

Tree of Life Platonic Joker Platonism

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In this essay I suggest a language bias of “Tree of Life” which I think became the dominant bias of Judaism, which evolved hypothetically the bias resulting from Nut worship in ancient Egypt. The “Early and Late Eroticism” hypothesis as long-term influence is discussed and considered in relation to possible unknown historical sources of anti-Egypt influence in Babylonian captivity. This bias can be contrasted with the language bias of “Tree of Life” in the Serer religion.

Platonism is the belief in existence of abstract objects. What makes an abstract object special compared to a concrete object, is that it can be copied as information. For example, a copyrighted movie exists in our modern culture as an abstract object. The movie is identified by its properties in a very complex way, which is not depending on any specific bit in the data of the movie, yet it depends on the data as a whole and an undecidable amount of ways to transform the data and how to use it. With other words, it is simultaneously clear what humans mean by an abstract object and also entirely unclear what is meant. Basically, it is a form of language bias.

Language bias means that there are certain expectations about what comes next while communicating a message, which is lost to receivers who do not participate in the culture behind the language usage. In mathematics, language bias can also be formal differences in semantics, such as the difference between classical and constructive logic. Historically, language bias is important because beliefs and ideas do not evolve in isolation from mediums used to communicate information. In existential philosophy, language bias is often associated with different Beings.

This means, that although Platonism in philosophy is considered a position, researchers studying languages can use it as a bias. If Platonism sounds difficult to understand, with all its undecidable ambiguity, then surely the dual of it must be easy to understand? The dual of Platonism is often associated with the belief in existence of concrete objects. However, what is a concrete object?

A concrete object can not be copied and is original in some sense that even if you have a full description of it, you can not fully understand what the object is. Some philosophers compare this to knowing how to describe colors in a detailed way without ever experiencing a color. The dual of Platonism is often attributed our particular human existence.

The term I use for the dual of Platonism in language bias is “Seshatism”. In Joker Calculus, I can construct terms which describe higher dualities, such as “Platonic Seshatism” or “Seshatic Platonism”. In this essay I will talk about a specific term “Platonic Joker Platonism” for Judaism. When I talk about the transition from the hypothetical “Late Eroticism” period into “Tree of Life”, I will use “Seshatic Joker Platonism”, which as in similar periods of history, a religious idea seems to embrace an existing ideology while later turning into an oppressing ideology.

Platonic Joker Platonism is inauthentic in sense of Heidegger, which means that it has some Joker in it. A Joker is separation in meaning between depth and surface language where the surface language is “opposite” to the depth language, e.g. when we tell jokes. When one says “Joker Seshatism”, the depth language is Seshatism and the surface language is Platonism.

Martin Heidegger was a German philosopher who often talked about “authentic” and “inauthentic” modes of Being (existence). For Heidegger, the concrete existence was the foundation for everything and therefore he thought about stuff from a kind of fixed perspective.

However, in Joker Calculus there is no “correct” starting point, so inauthenticity is relative to a chosen perspective (the depth language). This makes it easier to talk about the work of other philosophers and thinkers and it corresponds approximately to what people normally consider authenticity in language biases.

What makes Intellectual History difficult, is comparing ideas and track how they evolved over time. In some cases there are no single words in the English language that describes the nuances of ideas. This is where Joker Calculus might help, since it is a formal language expressing higher dualities with properties that occur in natural language, such as “embracing” and “opposing” biases.

For example, when there is a religion oppressing other religions, it uses “opposing” bias that is oppressive, often expressed as “Platonic Joker Platonism”. An oppressed religion might use “opposing” bias that is oppressed, often expressed as “Seshatic Joker Seshatism”. A thumb rule for inauthenticity in language bias is that when the bias “doubles down” on its intended position, it is often perceived as dishonest and trying too hard to assert an unreachable ideal.

