

Myths as Symbolic Maps of Social-Moral Order & Worldview-Identity: Moses and the Ten Commandments are obviously religious symbols of social-moral order with Hammurabi Code, Code of Ur-Nammu, Zeus, Indra + E Halas “Groups Exist [as] Common Symbolization...Create a Social Order!

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Abstract:

Myths as “bad science” or, alternatively as Symbolic Maps of Social Order – Suresh, Kamar S The Indian scientist, Suresh, states that “When we stop viewing myths as ancient "bad science" and instead see them as cognitive operating systems, their true function becomes clear. They are structural frameworks designed to categorize reality, enforce social cohesion, and guide the human unconscious.” (Suresh Kumar S Council of Scientific and Industrial Research India, NIIST, Trivandrum, India, Faculty Member)

As Confucius observed long ago, “signs and symbols rule the world not words nor laws!” For many, the most obvious example of the historical connection between spiritual-religious beliefs and social-moral order would be Moses and the Ten Commandments. I would highlight the fact that the Compassionate aspect of the Moses and the ten commandments is often over looked. After the Golden Calf incident, God famously reveals His core character to Moses in Exodus 34:6-7. Exodus 34:6 states “And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,”

The emergence of compassion in Hinduism is parallel to the emergence of compassion in the Old Testament which emerged roughly around 2000 to 1600 BC. Compassion, of course didn’t appear suddenly as a lightning bolt, but took years to develop. In Vedic literature which emerged roughly around 1600-1500 BC, particularly the Rigveda, Indra is the supreme king of the gods, a warrior deity of thunder, storms, and war and developed into the protector of mankind.

In the earliest text, the Rig Veda, “dharma” emerged from the cosmic concept of ṛta (universal order) to denote the moral, ritual, and societal laws that sustain the universe.: Originating from the ancient Sanskrit root dhr, meaning "to uphold" or "to support", it generally translates to cosmic order, righteousness, duty, and the "way things are. Moitreyee Raj, an Indian poet and “story Teller, explained it this way: “Dharma is like a spiritual court of justice or justice by itself which is ingrained or inbuilt within us that should act as a deterrent from doing the wrong thing. In other words dharma is the conscience or the God that resides

within the body. That is why it's said Karma is dharma. When your karma is right you are following dharma.

In all ancient civilizations from the Mesopotamian to Egyptian there are parallels

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Joseph von Führich - Gott schreibt Moses auf dem Berg Sinai die zehn Gebote auf zwei steinerne Tafeln
2540 - Kunsthistorisches Museum.jpg

St Gregory of Nyssa states "God's manifestation to the great Moses began with light [Ex 19.18], after which he spoke through a cloud [Ex 20.21] Having risen higher and having become more perfect, Moses saw God in darkness [Ex 24. 15-18]. By this example we learn that our withdrawal from false, deceptive ideas of God is a transition from darkness into light!" [Exodus 20.21]. (p.202 SoS)

Social Moral Order in Early Human Society

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storms, and war and developed into the protector of mankind. In Hinduism, along with the deities, a philosophical-spiritual foundation appeared at the same time. In Hinduism, compassion evolved from an early Vedic ethic of duty and non-violence (Ahimsa) into a foundational spiritual virtue – introducing ideals such as Daya (active kindness) and Karuṇā (empathetic concern to alleviate suffering),

In the earliest text, the Rig Veda, “dharma” emerged from the cosmic concept of ṛta (universal order) to denote the moral, ritual, and societal laws that sustain the universe. The Hindu concept of Dharma is a classic example of social moral order: Originating from the ancient Sanskrit root dhr, meaning "to uphold" or "to support", it generally translates to cosmic order, righteousness, duty, and the "way things are. Moitreyee Raj, an Indian poet and “story Teller, explained it this way: “Dharma is like a spiritual court of justice or justice by itself which is ingrained or inbuilt within us that should act as a deterrent from doing the wrong thing. In other words dharma is the conscience or the God that resides within the body. That is why it's said Karma is dharma. When your karma is right you are following dharma.

The emergence of compassion in Egyptian literature is parallel to Hinduism and Judaism with parallel timing as well. The Egyptian goddess Ma'at was the Goddess of Cosmic Order, truth, justice, fair dealing and balance. Wisdom literature, such as the Maxims of Ptahhotep (Old Kingdom, c. 2350 BCE), emphasized humility, self-discipline, and the protection of the poor

Many Mesopotamian societies have almost identical social-moral mandates and principles as the ten commandments. In the Mesopotamia gods were often seen as providers, and human beings were created to serve them. Kings were the earthly stewards of the gods, mandated to ensure justice. Empathy and compassion were institutionalized as the obligation to protect those unable to protect themselves—namely, widows, orphans, and the poor.

