

[INTRODUCTION]

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. (Genesis 1:1-3 NIV)

Christianity but also other Abrahamic religions such as Judaism and Islam identifies water as something so prehistorical that simply existed even before creation. In the Quran water is the main ingredient of which man is created:

We have made from water every living thing[...] He who created men from water. [ref]

[THE HISTORY OF THE TRANSMITTED NARRATIVE]

These quotes above gain new meaning in the light of modern science, where it's proved our body contains 75% to 83% of water when we are born. In fact, by ageing we are slowly dying out, resulting in roughly 50% of water by the time we reach our elder years. [website 1]

Fundamentally, water is a symbol of life, human existence would be impossible without it. Living matters can't survive without water. The absence of it, as well as the excessive amount of it, such as in a flood, can be equally fatal. We must find the middle of the axes where we can utilize it as something that is potentially life-giving.

Ironically, to the best of our knowledge, the first documented destruction of the world was portrayed by the flood tale. There are many earlier version, all originating from Ancient Mesopotamia. The oldest known story comes from the earliest known civilization around the 4000 B.C., the Sumerians what is now modern Iraq. In that story, Noah's hero role is filled by someone called Ziusudra. Around the beginning of the second millennium B.C, a new version of the flood story appeared, this time Atrahasis named as its hero. Later, around 1800 B.C., someone fabricated these earlier stories to form one, great narrative, the Epic of Gilgamesh. Gilgamesh was the king of Uruk, a Sumerian city, around 2700 B.C. However, he wasn't present in the original Sumerian tale of the flood, which suggests that that story was rewritten in order to introduce their King to this "epic" narrative, which later was cherished by many and was told and retold for over centuries.

No matter the origin, Sumerian, Akkadian or Babylonian, all these stories are extremely analogous to the one told in the Bible about Noah and follow a casual pattern. God(s) decide to flood the world and wipe out its

inhabitants, except for one man, the chosen one — whether called Atrahasis, Ziusudra or Noah, get to save himself along with his family and every kind of animal, paired 2 by 2, by building an ark. When the great flood comes, they are sailing for some time until their ark takes place on the top of a mountain. Then the hero figure sends out a couple of birds until the one realised as last didn't return, meaning the waters receded. The passengers of the ark let out the animals and begin to live in this newly cleansed world. In other words, the underlying structure of the narrative is fundamentally the collapse of order into chaos. A structured, regulated, predictable world get destroyed by God with the use of excessive amount water.

Despite the fact that the similarities between these stories are obvious, the differences suggest interesting ethical and moral views on the culture in question. In the Biblical narrative, God decided to flood the earth because of human corruption and violence and they needed to be punished. However, in the old Mesopotamian versions, that were known already for 900 years before the Bible was written, the god(s) decided to exterminate the human race not because of their corruptness, but because there were too many of them, they were making too much noise which resulted in the god(s) not being able to get to sleep. This is an interesting twist that can be found over and over for those who are interested in comparing different versions of the Flood tale. Although the similarities are unmistakable, the most significant changes were are moral and ethical endings through which the writers could illustrate their point and make a statement.

Since the many details within these stories are so similar, scholars favour the suggestion that these stories are an example of a transmitted narrative. In fact, many think that Noah's ark is one of the best examples of such narrative (ref: From Eden to Exile page 26). Coming from ancient Mesopotamia, making its way from the Sumerians to the Babylonians then to the Canaanites and the Israelites, the tale of Noah and his ark has not only spanned generations, it has also spanned civilizations, with only a few changes before ending up in the Bible. However, it's impossible to put Noah's biblical narrative into valid historical context, since the beginning of recorded history is considered to be around 3000 B.C when writing was invented in Mesopotamia and these events presumably happened earlier.

Anyhow, by all possibilities, we may explain this dissemination of the stories by the evidence of catastrophic deluges, although it might as well just be just one of the many speculations. In 1998, a relevant discovery was published by two geologists at Columbia University. They showed evidence for a great flood, originating from the Black Sea. The data they presented indicated that large area in Turkey, and perhaps even further south was flooded 7,500 years ago. A different group of environmental scientists has found geological traces in Missoula, North America, of at least 25 massive floods that occurred 15,000 and 13,000 years ago. The largest was discharging up to 13 times of the Amazon river. [F2] These archeological and geological evidences for the biblical Flood suggest that these narratives found around the world are essentially folk memories of our ancestors, who lived around the end of the Ice Age, when the

ice covering various parts of the earth were melting and as a result, water levels begin to rise and floods were always a threat.

