numbers in the analysis are: 1, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 49, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 100, 105, 110, 115, 120, 125, 130, 135, 145, 150, 155, 160, 165, 170, 175, 180, 185, 190, 195, 200, 205, 210, 215, 220, 225, 230, 235, 240, 245, 250, 255, 260, 265, 270, 275, 280, 285, 290, 295, 300, 305, 310, 315, 320, 325, 330, 335, 340, 343, 350, 355, 360, 364, 370, 375, 380, 385, 390, 391, 394
CAUSREND = 39a. Is the causer of the Flood said or implied to have ended the Flood?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT CAUSREND 35 35 44.3 44.3 -1 = NO

Appendix 1. Contents analysis of Flood myths worldwide

		37 72 46.8 91.1 0 = UNCERTAIN 7 79 8.9 100.0 1 = YES
CHAIN = o8. Rope or chain in evidence?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT CHAIN 75 75 94.9 94.9 -1 = NO 4 79 5.1 100.0 1 = YES
COMBAT = 63. Are the hero(es) and/ or other protagonist(s) said or implied to have been in contest-game-combat?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT COMBAT 48 48 60.8 60.8 -1 = NO 31 79 39.2 100.0 1 = YES
COMCSRHE = 81. A combat-contest-game between Flood Hero and Flood causer is in evidence?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT COMCSRHE 25 25 31.6 31.6 -1 = NO 48 73 60.8 92.4 0 = UNCERTAIN 6 79 7.6 100.0 1 = YES
CONTINTs = Continent?	n	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT CONTINTs\$ 5 5 6.3 6.3 AUSTRALIA 3 8 3.8 10.1 EUROPE 8 16 10.1 20.3 MESO AM 24 40 30.4 50.6 NORTH AMERICA 3 43 3.8 54.4 NORTH&EAST ASIA 4 47 5.1 59.5 NEAR EAST 1 48 1.3 60.8 NW GUINEA 5 53 6.3 67.1 PACIFIC 10 63 12.7 79.7 SOUTH AMERICA 4 67 5.1 84.8 SOUTH ASIA 9 76 11.4 96.2 SE ASIA 3 79 3.8 100.0 SS AFRICA
CONTACT = o2. Is this case subjectively suggestive of culture contact with Nuahite model?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT CONTACT 49 49 62.0 62.0 -1 = NO 30 79 38.0 100.0 1 = YES
CONTAMIN = This Flood story displays the Nuahite model? ( variable constructed by discriminant analysis)	n	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT CONTAMIN 27 27 34.2 34.2 -1 = NO 25 52 31.6 65.8 0 = UNCERTAIN 27 79 34.2 100.0 1 = YES
CONTAMIX (transformation of CONTACT)	n	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT CONTACT2 39 39 49.4 49.4 -1 = NO 3 42 3.8 53.2 0 = UNCERTAIN 37 79 46.8 100.0 1 = YES

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DAYSFLUD = 19. How many days is the Flood stated or implied to have lasted?	i	N OF CASES 79 MINIMUM 1 = yes MAXIMUM 5000.000 RANGE 4999.000 MEAN 155.253 VARIANCE 557872.089 STANDARD DEV 746.908 STD. ERROR 84.034 SKEWNESS (G1) 5.877 KURTOSIS (G2) 33.362 MEDIAN 17.000 missing cases (N=61) have been recoded to the median; correspondingly, variable has been used with great caution
DEMIANIM = 30a. Animal Demiurge in evidence?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT DEMIANIM 68 68 86.1 86.1 -1 = NO 11 79 13.9 100.0 1 = YES
DEMIHUM = 30b Human Demiurge in evidence?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT DEMIHUM 66 66 83.5 83.5 -1 = NO 13 79 16.5 100.0 1 = YES
DEMIPRES = 29. Demiurge/ trickster in evidence?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT DEMIPRES 46 46 58.2 58.2 -1 = NO 33 79 41.8 100.0 1 = YES
DESTFLUD = 05. Are all destructions just floods?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT DESTFLUD 8 8 10.1 10.1 -1 = NO 71 79 89.9 100.0 1 = YES
DIVERSIT = 76. Evocation diversity of tongues et nations in evidence?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT DIVERSIT 54 54 68.4 68.4 -1 = NO 25 79 31.6 100.0 1 = YES
DURASTAT = 18. Duration of Flood stated?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT DURASTAT 60 60 75.9 75.9 -1 = NO 19 79 24.1 100.0 1 = YES
ERZDVEND = 71, 39b. Is Earth diver said or implied to have stopped the Flood?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT ERZDVEND 75 75 94.9 94.9 -1 = NO 4 79 5.1 100.0 1 = YES
ERZDVPRS 70. Is Earth diver in evidence?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT ERZDVPRS

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		74 74 93.7 93.7 -1 = NO 5 79 6.3 100.0 1 = YES
<b>FIRECAUS</b> = 40a. Was fire said or implied to have been the cause or the reason or the nature of the Flood?	<b>n-d</b>	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT FIRECAUS 73 73 92.4 92.4 -1 = NO 6 79 7.6 100.0 1 = YES
<b>FIREEND</b> = 40b. Was fire said or implied to have ended the Flood?	<b>n-d</b>	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT FIREEND 76 76 96.2 96.2 -1 = NO 3 79 3.8 100.0 1 = YES
<b>FIRSTANI</b> = 34b. Is the Flood said or implied to have taken place at a time that the inhabitants of Earth were animals?	<b>n-d</b>	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT FIRSTANI 54 54 68.4 68.4 -1 = NO 20 74 25.3 93.7 0 = UNCERTAIN 5 79 6.3 100.0 1 = YES
<b>FIRSTHUM</b> = 34a. Is the Flood said or implied to have taken place at a time that the inhabitants of Earth were humans?	<b>n-d</b>	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT FIRSTHUM 12 12 15.2 15.2 -1 = NO 20 32 25.3 40.5 0 = UNCERTAIN 47 79 59.5 100.0 1 = YES
<b>FISH</b> = 10. Fish in evidence?	<b>n-d</b>	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT FISH 73 73 92.4 92.4 -1 = NO 6 79 7.6 100.0 1 = YES
<b>FLDMOUNT</b> = 58. Is Flood stated or implied to have been the beginning of mountains, valleys?	<b>n-d</b>	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT FLDMOUNT 74 74 93.7 93.7 -1 = NO 5 79 6.3 100.0 1 = YES
<b>FLDPARAD</b> = 45. Flood stated or implied to be end of paradise / beginning of death	<b>n-d</b>	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT FLDPARAD 75 75 94.9 94.9 -1 = NO 4 79 5.1 100.0 1 = YES
<b>FLUDBLUD</b> = 44. Is Flood said or implied to have been associated with blood?	<b>n-d</b>	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT FLUDBLUD 74 74 93.7 93.7 -1 = NO 5 79 6.3 100.0 1 = YES
<b>FLUDUNIV</b> = 38. Was the Flood said or implied to be universal?	<b>o</b>	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT FLUDUNIV 6 6 7.6 7.6 1 = LOCAL 15 21 19.0 26.6 2 REGIONAL 24 45 30.4 57.0 2.5 34 79 43.0 100.0 3 WORLDWIDE 24 missing cases have been recorded

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		towards the median value of 2.5
FUDCROPS = 8o. Food crops after/during Flood in evidence?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT FUDCROPS 66 66 83.5 83.5 -1 = NO 13 79 16.5 100.0 1 = YES
GENs = broad genetic classification	n	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT GENs 3 3 3.8 3.8 AFRICAN 9 12 11.4 15.2 EUROPEAN BERBER SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH ASIA 45 57 57.0 72.2 NORTH&EAST ASIA AND 6 63 7.6 79.7 NW GUINEA AUSTRALIA 16 79 20.3 100.0 SE ASIA OCEANIA
GENDRDEM = 3i gender Demiurge /trickster	n d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT GENDRDEM 19 19 24.1 24.1 -1 = MALE 55 74 69.6 93.7 0 = UNCERTAIN 5 79 6.3 100.0 1 = FEMALE
GNDRFLUD = 59. Which gender triggered Flood if any	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT GNDRFLUD 11 11 13.9 13.9 -1 = MALE 58 69 73.4 87.3 0 = UNCERTAIN 10 79 12.7 100.0 1 = FEMALE
GNDRHERO = 53. gender of hero(es)	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT GNDRHERO 35 35 44.3 44.3 -1 = MALE 34 69 43.0 87.3 0 = UNCERTAIN 10 79 12.7 100.0 1 = FEMALE
HANG = 23. Hanging from Heaven /tree in evidence?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT HANG 69 69 87.3 87.3 -1 = NO 10 79 12.7 100.0 1 = YES
HEROAGEN = 51a. Is Flood Hero said or implied to have been singled out as such because of his agency?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT HEROAGEN 65 65 82.3 82.3 -1 = NO 14 79 17.7 100.0 1 = YES
HEROALLY = 56a. Hero said or implied to have been ally of Flood causer?	n-d	CUM CUM COUNT COUNT PCT PCT HEROALLY 22 22 27.8 27.8 -1 = NO, HERO IS ADVERSARY OF FLOOD CAUSER 39 61 49.4 77.2 0 = UNCERTAIN 18 79 22.8 100.0 1 = YES

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HERODIVR = 67c. Is hero said or implied to have directed the Earth diver?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	HERODIVR
		75	75	94.9	94.9	-1 = NO
		4	79	5.1	100.0	1 = YES
HEROHUM = 50a. Is a human Flood Hero in evidence?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	HEROHUM
		17	17	21.5	21.5	-1 = NO
		10	27	12.7	34.2	0 = UNCH
		52	79	65.8	100.0	1 = YES
HEROKNOW = 51d. Is Flood Hero said or implied to have been singled out as such because of his special knowledge or skills?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	HEROKNOW
		66	66	83.5	83.5	-1 = NO
		13	79	16.5	100.0	1 = YES
HEROMORL = 51c. Is Flood Hero said or implied to have been singled out as such because of his high morality?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	HEROMORL
		68	68	86.1	86.1	-1 = NO
		11	79	13.9	100.0	1 = YES
HEROPRES = 46. Any hero(es) (i.e. protagonist other than the Flood itself) in evidence?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	HEROPRES
		3	3	3.8	3.8	-1 = NO
		76	79	96.2	100.0	1 = YES
HERORANK = 51b. Is Flood Hero said or implied to have been singled out as such because of his high rank?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	HERORANK
		70	70	88.6	88.6	-1 = NO
		9	79	11.4	100.0	1 = YES
HEROREPO = 67b. Is Flood Hero said or implied to have been active in post-Flood repopulation of the Earth?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	HEROREPO
		26	26	32.9	32.9	-1 = NO
		18	44	22.8	55.7	0 = UNCH
		35	79	44.3	100.0	1 = YES
HEROSUPR = 56b. Hero is said or implied to be superior to the Flood causer?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	HEROSUPR
		32	32	40.5	40.5	-1 = NO, HERO IS INFERIOR
		46	78	58.2	98.7	0 = UNCERTAIN; OR: HERO IS MATCH FOR CAUSER
		1	79	1.3	100.0	1 = YES, HERO IS SUPERIOR
HEROSURV = 67a. Is the Flood Hero said or implied to have survived the Flood	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	HEROSURV
		9	9	11.4	11.4	-1 = NO
		20	29	25.3	36.7	0 = UNCH
		50	79	63.3	100.0	1 = YES