It is easy to feel bad about oppressing and oppressed language biases. However, the upside in Joker Calculus is that the same mechanism that allows expressing such “dark biases” also enables expressing tolerance. A Platonic biased language which embraces Seshatism is “Seshatic Joker Platonism” that normalizes to “Seshatism” in the closed variant evaluation of Joker Calculus. Evaluation using the closed variant might be thought of as using metaphorical “arms” in speech act. Humans often assist spoken messages this way using gestures and body language.

An embracing language bias is considered authentic in sense of Heidegger, using the idea that humans can extend their Being in the world using tools. When a person “embraces” another through speech, the other person is taken in and treated as an extension of the Self, instead of being treated as an The Other. This is how humans build larger social groups, by treating somebody nice who was previously treated bad in society. In return, the person with less social status provides loyalty.

This means that the Joker can vanish and thus appear to be inauthentic in a superficial way, but be authentic in a deep sense that differs from the kind of inauthenticity Jokers usually have. This property is also used by humans to intentionally “misunderstand” in order to persecute other groups.

People internalize these biases to learn which side is showing force and abuse toward an out-group, so they can pick a side to avoid extermination and to assist in e.g. genocide. So, when a targeted group tries to signal surrender or peace, this can be presented by the in-group as inauthenticity in order to force through the violent coordinated behaviour. It is important for people to understand when abuse is happening, at the same time they consider standing up against the leader, because selfish genes have DNA programming the brain, to calculate probabilities of increasing spread of genes, by taking over leadership positions, versus establishing the rule of an existing leader.

The study of Joker Calculus suggests that humans have psychologically internalized some parts of it to be used for political and religious reasoning. There is a kind of Möbius topology to Joker Calculus, that allows expressing “embracing” and “opposing” biases. This Möbius topology acts a psychological fix-point that produces anxiety. The anxiety of oppressing and oppressed religions is that they want to perceive themselves as authentic, yet can not, due to the existence of The Other.

The Other is identified as a group of humans by using the dual language bias and theory of mind. With other words, in order to persecute someone, it requires psychological development to the extent that one can reason about what other people are thinking. Yet, the model of what other people are thinking is a projection of the dual language bias used internally. Therefore, the persecuted group of people are attributed beliefs that are often entirely made up by the oppressor.

In many cases, the accusations are practiced by the oppressor, which is a way of provoking aggression from The Other while displaying hypocritical exercise of arbitrary authority to the in-group. This hypocritical behaviour attracts potential mates by demonstrating energy surplus. When any group of humans perform abuse toward other people, there is an abundance of it, to commit followers to the same social taboos. The accusations toward other groups are often practiced by many followers within the group, who know they are being hypocritical while projecting their guilt onto the targetted group. Therefore, the target group is seen as guilty, without necessary in the presence of any evidence. To handle and counter-act this phenomena in society, humans invented and developed justice systems.

When humans talk about religion, it is often pretended that religion is supposed to be pure and Platonic in some sense, while also understood in practice that it is used politically. Any person who did not understand this, would not be able to function in a leadership role in human societies. However, there is a subset of the population that are deeply invested into believing in the purity of religion, which makes them useful as a tool for the elite to attack the subset of population that are opposing tyranny. The rest of the population borders on the ambiguity of purity and impurity of religion, doing pragmatic decisions concerning the political side of religion.

The modern society is a kind of social pressure cooker with outlets to handle divergent behaviour and thus control the pressure, while allowing most of the pressure to perform useful work. Basically, there is a lot of functionality put in place to prevent abuse. When violence breaks out in society, it is usually due to some parts of the systems failing. In the future, humans might design systems that are not based on this principle, since science and technology outpaces and shifts the environment and evolution of ideas into new domains outside adapted human physiology.

One motivation to research language bias in history is to develop a clearer understanding of human behaviour and the social systems that existed throughout time. As with Intellectual History in general, the point is not to judge people who lived during certain periods, but to acknowledge a realistic development and to test hypotheses in order to learn how new developments might be predicted in the future.