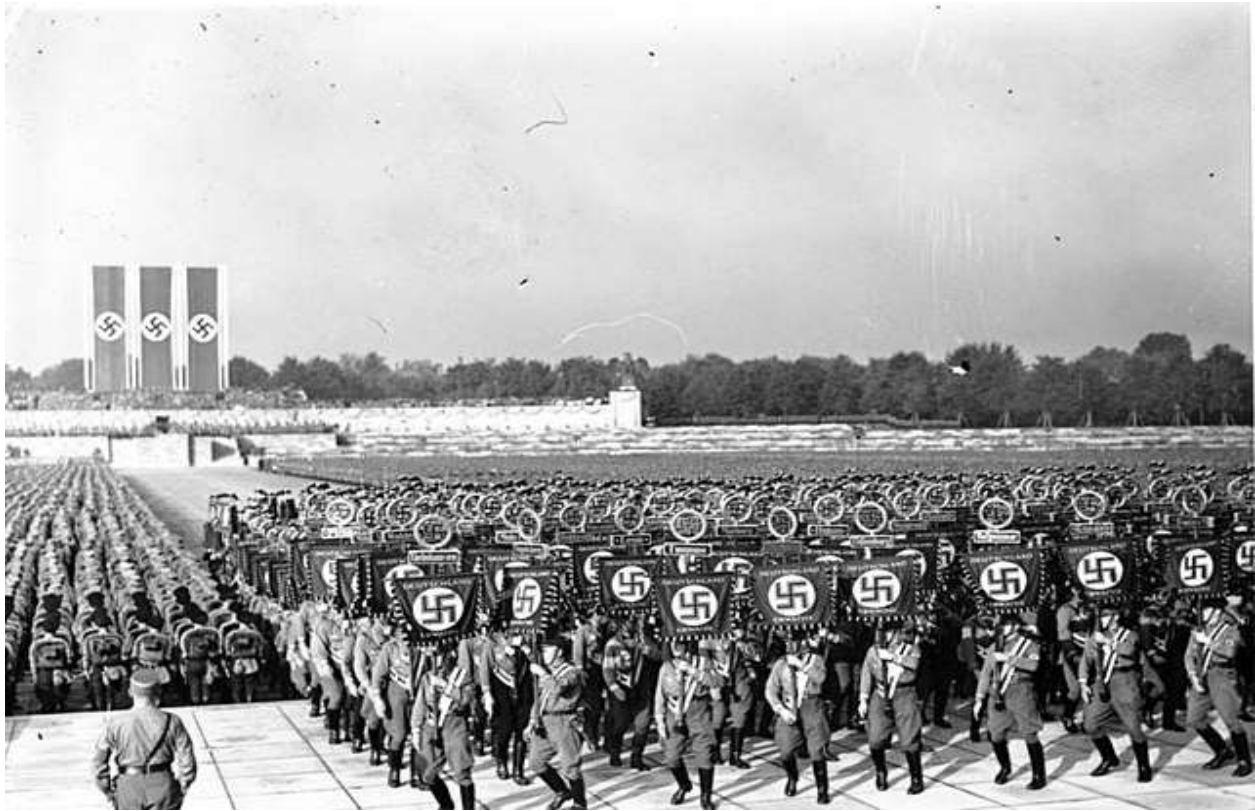
The Code of Ur-Nammu, the world's oldest surviving legal text, was written on clay tablets in the Sumerian language between 2100 and 2050 BCE, and provided compensation for the victim of the crime. The Hammurabi Code, which had an emphasis on the physical punishment of the perpetrator, was parallel to the ten commandments and had a parallel timeline being written about 1754 BCE The earliest historical protest–revolt was in the city of Lagash in ancient Sumerian civilization in the fertile crescent between the Tigris and Euphrates. Urukagina overthrew the ensi Lugalanda around 2375 BCE. Urukagina reforms against corrupt ruler Lugalanda improved the lives of common people by addressing issues like the seizure of their boats, sheep, and fish stores

In ancient spiritual-religious myths, gods and goddesses representing social-moral ideals were the rule – not the exception. Then there were numerous Gods of Mesopotamia that symbolized pro-social values: Shamash: god of justice Marduk: god of justice, compassion, healing; Enki: god of wisdom and craftsmen; Nabu: god of wisdom and learning Inanna: goddess of sex, war, and justice; Enlil: creator and destroyer; Anu: King of Gods. In ancient Greek religion, Zeus: The Father and Ruler of heavens had roles, like keeper of “oaths”

Sociology and Social-Moral Order

1. Religion as “a system of symbols” is a primary characteristic of Geertz’s five-part definition of religion¹
2. Emile Durkheim: “The forces before which the believer bows are not simple physical energies, such as are presented to the sense and the imagination; they are social forces,”²
3. Ramon Reyes on Philippine prehistoric societies: “In sum, one social and moral order encompasses the living, the dead, the deities and the spirits, and the total environment.”³

Myths as Symbolic Maps and Worldviews: “Signs and symbols rule the world not words nor laws!” Confucius – Brief overview of symbolism



Nazi,party,rally,Bundesarchiv_Bild_183,H12148,_Nürnberg,_Reichsparteitag Scherl

As Confucius, a Chinese philosopher and spiritual leader who lived from 551 to 479 BCE, observed long ago, "Signs and symbols rule the world, not words or laws!" Modern politics and religion have proved Confucius right. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "We are symbols, and inhabit symbols."⁴ That would especially be true when it comes to nationalism and the influence of national flags as symbols. In WWI 11 million soldiers died and every single one was a patriot. The Nazis were famous for manipulating symbols.

Heschel observes that “flags” are perhaps the best illustration of the power of symbols in group related behaviors - which Balaganapathi and D. Butz agree with. Both highlight the fact that national symbols can evoke powerful emotions. Balaganapathi goes on to say that “National symbols, stated Michael Geisler (2005), serve as a marker for the collective memory of the nation and thus represent the power of the state to define a nation. National symbols of India are deeply rooted in historical antiquity and the Nationalist movement. National Flag: India’s National flag is a horizontal tri-colored one with deep saffron at the top, white in the middle and dark green at the bottom in equal proportions. The ratio of the width of the flag to its length is two to three. In the centre of the white band is a wheel, in navy blue, which represents the chakra, wheel of dharma. Its design is also that of the wheel which appears on the abacus of the Saranath lion capital of King Asoka. The wheel has 24 spokes.