By any means, a vast majority of scholars agree that the earlier flood tales, told by the ancient Sumerian and Babylonian civilizations, as well as the Epic of Gilgamesh are the historical core and the basic outline of the biblical Flood story narrative. The question whether these stories are factually true is impossible to answer, and in my opinion, in terms of what these stories tell us, is irrelevant.

[THE CHRISTIAN INTERPRETATION]

Without doubt, the story of the flood is not one to be interpreted literally. It carries hidden meanings. The meaning attributed to it is, however, is dependent on the reader and his/her past experience through which he/she can analyze the text. We have a priori perceptual structure, a built-in interpretive system that is extraordinarily deeply embedded and invisible. The implicit structure of unconsciousness is what gives rise to the conscious experience, that is what presents the world to us, that is what gives us vision from which we extract meaning which evidently varies over time and space. The story in different places and different times are aligned to be consistent with the cultural expectations and hypothesis.

In order to understand how the story has been spread, changed and transmitted over time, we need to find and determine the people who had custody and responsibility for maintaining, transforming and retelling it in the first place. Religious leaders were the first custodians of the biblical narratives and were in a position to share it with others. In Christianity, they were fathers of churches, and their axiom was to transform the Old Testament in support to the New Testament. This axiom is called typology, which has been used throughout the entire Christian tradition. They suggest that the stories, the event and the characters of the Old Testament are foreshadowing and predicting the coming of Jesus Christ.

Through this interpretive scheme, Noah has been conventionally interpreted as an exemplary Christian figure because of his unquestionable obedience to God. He could also be labeled as a type of Christ since he had founded new, ordered world, "emerging from the ark that floated on watery grave just as Christ left the tomb" (ref: Piehl, 1989, p. 41). In the same manner, the ark could be recognized as the city of God or the one true church, where different levels and rooms signify different degrees of spiritual progress. The image of water is essentially a cleansing entity, purifying one from its sin, representing the beginning of a new, better life, which foreshadows Christian baptism, and hence, salvation and also the Christian apocalypse.

[TRANSMISSION CONTINUED: SCIENCE VS. RELIGION]

Shifting our story ahead to the 17-18 century, there were a number of indicators that Christianity started to lose its grip on being the center of Western culture. [ref] In the 17th century, the King of England of that time, King James commissioned a new version of the Bible, known as the King James Bible. The greatest scholars of the time worked from 1603 to 1610 on the translation. When they finished the translation, the king published it to the public, making it available to anyone. Every literate person could read and interpret it on their own and discuss its meaning, without having to rely on priests and churches. Since many intellectuals were educated to read Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, all the stories among the flood could be analyzed in context.

In addition, with the Protestant Reformation initiated by Martin Luther, the power of the Catholic Church became even weaker. Radical friars had criticised Priests and Popes for their hypocrisy and claimed that what they were saying was not always correct. They replaced the authority of the church by democratizing the Bible.

In the 18th century, an intellectual movement, the Enlightenment dominated the world of ideas. During this period, new questions were raised about the flood story, focusing on its explanation of creation and, with the development of the nation-state, the explanation of the disaster is a consequence of God's punishment. [ref]

It was during this time, that Friedrich Nietzsche, famous German philosopher declared that God is dead.

"God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him. How shall we comfort ourselves, the murderers of all murderers? What was holiest and mightiest of all that the world has yet owned has bled to death under our knives: who will wipe this blood off us? What water is there for us to clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent? Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it?"

The morality of the Western European society that time was based on the fundamental axiom of divinity, since it had been Christian ever since the Roman Empire. As a consequence of the Age of Enlightenment, this axiom became questionable by the conflict between science and religion. A lot of educated people in particular, had less and less belief in God. Churches have become corrupt and they no longer served as resources and guidelines to our lives, they were no longer credible. The belief in God no longer gripped, animated people, it was no longer a central guide to their lives. Instead, they started to study science and logic as an inspiration for the formulation of our true morality to give guidelines of how we should live.

Nietzsche recognized this as the "Death of God", by which he means the death of belief in God. God is only dead figuratively because through wisdom, logic, science, and mindfulness we have transcended him. This human progress and its own right have transcended God.