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HEROTRIC = 50b. Is Flood Hero said or implied to have been a trickster/ Demiurge?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	HEROTRIC
		59	59	74.7	74.7	-1 = NO
		10	69	12.7	87.3	0 = UNCE
		10	79	12.7	100.0	1 = YES
HMSAVANI = 42. Is human agency said or implied to have saved animal survivors?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	HMSAVANI
		65	65	82.3	82.3	-1 = NO
		14	79	17.7	100.0	1 = YES
INCESPRE = 69a. Post-Flood incest in evidence?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	INCESPRE
		75	75	94.9	94.9	-1 = NO
		4	79	5.1	100.0	1 = YES
INCESSIB = 69b. Post-Flood sibling incest in evidence?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	INCESSIB
		76	76	96.2	96.2	-1 = NO
		3	79	3.8	100.0	1 = YES
INTOXIC = 73. Association in evidence between Flood et intoxicating drink ?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	INTOXIC
		77	77	97.5	97.5	-1 = NO
		2	79	2.5	100.0	1 = YES
LENGTH = number of ASCII characters in Flood story	i	N OF CASES		79		
		MINIMUM		100.000		
		MAXIMUM		4654.000		
		RANGE		4554.000		
		MEAN		914.139		
		VARIANCE		735476.327		
		STANDARD DEV		857.599		
		STD. ERROR		96.487		
		SKEWNESS (G1)		2.339		
		KURTOSIS (G2)		5.771		
		MEDIAN		676.000		
LINGs = language family	n	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	LINGs
		2	2	2.5	2.5	AFROASIATIC
		3	5	3.8	6.3	ALTAIC
		37	42	46.8	53.2	AMERIND
		5	47	6.3	59.5	AUSTR
		5	52	6.3	65.8	AUSTRAS
		10	62	12.7	78.5	AUSTRON
		2	64	2.5	81.0	ESKIMO ALEU
		6	70	7.6	88.6	INDOEUROPEA
		1	71	1.3	89.9	INDO PACIFI
		3	74	3.8	93.7	NA-DENE



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		3	77	3.8	97.5	NIGER KORDC
		1	78	1.3	98.7	SINO-TIBET#
		1	79	1.3	100.0	URALIC-YUK#
MLTHRSIB = 79a. Multiple heroes in evidence who are each other's siblings, blood brothers, co-wives or colleagues?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	MLTHRSIB
		20	20	25.3	25.3	-1 = NO
		42	62	53.2	78.5	0 = UNCE
		17	79	21.5	100.0	1 = YES
MLTHRSPO = 79b. Multiple heroes in evidence who are each other's spouses?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	MLTHRSPO
		32	32	40.5	40.5	-1 = NO
		42	74	53.2	93.7	0 = UNCE
		5	79	6.3	100.0	1 = YES
MODES = 07a. Modes of production beyond hunting etc. in evidence?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	MODES
		61	61	77.2	77.2	-1 = NO
		18	79	22.8	100.0	1 = YES
MURDDEM = 32. Murder (attempt) Demiurge/ trickster in evidence?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	MURDDEM
		65	65	82.3	82.3	-1 = NO
		14	79	17.7	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM01= SEBABTR1355 = The Separation of Heaven and Earth	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SEBABTR1
		35	35	44.3	44.3	-1 = NO
		25	60	31.6	75.9	0 = UNCE
		19	79	24.1	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM02= RECONN2 = The re-connection between Heaven and Earth after Separation	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	RECONN2
		27	27	34.2	34.2	-1 = NO
		52	79	65.8	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM03= HEAVEN3 = What is in Heaven?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	HEAVEN3
		42	42	53.2	53.2	-1 = NO
		37	79	46.8	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM04= LIGHTNI4 = The lightning bird	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	LIGHTNI4
		72	72	91.1	91.1	-1 = NO
		7	79	8.9	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM05= MANTIS5	n-d	CUM	CUM			

355 Here begins the series of variables indicating which of the 30=odd NarComs are in evidence in a particular case. These numbers are usually very small, and correspondingly these variables have been used with great caution.

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= The mantis		CUM 78 1	CUM 78 79	PCT 98.7 1.3	PCT 98.7 100.0	MANTIS5 -1 = NO 1 = YES
NARCOM6= OGRE6= Rescue from the ogre	n-d	CUM 70 9	CUM 70 79	PCT 88.6 11.4	PCT 88.6 100.0	OGRE6 -1 = NO 1 = YES
NARCOM7= MOUTH7 = From the mouth	n-d	CUM 72 7	CUM 72 79	PCT 91.1 8.9	PCT 91.1 100.0	MOUTH7 -1 = NO 1 = YES
NARCOM8= STONES8 = The stones	n-d	CUM 66 13	CUM 66 79	PCT 83.5 16.5	PCT 83.5 100.0	STONES8 -1 = NO 1 = YES
NARCOM9= MOON9 = The Moon	n-d	CUM 72 7	CUM 72 79	PCT 91.1 8.9	PCT 91.1 100.0	MOON9 -1 = NO 1 = YES
NARCOM10= EARTH10 = The Earth as primary	n-d	CUM 60 19	CUM 60 79	PCT 75.9 24.1	PCT 75.9 100.0	EARTH10 -1 = NO 1 = YES
NARCOM11= WATERS11 = The Primal Waters and the simple Flood [ forget 'simple'-the distinction between simple and elaborate Flood myth turned out to be invalid ]	n-d	CUM 1 78	CUM 1 79	PCT 1.3 98.7	PCT 1.3 100.0	WATERS11 0 = UNCE 1 = YES
NARCOM12. = From under the tree	n-d	CUM 29 50	CUM 29 79	PCT 36.7 63.3	PCT 36.7 100.0	TREE12 -1 = NO 1 = YES
NARCOM13 = SERP13 = The cosmic / rainbow snake	n-d	CUM 67 12	CUM 67 79	PCT 84.8 15.2	PCT 84.8 100.0	SERP13 -1 = NO 1 = YES
NARCOM14 = TWOCHI14 = Fundamental duality, the two children, the twins	n-d	CUM 62 17	CUM 62 79	PCT 78.5 21.5	PCT 78.5 100.0	TWOCHI14 -1 = NO 1 = YES
NARCOM15 SPIDER15 = The spider and feminine arts	n-d	CUM 77	CUM 77	PCT 97.5	PCT 97.5	SPIDER15 -1 = NO

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		2	79	2.5	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM16 = SHAMAN16 = Shamanism, bones	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SHAMAN16
		54	54	68.4	68.4	-1 = NO
		25	79	31.6	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM17= SPOTTD17 = Spottedness and the leopard	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SPOTTD17
		75	75	94.9	94.9	-1 = NO
		4	79	5.1	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM18 = HONEY18 = Honey, bees, and honey-beer	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	HONEY18
		77	77	97.5	97.5	-1 = NO
		2	79	2.5	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM18= HONEY18	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	HONEY18
		77	77	97.5	97.5	-1 = NO
		2	79	2.5	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM19= VIRGIN19	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	VIRGIN19
		78	78	98.7	98.7	-1 = NO
		1	79	1.3	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM20 = MESSGR20= Contradictory messengers bring death (not attested in sample)	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	MESSGR20
		79	79	100.0	100.0	-1 = NO
NARCOM21= WHITGD21 = the White God [ in blue: newly defined NarComs; assess whether these NarComs may also be found in van der Sluys African data set ]	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	WHITGD21
		75	75	94.9	94.9	-1 = NO
		4	79	5.1	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM22= ASTRON22 = naked-eye astronomy, the celestial pole, the halfling, astronomy	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	ASTRON22
		69	69	87.3	87.3	-1 = NO
		10	79	12.7	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM23 = TRIKSR23= the trickster, the Raven, Coyote	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	TRIKSR23
		38	38	48.1	48.1	-1 = NO
		41	79	51.9	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM24= CORN24 = raising the corn spirit? (not attested in sample)	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	CORN24
		64	64	81.0	81.0	-1 = NO

Sunda pre and protohistorical continuity between Asia and Africa

		15	79	19.0	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM25= COW25 = the cow of Heaven	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	COW25
		78	78	98.7	98.7	-1 = NO
		1	79	1.3	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM26. = ERZDIV26 = the Earth diver	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	ERZDIV26
		74	74	93.7	93.7	-1 = NO
		5	79	6.3	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM27 = REED27 = music of enchantment, Orpheus, flute, reed	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	REED27
		75	75	94.9	94.9	-1 = NO
		4	79	5.1	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM28 = COMBAT28 = games, contests of power	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	COMBAT28
		48	48	60.8	60.8	-1 = NO
		31	79	39.2	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM29 = FORDIR29= the four (cardinal directions)	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	FORDIR29
		73	73	92.4	92.4	-1 = NO
		6	79	7.6	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM30 = BLOOD30 = blood as poison, menstruation	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	BLOOD30
		73	73	92.4	92.4	-1 = NO
		6	79	7.6	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM31 = TRTOIS31 = the tortoise/turtle (not attested in sample)	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	TRTOIS31
		79	79	100.0	100.0	-1 = NO
NARCOM32 = LNDWAT32 = the Separation of Water and Land	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	LNDWAT32
		78	78	98.7	98.7	-1 = NO
		1	79	1.3	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM33 = FRGMNT33 = fragmented, the monster becomes the world	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	FRGMNT33
		75	75	94.9	94.9	-1 = NO
		4	79	5.1	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM34 = DENTAT34 = the vagina dentata (not attested in sample)	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	DENTAT34
		79	79	100.0	100.0	-1 = NO