The saffron of the national flag stands for courage, sacrifice and renunciation, while white stands for truth and purity: truth in words and actions and purity in thoughts. Green is the symbol of life, abundance and prosperity. Chakra is the symbol of progress and of movement and its 24 spokes symbolize division of time, i.e., 24 hours of the day. The cloth used for the flag should be homespun and handwoven khadi

representing the nationalist feeling.”⁵ There is a consensus that symbols condense and encode information. The Indian flag is very intricate and complex so that is a good example of symbols condensing and encoding information.

Symbolic Knowledge

Immanuel Kant (1724 -1804), a German philosopher, who was an icon during the Enlightenment, developed the theory of symbolic knowledge which is considered pivotal in philosophy. "He [Kant] argues that the mind provides a formal structuring that allows for the conjoining of concepts into judgments."⁶ (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy) Kant's theory of symbolic knowledge emphasizes that knowledge isn't just passive reception but a synthesis where the mind actively structures raw sensory data (intuitions) using innate concepts (Categories, space, time) to form meaningful experiences (phenomena), with symbols often bridging the gap between abstract concepts and concrete intuition, allowing for representation beyond immediate sensory input, especially in aesthetics and moral reasoning. The unconscious researcher John Bargh argues that “mental categories” are pivotal in human consciousness.⁷ Michael Steger has a similar view stating that “meaning is, at its heart, an integrating factor for people. Meaning pulls together people’s ideas about who they are, the kind of world they live in, and how they relate to the people and environments around them.”⁸ (Quest p. 169) Human consciousness is a dynamic force, not a static fixed reality.

D. Balaganapath observes: “The basis of every culture and every identity is determined by its own established common symbolic expression.” Balaganapathi goes on to say that “Though man and his life ultimately are symbolic, there are more evident symbols in man’s creation. These symbols are the substitutes or suggestions of abstract things. They are more concrete in nature. Thus, superimposing an idea on a thing or invoking a deity in an image is symbolization. Symbols are used for both concealment and revelation. They conceal partly the essential content from an ordinary person and partly reveal it by suggesting it.”⁹

Elzbieta Halas: “groups exist only on the ground of common symbolization of their members.” “The processes of symbolization...create a social order, express meaning and control actions. Symbols are not autonomous. They constitute tools of action, indicating and dramatizing social relations”¹⁰

Erica Hill on Arctic Hunter Gatherer Society: “Their thoughts and actions established and maintained relationships with prey animals and may be more productively conceptualized as dynamic social behaviours embedded within the context of daily life than as privileged ritual acts.”¹¹ I would add that the beliefs focused attention (evolutionary adaptive selective attention) of the community on the activity of hunting-gathering of animals.

Abraham Heschel: “As long as man believes in his ability to comprehend the world directly, as long as he is impressed by that which is rather than concerned to express what he thinks, symbolism is one of the techniques of human understanding. When man becomes the measure of good and evil, when the truth is regarded as that which the mind creates, symbolism becomes the sole technique of human understanding.”¹² (Heschel Symbolism p. 127-128)

For perspective I would add that symbols and symbolism have been evident in prehistoric art from the dawning of civilization. Karen Armstrong highlights prehistoric cave art as the first evidence for human ideologies can be found in the prehistoric cave paintings of “shamans” in the French and Spanish caves dating as far back as twenty or thirty thousand years.¹³ Besides the numerous religious art works of the Renaissance, Chelsea Ann Rulofson observes that: “Some modern art movements coined their own

spirituality and reflected it in their art; it is easy to see this in artists such as Paul Klee, Franz Marc, and Wassily Kandinsky. Historically, divine inspiration has often been a hallmark of creativity.¹⁴

Unconscious Spiritual Symbolism – The Unconscious Processes the Lion’s Share of data

Leslie White (1995) “the creative faculty of human beings makes them bestow values upon things freely, actively and arbitrarily, driving them towards symbolization. This symbol-making tendency is innate in man.”¹⁵

Modern unconscious research demonstrates that the “Unconscious processes” process 11 million bits of data per second vs 40 bits of data per second processed by cognitive processes, (From: Forbes: Your Brain Sees Even When You Don’t June 24, 2013)¹⁶ John Bargh observes that nonconscious mental systems perform the lion’s share of the self-regulatory burden, beneficially keeping the individual grounded in his or her current environment.”¹⁷ (P.462) “There are a multitude of behavioral impulses generated at any given time derived from our evolved motives and preferences, cultural norms and values, past experiences in similar situations, and from what other people are currently doing in that same situation..”¹⁸ (PERSPECTIVES ON PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE Volume 3—Number 1 73 Copyright r 2008 Association for Psychological Science) After thousands of years of spiritual-religious beliefs it would seem an inescapable conclusion that numerous unconscious spiritual symbols would exist.

Sociological Evidence of Unconscious spiritual symbolism: Massive Popularity of Star Wars & Harry Potter Fandoms

Jung defined [unconscious] archetypes as universal, primordial patterns and symbols that reside in the human collective unconscious - which form the unconscious blueprints of human personality, shaping behaviors, motivations, and cultural narratives through myths, dreams, and art.¹⁹

Rhiannon Grant in The Sacred in Fantastic Fandom, Grant observes in 2001, the British government ran a regular census, but they included a new question about religion. In response, almost 0.8 percent of the total population said they were a “Jedi” or Jedi knight!”²⁰ (p. 38) Those results were repeated in Australia and New Zealand.” The contemporary-modern social popularity of Star Wars and Harry Potter, and the numerous other imaginative fandoms, that provides massive data and evidence of the existence of unconscious spiritual symbolism.