A book that is considered a milestone in the process of investigating the question of creation and the flood story from a scientific perspective was written by Thomas Burnet English theologian and writer on cosmogony. [ref] In the Sacred Theory of the Earth, written in 1681, he suggested that earth was hollow, containing most of its water inside until Noah's flood when the oceans and mountains arose. With this theory, he attempted to reconcile what was the beginning of what we call today the geology of the Earth. According to his calculations, he concluded that there was not enough water for a universal flood. Because of his attempt at reconciliation of emergent science with religious perspectives, this book is now viewed as pre-scientific. Such interpretations were not considered as religious threats and were generally accepted. In fact, many believers of the Christian church thought that God's laws can be explained by rational examination rather than blind faith. [ref]

In addition to the rise of scientific methods for biblical analysis, another development took place, which radically transformed how the story of the deluge was interpreted. With the rise of the nation states and the secularization of political authority, the reason for God's flood as a punishment became questionable. Many political leaders claimed ultimate authority and kinship to God and thought they can interpret his wishes more accurately. With this notion, the disastrous chaos that the flood represented and what needs to be resolved by creating order, could be transferred to political leaders as their responsibility. [ref]

[FLOODS IN OUR (POP) CULTURE]

As a result of centuries of broadcasting and retelling, the great story of the deluge is deeply embedded into our (contemporary) western mass culture. It's widely spread allowing everyone to interpret it and use it for their own purposes, whereas before only religious leaders had access to them. [ref]

The depths of embeddedness within our (popular) culture can be measured by its frequency. Already in 1954, there were estimated 80,00 literary works in 72 languages, devoted to discussions of Noah and his ark. (ref: cited in Dundes, 1988, p.90) Such writings touch upon the fields of different expertise, such as theology, geology, astronomy, mythology, adventure, and the philosophy. In addition, it's been a rich inspiration for creators of art, music, and theatre.

Many of the biblical themes, including Noah's deluge were subject to early religious art since the Christian church was supportive of artists. [ref] Perhaps one of the most well known is the frescos from Michelangelo on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. He painted nine segments based on Genesis of which 3 are on Noah and one is specifically about the flood. He presumably had a great compassion towards the doomed, because instead of focusing his art on the one chosen by God, he depicted the misery of all who were about to perish.

Another argument could be in the persistent cultural meanings given

to some element of the story. For example, doves, usually represented with their olive branch, are still the symbol of hope and peace, just like in through the lenses the Christian paradigm, where they meant the covenant of God. Some ceremonies are still to this day are celebrated with the ritual of releasing doves as an act of commemoration to important milestones of life. [img of Olympics] These symbols are understood without a direct connection to the Bible, however, they originate from there.

Our perception of contemporary secular retellings of the flood story and Bible stories, in general, depends on how closely we can link them to their original. A common method used by writers is to resituate the Bible stories within the context of a modern narrative, thereby to create an alternative version. This strategy is often used to retell the Flood story. The flood story is often associated with apocalyptic visions, thus many contemporary retellings link the story with the current ecological catastrophes. Another method is to construct a new story by means of borrowing biblical motifs in an innovative way. Those stories are not directly labeled as "retellings" but they are still thematically connected to the original scripture. [ref]

In many of the secular versions of the Flood are placed within the context of an ecological disaster, since it has an apocalyptic association to it. By interchanging some of the components of another story for the function and the character that is usually depicted as God, thus repositioning it in a secular paradigm. By taking out supernatural power from the context, all that remains is human cause and consequence.

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy is an ironic opposite of the traditional story of the deluge. The elite of the society decided to get rid of a certain "category" of their population, the ones that are not creative, nor productive, described by "Useless bloody loonies". (episode 6) They concocted a story of a forthcoming apocalypse, which serves a reason evacuate the useless third of their population into a spaceship called B-Ark, and send them off to space. The other two thirds stayed at home, on the planet of Golgafrincham, and lived happily ever after. Suddenly however, they were wiped out by infectious disease, obtained from a dirty telephone. Since the higher elite takes up the function of God in this story, humanity is depicted as the cause of its own destruction. The demolition of the high-class is only mentioned by words and not depicted anyhow by means of cinematography, leaving it to the observer to imagine it based on its previous accusations of an apocalypse. On the other hand, the "useless bloody loonies", who were initially sent to extinction, land on a planet full of nature, analogous of how the Garden of Eden is usually depicted.