Appendix 1. Contents analysis of Flood myths worldwide

NARCOM35 = SUN35 = the sun	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SUN35
		67	67	84.8	84.8	-1 = NO
		12	79	15.2	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM36 = FIRE36= fire	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	FIRE36
		64	64	81.0	81.0	-1 = NO
		15	79	19.0	100.0	1 = YES
NARCOM37 = VOLCAN37 = volcanic	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	VOLCAN37
		48	48	60.8	60.8	-1 = NO
		31	79	39.2	100.0	1 = YES
NEWCONT\$= Continent regrouped	n	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	NEWCONT\$
		6	6	7.6	7.6	AUSTALIA & N
		8	14	10.1	17.7	MESO AMERIC
		27	41	34.2	51.9	NORTH AMERICA
		10	51	12.7	64.6	SOUTH AMERI
		14	65	17.7	82.3	SE ASIA & C
		14	79	17.7	100.0	WEST & SOUTH C
						(EUROPE, AFF SOUTH ASIA)
NUMDESTR = 04. How many destructions were there?	o	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	NUMDESTR
		72	72	91.1	91.1	1 = ONE
		4	76	5.1	96.2	2 = TWO
		3	79	3.8	100.0	3 = THREE
NUMHERO = 52. Number of Flood Heroes?	o	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	NUMHERO
		34	34	43.0	43.0	1 = ONE
		22	56	27.8	70.9	2 = 2
		5	61	6.3	77.2	3 = 3
		8	69	10.1	87.3	4 = A HF
		10	79	12.7	100.0	5 = MANY

Sunda pre and protohistorical continuity between Asia and Africa

<p>OTNARCM<sub>1</sub> = identification number of first other NarCom in evidence in this case</p>	<p>n</p>	<p>CUM COUNT</p>	<p>CUM COUNT</p>	<p>PCT</p>	<p>PCT</p>	<p>NARCOM1</p>
		42	42	53.2	53.2	NONE
		1	43	1.3	54.4	4
		6	49	7.6	62.0	8
		5	54	6.3	68.4	10
		12	66	15.2	83.5	12
		1	67	1.3	84.8	13
		1	68	1.3	86.1	14
		1	69	1.3	87.3	15
		1	70	1.3	88.6	16
		1	71	1.3	89.9	17
		1	72	1.3	91.1	18
		1	73	1.3	92.4	19
		4	77	5.1	97.5	22
		2	79	2.5	100.0	26
<p>OTNARCM<sub>2</sub> = identification number of second other NarCom in evidence in this case</p>	<p>n</p>	<p>CUM COUNT</p>	<p>CUM COUNT</p>	<p>PCT</p>	<p>PCT</p>	<p>NARCOM2</p>
		66	66	83.5	83.5	NONE
		1	67	1.3	84.8	2
		1	68	1.3	86.1	4
		1	69	1.3	87.3	6
		4	73	5.1	92.4	8
		2	75	2.5	94.9	12
		2	77	2.5	97.5	22
		1	78	1.3	98.7	23
		1	79	1.3	100.0	26
<p>OTNARCM<sub>3</sub> = identification number of third other NarCom in evidence in this case</p>	<p>n</p>	<p>CUM COUNT</p>	<p>CUM COUNT</p>	<p>PCT</p>	<p>PCT</p>	<p>NARCOM3</p>
		76	76	96.2	96.2	NONE
		1	77	1.3	97.5	8
		2	79	2.5	100.0	10
<p>PARTKIL = 62. Hero(es) said or implied to (attempt to) kill partners/ sibling?</p>	<p>n-d</p>	<p>CUM COUNT</p>	<p>CUM COUNT</p>	<p>PCT</p>	<p>PCT</p>	<p>PARTKIL</p>
		73	73	92.4	92.4	-1 = NO
		6	79	7.6	100.0	1 = YES
<p>PLURAL = 22. Plurality worlds in evidence?</p>	<p>n-d</p>	<p>CUM COUNT</p>	<p>CUM COUNT</p>	<p>PCT</p>	<p>PCT</p>	<p>PLURAL</p>
		64	64	81.0	81.0	-1 = NO
		15	79	19.0	100.0	1 = YES
<p>PRTNRSIB = 55. Hero(es)'s partner/ sibling before Flood</p>	<p>n-d</p>	<p>CUM COUNT</p>	<p>CUM COUNT</p>	<p>PCT</p>	<p>PCT</p>	<p>PRTNRSIB</p>

Appendix 1. Contents analysis of Flood myths worldwide

in evidence?		50 29	50 79	63.3 36.7	63.3 100.0	-1 = NO 1 = YES
<b>RANK</b> = o3. Social rank hierarchy in evidence?	<b>n-d</b>	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	RANK
		57 22	57 79	72.2 27.8	72.2 100.0	-1 = NO 1 = YES
<b>RECOMNMD</b> = 74d. Post-Flood re-connection of a man-made nature in evidence?	<b>n-d</b>	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	RECOMNMD
		71 8	71 79	89.9 10.1	89.9 100.0	-1 = NO 1 = YES
<b>RECONHUM</b> = 74e. Post-Flood re-connection in evidence in the shape of humanity and its institutions?	<b>n-d</b>	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	RECONHUM
		68 11	68 79	86.1 13.9	86.1 100.0	-1 = NO 1 = YES
<b>RECONMET</b> = 74b. Post-Flood re-connection of a natural meteorological nature in evidence?	<b>n-d</b>	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	RECONMET
		72 7	72 79	91.1 8.9	91.1 100.0	-1 = NO 1 = YES
<b>RECONPRE</b> = 74a. Post-Flood mention of re-connection in evidence (even if only implied)?	<b>n-d</b>	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	RECONPRE
		28 51	28 79	35.4 64.6	35.4 100.0	-1 = NO 1 = YES
<b>RECONTER</b> = 74c. Post-Flood re-connection of a terrestrial nature in evidence?	<b>n-d</b>	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	RECONTER
		57 22	57 79	72.2 27.8	72.2 100.0	-1 = NO 1 = YES
<b>REGION</b> = broad world region	<b>n</b>	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	REGION
		3 4 3 3 4 9 5 1 5 24 8 10	3 7 10 13 17 26 31 32 37 61 69 79	3.8 5.1 3.8 3.8 5.1 11.4 6.3 1.3 6.3 30.4 10.1 12.7	3.8 8.9 12.7 16.5 21.5 32.9 39.2 40.5 46.8 77.2 87.3 100.0	EUROPE NEAR EAST AFRICA NORTH&EAST ASIA SE ASIA PACIFIC NW GUINEA AUSTRALIA NORTH AMERI MESO AM SOUTH AMERI
<b>REPOABNO</b> = 68b. Is post-Flood repopulation said or implied to have taken place through abnormal (e.g. incestuous) reproduction?	<b>n-d</b>	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	REPOABNO
		20	20	25.3	25.3	-1 = NO

Sunda pre and protohistorical continuity between Asia and Africa

		46 13	66 79	58.2 16.5	83.5 100.0	0 = UNCE 1 = YES
REPOASEX = 68c. Is post-Flood repopulation said or implied to have taken place through asexual reproduction?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	REPOASEX
		21 46 12	21 67 79	26.6 58.2 15.2	26.6 84.8 100.0	-1 = NO 0 = UNCE 1 = YES
REPONORM = 68a. Is post-Flood repopulation said or implied to have taken place through normal human heterosexual reproduction?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	REPONORM
		23 46 10	23 69 79	29.1 58.2 12.7	29.1 87.3 100.0	-1 = NO 0 = UNCE 1 = YES
RESCMNMD = 57b. Was rescue said or implied to have been through <i>manmade</i> (usually vegetal) product?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	RESCMNMD
		45 34	45 79	57.0 43.0	57.0 100.0	-1 = NO 1 = YES
RESCNATR = 57a. Was rescue said or implied to have been through a <i>natural</i> vegetal product?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	RESCNATR
		70 9	70 79	88.6 11.4	88.6 100.0	-1 = NO 1 = YES
RESMOUNT = 57c. Was rescue said or implied to have been through mountain?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	RESMOUNT
		65 14	65 79	82.3 17.7	82.3 100.0	-1 = NO 1 = YES
RIDIC = 82. Ridicule/ ignoring of warning/ark building in evidence?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	RIDIC
		17 52 10	17 69 79	21.5 65.8 12.7	21.5 87.3 100.0	-1 = NO 0 = UNCE 1 = YES
RODENT = 84. (Musk)rat / mouse / beaver in evidence?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	RODENT
		70 9	70 79	88.6 11.4	88.6 100.0	-1 = NO 1 = YES
SACRIF = 75. Veneration of re-connection in evidence /site of sacrifice in evidence?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SACRIF
		70 9	70 79	88.6 11.4	88.6 100.0	-1 = NO 1 = YES
SEPARWAT = 28. Already before Flood, the Separation of Waters up, aside and below is in evidence?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SEPARWAT
		5 60 14	5 65 79	6.3 75.9 17.7	6.3 82.3 100.0	-1 = NO 0 = UNCE 1 = YES



Appendix 1. Contents analysis of Flood myths worldwide

SERPFLUD = 36. Snake or serpent or lizard stated or implied to have caused the Flood?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SERPFLUD
		74	74	93.7	93.7	-1 = NO
		5	79	6.3	100.0	1 = YES
SERPMENT = 35. Serpent / snake/ lizard in evidence ?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SERPMENT
		69	69	87.3	87.3	-1 = NO
		10	79	12.7	100.0	1 = YES
SHAPSHIF 61. Hero(es)'s shapeshifting in evidence ?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SHAPSHIF
		69	69	87.3	87.3	-1 = NO
		10	79	12.7	100.0	1 = YES
SIN = 27b Flood is stated or implied to have been due to human sin?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SIN
		65	65	82.3	82.3	-1 = NO
		14	79	17.7	100.0	1 = YES
SNDRGOD = 26a Flood was stated or implied to have been sent by a god?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SNDRGOD
		24	24	30.4	30.4	-1 = NO
		34	58	43.0	73.4	0 = UNCE
		21	79	26.6	100.0	1 = YES
SNDRSUP = 26b Flood was stated or implied to have been sent by the Supreme Being ?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SNDRSUP
		30	30	38.0	38.0	-1 = NO
		34	64	43.0	81.0	0 = UNCE
		15	79	19.0	100.0	1 = YES
SORCEYR = year CE/BCE (= -, negative) source was published or original story was first committed to writing	i	N OF CASES 79 MINIMUM -1000.000 MAXIMUM 1996.000 RANGE 2996.000 MEAN 1858.646 VARIANCE 211041.104 STANDARD DEV 459.392 STD. ERROR 51.686 SKEWNESS (G1) -5.024 KURTOSIS (G2) 24.640 MEDIAN 1969.000  missing cases (N=20) have been recoded towards the median; in the analysis, this variable was replaced by AGESOURC= (2007- sorceyr)				