Nancy Furlotti states " Affect emerges from archetypes, which are the a priori ordering principles of nature, the world, and the psyche. When an archetype is activated, energy is put in motion that does not adhere to the laws of causality, or time and space."²¹ (Tracing a Red Thread: Synchronicity and Jung’s Red Book:(2010), Psychological Perspectives, 53:4, 455-478) Donald Kalsched explains "Archetypal energy is rooted deep in the unconscious and it is ‘archaic’, primitive, and also ‘typical’. Archetypal energies and affects are not easily assimilated by the conscious mind. They can be luminous or dark, angelic or demonic, but because they exist in raw, unmediated form they tend to be over-powering." Unconscious symbolism is very real – and often packed with emotional and psychic energy.²²

"To me it seems the most important and exceedingly difficult task of our time is to work on the construction of a new idea of reality." Wolfgang Pauli

It would seem "our reality" isn't working all that well.

We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them - Albert Einstein:²³

Myths as “bad science” or, alternatively as Symbolic Maps of Social Order

The Indian scientist, Suresh, states that “When we stop viewing myths as ancient "bad science" and instead see them as cognitive operating systems, their true function becomes clear. They are structural frameworks designed to categorize reality, enforce social cohesion, and guide the human unconscious.” (Suresh Kumar S Council of Scientific and Industrial Research India, NIIST, Trivandrum, India, Faculty Member)

Robert Bellah, a prominent sociologist stated that “There is no other sphere of human culture which is excluded from sympathetic academic consideration on its own terms on the grounds that such a study endangers science, reason, logic, and the whole heritage of the Enlightenment”²⁴ (p.133). (p.36) Robert Bellah (1970b),

Brian D Josephson, a Nobel-prize winning quantum physicist in his article, Religion in Genes (Nature, Vol 362, April 15, 1993) stated unequivocally that “the significant questions in this context [of analysis of religions] relate to the functions and fruitfulness of religious beliefs.” Many academics are fixated on the "supernatural.”²⁵

For example, David A. Barrowclough states that religion can be understood as the formalized recognition of some higher, unseen, divine power as having control over human destiny, and as a consequence is worthy of reverence, obedience and organized worship.”²⁶

Defining religion solely and entirely in terms of the supernatural is wrong on several levels. First it is a grotesque oversimplification. Secondly, by definition the “supernatural” is “outside the scope of science” (Mirriam Webster) and so, scientifically meaningless. Plus, the supernatural comes with baggage: powers, superstitious nonsense, irrational, as well as intangible and unreal.

Real-World Context: People are the only True Source of Real-World Context for Religion or Spirituality

Furthermore, it violates several scientific principles. Immanuel Kant, Iain McGilchrist, and Muzafer agree completely that without real-world context, a theory is not scientifically valid. Immanuel Kant stated, “If a concept lacks reference to any object of possible experience, Kant argues, it "has no meaning and is completely lacking in content”²⁷ (CR, A 239/B 298). (P.15 Kant’s Theory Of Symbolism John D. Glenn, Jr.)

There is a consensus among modern researchers that attention – particularly selective attention - is a critical function in human consciousness because that process determines priorities, motivations and purpose. Paying attention to fruitfulness versus the supernatural would be an important issue. So, a salient question would be the “Creating” aspect of human consciousness vs quantifying reality.

Modern religions are complex and often too dogmatic, so early religion is easier to analyze. Identity and worldview are critical functions in human consciousness, and in that context the ancient Deities would appear to structure a social-moral order and “Worldview. Each of the Egyptian deities plays a role in the social harmony of the Egyptian civilization – and so provides a worldview and identity for Egyptians.

Are “Myths as Symbolic Maps” a New Approach?

First, I should point out that a large part of writing on myths focuses on heroes, individuals and archetypes. For instance, Joseph Campbell is renowned for his work in mythology, particularly his concept of the monomyth, or hero's journey, which proposes a universal pattern underlying heroic narratives across cultures. His book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, outlines this pattern, while *The Power of Myth*, a series of conversations with Bill Moyers, explores the functions and enduring relevance of myths in modern life.

My approach offers a unique cross cultural comparative analysis of myths focused on social moral order emphasizing the connection between spirituality and social-moral order as well as “groups as common symbolization” (Elzbieta Halas)²⁸. The focus is on unconscious symbols of Justice and order, in particular the symbol of “injustice” Gerringer observes “Joseph Campbell argues there are four primary functions and through the third “Sociological Function” “mythology reinforces the moral order by shaping the person to the demands of a specific geographically and historically conditioned social group. (Thou Art That 5)”²⁹(Campbell’s Four Functions of Myth Stephen Gerringer) – The point being myths as symbolic maps as counterpoint to myths and spirituality as superstitious nonsense and completely irrational.

Myths as Symbolic Maps of Social-Moral Order and Worldview - Myths as Common Symbolization

Egyptian Myths as a Model & Worldview of the World

The Egyptian pantheon of gods and goddesses is perhaps the easiest and clearest example of myths as social moral order and worldview. Every god and goddess had a role to play in society. As Ramon Reyes stated, “In sum, one social and moral order encompasses the living, the dead, the deities and the spirits, and the total environment.”³⁰ This is in line with Erica Hill’s model of Arctic hunter-gatherer society: “Their thoughts and actions established and maintained relationships with prey animals and may be more productively conceptualized as dynamic social behaviours embedded within the context of daily life than as privileged ritual acts.”³¹ Emile Durkheim emphasized, “The forces before which the believer bows are not simple physical energies, such as are presented to the sense and the imagination; they are social forces!”³² From a certain perspective myths could be seen as a rudimentary form of categorization. As Bargh, the unconscious researcher, concludes that “mental categories” are pivotal in the workings of the human mind,³³

Roles of Ancient Egyptian Gods

1. Khonsu: God of the moon and the son of Amun and Mut.
2. Anubis: God of mummification, the afterlife and the dead.
3. Aten: A solar god
4. Atum According to one popular myth, he created the world.
5. Bastet Goddess of cats, fertility, associated with joy and dance.
6. Bes friendly and helpful god, who protected children, cared for women
7. Geb God of the earth and fertility (new life).
8. Hapy Thought to control the Nile river's seasonal inundation
9. Hathor Goddess of love, joy, music, beauty, women
10. Horus God of the sky, war and hunting; God of kingship, he was associated with the pharaohs and was often depicted as their protector and defender.