Some other works are considered to be the modern continuation of the biblical flood within the context of contemporary ecological disasters, which again highly dependent on the reader's interpretation and the ability recognizing the original scripture that serves as an underlying structure to the sequel.

In the novel Mr. Noah and the Second Flood, Noah is the descendant of the original, living as a farmer amongst the mountains, which was considered

as the 1970 ideal. (The story was published in 1973). The pollution, the melting of icecaps due to global warming caused by mankind prompts the second flood, Noah decides to build a second ark and save two animals of each kind. In this story, however, he excludes his family, thinking they are not worthy of perpetuation since they are Homo Sapiens, who was the cause of all problems. The rest of humanity, including Noah's family, build another ark in the form of a rocket, to colonize the moon.

In the book *The Bible According to Mark Twain*, he wrote satirically and irreverently about well known biblical stories, which resulted in a humorous analyzation. For example, Adam asked Noah why did he forget the dinosaurs from his ark. Noah said they weren't on the freight list. He added, that it wouldn't have mattered anyway, because his sons wouldn't have recognized them, since dinosaurs are American animals, and America was discovered in 1492, way after the time of the voyage. In a different context, one of Noah's sons said that the construction of the ark had a delay because of a shortage of wood materials and because the workmen went on strike since no one paid them. [ref]

Some other works do not directly retell Noah's story in terms of narrative, but echo its visual element. The opening of Beyonce's music video for her song called *Formation* starts with her sitting on half-submerged police car in a flood. Although her message as a whole is predominantly about the celebration of her southern black heritage and her support to Black Lives Matter, the opening sentence is "What happened in the New Orleans?" The city is fully flooded thereby evoking the image of New Orleans after hurricane Katrina. The understanding of such scenes highly depend on the spectator's knowledge of what actually happened in New Orleans, to make the necessary connections. Through out the video there are shots of the damage that Katrina made 10 years ago that still remain, such as a building that is still submerged. Slowly the police car is sinking, with her lying on top in such a position that echoes the crucifixion of Jesus. Suggesting the death of Christ, it's a clear symbol for the death of the innocent that drowned due to the aftermath of the disastrous hurricane. On how the hurricane itself is analogous to the flood myth will be discussed in a later chapter.

The speculative genre of Science fiction often contains biblical references in the context of a devastation. For example, the movie *When World Collide*, directed by Mate Rudolph in 1951, opens up with a biblical quote:

And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, the end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth... [Gen. 6:12 - 13]

Planet Zyra, orbiting around a falling star, Bellus (analogously God's hand [ref: bible in motion page 38], hurtle toward our doomed earth. American astronomer, Dr. Cole Hendron — warns the international community, but his warning remains rejected. Belatedly, they accept that humanity's only way out it

to build a modern ark, in the form of a rocketship as their (20th-century ark)

When the construction of the ship gets delayed, Sydney Stanton, who is morally and physically analogous to the corrupt flesh, financially supports the completion of the process of building, but not for the salvation of the civilization, but to delay his own death. Forty people, selected by lottery, most of them are breeding couples, to enter the spaceship, together with animals (two by two) and supplies, and they are headed to uncertain safety to another planet. The approaching interplanetary bodies trigger earthquakes, avalanches, massive “natural” disasters, tidal waves. These actions destroy New York before the approaching deadly star wipes out earth. The rocket lands on planet Zyra, on a snowy mountain, a new garden of Eden, paradisiacal fields foreshadow a fertile future. Earth’s survivors unload their animals, heavenly choice sings and on the screen “The first day on the new world had begun... ” appears. (Gen. 8:13)

In a more contemporary natural disaster movie, *The Day After Tomorrow*, the melting of polar ice caps, the deadly hail in Japan, the blizzard in New Delhi and the flooding of New York city is the consequence of mankind environmental arrogance. Scientist and the avaricious members of the government dismiss the warnings of the Noah figure climatologist, Jack Hall. His son and a group of now weather refugees seek safety in a public library, trying to avoid the freeze that has now overtaken the city of New York. As it gets colder some decide to escape despite Sam’s (Jack’s son) request, only to find their death by fatally freezing. The survivors, however, acquire some supplies from an ark-like Russian freighter. Later, they are saved by helicopters — that could be interpreted as high tech doves [bible in motion page 41.] as the new age comes to be. The catastrophe resulted in crystal clear air, that is a symbol of purification.