Sunda pre and protohistorical continuity between Asia and Africa

SPNATGND = 25. Gender supernatural protagonists	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SPNATGND
		12	12	15.2	15.2	-1 = MALE
		62	74	78.5	93.7	0 = UNCH
		5	79	6.3	100.0	1 = FEMF
SPNATPRS = 24a. Supernatural protagonist in evidence?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SPNATPRS
		9	9	11.4	11.4	-1 = NO
		29	38	36.7	48.1	0 = UNCH
		41	79	51.9	100.0	1 = YES
SPNATSUP = 24b. There is one Supreme Being in evidence	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SPNATSUP
		63	63	79.7	79.7	0 = UNCH
		NO 16	79	20.3	100.0	1 = YES
SPRLING\$ = super language family	n	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SPRLING\$
		37	37	46.8	46.8	AMERIND
		15	52	19.0	65.8	AUSTRIC
		4	56	5.1	70.9	DENE SINE C
		6	62	7.6	78.5	INDO-PACIFIC/AU
		17	79	21.5	100.0	SUPERNOSTR\$
STNREPOP = 43b. After Flood repopulation from stones in evidence?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	STNREPOP
		76	76	96.2	96.2	-1 = NO
		3	79	3.8	100.0	1 = YES
STORY = 01. Is this a Flood story?	n-d	since all items in data set were considered Flood stories, this variable has not been entered into the analysis				
SURVIV = 47. Did any living being survive Flood?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	SURVIV
		7	7	8.9	8.9	-1 = NO
		72	79	91.1	100.0	1 = YES
THIRDPRT = 37. Was there a third party involved indirectly causing?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	THIRDPRT
		44	44	55.7	55.7	-1 = NO
		35	79	44.3	100.0	1 = YES
TURNSTON = 43a. Are people said or implied to have turned to stone in the Flood?	n-d	CUM COUNT	CUM COUNT	PCT	PCT	TURNSTON
		74	74	93.7	93.7	-1 = NO
		5	79	6.3	100.0	1 = YES

Appendix 1. Contents analysis of Flood myths worldwide

<p>TWOCHILD = 16. Two children/ siblings (any age) in evidence?</p>	<p>n-d</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>CUM</th> <th>CUM</th> <th>PCT</th> <th>PCT</th> <th>TWOCHILD</th> </tr> <tr> <th>COUNT</th> <th>COUNT</th> <th></th> <th></th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>62</td> <td>62</td> <td>78.5</td> <td>78.5</td> <td>-1 = NO</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td> <td>79</td> <td>21.5</td> <td>100.0</td> <td>1 = YES</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	CUM	CUM	PCT	PCT	TWOCHILD	COUNT	COUNT				62	62	78.5	78.5	-1 = NO	17	79	21.5	100.0	1 = YES					
CUM	CUM	PCT	PCT	TWOCHILD																							
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54	68	68.4	86.1	0 = UNCE																							
11	79	13.9	100.0	1 = YES																							
<p>WARNING 48. Was there any prior warning of the Flood?</p>	<p>n-d</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>CUM</th> <th>CUM</th> <th>PCT</th> <th>PCT</th> <th>WARNING</th> </tr> <tr> <th>COUNT</th> <th>COUNT</th> <th></th> <th></th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>52</td> <td>52</td> <td>65.8</td> <td>65.8</td> <td>-1 = NO</td> </tr> <tr> <td>27</td> <td>79</td> <td>34.2</td> <td>100.0</td> <td>1 = YES</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	CUM	CUM	PCT	PCT	WARNING	COUNT	COUNT				52	52	65.8	65.8	-1 = NO	27	79	34.2	100.0	1 = YES					
CUM	CUM	PCT	PCT	WARNING																							
COUNT	COUNT																										
52	52	65.8	65.8	-1 = NO																							
27	79	34.2	100.0	1 = YES																							
<p>FACTOR<sub>(01356)</sub></p>	<p>i</p>	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>N OF CASES</td> <td>79</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MINIMUM</td> <td>-1.665</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MAXIMUM</td> <td>3.550</td> </tr> <tr> <td>RANGE</td> <td>5.215</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MEAN</td> <td>-0.000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>VARIANCE</td> <td>1.000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	N OF CASES	79	MINIMUM	-1.665	MAXIMUM	3.550	RANGE	5.215	MEAN	-0.000	VARIANCE	1.000													
N OF CASES	79																										
MINIMUM	-1.665																										
MAXIMUM	3.550																										
RANGE	5.215																										
MEAN	-0.000																										
VARIANCE	1.000																										

<sup>356</sup> Here begins the description of the factors constructed with factor analysis; these are not in the alphabetical series of variables

Sunda pre and protohistorical continuity between Asia and Africa

		STANDARD DEV	1.000
		STD. ERROR	0.113
		SKEWNESS (G1)	1.198
		KURTOSIS (G2)	1.432
		MEDIAN	-0.228
FACTOR(02)	i	N OF CASES	79
		MINIMUM	-1.599
		MAXIMUM	2.653
		RANGE	4.252
		MEAN	-0.000
		VARIANCE	1.000
		STANDARD DEV	1.000
		STD. ERROR	0.113
		SKEWNESS (G1)	0.680
		KURTOSIS (G2)	-0.469
		MEDIAN	-0.307
FACTOR(03)	i	N OF CASES	79
		MINIMUM	-3.510
		MAXIMUM	1.517
		RANGE	5.027
		MEAN	0.000
		VARIANCE	1.000
		STANDARD DEV	1.000
		STD. ERROR	0.113
		SKEWNESS (G1)	-1.569
		KURTOSIS (G2)	2.815
		MEDIAN	0.232
FACTOR(04)	i	N OF CASES	79
		MINIMUM	-1.398
		MAXIMUM	5.883
		RANGE	7.281
		MEAN	0.000
		VARIANCE	1.000
		STANDARD DEV	1.000
		STD. ERROR	0.113
		SKEWNESS (G1)	3.342
		KURTOSIS (G2)	15.376
		MEDIAN	-0.197
FACTOR(05)	i	N OF CASES	79
		MINIMUM	-1.602
		MAXIMUM	4.689
		RANGE	6.291
		MEAN	-0.000
		VARIANCE	1.000
		STANDARD DEV	1.000

Appendix 1. Contents analysis of Flood myths worldwide

		STD. ERROR	0.113
		SKEWNESS (G1)	1.999
		KURTOSIS (G2)	6.227
		MEDIAN	-0.158
FACTOR(06)	i	N OF CASES	79
		MINIMUM	-2.029
		MAXIMUM	5.190
		RANGE	7.219
		MEAN	-0.000
		VARIANCE	1.000
		STANDARD DEV	1.000
		STD. ERROR	0.113
		SKEWNESS (G1)	2.341
		KURTOSIS (G2)	8.943
		MEDIAN	-0.119
FACTOR(07)	i	N OF CASES	79
		MINIMUM	-3.730
		MAXIMUM	1.533
		RANGE	5.263
		MEAN	-0.000
		VARIANCE	1.000
		STANDARD DEV	1.000
		STD. ERROR	0.113
		SKEWNESS (G1)	-1.873
		KURTOSIS (G2)	4.778
		MEDIAN	0.145
FACTOR(08)	i	N OF CASES	79
		MINIMUM	-1.824
		MAXIMUM	3.925
		RANGE	5.749
		MEAN	-0.000
		VARIANCE	1.000
		STANDARD DEV	1.000
		STD. ERROR	0.113
		SKEWNESS (G1)	1.633
		KURTOSIS (G2)	3.892
		MEDIAN	-0.204

Sunda pre and protohistorical continuity between Asia and Africa

FACTOR(09)	i	N OF CASES	79
		MINIMUM	-1.521
		MAXIMUM	3.601
		RANGE	5.122
		MEAN	0.000
		VARIANCE	1.000
		STANDARD DEV	1.000
		STD. ERROR	0.113
		SKEWNESS (G1)	1.514
		KURTOSIS (G2)	2.334
		MEDIAN	-0.234
FACTOR(10)	i	N OF CASES	79
		MINIMUM	-1.285
		MAXIMUM	4.835
		RANGE	6.120
		MEAN	0.000
		VARIANCE	1.000
		STANDARD DEV	1.000
		STD. ERROR	0.113
		SKEWNESS (G1)	2.393
		KURTOSIS (G2)	7.588
		MEDIAN	-0.345
FACTOR(11)	i	N OF CASES	79
		MINIMUM	-1.612
		MAXIMUM	3.921
		RANGE	5.533
		MEAN	-0.000
		VARIANCE	1.000
		STANDARD DEV	1.000
		STD. ERROR	0.113
		SKEWNESS (G1)	1.385
		KURTOSIS (G2)	2.495
		MEDIAN	-0.260
FACTOR(12)	i	N OF CASES	79
		MINIMUM	-1.938
		MAXIMUM	3.258
		RANGE	5.196
		MEAN	-0.000
		VARIANCE	1.000
		STANDARD DEV	1.000
		STD. ERROR	0.113
		SKEWNESS (G1)	0.505
		KURTOSIS (G2)	0.430
		MEDIAN	-0.090

### *A1.2. Rotated factor loadings for the factor analysis on which the factors(1-12) have been based*

Parameter choices were: number of factors = 12; Eigenvalue = 2, tolerance = 0.03; rotation method chosen is Varimax

to facilitate interpretation of the factors, the factor analysis programme has sorted the input variables in order of their high loading on the successive factors. I have adopted the following typographical highlighting:

double underline = factor loading > 0.499 or < - 0.499 (*considerable*)

single underline = factor loading > 0.399 and < 0.499 or > -0.399 and < -0.499 (*low*)

dotted underline = factor loading < 0.400 and > 0.299 or > -0.400 and < -0.299 (*very low*)