11. Isis: Goddess of protection, motherhood and magic; mother of Horus.
12. Khepri: God of the rising sun, transformation and rebirth, hope and resurrection and was often mentioned during funeral ceremonies.
13. Khnum A creator god who was believed to form humans on a potter's wheel using clay from the Nile River.
14. Khonsu God of the moon; His name means 'traveler' or 'pathfinder'; believed to have the power to cure illnesses and injuries.
15. Ma'at: Goddess of truth, justice and balance – and associated with order and harmony, the force that kept the universe in balance,
16. Montu: God of war, he was often worshipped by soldiers who believed he would help them win battles.
17. Neith Goddess of hunting, weaving and war, she was often linked with creation and rebirth.
18. Nephthys Goddess of mourning, funerals and the dead.
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20. Nun, he existed before the world and the gods came into being. The ancient Egyptians believed that before anything else existed, there was only Nun, a vast and infinite ocean of water.
21. Nut A goddess who represented the sky.
22. Osiris God of the afterlife and fertility (new life).
23. Ptah God of craftsmen, architects and artists.
24. Ra A god of the sun, often considered to be the first king, ruling initially over humans and gods on earth and then later in the heavens. Believed to have the power to control the sky and the weather, as well as life and death.
25. Ra-Horakhty God of the rising sun and often associated with light, warmth and growth. A combination of two other gods, Ra and Horus.
26. Sekhmet Goddess of war, destruction power and strength – her image was often used as a symbol of courage and resilience; Also, goddess of pestilence and plague – because of this she was thought to have the power to protect against disease and evil.
27. Serket: Goddess of scorpions, venom and healing.
28. Seshat Goddess of all types of notations, including writing, accounting, record keeping, censuses, mathematics and building planning.
29. Seth God of chaos, the desert, storms, violence and foreign people. Portrayed as a villain who killed his brother Osiris out of jealousy, he was also seen as a protector who defended the sun god Ra from dangerous creatures.
30. Shu God of air and the atmosphere. Husband of Tefnut, goddess of moisture.
31. Sobek God of the Nile River, often associated with fertility (new life), protection and strength.
32. Tawaret Goddess of childbirth, fertility (new life) and protection – frequently associated with motherhood and family.
33. Tawaret: Goddess of childbirth, fertility (new life) and protection – frequently associated with motherhood and family.
34. Thoth God of wisdom, writing and knowledge, as well as a moon god.
35. Four sons of Horus protect the organs of the deceased
36. Imsety, who protected the liver
37. Duamutef, who protected the stomach
38. Hapi, who protected the lungs

39. Qebhsenuel, who protected the intestines.

Symbolic Maps of Social-Moral Order and “dynamic social behaviors

Moses – Prophet and Lawgiver

Many westerners and Christians might think that Moses and the ten commandments aren't myth – it is real. A closer examination of morals might shed some light on this question, While Spinoza, the philosopher, - and others argue that morals are derived from reason, recent neuroscience research indicates that emotions are pivotal. Neuroscientists Funk and Gazzaniga observe, “Morality is a set of complex emotional and cognitive processes that is reflected across many brain domains. Some of the emotions processed are more central to morality than others, but all emotions contribute to moral judgment given specific contextual situations.”³⁴ (Brain Architecture of human morality, Funk and Gazzaniga Current opinion in Neurobiology 2009 19:678-681) I should highlight that emotions are pivotal in morals as well as “contextual situations.

The biblical account of Moses on Mount Sinai (also known as Mount Horeb) is the foundational event where God established a covenant with the Israelites and delivered the Ten Commandments. Three months after fleeing Egypt, the Israelites camped at the base of Mount Sinai. On the third day, God descended upon the mountain and the summit was wrapped in thick smoke, flashing lightning, and a dense cloud.

From St Gregory's Song of songs: "God's manifestation to the great Moses began with light [Ex 19.18], after which he spoke through a cloud [Ex 20.21] Having risen higher and having become more perfect, Moses saw God in darkness [Ex 24. 15-18]. By this example we learn that our withdrawal from false, deceptive ideas of God is a transition from darkness into light. Next, a more careful understanding of hidden things leads the soul through appearances to God's hidden nature which is symbolized by a cloud over-shadowing all appearances and which little by little accustoms the soul to behold what is hidden. Scripture says of the Lawgiver, “Moses entered into the darkness where God was!” [Exodus 20.21]. (p.202 SoS)

The apparent stereotype of the ten commandment is focused on the explicit cognitive-rational “LAW”. The Compassionate aspect of the Moses and the ten commandments is often over looked. After the Golden Calf incident, God famously reveals His core character to Moses in Exodus 34:6-7. Exodus 34:6 states “And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,” The Hebrew words involved add some insight. He defines Himself first as *rakhûm* (compassionate) and *khanûn* (gracious). The Hebrew word *rakhûm* stems from *rechem*, meaning "womb".