[THE FLOODS OF OUR UNCONSCIOUS]

The image of the flood appears quite commonly in people’s dreams. Of course, their meaning is very dependent and subjective to each individual and their relationship with water, their current state of mind and other circumstances. Generally, however, water symbolizes the unconscious. People usually dream of their house being flooded or discovering a new room in their house which is flooded. In this case, the water might signify a change in your consciousness, you transitioning into your new “better developed” self. It may be a new domain of possibility, where some negative parts, attitudes in your old-self have to die in order to for the new self to resurrect. There is a parallel pattern that can be drawn of flood-water and the water of baptism. [E4]

This exact Christian symbolism, the flood water as a cleansing entity, can be found in Beyonce’s visual album, *Lemonade* (2016). In one of the scenes, she is standing on the edge of a high building, putting her arms up forming a cross-like image with her body, which echoes the image of Christ and the cross. She jumps off, however unexpectedly she arrives in water and does

not literally die. Underwater, she slowly takes off some of her clothing, symbolising the act of leaving some of the “old-self” behind. She can be seen in a fully flooded bedroom in which she finds herself laying on the bed, barely showing any sign of life, which again, means the death of the old self. Slowly she swims out from her room. In the next scene, she opens the doors of a building and puts her arms in the exact same “cross” position as when she was jumping off the building. She is wearing new clothes, and all the water floods out from the building, depicting the image of rebirth. This image sequence, is unmistakable analogous to the Christian interpretation of the flood. The motif is a purifying entity, symbolising the death in order to make a new, better creation possible.

Upon closer inspection, one can notice that a similar meaning of the water connected to (un)consciousness appears in *Stranger Things*, which is a one of the most popular series today. In the first season Eleven, who occupies the role of the hero in the story, has psychokinetic abilities that are amplified by the use of water. In many scenes she can be seen dumped into an aquarium or floating on water in order to reach the top of her abilities. As opposed to unconsciousness, she can enter a deeper state of her consciousness, which in the series is depicted as a dream like image, with water flooded on the ground in a pure blank black space. In this retelling the water does not necessarily have apocalyptic association at the first sight, however, because of the power she could gain from water, she accidentally opened a gate to the Upside Down which is quite analogous to a hell like phenomena.

As I argued before, water can be associated with sleeping, dreaming and therefore, the unconscious, but also with death and re/destruction. All of these images are used in *Inception*, a movie directed by Christopher Nolan, who is using the water as a returning metaphor to his great advantage. The opening scene depicting the ocean but the movie ends far above it. In the end, Cobb — the hero figure of the current narrative — is finally reunited with his children and can see their faces, as they were not shown throughout the whole movie (which was an indication for the views whether he is asleep or not). There is a very subtle reference, but his daughter says “we are building a house on the cliff”, which is a citation from Matthew (7:24). “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.” (New International Version)

The presence of water can be found nearly always in their dream world. Already in the beginning, Cobb is dunked into a bathtub in order to wake him up, and accordingly, in Saito’s (Cobb’s employer) dream, water hits him with the magnitude of a great flood. But in other instances, such as the torrential downpour on the city, the water drinks at the hotel and the fact that Limbo takes on the appearance of an endless ocean, this symbolism appears.

Flood myths are so universal that the Hungarian psychoanalyst Geza Roheim (1891 - 1953) thought their origins were physiological, not historical. He analyzed many myths and tales in his work *The Gates of Dream* (1952). He suggested that dreams were the precursors of the myths, combining unconscious fantasies to form them. In his hypothesis, dreams of the Flood

came when humans were asleep with full bladders. He believes that someone once dreamed in such way, and transmitted it to others who themselves had experiences with similar dreams, and from these repetitions, myths developed. [ref: Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction p. 28]

[THE FLOOD OF COMPLEXITY]

Myths universally portray standard situations in everyone's lives. The stories that are told through mythology are essentially distillations of our ordinary lives into it's most important elements. They are fundamentally ways to deal with our lives and the complexity of the world. And the problem we're trying to solve is that our existence and being is so complex that it's beyond our comprehension. And this complexity can shift in unpredictable ways. Jordan Peterson, clinical psychologist explained during one of his lectures, that people usually tend to think that his client's problems are mostly psychological but they aren't. Their real problem is that they can not handle the complexity of their lives which got out of hand and they are unable to get it under control again. As a result of this chaos, they get mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety.