Sunda pre and protohistorical continuity between Asia and Africa

ROTATED LOADINGS

	1	2	3	4	5
HANG	<u>0.671</u>	-0.205	0.024	-0.017	-0.077
TWOCHI14	<u>0.603</u>	-0.147	0.137	-0.030	0.044
PARTKIL	<u>0.599</u>	0.157	-0.121	0.218	0.203
REED27	<u>0.576</u>	-0.018	-0.009	-0.191	0.401
SHAMAN16	<u>0.541</u>	0.017	-0.047	0.244	0.118
PRITNRSIB	<u>0.505</u>	0.063	0.141	0.108	0.053
SNDRSUP	-0.073	<u>0.708</u>	0.125	0.140	-0.094
SPNATSUP	0.076	<u>0.700</u>	-0.174	0.102	0.031
SNATPRS	0.002	<u>0.623</u>	-0.072	-0.080	0.040
HEAVEN3	0.067	<u>0.621</u>	-0.092	0.043	0.031
BIRDSEND	-0.112	<u>0.580</u>	0.186	-0.159	0.059
WARNING	-0.029	<u>0.566</u>	0.104	0.023	-0.005
HEROALLY	-0.144	<u>0.530</u>	0.218	0.060	-0.108
HEROSUPR	-0.073	<u>0.522</u>	0.084	0.208	-0.020
CORN24	-0.003	<u>0.516</u>	0.103	0.359	0.078
ARKPRES	0.051	0.065	<u>0.703</u>	-0.035	0.117
HEROSURV	-0.249	0.053	<u>0.675</u>	0.169	0.100
SURVIV	0.013	-0.029	<u>0.652</u>	-0.023	0.058
OGRE6	-0.110	0.111	<u>0.533</u>	0.182	0.036
BLOOD30	0.064	-0.089	<u>0.510</u>	-0.097	-0.080
HEROPRES	0.150	0.125	<u>0.507</u>	-0.116	0.089
DESTFLUD	0.045	0.120	<u>0.126</u>	<u>0.709</u>	-0.055
NUMDSTR	-0.079	-0.092	-0.128	<u>0.708</u>	0.076
FLDMOUNT	0.000	0.159	0.009	<u>0.671</u>	-0.020
COW25	0.183	0.186	0.024	<u>0.670</u>	-0.045
FRGMNT33	0.145	0.115	0.016	<u>0.623</u>	0.030
ERZDIV26	-0.057	-0.108	0.006	0.204	<u>0.650</u>
GENDRDEM	0.053	-0.023	0.047	-0.064	<u>0.614</u>
LENGTH	0.204	0.103	0.051	0.433	<u>0.528</u>
DEMTHUM	0.087	-0.045	-0.183	-0.137	<u>0.515</u>
RODENT	-0.069	-0.254	0.158	0.126	<u>0.514</u>
ANIMSRV	-0.084	0.283	0.341	0.248	<u>0.501</u>
INCESSIB	0.137	0.134	0.108	-0.014	<u>0.062</u>
HONEY18	0.007	-0.093	-0.216	0.117	-0.018
WARNCASR	0.058	0.184	-0.078	0.245	0.170
STNREPOP	-0.015	0.252	0.138	-0.083	-0.046
STONES8	0.013	-0.026	-0.071	0.084	-0.087
REFOABNO	0.050	0.087	0.061	-0.061	-0.293
DEMIANIM	-0.188	-0.069	0.166	0.028	0.012
WHITGD21	0.089	-0.005	-0.067	0.119	0.313
SEPARWAT	-0.080	-0.155	0.049	-0.098	0.267
REFONORM	-0.028	-0.262	-0.039	0.044	-0.072
MURRDEM	0.064	0.168	0.076	-0.059	0.117
SACRIF	-0.040	0.124	0.173	-0.125	-0.137
SPIDER15	0.242	-0.009	0.025	-0.061	0.004
SUN35	0.191	0.086	0.002	0.167	0.026
FLDPARAD	0.350	0.229	0.070	-0.100	0.288
MOON9	<u>0.033</u>	0.021	0.006	-0.129	-0.114
CHAIN	-0.195	0.142	-0.268	0.004	0.094
RECONHUM	0.163	-0.031	0.108	-0.066	0.243
COMBAT28	0.127	-0.016	0.206	0.295	0.163
NUMHERO	0.095	-0.158	0.027	0.048	-0.295
FORDIR29	<u>0.332</u>	-0.024	0.100	-0.115	<u>0.337</u>
MLTHRSIB	0.279	-0.072	-0.052	0.017	0.128
HERORANK	0.038	0.045	0.074	0.158	-0.070
DURASTAT	0.023	0.178	0.160	-0.071	0.113
HEROMORL	-0.007	0.236	-0.123	0.004	-0.100
VULCAN37	-0.095	-0.070	0.218	0.265	0.051
RESMOUNT	-0.146	-0.213	0.185	0.116	-0.219
FLUDUNIV	-0.031	<u>0.365</u>	0.063	0.181	-0.264



Appendix 1. Contents analysis of Flood myths worldwide

RESCNATR	<u>0.444</u>	-0.102	0.182	-0.117	0.030
RECOMMET	0.114	0.063	0.082	-0.055	-0.161
LIGHTNI4	0.142	0.017	-0.137	<u>0.333</u>	-0.052
CANINE	-0.041	0.121	0.235	-0.126	0.260
FIRE36	-0.040	0.033	0.007	<u>0.456</u>	0.078
ASTRON22	0.212	0.038	-0.071	<u>0.107</u>	0.219
RECONNC2	0.272	-0.002	<u>0.383</u>	0.155	-0.163
TRIKSR23	0.034	0.193	<u>0.184</u>	-0.169	<u>0.395</u>
SERP13	<u>0.420</u>	0.045	-0.131	<u>0.330</u>	<u>0.050</u>
WATERS11	0.005	0.058	-0.047	-0.112	0.073
HEROHUM	<u>0.313</u>	0.187	0.135	0.051	-0.241
CAUSREND	-0.193	0.004	-0.395	-0.056	-0.075
SIN	0.178	<u>0.382</u>	-0.186	0.070	-0.185
SPNATGND	-0.078	-0.262	-0.078	-0.073	-0.072
SHAPSHIF	0.196	-0.151	-0.024	-0.134	<u>0.322</u>
AGENCY	<u>0.477</u>	0.236	-0.312	-0.053	-0.195
DAYSFLUD	-0.153	0.252	<u>0.035</u>	-0.116	0.057
MODES	-0.187	<u>0.344</u>	0.039	0.217	0.058
SEPABTR1	<u>0.379</u>	<u>0.390</u>	-0.041	0.229	0.093
RANK	-0.038	-0.140	-0.124	-0.094	<u>0.318</u>
GNDRHERO	0.245	-0.170	-0.246	-0.239	-0.457
DIVERSIT	-0.032	-0.097	0.052	0.152	-0.243
VIRGIN19	-0.104	-0.086	-0.034	-0.076	-0.140
GNDRFLUD	0.050	0.065	-0.366	-0.184	0.047
SPOTTD17	0.261	0.065	<u>0.134</u>	-0.131	<u>0.474</u>
RIDIC	0.162	-0.241	-0.205	0.021	0.021
RECOMMMD	-0.093	0.012	0.080	-0.022	0.012
COMCSRHE	-0.094	-0.234	-0.195	-0.295	0.284
INTOXIC	-0.130	-0.090	0.070	<u>0.322</u>	-0.015
FIRSTHUM	0.137	0.226	<u>0.300</u>	<u>0.006</u>	-0.240
HEROREPO	-0.205	-0.045	<u>0.422</u>	0.125	-0.171
FISH	-0.081	0.004	<u>0.030</u>	0.001	-0.009
TURNSTON	0.140	-0.073	-0.164	-0.102	0.041
FIRSTANI	-0.191	-0.385	-0.044	0.039	<u>0.325</u>
HMSAVANI	0.114	<u>0.262</u>	0.193	0.135	<u>0.454</u>
RECONTER	0.161	0.055	<u>0.303</u>	0.249	-0.216
TREE12	0.069	0.195	<u>0.368</u>	0.127	0.297
THIRDPRT	0.052	0.060	-0.266	0.063	0.007
EARTH10	0.136	0.152	0.182	<u>0.305</u>	<u>0.375</u>
REPOASEX	0.098	0.245	-0.261	0.192	<u>0.365</u>
AGESOURC	-0.064	0.270	0.167	-0.114	-0.048
HEROKNOW	0.143	-0.226	0.098	-0.130	<u>0.490</u>

	6	7	8	9	10
HANG	-0.073	0.005	-0.085	-0.078	0.043
TWOCHI14	<u>0.330</u>	-0.056	0.067	-0.094	0.036
PARTKIL	-0.114	0.160	0.095	-0.093	0.147
REED27	0.038	-0.074	0.180	-0.102	0.252
SHAMAN16	-0.009	-0.254	-0.045	-0.042	0.289
PRTNRSIB	0.259	-0.179	-0.066	0.253	-0.050
SNDRSUP	0.047	-0.182	0.062	-0.007	-0.117
SPNATSUP	-0.138	-0.114	-0.042	-0.103	0.229
SPNATPRS	-0.007	-0.223	0.025	-0.272	0.170
HEAVEN3	-0.016	-0.164	0.253	0.069	-0.031
BIRDSEND	0.034	0.226	-0.020	0.212	0.008
WARNING	0.264	0.280	-0.062	0.200	-0.188