What makes “Platonic Joker Platonism” special as a language bias, is that it “wants” to be “Platonism” yet fails at producing a surplus of it. In fact, it opposes surplus by producing artificial scarcity. This serves the purpose of making a desired object, or state, inaccessible to the general population, increasing the desire to obtain it, while falsely projecting access through a special elite group claiming to control the very idea that people want.

At the same time, the very idea that people want can be in abundance and accessible through democratic means, through other language biases. This is why the elite group attacks existing language biases in order to establish their own control over the supply. However, in order to do this, there must be some amount of acceptance among the general populace that the elite group has a “reasonable reason” to do it. This is why “Platonic Joker Platonism” rarely succeeds when applied directly, but needs a period of “Seshatic Joker Platonism” in advance.

In the Serer religion, people associate “Tree of Life” with local sacred places of ancestor worship. They believe that people, when they die, gets their soul reincarnated as snakes, who hide in the sacred trees. This belief protects the snakes in the ecosystem, as killing them is seen as a social taboo. So, the idea of immortality through “Tree of Life” in this sense is very different from the bias found in Judaism. The hypothesis that “Tree of Life” was spreading from Nut worship in ancient Egypt, addresses the bias common to religions based on Judaism where immortality is scarce. Prior to this spread, it is likely that the bias found in the Serer religion was common in other places.

The story of genesis in the bible was written during a period of Babylonian captivity, when the power elite from Israel lived in exile. In this story, the “Tree of Life” is accessible at first, but gets guarded by an angel. Notice that “Tree of Life” is a provided literal mechanism to explain how immortality is gained. There is no literal mechanism of the immortality process given directly by God in the story. Immortality is kind of rooted in the symbolism of “Tree of Life” itself.

If one interprets “Tree of Life” as sacred places which everyone can access and where reincarnation is unconditional, then the whole point of the biblical genesis story falls apart. There would be no incentive to convert to Judaism as people already believed they had access.

Obviously, the religion surrounding sacred trees in Israel at the time was more complex than the impression one gets from the genesis story. A leading hypothesis is that such sacred trees were associated with the goddess Asherah, that was often depicted with wings, just like Nut. Asherah might be thought of as a fertility goddess, but she is also often referred to as “Queen of Heaven”.

As accustomed people are to think of “Mother Earth”, this is a stereotypical view of fertility goddesses that has no basis in archeological evidence. In fact, this impression might be based on false interpretations of Venus figurines, which arguably are collections of similar clay figures spanning multiple thousands of years, and thus attributed religious properties without any scriptures to back this up, since such figurines dates back to pre-literacy societies.

The link between Asherah and Nut could be an important insight into how “Tree of Life” in sense of Judaism started to spread. In the essay “Early and Late Eroticism of The Sky Goddess” I suggested a dynamics for this transition. The basic idea is that although the sacred tree is a place on the ground, it is guarded and protected by a sky goddess. So, the angel put in place to guard the “Tree of Life” in the biblical genesis, might be a reference to Asherah worship. When people interpreted these stories, they thought about it as God wanting to prevent people’s access to the sacred trees. This was used to persecute Asherah worshippers. Despite persecution, Asherah worship continued at least up the 2nd century before birth of Jesus.

The influence of ancient Egypt on Israel is backed up by archeological evidence, where Hathor symbolism is used in female Jewish tombs in Jerusalem, at the time of Jesus. Considering that Nut worship was central in The Book of The Dead used by pharaohs and nobles in ancient Egypt, it is very likely that this figure had some influence in the surrounding regions, when people started to write and use new holy scriptures.

Even in ancient Egypt, Nut was depicted in sacred gardens and often symbolized using a grape tree. The production of wine in Israel and Syria with trade the across Mediterranean motivates worship associated with grape trees. The forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden was likely a grape. Basically, if one swaps the name “Nut” to “Asherah”, the apparent symbolism is very similar. However, very little is known about Asherah worship today, as persecution processes of such beliefs destroyed much of the tradition. Hopefully, some of this knowledge might be recovered by future archeological evidence.