Noah's story of the flood is a myth, and we are highly dependent on the such stories. They frame the way we perceive the world. Perhaps on the account of our modern civilization, disasters are not very frequent, at least not on a personal level, therefore not many of us have experienced them. But if anything as tragic as a disaster has happened to you or your surrounding, you've learned that they are unforgettable and long lasting. Their existence constantly captures our imagination a provide a setting for questioning our existence and our death, which could also serve as another argument on why the story of Noah is so widely spread. By experiencing a catastrophe our value systems and their meaning are challenged. Order and permanence are challenged. Disaster stories evoke basic human concerns such as death, hope, and helplessness, broken social ties, and disruption.

Because of the nature of these type of stories, one can be presume that the survivors of such catastrophes told their stories to one another, which would be another speculation to the origins of the flood tale. Our perceptual frames help us to organize the massive amount of constant information we are confronted with from the world, and it helps us to guide our actions by rendering particular events as meaningful. [essay ref] The biblical story of the flood framed our perception of an apocalyptic disaster image in such way, that it still persists today.

Mircea Eliade, Romanian historian of religion, had different perspective on the conventional interpretation of the flood myth that were discussed in previous chapters. In his book called A History of Religious Ideas: From the stone age to the Eleusinian mysteries, elaborates on the origins and reasons of flooding. He claims, that if we delve into the signs that reveal the coming flood, we find out that the main causes are not only the sinful state of humankind but also the mere fact that complex things have that tendency to

fall apart by themselves. The world, just because it exists, in his words - lives and produces - slowly deteriorates and falls into decay, that is why it needs to be recreated. In other words, things have the proclivity to fall apart on their own accord, but the rate by which they fall apart can be increased by the sins of mankind.

The second law of thermodynamics describes the same phenomena from a scientific perspective. The state of the entropy of the universe will always tend toward a maximum. Entropy is the measure scientists use to calculate the amount of disorder on a microscopic scale, more specifically, the energy of a collection of particles. [E2] Therefore, we may consider it a fact that everything in the universe tends to move from order to disorder. Simple rules of probability also tell us that it's much more likely for things to be an unorganized state, than an organized one; simply because there are more ways for things to be unorganized than organized. On the side I'd like to mention, that this concept is usually explained by comparing whether ice or water is more ordered. The answer is ice. In the context of our current climate change situation, one can make the connection that by our harmful activities that melt the polar caps, we are in fact speeding up entropy, the decay of our world.

The science fiction story of Isaac Asimov, "The Last Question" is dealing with the same problem and it unfolds as a series of stories. In the span of thousands of years, different generations of humans ask the same question to an evolving super computer: Can entropy be reversed? No matter how much time has passed and how evolved the civilisation and the computer have become, the computer's only answer is "INSUFFICIENT DATA FOR MEANINGFUL ANSWER." At the end, a God-like descendant of humanity asks the computer one last time the big question, before all matter ends and all the stars fade out.

[THE FLOOD OF KATRINA]

Hurricane Katrina hit the coast of the United States on August 29, 2005, and was one of the most catastrophic disasters ever since. [N2] Although its eye, the strongest point didn't directly hit New Orleans, it still caused hurricane wind conditions for hours. Katrina made landfall first in Florida, downgraded to a tropical storm, but then picked up strength once it got into the Gulf of Mexico. By the time it hit the city, Katrina weakened to a category 3 rating.

New Orleans is located entirely below sea level, surrounded by water. The Gulf of Mexico is located 160 kms to the south, the Lake Pontchartrain to the north, and the river of Mississippi flows through it. On average the city streets are 2 meters lower than the Gulf, however it's protected by one of the world's largest system of levees and flood walls. When experts saw that the hurricane is getting more and more strength above the warm waters of the Gulf, people were told to evacuate, however, many of them stayed put. The city with nearly half a million inhabitants was unprepared to deal with the consequences of so many people who decided to stay in their homes and ride out the violent

windstorm. According to the New Orleans emergency management plan, roughly 1000 citizens does not have cars or any other means of personal transportation. Many of these same people can't even afford to go on a bus, a train or to book a hotel. New Orleans has a poverty rate of more than 23%, almost the double the U.S. average.