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HEROALLY	0.123	-0.139	-0.046	-0.058	-0.099
HEROSUPR	0.211	0.127	-0.009	-0.052	0.201
CORN24	0.039	-0.114	-0.039	0.047	0.265
ARKPRES	-0.018	0.045	-0.121	0.115	-0.007
HEROSURV	0.241	-0.035	-0.003	-0.138	0.078
SURVIV	-0.075	-0.047	0.102	0.022	0.032
OGRE6	0.041	0.044	-0.080	0.102	0.118
BLOOD30	-0.111	0.015	0.067	-0.112	-0.004
HEROPRES	-0.216	0.083	0.116	-0.029	-0.215
DESTFLUD	0.052	0.151	-0.007	0.023	0.033
NUMDESTR	0.074	-0.133	-0.024	0.104	0.090
FLDMOUNT	-0.214	0.051	0.221	-0.139	-0.029
COW25	-0.074	0.137	-0.016	0.000	0.028
FRGMNT33	<u>0.464</u>	0.036	0.190	-0.082	-0.089
ERZDIV26	-0.089	-0.028	0.210	-0.125	-0.016
GENDRDEM	-0.105	0.145	0.203	0.070	0.120
LENGTH	0.159	-0.008	<u>0.396</u>	0.195	0.277
DEMIHUM	-0.106	0.125	<u>-0.166</u>	0.061	0.032
RODENT	0.141	-0.070	0.081	0.036	0.044
ANIMSRV	0.015	0.188	0.193	0.085	0.133
INCESSTB	<u>0.706</u>	0.191	0.051	-0.056	-0.142
HONEY18	<u>0.609</u>	0.123	-0.075	0.008	-0.063
WARNCASR	<u>-0.505</u>	0.191	-0.123	-0.108	0.029
STNREPOP	-0.051	<u>-0.736</u>	0.004	-0.034	-0.035
STONES8	-0.079	<u>-0.719</u>	0.149	0.118	-0.080
REFOABNO	0.005	<u>0.567</u>	0.244	-0.186	0.195
DEMIANIM	0.095	0.078	<u>0.718</u>	0.023	-0.028
WHITGD21	-0.004	-0.154	<u>0.578</u>	0.073	-0.062
SEPARWAT	0.009	0.260	<u>-0.556</u>	0.012	0.121
REFONORM	-0.133	0.102	<u>-0.555</u>	0.275	-0.205
MURDEM	0.007	-0.027	<u>0.513</u>	-0.055	0.169
SACRIF	-0.064	-0.110	<u>0.136</u>	<u>0.747</u>	-0.088
SPIDER15	-0.013	0.008	-0.111	0.023	<u>0.683</u>
SUN35	-0.205	0.132	0.101	0.028	<u>0.347</u>
FLDPARAD	-0.028	-0.174	0.122	0.104	<u>0.538</u>
MOON9	-0.104	0.190	0.126	0.061	<u>0.529</u>
CHAIN	0.144	-0.070	-0.184	<u>0.383</u>	<u>0.525</u>
RECONHUM	0.176	0.109	0.176	0.085	-0.069
COMBAT28	-0.132	0.114	0.111	-0.071	<u>0.341</u>
NUMHERO	-0.156	0.050	-0.132	-0.163	-0.133
FORDIR29	0.116	0.015	0.034	-0.146	-0.081
MLTHRSIB	<u>0.341</u>	0.133	0.016	0.243	-0.126
HERORANK	-0.053	-0.144	-0.002	-0.006	-0.063
DURASTAT	<u>0.337</u>	-0.095	-0.038	0.272	-0.114
HEROMORL	<u>0.272</u>	-0.088	0.032	<u>0.410</u>	0.007
VULCAN37	-0.245	-0.043	0.123	0.069	-0.171
RESMOUNT	-0.259	0.171	0.153	0.055	0.099
FLUDUNIV	0.201	0.042	0.012	-0.150	<u>0.311</u>
RESCNATR	<u>0.342</u>	0.122	0.114	-0.151	<u>0.146</u>
RECOMMET	-0.252	0.131	0.008	-0.145	0.042
LIGHTNI4	0.102	-0.010	-0.244	-0.054	0.479
CANINE	0.010	0.099	0.211	-0.246	<u>0.039</u>
FIRE36	0.159	-0.021	0.064	-0.048	-0.099
ASTRON22	<u>0.402</u>	-0.058	0.077	0.190	0.206
RECONNC2	0.139	-0.259	0.159	<u>0.311</u>	0.247
TRIKSR23	0.154	0.104	<u>0.347</u>	<u>0.157</u>	0.141
SERP13	-0.250	0.135	<u>0.484</u>	-0.014	0.102
WATERS11	0.078	0.086	0.081	-0.040	0.071
HEROHUM	-0.079	-0.031	-0.206	0.165	-0.462
CAUSREND	0.201	-0.125	0.211	-0.035	0.008
SIN	-0.087	0.065	-0.055	0.184	0.180
SPNATGND	-0.209	<u>0.479</u>	0.035	0.251	-0.315
SHAPSHIF	-0.071	-0.018	<u>0.413</u>	0.038	-0.020
AGENCY	-0.144	0.037	-0.001	0.244	-0.025

Appendix 1. Contents analysis of Flood myths worldwide

DAYSFLUD	0.411	0.085	0.004	0.093	0.058
MODES	0.019	-0.026	-0.265	0.301	0.327
SEFABTRI	0.075	-0.310	0.091	0.141	0.266
RANK	-0.004	0.079	0.078	0.494	0.217
GNDRHERO	0.057	-0.075	-0.020	-0.411	0.135
DIVERSIT	0.245	0.073	0.347	-0.004	0.018
VIRGNI19	0.044	0.014	0.073	-0.134	0.076
GNDRFLUD	-0.052	0.155	-0.262	-0.078	0.175
SPOTTD17	-0.011	0.018	0.148	-0.029	-0.008
RIDIC	-0.320	0.060	0.095	0.352	0.072
RECOMNMD	0.223	-0.081	-0.099	0.470	0.164
COMCSRHE	-0.119	0.028	-0.078	0.005	-0.223
INTOXIC	0.069	-0.079	0.491	0.064	-0.041
FIRSTHUM	-0.049	0.053	-0.295	0.195	-0.468
HEROREPO	0.406	-0.112	0.122	-0.102	0.066
FISH	0.093	-0.094	-0.252	-0.072	-0.011
TURNSTON	-0.023	-0.388	0.252	0.379	-0.022
FIRSTANI	0.029	-0.019	0.408	-0.326	0.197
HMSAVANI	-0.122	0.191	-0.172	0.175	0.206
RECONTER	0.011	-0.382	0.096	0.038	0.142
TREE12	0.319	-0.162	-0.162	-0.307	0.013
THIRDPRT	0.023	-0.098	0.171	0.054	0.229
EARTH10	-0.101	-0.398	-0.008	-0.143	0.200
REFOASEX	-0.002	-0.402	0.076	-0.047	-0.159
AGESOURC	-0.013	-0.438	-0.092	0.161	-0.087
HEROKNOW	-0.104	0.028	-0.069	-0.071	0.265

11

12

HANG	0.004	0.107
TWOCHI14	0.400	-0.137
PARTKIL	-0.064	-0.222
REED27	0.099	0.115
SHAMAN16	-0.069	0.018
PRTNRSIB	0.282	-0.133
SNDRSUP	-0.257	0.179
SPNATSUP	-0.130	-0.040
SPNATPRS	0.235	0.037
HEAVEN3	0.082	0.097
BIRDSEND	-0.015	-0.037
WARNING	-0.033	-0.326
HEROALLY	0.024	-0.164
HEROSUPR	-0.277	0.317
CORN24	0.042	-0.060
ARKPRES	0.073	0.007
HEROSURV	0.029	0.181
SURVIV	0.082	0.108
OGRE6	0.016	0.155
BLOOD30	0.173	0.023
HEROPRES	0.121	0.039
DESTFLUD	-0.291	-0.057
NUMDESTR	0.125	0.039
FLDMOUNT	-0.049	0.064
COW25	-0.099	-0.137
FRGMNT33	-0.045	-0.062
ERZDIV26	-0.154	-0.064
GENDRDEM	-0.352	0.011
LENGTH	0.139	0.068
DEMIHUM	0.153	-0.334
RODENT	0.102	0.018
ANIMSRV	-0.146	0.047

Sunda pre and protohistorical continuity between Asia and Africa

INCESSIB	0.195	-0.010
HONEY18	-0.150	-0.038
WARNCASR	-0.050	-0.072
STNREPOP	-0.066	-0.083
STONESS	0.154	-0.107
REFOABNO	0.007	-0.316
DEMIANIM	0.128	0.106
WHITGD21	-0.173	0.023
SEPARWAT	-0.124	-0.115
REFONORM	-0.040	0.193
MURDDEM	0.099	-0.305
SACRIF	-0.084	-0.064
SPIDER15	-0.040	-0.134
SUN35	0.122	0.055
FLDPPARAD	-0.089	-0.026
MOON9	0.076	0.078
CHAIN	0.106	0.074
RECONHUM	<u>0.556</u>	0.137
COMBAT28	<u>0.515</u>	-0.044
NUMHERO	0.124	<u>0.678</u>
FORDIR29	0.014	<u>0.470</u>
MLTHRSIB	0.366	-0.459
HERORANK	0.140	-0.455
DURASTAT	0.138	<u>0.450</u>
HEROMORL	-0.047	<u>0.407</u>
VULCAN37	-0.180	<u>0.328</u>
RESMOUNT	0.215	0.273
FLUDUNIV	-0.060	0.261
RESCNATR	0.012	-0.252
RECONMET	0.154	0.197
LIGHTN14	-0.143	-0.170
CANINE	0.254	0.165
FIRE36	<u>0.385</u>	-0.163
ASTRON22	0.004	0.161
RECONNC2	0.201	0.160
TRIKSR23	0.208	-0.160
SERP13	-0.051	0.134
WATERS11	<u>-0.447</u>	0.119
HEROHUM	-0.007	0.115
CAUSREND	<u>0.374</u>	0.112
SIN	-0.184	0.104
SPNATGND	-0.210	0.103
SHAPSHIF	0.292	0.102
AGENCY	-0.023	0.100
DAYSFLUD	0.230	0.099
MODES	0.025	-0.087
SEFABTRI	0.179	0.083
RANK	<u>0.343</u>	-0.082
GNDRHERO	0.015	0.081
DIVERSIT	-0.002	0.081
VIRGIN19	-0.055	-0.074
GNDRFLUD	-0.128	0.073
SPOTD17	-0.036	0.066
RIDIC	-0.088	0.058
RECOMMD	0.084	-0.055
COMCSRHE	-0.476	0.053
INTOXIC	-0.177	-0.052
FIRSTHUM	0.036	-0.049
HEROREPO	-0.003	0.048
FISH	-0.072	0.039
TURNSTON	0.022	-0.037
FIRSTANI	0.038	0.026
HMSAVANI	-0.258	-0.020
RECONTER	-0.366	0.017

Appendix 1. Contents analysis of Flood myths worldwide

TREE12	-0.162	-0.017
THIRDPRF	0.475	0.016
EARTH10	-0.037	-0.015
REPOASEX	0.061	-0.013
AGESOURC	-0.105	0.011
HEROKNOW	0.011	0.010

VARIANCE EXPLAINED BY ROTATED COMPONENTS (TOTAL = 52.601)

1	2	3	4	5
4.550	5.759	4.788	4.911	5.416
6	7	8	9	10
3.968	3.852	4.480	3.555	4.447
11	12			
3.757	3.118			

PERCENT OF TOTAL VARIANCE EXPLAINED (TOTAL = 51.569)

1	2	3	4	5
4.461	5.646	4.694	4.815	5.310
6	7	8	9	10
3.890	3.777	4.393	3.485	4.359
11	12			
3.683	3.056			