The earliest biblical teachings present compassion not as a cold duty, but as the deep, protective, and nurturing love a mother has for her child. The Torah (the first five books) embeds compassion directly into civil law, commanding the protection of widows, orphans, the poor, and foreigners (e.g., Exodus 22:21-27, Deuteronomy 24:10-22). The Compassion teaching emerged roughly around 1500 BC – roughly about the same time as the teaching of compassion emerged in Hinduism.

In ancient Hebrew, "knowledge" is far more than an intellectual grasp of facts. Represented primarily by the verb *Yada* (יָדָע) and the noun *Da'at* (דַּעַת), it means to know through experience, relationship, and intimate connection. In this worldview, you do not truly "know" something unless you have lived it, felt it, or intimately engaged with it

In contrast modern day knowledge is defined In philosophy and cognitive science, knowledge is generally broken down into distinct categories: Propositional Knowledge: Knowing "what" (e.g., knowing that the

capital of France is Paris). Procedural Knowledge: Knowing "how" to do something (e.g., how to ride a bike or program a computer). Knowledge by Acquaintance: Knowing "who" or "what" through direct familiarity (e.g., knowing what your hometown smells like in the rain).

Alex P. Jassen, in his analysis of prophecy and lawgiving in Judaism, "The Presentation of the Ancient Prophets as Lawgivers at Qumran" observes, "The Qumran community, like nearly all segments of Second Temple Judaism, viewed itself as based on a revealed religion." It stands to reason that in one sense or another, all religions view their beliefs as revealed religion or truths. Jassen states that the "Qumran texts routinely represent the ancient prophets as mediators of divinely revealed law, sometimes in cooperation with Moses and sometimes independent of Moses." Jassen goes on to highlight the spiritual aspect of prophecy-lawgiving: Nehemiah 9:52 The notice that God, through his spirit, sent the prophets to instruct (Vowrft) Israel (line 4) is drawn from Neh 9:20, where God is lauded for bestowing on Israel "your good spirit to instruct them (oVottJr6) "53 The prophets, sent with the aid of a divine spirit, are identified with the task of "instruction" and "illumination." That would seem to suggest that spirituality is a "substrate" for morals, law, and social-moral order.³⁵

Ancient Hebrew – Knowledge as yada, Christ on spirit and McGilChrist on Experience

The ancient Hebrews made an interesting connection between "spirit" and knowledge, with one passage directly referencing spirit as conveying an understanding of good and bad (foreshadowing Christ's "Spirit is truth!") (John 5:6). Exodus 31:3 And I have filled him with the spirit of God, with the ability to distinguish between the good and the bad, and with the ability to discern the processes of construction, and with an intimate ability to perform the tasks, and in all manner of workmanship. Or Exodus 31: 3 and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills.

Quotes from the Gospel

Being born of the Holy Spirit makes us a spiritual being (John 3: 6).

"God is a Spirit" (the Holy Spirit) (John 4:24).

He is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth (John 4: 24).

He is the Spirit of truth (John 15: 26).

He is the Spirit of truth (John 14:17).

Jesus' words are spirit and life (John 6: 63).

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for knowledge, as expressed in root "yada," appears nearly 950 times so it is a word that is important to everyday life and functioning. It's usage in the Bible expressed a generally wider understanding of the word as opposed to the rather narrow definition of knowledge in terms of rational analysis, scientific facts or philosophical truths as current usage would indicate. Yada includes all manner of workmanship and construction as well as perceiving, learning, understanding, willing, performing, and experiencing. To know is not to be intellectually informed about some abstract principle, but to grasp the world and experience truth. Knowledge is not the passive internalization of information and facts, but rather the shared fulfillment of being and the expression of the actualization of knowledge (and God). Yet, as Biblical scholars point out, perhaps the most salient and significant characteristic of the ancient Hebrew understanding and usage of "knowledge" is that it definitely indicates more personal and intimate relationship which is far removed from the contemporary understanding as something impersonal and objective. There is an aspect of subjectivity that the ancient Hebrews embraced.

“Meaning emerges from engagement with the world, not from abstract contemplation of it.”³⁶ — Iain McGilchrist Briefly, I should highlight that Kant argued that beauty is the origin of morals. Irish theologian and poet John O’Donohue stated that “Beauty is the illumination of the soul!”³⁷ From that perspective it would stand to reason that “Truth” would also be an illumination of the soul.

Code of Hammurabi: Social Order-Structure is an Imperative Need

“Hammurabi is best known for having issued the Code of Hammurabi, which he claimed to have received from Shamash, the Babylonian god of justice. Unlike earlier Sumerian law codes, such as the Code of Ur-Nammu, which had focused on compensating the victim of the crime, the Law of Hammurabi was one of the first law codes to place greater emphasis on the physical punishment of the perpetrator. It prescribed specific penalties for each crime and is among the first codes to establish the presumption of innocence. They were intended to limit what a wronged person was permitted to do in retribution. The Code of Hammurabi and the Law of Moses in the Torah contain numerous similarities.”³⁸ (Wikipedia) I should emphasize that – historically - spiritual-religious beliefs have been a source for morals, social order, and law – as Durkheim emphasized!