By Saturday, (2 days before the disaster) Katrina proves the forecasters right, it becomes a category 5 hurricane, and predicted to come ashore in 24 hours. At this point the mayor of the city, Ray Nagin announced a mandatory evacuation on the city, something that's never don't before. He puts the plan in motion. President Bush declared a pre-hurricane state of emergency. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) officials told the governor (of Louisiana) Blanco, that such a statement from the president it very unusual and a president hasn't done it since 1992. Despite the warnings, a FEMA report will later state that on Saturday night, 2 days before the disaster, the bars were rocking in the French Quarter.

The flood gates are closing on the levees that surround though the city. The levees are embankment made of dirt. Several are topped with reinforced concrete flood walls, that range between 4 and 6 meters tall. Some of the levees date back to the 1920s. The Army Corps of Engineers maintains them and acknowledges that budget shortfalls have prevented urgently needed repairs. The levees are built to protect the city from the storm surge of a category 3 hurricane. Storm surge is when high winds push massive amount of water above the normal sea level. The National Weather Service gave predicted surge values of 6 to 8 meters outside the levee system. They forecasted major overtopping.

After the disastrous visit of Katrina ended in the city, an ABC news correspondent on the scene of New Orleans reported that the levees have only over topped and we not broken. "It was simply the volume of rain that left many areas under water. This was not the apocalyptic hurricane that many had feared." In reality, flood waters cover 80 percent of the greater New Orleans area, due to broken flood walls. In the city alone, Katrina has destroyed at least 200.000 homes. Cars, houses, streets signs were all submerged into the muddy brown layer of water, gas and chemicals. Thousands of desperate residents were trapped in their homes. Depleted police force struggled to come to the city's aid. They will later report that 249 officers deserted their post during the hurricane. The Army Corps of Engineers try to repair the break at the flood walls. They fly in sandbags with helicopters and drop them on the broken levees, but it doesn't work: the bags are too small and the waters carry them off. New Orleans keeps being filled with water: the levees and canal walls that were supposed to protect the city now trap the water inside. Chaos on the streets developed rapidly. Rumours of murders and gang rapes started to spread after on the second day of Katrina. At this point, police started to focus on law and order and stopped search missions. Lot of people stole from shops in order to survive. Others were simply taking advantage of the situation. There were many crimes and not enough police officers. National troops weren't handling law enforcement, because under the command of the state governor

search and rescue were their top priority. Rumours have started to spread about rampant violence in the superdome stadium and the convention centre, where people were preciously sent to be in shelter safe from the dangers of the violent windstorm. U.S. media reported many of the rumours as confirmed facts, where most turned out to be either false or highly exaggerated. For instance, the estimates of 200 dead bodies in the superdome turned out to be six. Four died of natural causes, one due to an overdose, and one because of suicide.

The relief efforts were slowed down because of bureaucracy, where as thousands of people still remained stuck in horrendous conditions, without food or water. The chaos on the streets were matched by the chaos in the office. Not the city, nor the state, not even the federal government was able to handle the crisis. 11 days after the hurricane has struck, more then half of the city is still under water. On the 1st of September President Bush made a statement that later created a political dust storm. On ABC's *Good Morning America*, he commented "I don't think anyone anticipated the breach of the levees". One day later, many U.S. news paper including the Washington Post noted that those clamis were false. In fact, experts inside as well as outside of government have warned repeatedly for years about the city's vulnerability due to its location below sea level, and those warnings were echoed by the media both nationally and in the state of Louisiana. However, those warnings remained unheard.

One year later, 1,833 people were confirmed dead, of which 1,577 were from the state of Louisiana, with another 135 people still missing as a result of Katrina. The cost of damage to real estates and public infrastructure is estimated at 27.7 billion dollars. Almost half of the inhabitants of New Orleans still haven't returned after evacuation.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers admitted that their failure in properly designing and maintaining the levees increased the amount of damage Katrina had done on New Orleans. Some experts had in fact warned that the levees might fail if a big hurricane swept through New Orleans. The storm surge breached the flood-walls in around 20 places. The USACE concluded according to a modeling exercise, that in a scenario where their hurricane protection didn't fail, nearly two-thirds of the deaths would not have occurred. J. David Rogers, who was a lead researcher on a paper published in Water Policy law journal that focused on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, concluded that the flooding caused during Katrina might have been prevented if the corps had an external commission to review and double-check their levee designs. [N3]