# **Appendix 2. Mythological continuities between sub-Saharan Africa and civilisations of the Old and New World**

**with special attention to Ancient Egypt, the Bible World, and Graeco-Roman Antiquity**

NC as attested on cosmogonic myths from sub-Saharan Africa in historical times	CTI	Ancient Egypt	Bible	Graeco-Roman Antiquity	selected other (only literate civilisations of the Old World, outside sub-Saharan Africa – for the point is to argue continuity between the mythologies of these civilisations, and sub-Saharan Africa)
1. The Separation of Heaven and Earth	()	Nut and Geb separated by Shu  Horus and Set (ladder), minor portable shrine whose pole and whose leopard skin, the circumplular stars; Stricker, see under Ancient Egypt Stricker ( <i>Birth of Horus</i> ), it is the Supreme Being that is the pharaoh as god, Geb's penis; the celestial cow; metacrite is sacred to phallic Nil	Genesis 1  Tower of Babel; Jacob's ladder; the ladder to heaven of Elijah, of Jesus; Stricker, see under Ancient Egypt the King as God's anointed; the rainbow as sign of covenant; the devil as God's attorney (Hob); Jesus temptation in the desert)	Chaos [Kronos...]  Prometheus' theft of fire; Hephaestus; Heraclius' apothosis; Heraclius with his club and lion's skin evocation of the celestial pole and the sun, and in general of the ubiquitous Luwe sidew = (mesquite) iron Heraclius, and numerous others, as mortal children of Zeus and other gods Kronos separating Ouranos and Gaia so that her children can be born – Kronos pushes up the sky – Shu (Cotterell 1989: 131)	India separated heaven and earth (Wills; 1994:78) Pankaj J.I., Chinese primal god, still venerated in S. China by minorities; Mao, You and others, Chinese primal gods, still venerated in S. China by minorities (Wills 1994: 90); (especially belonging to SE minorities in China – this is a LATE myth, allegedly (Cotterell 1989: 147) Mankaj, by cutting Timak in two, separates heaven and earth (Cotterell 1989: 126)  Indo-Iranian world, and Germanic Antiquity; Stricker, see under Ancient Egypt Hemhali is guardian of the Bifröst rainbow bridge that connects Asgard (the gods' realm) to the realm of the dead; after death one has to pass across a bridge between Earth and Heaven, and one is met by one's spiritual alter-ego (Iran)
3. What is in Heaven's Supreme Being: Lightning/Rain as Demiurge; and the Rainbow (Serpent)/Sun as Adversary ]	()	see my extensive discussion of trinites, mainly in the IE realm, with Dumézilian tripartite implications	Sims-Ham; Iphig that this turns out not to be a genuine trinity, nor one to be interpreted in terms of this NC	see my extensive discussion of trinites, mainly in the IE realm, with Dumézilian tripartite implications Zeus wields lightning, thunderbolt, thunder 'snows' Medea as divine trickster Heraclius = Vulcan (fire-wielding blacksmith thrown from heaven) by their names Cyclopes are exponents of Lightning (Arges = Bright; Brontes = Thunder; Steropes = Lightning maker? ), and they are the children of Ouranos (Heaven, = Raimbow, Sun) and Gaia (Earth)	see my extensive discussion of trinites, mainly in the IE realm, with Dumézilian tripartite implications; thunder god causes flood from which Fu Xi 伏羲 and Nu Wa 女媧 are the survivors (China)  Odm wields lightning; Thor flunder (Norse)
4. The Lightning Bird (and the World Egg)	I	Pha; the Great Cuckler lays the Cosmic Egg, out of which comes the Lotus, containing Thoth Itthi took the cosmic egg, from which four children emerged in the shape of frogs	Gen 1: 2 (God as bird over the Waters, as was Jesus' baptism (Matt 3: 16))  Gen 1: 2 (God as bird over the Waters, as was Jesus' baptism (Matt 3: 16))	Zeus' Eagle; Zeus as Swan from which Helen, Clytemnestra and the Dioscuri – Zeus as Swan, this egg implied to be the World Egg Ophitic world egg; Phanes	Odm's Raven (Norse) World Egg (Japan) Vinau, mother of Anuna (Down), lays two eggs; Anuna comes from the broken egg hence only one side to his body (S. Asia) Anuna, daughter of Creation god, mated with bird and laid cosmic egg (Finland) N.B. all of the above are associated with the First God, others with day/son versus night Pankaj J.I.; from World Egg (S. China); Pankaj, Chinese primal god, still venerated in S. China by minorities; Mao, You and Li; from egg > open > heaven and earth, > Pengu kept on growing; from his body parts, all parts of the visible world were produced Finnish mythology: Louhi, daughter of the creation god, mated with bird, produced egg; from this egg: heaven, earth, sun, moon (Cotterell 1989: 217) Moi, lord of death, born from primal egg produced by Air and Chaos (Syro-Palestine); Mot (Canaan) lord of death, born from original egg from Air and Chaos (Syro-Palestine); Mot, lord of underworld, Vanh (Finnish) from Air, killing Mot, oger motif (Cotterell 1989: 223)



<p>NC as attested in non-ogreanic myths from sub-Saharan Africa in historical times</p> <p>5. The Marais</p>	<p>CITI</p>	<p>Ancient Egypt</p>	<p>Bible</p>	<p>Greco-Roman Antiquity</p>	<p>selected other (only) literaric civilisations of the Old World, outside-sub-Saharan Africa – for the purposes of this study, but not necessarily the ethnographers of these civilisations, and sub-Saharan Africa)</p>
<p>6. Rescue from the Ogre</p>	<p>II</p>	<p>one of the Ancient Egyptian shaman's familiars</p> <p>The Pseud Waters</p> <p>Not daily swallows and gives birth to the sun</p> <p>RE' determined to destroy humankind, but his intercesses Shesmet, who is in a room in a weaving room in order to weave a shroud for Osiris, but she escapes</p> <p>Osiris lured into a coffin or tomb, but she escapes</p> <p>Osiris is related to ogre theme – but this vessel often turns out to be the earth</p>	<p>Isaiah in Exod... John and Jesus in the desert</p> <p>The wild and empty earth (Gen 1-2)</p> <p>Noah's Ark (Gen. 8), the vessel from which things are release (cf. Ark.) is related to ogre theme</p> <p>Jesus' descent into hell; Jesus (cf. Mary) as redeemer (Christian tradition)</p>	<p>mesenger of the Miners</p> <p>Ugri motif in the narrower sense: Apollo (cf. Artemis, Leto) kills Python Herakles kills Kyklops Herakles kills Antaios father eats child Zeus' / Athysas (Zeus swallows pregnant Metis) Zeus' / Dionysos (Zeus swallows mortal's serving their children as meat to the gods – Thyestes, Sisyphus, etc</p> <p>Ugri motif in the derived sense: Chronos' incessant mating with Gaia locks their children inside her womb, until Kronos separates them violently (Hades in Diktaean cave)</p> <p>Achilles' bag of winds</p> <p>The forbidden box</p> <p>Pandora</p> <p>Adam and the daughter of Crotopos</p> <p>Adonis delivered from a tree – wooden encasement: his mother Myrrha had become a tree</p> <p>Arsinoe was shut up in a chest by her brothers after those slew Alkmaeon</p> <p>Ophion, descended into the underworld (Hades) was hidden in a cave by Prometheus, while he sends her substitute to Troy!</p> <p>Seleno (Moon) put her mortal lover Endymion to sleep in a cave</p> <p>Dionysos and Ixion escape from Minos' captivity</p> <p><b>I still to be integrated with the above:</b></p> <p>Idelen was hidden in a cave [ cave is also underworld motif ]</p> <p>Idelen was related to the ogre theme [ I may take the sea god Proteus as a trickster mirror variant of Prometheus ]</p> <p>all Ouarane children were imprisoned in Gaia's belly (non-being, but also: subterranean organ, this is an old theme, also related to Crotopos' daughter, but also: Kronos swallows his children at birth, in his turn)</p> <p>Endymion, eternal sleep in a cave (Cottarell 1989: 198)</p> <p>Zeus in Diktaean cave</p>	<p>1) ogre motif in the narrower sense: ---</p> <p>2) ogre motif in the derived sense: Inanna's descent into underworld (Sumer) Anur's descent into underworld (Syro-Palentine) (cf. Inanna's descent into underworld), Ididim(s) emerged from rock with knife and torch (Iran, Roman Mitrasism) escape boats build by Mesopotamian Flood heroes (Ziusardra, Atra-hasis, Utnapishtim) (Sumer, Babylon) Mer (Canaan) lost of death, born from original egg from Air and Chaos; Ibal is visited by Molr, dies in the underworld; Anur brings him back, killing Molr (Syro-Palentine) (cf. Inanna's descent into underworld) (Iran, Roman Mitrasism) St Patrick petrified of a snake by enticing it into a box and drowning it (Ireland) Gimmunglap chaos, Loki and his wife Sigm locked in a cave until Ragnarok (Norse Europe) Medea (W. Europe) Ugri motif in the derived sense: Ogres mate of Ayalakshahvara (Tibet) Indra, but was gagged by the gods so that Indra (wielding the thunderbolt) could jump out (S. Asia) Ogres were stronger than Indra; grant snake Vrtra (cf. Rainbow) swallowed grows, father builds an iron boat in anticipation of the flood, but crashes, whereas the children survive in a the gourd (S.E. China) Sun goddess Amaterasu 天照 does not want to come out of the cave (inverted ogre rescue motif, Japan)</p> <p><b>I still to be integrated with the above:</b></p> <p>descent into underworld by Inanna / Anur</p> <p>Loki locked up in a cave [ cave is also underworld motif ] (Cottarell 1989: 121)</p> <p>Mithras cult, killing of the bull in the cave (cf. and Inanna's descent into underworld)</p> <p>Zeus and his wife Sigm were themselves locked in a cave until Ragnarok (Cottarell 1989: 239)</p>
<p>7. From the Mouth</p>	<p>VII</p>	<p>the world created by RE's or Amun's spitting or weeping</p>			