At the time the genesis story was written, Asherah worship was popular in Israel. However, it is important to keep in mind that blocking access to “Tree of Life” would not have been easily accepted by people at the time. In order to explain how this genesis story could have been considered reasonable by the author or authors, in particular how easily Asherah worship can be interpreted as a social taboo, one can not ignore the context which this story was written. The context is Babylonian captivity, where the power elite lived in exile.

Other cultures and perspectives might have contributed to the views developed over time of the power elite living in Babylonian captivity. A likely hypothesis is that such influence might have been against Egyptian mythology, since the Neo-Babylonian empire was an enemy of the Egyptian dynasty. So, why being against Asherah? Could it be against Nut?

The hypothesis of “Tree of Life” bias in Judaism is that it lends toward “Platonic Joker Platonism”, which is the common language bias of an oppressive ideology. This is consistent with the persecution of Asherah worship in Israel. However, the hypothesis of “Tree of Life” bias originating from Nut worship is that it lends toward “Seshatic Joker Platonism”. The latter is an “embracing” of prior ancestor worship related to sacred trees, similar to those found in the Serer religion. If this change in beliefs did not take place, where immortality was associated with star imagery in the night sky, then there might be no motivation for Asherah worshippers to convert from El to Yahweh.

Celestial divinity, associated with the sky, is usually considered more scarce and holy than terrestrial divinity associated with material forms. The bias of scarcity of immortality in “Seshatic Joker Platonism”, where the form of immortality was acceptable to traditions leaning toward “Seshatism” (such as beliefs similar to Serer religion), developed into “Platonic Joker Platonism” and hence persecution. It is in the period prior to the authorship of the biblical genesis story that the influence of Nut worship spreads through Israel. This could have been a transition from belief in reincarnation into viewing immortality as something difficult to obtain and desirable. When people converted from El to Yahweh, most people could not read (literacy was approximately 2%) and did not travel to Jerusalem, so they thought about as a way to appease the authority while continuing Asherah worship by marrying the goddess to Yahweh instead of El.

The expression “Mother Earth” makes it easy to believe that in ancient religions around the Mediterranean, people thought about fertility goddesses and sacred trees as connected to the ground. However, in reality most people might have thought about fertility goddesses in a cosmic sense, which extends the notion of “World Tree” to including the sky, compared to the limited interpreted sense of “Mother Earth”. It might have been much more recently that the idea of “Mother Earth” appeared as an idea, or got mixed, when ancestor worship of sacred trees vanished.

It makes sense to think of ancestral worship in relation to fertility goddesses in a local sense on the ground, since people through agricultural development were closely connected spiritually to their land. However, when this connection was lost, people started to mix the two interpretations, which degraded the sky goddess. The sky goddess was no longer associated with heaven, but with the ground, so her wings might have also been a contributor to the idea of a “fallen angel”.

There is also an interesting hypothesis in how the idea of divine femininity might have evolved in this period. Prior to the influence of Nut worship onto “Tree of Life”, people might not have thought about divine femininity in a personal way, but more in a cosmic sense. The divine femininity in a cosmic sense is a way to explain the creation process of the world. When people started to think about “Tree of Life” as a scarce process of immortality, by eating a fruit from a hidden sacred tree located somewhere on the ground, or possibly existing at some separate spiritual plane, the erotic associations hinted at personal divine femininity. This hypothesis was motivated by “Hero’s Journey” developments through “Early and Late Eroticism” as metaphor for a man’s courtship to win the heart of a woman, representing heroic deeds to deserve eternal glory in the sky.