Ray Nagin, the mayor of New Orleans at the time, in 2014 was sentenced to 10 years in prison due to bribery and corruption. The event was not a natural, it was a man-made disaster. It is the result of more than 40 years' worth of misjudgments, mistakes, ignorance, and corruption. If the infrastructure would have been maintained and built to the technical specifications that were possible, and cheaper on the long term, the worst effect of Katrina on New Orleans would have been "wet ankles." [N4]

Within the context of the deluge, one can notice a pattern that exists in both stories. The role of the judgemental God is taken Mother Nature. Many people saw the warnings but ignored them. People in the office knew, that the dikes need to be repaired. They didn't. Citizens were warned about what is about to come. 2 days before Katrina, the bars were full in the French quarter. The story of New Orleans is not only showing us our fragility against mother nature ,but also teaches us about the failure of the human structure and the human individual, as a consequence of corruption.

[CONCLUSION]

The fundamental moral question of the human being is can one behave correctly. Within the context of Noah's flood story, the important question that arises is how can one become the Noah figure when the flood comes. Following this logic, the notion of bad and the evil is fundamentally the result of unsuccessful fight against entropy. One of the reasons of this failure is the tendency to take the simple route which is to wilfully blind. Many times, we are very well aware that entropy is out there constantly creating disorder, however, we decide to ignore it which only speeds the process up. The more we neglect it, the more effort we will have to put in to keep order, until it's too late and it grows big enough to consume us. That is what the sinners experiences in the myth of the deluge. The neglect of entropy is what leads us to corruption. Following this thread of thought, the definition of what it means to do good, it to fight against entropy when you know it's there. One has to accept the mere fact that the nature of our environment is to fall to decay by itself, and to keep things under control, one has to "fight" against it to the best of its ability.

The biblical word sin comes from Greek and originally it means, failure, being in error, missing the mark, especially in spear throwing. In other words to not adequately dealing with a situation. Based on this etymology, one can conclude, that unfortunately, it doesn't matter if you are wilfully build or just incapable to fight entropy, both ways you'll become a sinner. The Christian doctrine original sin by this interpretation, essentially describes the human state as something that is finite, opposed to the complexity of the environment, which is infinite. By the nature of our world, we are simply incapable of successfully fighting entropy, that is why we are born as sinners. That is why the only answer the super-computer could give was "INSUFFICIENT DATA FOR MEANINGFUL ANSWER." To continue the story line that was left unfinished on purpose previously, by the time all matter ends in the universe, the machine still haven't found the answer, nevertheless it still ponders. Finally, it reaches a conclusion, but by that time, everything is dead.

By all means, these complex thoughts and archetypal images recurring in mythology didn't just pop up in a genius's mind many many years ago. These thoughts evolved in an organic matter. These concepts depict the fundamental laws of morals, and these laws came about much earlier then they were articulated. Together with our biological evolution, around behaviour also

evolved. These stories distill the human nature's behavioural pattern that was created through evolution. The reason why it's most important elements can be found in so many stories across different cultures, is because we still act them out. That's why the flood story is still elemental part of the western culture. That's why it's being constantly resurrected and retold to fit the context of our modern world. With the Death of God, a void was created in the human culture and psyche, which we are trying to fill by the new stories that we create and tell. From these archetypal images and stories we unconsciously reproduce and act out distilled behavioural patterns in our lives and in our stories. It's the most successful behavioural pattern from the viewpoint of evolution. And in parallel with human evolution, these moral rules came into being, but unlike animals, we are capable of describing them into images and words. And the distillation of these images and morals is the Bible.

Is a graphic designer able communicate a story that fills the void left by the death of God just as well as popular culture?

Ps.: Then then the computer said, "Let there be light!"
And there was light.

[source 3] <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/09/01/AR2005090101952.html>

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2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=04wyGK6k6HE>

3 <http://www.chrisharrison.net/index.php/Visualizations/BibleViz>

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N2 <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/pdf/nws-nhc-6.pdf>

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F1 Book: The end of the world edited by Lewis H. Lapham, page 3

F2 Science writer Richard Hill gives a brief geologic history of the Columbia River Gorge

F3 Book: Mircea Eliade - A history of Religious Ideas From the Stone Age to the Eleusinian Mysteries page 62

E1 <http://olsonb.com/articles/messy-room-entropy-second-law-analogy.html>

E2 <https://arxiv.org/pdf/cond-mat/9708200v2.pdf> page 3

[E3] http://www.indiana.edu/~curtweb/Research/Red_Queen%20hyp.html

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