NC as attested on cosmogonic myths from sub-Saharan Africa in historical times	CITI	Ancient Egypt	Bible	Greece-Roman Antiquity	selected other (only literate civilisations of the Old World, outside sub-Saharan Africa – for the pre-literate civilisations and sub-Saharan Africa)
<p>12. From under the Tree</p>	<p>I</p>	<p>becomes a bull, then an avocado tree, then a piece of flintstone, whose splinter kills the foot of Osiris. Beta ends up as a snake. The snake is then transformed into that of the mythical woman of Shilohka in Lakota (Willis 1994 : 53)</p> <p>Osiris, sacred to Hwt-Hor Ostris, sacrificed in Byblos, encorpated in tamarisk</p>	<p>tree of Paradise</p>	<p>Zeus's oak herb of immortality (Glaucus son of Minos) Atis' mother was impregnated by fruit from the tree against which Apollon (in hermaphroditic born of celestial semen) had a phallos Helen's tree at Sparta (since she is born from the World Egg, this must be the World Tree) (Conterrell 1989: 98) Erechon's vine is a shrub Myrrha, Cyprus princess, committed incest with her father and became the myrrh shrub, from which Adonis was born a plausible etymology for Poseidon is: * Borean *PVCV- *DNNV, 'viva/woman-[from which they] mightly tree [of descent has emerged].</p>	<p>oak sacred to Okeia, Yngfaelst (Ancient Germanic Europe) herb of immortality, Uta, a sun god guarding justice and opposed to Inanna's falling of a sacred tree (Conterrell 1989: 246) (Sumner) Parjata tree of Paradise produced at the beginning of the world, when a illumination (S. S. F. ) dived the primal Waters, Inyany Inyany tree of Blandia's gods (Sumner) House of Da Jun 玄日宮, God of the Western Sky, was on the top – Pole Star ] of an enormous tree [ – world axis ] (China) Fu Xi 伏羲 and Nu Wa 女媧 as 'parent children' (China); the thunder-god Peremi is an oak tree (Slavic peoples) Waluigi, sun god and warrior, emerged from a plant (Ancient Armenia)</p>
<p>13. The Cosmic / Rainbow Snake / the Adversary ]</p>	<p>I</p>	<p>Set/Sutekh as Adversary; RE' ; Apep</p>	<p>rainbow as sign of covenant (Gen 8); snake in Paradise (Gen 3)</p>	<p>Python; Helois; Ino the activities with oak, the feet giants born from Earth have snake-like feet Quames with snake-like or fishlike feet (Sumner); Fu Xi and Nu Wa with snake-like feet (China)</p>	<p>Ancient Babylon; Marduk slays Tiamat, world made out of the latter's cut-up body</p>
<p>14. Fundamental Duality</p>	<p>VIII</p>	<p>all three classic cosmogonies start with a series of pairs, which are subject to incest prohibition. Hapi is a twinned god, Lower and Upper Egypt are twinned</p>	<p>the binary oppositions of Gen. 1-12 Esau and Jacob</p>	<p>seth of twins: Discent, Amphion and Zethos</p>	
<p>15. The Spider and the Feminine Arts</p>	<p>I (VI)</p>	<p>Neith goddess of war and bows Isis beaked on by Seth to spin and weave Osiris' shroud spider is one of the Ancient Egyptian shaman's familiars Osiris as culture hero taught weaving bee is sacred to Neith fly is symbol of military prowess</p>	<p>Athena, Arachne the spider Ariadne Arachne Penelope, Calypso and Circe are weavers Violated and with cut out tongue, Phloemah tells her tale by weaving</p>	<p>Utu, weaving sun goddess; Enki (water god, pursues his daughters incessantly, and the goddesses of weaving, "whom the god had used and left". Enki persuades Ninkuraga to part the wounded Enki is her womb, from which he is reborn. He came from sea, was part man / fish or part man goat. I is therefore very close to Zeus, according to heroes) ] His Babylonian equivalent is En. Enki preceded Zoroaster, the god of the sun, the moon, and the stars, the god of the sea, when Marduk has to prove his superiority among the gods, he creates a garment by the power of his word (Babylonia) Atahuta (Inca)</p>	<p>Utu, weaving sun goddess; Enki (water god, pursues his daughters incessantly, and the goddesses of weaving, "whom the god had used and left". Enki persuades Ninkuraga to part the wounded Enki is her womb, from which he is reborn. He came from sea, was part man / fish or part man goat. I is therefore very close to Zeus, according to heroes) ] His Babylonian equivalent is En. Enki preceded Zoroaster, the god of the sun, the moon, and the stars, the god of the sea, when Marduk has to prove his superiority among the gods, he creates a garment by the power of his word (Babylonia) Atahuta (Inca) Peyra and Trigg, weaving for goddess; Wad (a weaving goddess, of fate, a spider weaving underworld goddess (Ancient Germanic Europe) Brigid is a spinning goddess (Celtic Ancient Europe) Suse is the weaving sub goddess (Haltic Europe)</p>

<p>NC as attested on cosmogonic myths from sub-Saharan Africa in historical times</p> <p>16. Shamanism, Banes</p>	<p>CITI</p>	<p>Ancient Egypt</p> <p>the Th, official on the Neutr tablet</p>	<p>Bible</p> <p>Book of Gen.</p>	<p>Graco-Roman Antiquity</p> <p>Phalgaues, his companion Abaris, Empedocles, Ophiasis</p>	<p>Mimamto no Yemimizu 源明正: fights 'the Grand Spider' Tsuchigumo 土蜘蛛 (name of a people? or a replaced deity?); Amaterasu 天照 is a weeping sun goddess (Japan)                      Cowherd 牛郎 / Altar to Aquila and Weaver Girl 织女 (漢文, / Vega in Lyne (classical China))</p> <p><b>selected other only literate civilisations of the Old World, outside sub-Saharan Africa – for the purposes of comparison with the mythologies of these civilisations, and sub-Saharan Africa:</b></p> <p>Odin as Shamantzi (Aesicent Germanic)                      Ganesar first human, dressed in leopard skin (Iran); Central in SE. Asia is the idea of a layered cosmos, up to 5 to 7 layers [Mier (Cunam) boat of death, born from original egg from Air and Chaos; Ball is invited by Mox, dies in the underworld, Anax brings him back, killing Mox, eggs most] (Cotterell 1989: 223) – Ophiasis and descent motif is in the first place                      Odin as trickster god, Loki as trickster god (Nordic)                      The 'leopard' as a shamanic animal (Asian)                      In Xi culture hero's corpse depicted edal in leopard skins (China)                      divine family Shiva, Parvati and Ganesha depicted on leopard skin, Shiva wears leopard skin and belt; Indra changes into leopard during royal enthronement ritual (South Asia)                      Taldanshi (Hittite)                      Ogiua German: 'of the leoparded mouth'; Irish equivalent of Arthur / Gryllodon seems (S. India)                      blood of god Kuarir mixed with honey to make the mud of poetry (Neritic)</p>
<p>(17. Spottedness and the Leopard)</p>	<p>()</p>	<p>Egyptian gods take animal form, but are not interchangeable as symbols of animals, but are one of the Ancestral Egyptian shaman's family members                      honey possibly a metaphor of royal divine incest</p>	<p>Jacob as striped                      Jacob as trickster</p>	<p>Proetus, Nerous, Zena, Heimes are shape-shifters, tricksters; Dionysus, Aphrodite, Orpheus, Jason, Mordcaus, Antenor, as wearers of leopard skin</p>	<p>Odin as trickster god, Loki as trickster god (Nordic)                      The 'leopard' as a shamanic animal (Asian)                      In Xi culture hero's corpse depicted edal in leopard skins (China)                      divine family Shiva, Parvati and Ganesha depicted on leopard skin, Shiva wears leopard skin and belt; Indra changes into leopard during royal enthronement ritual (South Asia)                      Taldanshi (Hittite)                      Ogiua German: 'of the leoparded mouth'; Irish equivalent of Arthur / Gryllodon seems (S. India)                      blood of god Kuarir mixed with honey to make the mud of poetry (Neritic)</p>
<p>(18. Honey and Honey-beer)</p>	<p>()</p>	<p>Neith and her temple at Sais: royal midwife over-air, bee, fly and midjet may be interchangeable as symbols of honey and honey-beer                      Ancestress (Egyptian shaman's) family members                      honey possibly a metaphor of royal divine incest</p>	<p>Pharaoh ('speaker, he') as Judge; Samson and the lion</p>	<p>Aristatus</p>	<p>Taldanshi (Hittite)                      Ogiua German: 'of the leoparded mouth'; Irish equivalent of Arthur / Gryllodon seems (S. India)                      blood of god Kuarir mixed with honey to make the mud of poetry (Neritic)</p>
<p>(19. The Cosmogonic Virgin and Her Son/Lover)</p>	<p>VI</p>	<p>Isis (cf. Ptahuch, Ptahosis), Isis as mother (ball of his mother); Horus and Isis as lovers                      Ostris as dying and resurrected</p>	<p>virgin birth of Jesus, of Mary</p>	<p>Oedipus and Icarate; Isis as mother (ball of his mother); Adonis, Attis; Erichthonios' birth, despite Hephaestus' cosmogonic fire, Athena has to remain a virgin, cf. Hephaestus' unsatisfactory marriage with Aphrodite – both women cosmogonic virgins; Iphigeneia and Achilles</p>	<p>Dumuzi (Tammuz) and Inanna, Sumter.</p>
<p>(20. Contradictory Messengers bring Death)</p>	<p>()</p>	<p>Thoth</p>	<p>Jesus died so that we may live...</p>	<p>Hermes; Iris</p>	<p>'Let all heavens shed a tear so that Riddar can return from the dead' – Loki refuses; this is a form of 'contradictory messengers cause death' (Cotterell 1989: 70) during the Flood when Vidkun in the Malaya waters saved Manu, the Hindu Noah, from the flood, but he took advantage of Vidkun's sleep to send the Vedic scriptures from his mouth, but Malaya saved them; cf. Krutu mate of Tamut... (Cotterell 1989: 220)</p>

The Narrative Complexes were defined on the basis of a corpus of sub-Saharan cosmogonic myths attested in historical times. Therefore sub-Saharan Africa scores, inevitably, positively on all Narrative Complexes. Narrative Complexes that have been argued to be derived from or implied in others ('not separately needed') have been put between parentheses. NB: 1 Heaven is a concept that already pre-supposed the upward gawe, which I believe to be associated with shamanism, from c. 20,000 BP onward

Table A2.1. Mythological continuities between sub-Saharan Africa and civilisations of the Old World and the New World



# Index of proper names other than those of authors

The trans-disciplinary and world-wide orientation of the present book makes for a dazzling abundance of proper names, including the names of authors cited. The following indexes aim to bring order in that chaos, by *exhaustively* listing all proper names, by offering a simplified encyclopaedic description for many of them, and by indicating cross connections whenever relevant. Subcategories distinguished by a particular direction (North, South etc.) are to be found under those directions and not under the main word.

*cf.* = 'compare, see also'; *q.v.* = 'see there'; *passim* = 'does occur frequently but no specific pages listed'; *i.e.* = 'that is'; – = 'insert the entry's key word'

The indexes in this book have been prepared with software designed by my brother Peter D.H. Broers and written / rewritten by him and me jointly. For technical reasons beyond our control, the actual pagination of an entry may be off by one or two pages.

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*q.v.* = ‘see specifically there’; *cf.* = ‘also see ....; a lower-case ‘n’ written after a number indicates a footnote on a page of that number

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