The feminine perspective allowed a new dimension of interpretation to such stories, where the Holy Quest to find “Tree of Life” at the end and eat its fruit, is simultaneously a manifestation of the spiritual reward and the continuous divine support of the protagonist. Thus, the divine femininity changed from a cosmic interpretation into a personal moral spiritual guide with the virginity and social status of women as being related. It gave a new sense of power to women that they could

access something divine in a way that men could not. Of course, this resulted in more superstition and suspicion toward women as shadow masters behind political rebellions. As a self-fulfilling prophecy, it could also have contributed to ancient spy networks being controlled by powerful women and use of mystic cults to conspire against the state.

The room for divine femininity to spread through Israel at the time the power elite was in exile, could also be Egypt wanting to increase its political and religious influence in the region. Several Jewish communities in Egypt originates from this period, which allows such political influence to take place. From a Neo-Babylonian perspective, the suspicion toward Asherah worship, could have been, not just based on religious superstition, but also a political conflict. In the centuries that followed, this political conflict might have evolved and getting more complex over time. This could be very important to understand the context of Early Christianity.

In ancient religions, birds and snakes are important parts of the symbolism. Very often, these two symbols are seen as in opposition to each other, e.g. the eternal battle between the Dragon and the Phoenix that needs to be balanced. A such symbolism contributes to a dualistic perspective. In modern times, people have thought about “Mother Earth” and “Father Sky” as representing similar dualistic notions. However, the bird and the snake in relation to “Tree of Life” is often thought about as non-dual. The reason is that one can have an apparent dualistic view at the surface of language bias, which in depth is revealed as a new insight, uniting the two opposites, the bird and the snake, in an ecosystem.

This form of non-dual perspective is commonly associated with “Seshatism”. There are many, but secretly, they are one, united. However, in “Platonism” there is also a non-dual perspective, but this form of non-dualism is morally attributed to goodness or light, where evil or dark is seen as lack of goodness or light. So, the non-dualism in “Platonism” does not allow uniting the two opposites. It is like a Phoenix that fights an eternal battle against an imaginary Dragon, which metaphysical existence is not considered authentic.

Motherly Love is often thought of as loving her children no matter whether the children are good or bad. Fatherly Love is often thought of as rewarding children for good deeds and punishing them for bad ones. With the increasing suspicion toward divine femininity, the spiritual connection to physical bodies and local places is treated as an impurity of religious beliefs. In this sense, people deserved to be punished for just existing. Under the hood, it might be about having eaten fruits of the forbidden Egyptian mythology, aka “Tree of Knowledge”. This is how the idea of original sin might have been developed, where all people, not just a particular group, was framed so they deserved to be punished whether they were innocent or not. This was the Fatherly Love represented through Yahweh monotheism. It was not just a transition into non-dualism, but of a particular form of non-dualism with a clear “Platonic” bias. Alternatively, one could believe all religions worshipped secretly the one true God, and thus all religions were accepted. This was not the case.

The “Tree of Knowledge” and “Tree of Life” in Judaism are considered two separate trees. In popular religion in Israel, this distinction might not exist. For example, snake symbolism is often associated with healing, rebirth and confronting one’s fears and to accept less desirable sides of society for the sake of community. In late developments, people might have thought of erotic associations as impure, but in ancient Egypt there could have been a period where these associations were part of the belief in the process of immortality itself. The separation of these two trees is kind of like the story of “Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” by Robert Louis Stevenson. While ending up with a clearer moral distinction, it increases the ambiguity of the tree itself. This form of uncertainty that followed, might have been intentional to target Asherah worshippers, which no longer could trust that their communities were tolerant and their religion was a good one. Maybe what they thought of as “Tree of Life” actually was a “Tree of Knowledge”?

I challenge people to learn more about the Serer religion, because it is, at least, a starting point to get a different perspective to the one gained through Judaistic religions. There is a temptation of put misleading terms like “Mother Earth” into a setting of history, where ancient religions are interpreted through the biases of our own time. Specially when it is about “Tree of Life”.