

# Comparative Language Bias in Tree of Life

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*In this paper I suggest a method to study language bias in “Tree of Life” by comparing religious beliefs using domains of divine power within particular religious beliefs. Instead of just considering a pantheon, which is a set of gods and goddesses, the domains within a particular religion might be thought of as occupied by divine power, which change of identity and gender describes the dynamics. All gods and goddesses are considered part of a potential universal pantheon. There can also be more dramatic changes within one religion than between different pantheons.*

One major problem when studying ancient religions, is to overcome the bias resulting from how people think in the modern world. For example, most people in the modern world are biased toward “Mother Earth” and “Father Sky” stereotypical thinking. This is not an accurate representation of what people in ancient religions believed. “Mother Earth” was actually more “Mother Sky” and the Cosmic Earth could be male and was often associated with the underworld.

Consider the following table showing domains of divine power with identity and gender:

M = Male

F = Female

F/M = Referred to as both male and female

Sun	Cosmic night sky	Cosmic earth	Tree of Life
Ra (M)	Nut (F)	Geb (M)*	Nut (F)
Utu (M)	Inanna (F)	Ereshkigal (F)*	Inanna (F)
Šimige (M)	Šauška (F/M)	Allani (F)*	Šauška (F/M)
El (M)	Asherah (F)	Hauron (M)*	Asherah (F)
El (M)	Asherah (F)	Ba'al Hammon (M)	Asherah (F)
Malakbel (M)	Ba'al Shamin (M)	Ba'al Hammon (M)	Asherah (F)
Helios (M)	Nyx (F)	Gaea (F)	Hera (F)
Helios (M)	Uranus (M)	Gaea (F)	Hera (F)
Helios (M)	Uranus (M)	Hades (M)*	Hera (F)
Sol (M)	Caelus (M)	Tellus (F)	Ceres (F)
Yahweh (M)	Yahweh (M)	Yahweh (M)*	Yahweh (M)
Allah (M)	Allah (M)	Allah (M)*	Allah (M)
Roog (F/M)	Roog (F/M)	Roog (F/M)	Roog (F/M)
Yahweh (M)	Yahweh (F)	Yahweh (F/M)*	Yahweh (F)

\* ruler of underworld

Notice: This table probably contains historial errors, but is used to illustrate an important point.

In polytheistic religions, the use of separate identities for divine power is a mechanism of disassociation between different domains of divine power. In stories, when something bad happened in the underworld, for example titans causing an earthquake, this could be described as an act by a separate identity from the supreme deity. With other words, events were blamed or praised by people depending on which identity they used to refer taking responsibility within the domain of power associated with the nature of the events. When people accused other people for wrongdoings, they could also accuse them of worshipping gods or goddesses with negative traits.

The rise of monotheism meant that all the domains of divine power were occupied by the same identity. Since there was no way to disassociate between different domains, the problem of evil became important in theology. The common motivation for monotheism is to believe that the world is moving according to a divine plan, with a deity of unlimited power having sorted out all possible outcomes in advance. This development might also have been motivated by logical aesthetics, where consistency and coherence related to a single divine power was desirable. However, since people also think of different processes in nature as male or female tendencies by language bias, one can also imagine somebody who believes the deity acts in different expression of gender by domain, as illustrated above in the last row in the table.

One can argue that there is a larger spiritual difference between religions who distinguishes domains of divine power by gender, than between religions who differ by pantheons. This perspective treats political struggles as less significant for the spiritual dimension of language bias.

For example, two sides in a war could have one-to-one correspondence between domains of divine power. If they differ by identities, then the two opposing groups might not be able to identify with each other. One can think about this as a “phase shift” from solutions of social equilibrium. Historically, such conflicts might be seen as nationalistic wars and attributed less spiritual meaning.

On the other hand, if the two opposing groups differ by gender in various domains of divine power, then they could match in some ways but not others. This could result in conflicts being perceived as a civil wars, where people who have much in common fight over some of the differences.

Historically, people have frequently thought about conflicts in religion as resulting from differences in pantheons or the difference between polytheism and monotheism. However, this is a relatively recent perspective of history. Prior to the development of monotheism, the conflicts in religion could have been about local differences over gender or identities changing domains of divine power within the same belief system. These conflicts could also have been passive resistance, distribution of new stories to counter-act opposing tendencies etc.

In the modern world, Platonic bias in language pushes monotheistic religions toward seeing domains of divine power as increasingly irrelevant. This could be a reason why Bronze Age religions seems so different from mainstream religions today. Simultaneously, Platonic bias is increasingly recognized as properties of mathematical languages, that can span multiple domains in nature.

Philosophy also contributes to this Platonic bias by treating higher dualities as perspectives of existential theses, instead of relating them to belief systems in ancient religions, which is seen as much a more speculative process in academics. However, the reactive nature of theses in existential philosophy are not necessarily less speculative, but are tolerated and encouraged to get new perspectives. On the other hand, “philosophizing” over historical events and periods can be controversial, because people often form an impression of history that feels personal and resist making changes to their beliefs. The danger is that beliefs diverges from historical accuracy, but at the same time, one might miss important sources of influential dynamics in language bias.