Mesopotamian Gods as Maps/Models of Social-Moral Order

1. Shamash: The solar deity and judge of gods and men, Shamash was known as the god of justice and equity. He was a member of the Anunnaki, a special class of Mesopotamian gods.
2. Marduk: The Babylonian god of justice, compassion, healing, and magic, Marduk was also the patron god of Babylon and was sometimes considered the god of creation.
3. Enki: The Babylonian god of wisdom and fresh waters, Enki was also the god of magic and the patron of craftsmen, artisans, and exorcists.
4. Nabu: The god of wisdom and learning, Nabu was the scribe of Marduk and had the ability to make prophecies come true by writing them.
5. Inanna: Also known as Ishtar or Astarte, Inanna was the goddess of sex, war, and justice. She was also known as the Queen of Heaven and was believed to have the ability to change a person's gender.
6. Enlil: A central deity in the Mesopotamian worldview, Enlil was both creator and destroyer, with unalterable authority and control over fate.
7. Anu: The Mesopotamian god of the sky, Anu was also the King of Gods. He was sometimes attributed with the creation of humans with the assistance of his sons Enlil and/or Enki

Commentary and Reflections

.The Sociologist, Elzbieta Halas states, “groups exist only on the ground of common symbolization of their members.” Halas goes on to say that “The processes of symbolization.... create a social order, express meaning and control actions. Symbols are not autonomous. They constitute tools of action, indicating and dramatizing social relations”³⁹ It would appear readily evident that the myths of ancient divinity created a “common symbolization” which as I show here did have a significant focus or selective attention on social order.

As Emile Durkheim emphasized, “The forces before which the believer bows are not simple physical energies, such as are presented to the sense and the imagination; they are social forces!”⁴⁰ An overview of Mesopotamian gods reveals numerous examples of symbolic maps of social consciousness: Shamash, Marduk, Enki, Nabu, Inanna, Enlil, and Anu

Myths: Zeus, Indra, Germanic-Norse Myths as Symbolic Maps-Models of Social Consciousness

Zeus, the Father and Ruler of heavens and earth was replete with bountiful symbols and symbolism. The lightning bolts of Zeus symbolized raw power and control of nature. Zeus, of course had a royal scepter and a throne which symbolized “authority” and social power. The Eagle and bull were the “sacred animals” of Zeus. Zeus abducted Ganymede as an eagle and Europa as a bull. In hunting gatherer societies, the ability to transmute into animals was often assumed. Though usually depicted with a long robe (chiton) and cloak (himation), on occasion he was pictured nude.

“Befitting his role as King of the Gods, Zeus was attended by a large complement of lesser divinities. His throne was guarded by four winged spirits, two male and two females, named Kratos (Strength), Zelos (Rivalry), Nike (Victory) and Bia (Force). Kratos and Bia functioned as muscular enforcers and were tasked with jobs such as the apprehension and imprisonment of the Titan Prometheus. Nike drove Zeus' chariot and often accompanied him in miniature form as something of a divine familiar. The god Hermes was Zeus' personal herald who acted as diplomat, envoy and general agent of the god's will. His messenger was Iris, the winged goddess of the rainbow, who simply relayed messages verbatim and delivered commands to the other gods. Zeus' high councilor Themis, goddess of law and order, was seated beside his throne. She was attended by their six daughters the Moirai (Fates) and the Horai (Seasons). These goddesses were collectively responsible for the orderly functioning of the cosmos. Themis was also charged with summoning all of the gods to assembly in the courtyard of Zeus.

Zeus Virginia Wikimedia

Metis, goddess of wisdom, was perhaps his most unusual attendant. Zeus swallowed her whole to avoid a prophesy and she took up residence in his belly. The ancient Greeks believed the belly rather than the brain was the seat of thought and emotion, and so by subsuming her he effectively implanted wise counsel in his mind. She continued to exist in some form or other within the god, even to the extent of birthing Athena there and equipping her with armour and weapons before her second birth from Zeus' head.

Zeus was the founder of kingly power, of law and of order, whence Dice, Themis and Nemesis are his assistants. For the same reason he protects the assembly of the people (agoraioi), the meetings of the council (boulaioi), and as he presides over the whole state, so also over every house and family. He also watched over the sanctity of the oath (horkios), the law of hospitality (xenios), and protected suppliants. He avenged those who were wronged, and punished those who had committed a crime, for he watched the doings and sufferings of all men.

He was further the original source of all prophetic power, from whom all prophetic signs and sounds proceeded. Everything good as well as bad comes from Zeus, and according to his own choice he assigns their good or evil lot to mortals and fate itself was subordinate to him.”

⁴¹(<https://www.theoi.com/Olympios/Zeus.html>)

VI The Hindu God Indra

The Hindu god Indra was king of the gods, god of war, god of weather, god of rain, thunder, and lightning plus Indra assumed the role as Upholder of Cosmic Order, symbolized wisdom, intelligence, as well as justice, integrity, and compassion - viewed as a benevolent deity.

Though originally a longstanding oral tradition, the Vedas, written roughly from 1500 to 500 BCE are the oldest scriptures of Hinduism and believed to be rooted in Indo-Aryan culture. Very roughly that is parallel to the Mycenaean society which dates from 1750 BCE to 1050 BCE. The Hindu God Indra is a very

similar deity to the Greek God Zeus. Indra primordial parents were Dyaus Pita and earth goddess Prithvi. In fact, the Mycenaean linear B name for Zeus was “di-we / di-wo”. The Hindu sky god Dyaus origins are rooted in the Proto-Indo-European deity Dyēus ph₂tér, which means "Daylight-sky Father" – and similar to other sky gods including: Greek: Zeus Patēr, Illyrian: Dei-pátrous, Latin: Jupiter. In Mycenaean culture Poseidon was the king of gods, but evolved into Zeus being king.

Similarly, as the Celestial Ruler Indra was king of the gods. Indra was the god of war, the god of weather, and the god of rain, thunder, and lightning in the Rigveda. These attributes are remarkably similar to deities in other Indo-European cultures like Jupiter, Perun, Perkūnas, Zalmoxis, Taranis, Zeus, and Thor – whose traditions are rooted in Proto-Indo-European mythology. Indra ruled Svarga (heaven) as well. Indra is depicted as a mighty being-force brandishing a thunderbolt, mounted on Airavata, a white elephant.



Indra – Wikimedia

The Puranas (350 and 750 CE) stories of religious legends, expand on Indra's role and importance. The puranas consisting of the Mahapuranas and the Upapuranas portrayed Indra as a powerful symbol -

benevolent god who guards the world from destruction and evil and maintains cosmic order. As a warrior-god who symbolized strength, courage, strategic aptitude as well as fighting ability and prowess, Indra commanded the gods in battles with demons and evil forces.

Indra's "most renowned victory is over the dragon Vritra, a leader of the dasas and a malevolent force associated with drought. Vritra is accused of hoarding waters and rains, stealing cows as a dasa, and concealing the Sun as an anti-god. Indra's potency for these feats is enhanced by imbibing the elixir of immortality, the soma, offered to him by priests during rituals. Among his allies are the Rudras (or Maruts), who ride the clouds and command storms. Indra is sometimes referred to as "the thousand-eyed."⁴² (Indra: King of Devas by Nitten Nair)

As the symbol of Cosmic Order, Indra symbolized wisdom, intelligence, and exemplifies the characteristics of justice, integrity, and compassion, reflecting his role as a benevolent deity. "Indra is responsible for upholding dharma (righteousness) and ensuring the universe functions harmoniously. He is a protector of the world and a guardian of moral law. He embodies justice, integrity, and compassion, safeguarding humanity and preserving the balance of the cosmos." From my research compassion as a teaching didn't fully blossom in Hinduism until the Upanishads – a development-evolution parallel to Judaism and Greek Philosophy to a degree.⁴³ (Indra: The King of Gods - temple yatri)

The story of Indra and Sibi

"Sibi's fame spread in the three worlds, and an idea was mooted among the Devas that it should be tested how much of the reputation of the King was genuine. Accordingly, Agni in the form of a dove and Indra in that of a kite hunting after the dove, rushed to King Sibi. The dove took refuge in the lap of the King sitting in 'divya' posture, and the priest told the King that it was the latter's duty to protect the dove, which took refuge with him for its life. The dove also told the King thus; "I am really a muni, who has entered the body of the dove. I take refuge in you for my life."

By that time the kite too had flown up to the King. It asked the King to return the dove, which it had been chasing. The King was surprised to hear the kite talk and told the bird that it was not proper for him to give up the dove who had sought refuge under him, but that he would give the kite any other flesh in lieu of the dove. The kite replied as follows: "You must give me flesh cut from your right thigh equal in weight to that of the dove. If you do so, the dove will be saved and you will be praised by people."

Accordingly, the King cut a piece of flesh from his right thigh and weighed it in the balance against the dove. But the dove weighed more. The King cut more flesh from his thigh and weighed, but the dove still weighed more. Thus, by instalments the King cut his whole body and weighed the flesh against the dove, yet it weighed more. Then the King himself sat in the balance, seeing which the kite flew away. Then the dove assumed its original form and told the King that it was Agni and the kite, Indra. The Devas were greatly pleased with the firm sense of sacrifice of the King; they blessed him and told him that a son called Kapotarmā will be born to him. ⁴⁴(Vana Parva, Chapter 197)." (Puranic encyclopedia by Vettam Mani | 1975)

The Upanishads are late Vedic and post-Vedic Sanskrit texts that "document the transition from the archaic ritualism of the Veda into new religious ideas and institutions" and the emergence of the central religious concepts of Hinduism. They are the most recent addition to the Vedas -- the oldest scriptures of Hinduism, and deal with meditation, philosophy, consciousness, and ontological knowledge. Earlier parts of the Vedas dealt with mantras, benedictions, rituals, ceremonies, and sacrifices (Wikipedia) The origins of the Upanishads predate the "Common era" and were "completed in 15th-century CE (common era) In Judaism compassion is found in Exodus and Deuteronomy

Truth as a Territorial Imperative

The idea of spiritual-religious beliefs as a way for people to mark their territory is not that wild an idea. to begin with Ancient religions were very territorial. Gods were generally viewed as being restricted to regions or specific territories. Furthermore, in Greek mythology nymphs - for example had specific locations or regions. I looked nymphs up and there is a very long list of specific nymphs connected with specific territories. My argument is that these spiritual symbols were a way for people to mark - and grasp their world - to make the world - "their" world On a list of nymphs connected to specific territories in Greek mythology – there were almost 80 specific nymphs connected with specific regions or landmarks just in the category of names beginning with the letter “A”. Marking – or claiming territory – is widespread in the animal world, wolves, cats, monkeys, lemurs, etc., etc. For the sake of argument, I would add that one “possibly” could compare this territorial imperative to a “nesting” instinct on a large scale. In a way this aspect could be seen as an effort by humanity to conquer the world and universe. This is in line with the theory that an underlying drive for spirituality and religious beliefs is anxiety and the need for certainty. I believe it was Malinowski who observed that an island tribe of the Polynesians had rituals and ceremonies for “deep” sea fishing expeditions – while there were none for lagoon (safer) fishing. The ended for certainty is a reality and plays into political and social situations as well. And a lot of different needs play into spiritual beliefs – 1. The need to belong (which would include compassion as well as familial relationships) 2. The need for meaning – which would involve a plethora of different brain regions, 3. the need for ideology, and 4. motivation or drive.

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