

Cross Linguistic Study of the New Creation Story / Man on Day Three in Genesis

Languages 101 through 150

Read against 7 Days to Perfection, banner revision of September

7, 2026

Three studies for each language · compiled September 2026

Continuing

Fifty more seats at the table.

No one was found worthy to open the book, or even to look inside it. That leaves no language holding a privileged reading, and every tongue holding something of its own.

Hebrew appears in this volume at number 102, which is where it falls when languages are counted by their speakers. It was placed first in the opening volume because that is where the writing happened, and that is the only sense in which it comes first. Here it takes the seat its numbers give it, between a Philippine language and a Chinese one.

The question this study is asking

What is God speaking — and do we have ears to hear?

7 Days to Perfection



Pleading the Cause of the Poor,
the Needy, the Fatherless...
TO WIN IT...

"Is that not what it means
to know Me?" says Yahuah



"In the whole land," declares the LORD,
"two-thirds of the 'fetuses'
will be struck down and perish;
yet one-third will be left in it.
This third I will put into the fire
I will refine them like silver
and test them like gold.
Zechariah 13:7-9 • present day



The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Do Not Lay a Hand on Him! The Mystery of God's Will: to End all Sacrifice & Offerings that Father be Glorified Again! Genesis 22:10-12

Jesus returns again as a Man, in a body prepared for Him in the fulness of the Book. Also as God the Maker, who by the power of His presence causes Old Heaven and Earth to pass away. **His Eternal Word & Name: Yashuah, exalted above the Heavens.**
The Master returns in the First Resurrection, in the Spirit of Prophecy, on the 3rd Day when the Hour of Judgment has come. He is **the Beginning** of the New Creation, and **the End** of the Old.
The Good Shepherd and Teacher returns as a thief, suddenly, unexpectedly robbing all claims of authority from those who throughout history have supposed themselves worthy to speak for God.
The Bridegroom is seeking a Bride from His side who rejoices seeing Him. One who is desiring to bring forth the generation not yet created, precious jewels of Zion, who inherit eternal life.
The Overcomer. The ONLY one found worthy. It is NOT GOOD that He be alone. — Revelation 12:11 **...and they overcame...** not loving their own souls even unto death.



01 DAY ONE

Light of the World

1 In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth.
2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.
3 And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.
4 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.
5 And God saw the light, that it was good.
6 And God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.
7 And the evening and the morning were the first day.

...we will no longer be infants, tossed back & forth by the waves & blown here & there by every wind of teaching & by the cunning & craftiness of people... speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of Him who is the head, that is, Christ.

02 DAY TWO

Wisdom Above & Below

1 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.
2 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.
3 And God called the firmament Heaven.
4 And the evening and the morning were the second day.



Looking for evidence for a God?
One whose existence is eternal & therefore being communicated with us beyond time & space?

The Little Scroll

Revelation 10 & 14:6-8 & 5:1-5...
Psalm 118:22-24 — Haggai 2:6-9

03 DAY THREE

Humility: the End of Pride
Old Creation Order Passes Away

1 And God said, Let the waters under the Heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.
2 And God called the Dry Land: Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas:



There was no one found worthy to open The Bible or even look inside. Not even anyone who claimed unbiased Science, Reason & Skepticism, nor Materialism & Atheism.

God set aside all arguments as proud, foolish & stupid, shaking up every claim of knowledge & authority throughout history. **Two unshakable things in His Word** — hidden in plain sight — **expose the blindness of proud institutions of men.** They have become worth less than nothing, for having despised the Day of small beginnings.



Great White Throne Lamb's Book of Life
Very Good Judgment
Most Names Expunged
God Justified & Glorified
Revelation 20:11-21:4



John wept & wept. The Little Scroll.
Mystery of God revealed. Knowledge passes away. Proud waves halt.
Must prophecy again.

03 THE MAN ON DAY 3

Making All Things New. **Rising** to Live Without Scars



3 This is the Genealogical Record of the Heavens and of the Earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the Earth and the Heavens,
4 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew:
5 for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.
6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.
7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.
8 and God saw that it was good.
9 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his

kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.
10 And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind.
11 And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.
12 And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden,
13 and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.
14 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.
15 The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;

16 And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone.
17 And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.
18 And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.
19 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it:
20 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:
21 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.
22 and God saw that it was good.
23 And the evening and the morning were the third day.

04 DAY FOUR

Solving for Not Good

1 And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him an help meet for him.
2 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:
3 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.
4 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.
5 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth.
6 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness:
7 And God saw that it was good.
8 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

05 DAY FIVE

Restoring the Fish & Birds

1 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, **2** and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.
3 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, **4** and every winged fowl after his kind:
5 and God saw that it was good.
6 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.
7 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.



"Throw your net on the right side of the boat..." Even with 153 large fish, the net was not torn.
John 21:4-11

06 DAY SIX

Counting Mother AND Child 好 — **Valuing** Life AND Liberty — **The End of Child Sacrifice**

1 And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.
2 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind:
3 and God saw that it was good.
4 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them:
5 and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.
6 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air; and to

every Beast of the field;
7 but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.
8 And God said, Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness:
9 and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.
10 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;
11 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.
12 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.
13 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.
15 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.
16 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.
[the child, at moment of conception; Malachi 2:15]
17 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

18 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.
19 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.
20 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.
21 And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.



07 DAY SEVEN

Perfect Prince of Peace

1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.
2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.
3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

Key findings across languages 101 to 150

Ten results, before the individual studies.

1 **In Uganda the first man is alone, and that is where the account begins.**

Kintu wanders the earth with one cow and nothing else. He is alone for many days. Then Nambi comes down from the sky with her sister, sees him, and stays. Nüwa and Obatala were lonely creators; Kintu is a lonely first man, which is what Day 4 verse 1 says.

2 **The Santal account tries clay first, and it does not take.**

Thakur Jiu shapes humans from clay, and they are destroyed before life can be breathed into them. He then makes a pair of birds. A tortoise and an earthworm bring up earth from under the water and land forms. Plants and trees grow. Then the female bird lays two eggs, and from them hatch the first man and the first woman.

3 **Two alphabets in this volume were invented in order to carry this text.**

Mesrop Mashtots made the Armenian alphabet around the year 405 so that scripture could be written in Armenian. Cyril and Methodius made the Glagolitic alphabet in the 860s for the same purpose, and Cyrillic descends from it. Add Hangul, designed in 1443 so ordinary Koreans could read, and Ol Chiki, made in 1925 for Santali.

4 **Guarani holds that speech itself was the first thing unfolded.**

The Ayvu Rapyta, the foundation of human language, tells that Ñamandú, out of himself and out of the primordial darkness, unfolded the foundation of human speech before anything else came to be, and made it part of his own divinity.

5 **Quechua holds breath, life and rest in a single word.**

Samay means all three. At Day 3 verse 7 the man is given breath and becomes a living soul; at Day 7 God rests. In Quechua those two verses share a root that no European language can give them.

6 **Finnish has the world made from broken eggs.**

In the Kalevala, Ilmatar floats on the water and a bird nests on her knee. The eggs roll off and break, and from the pieces come the earth, the sky, the sun, the moon and the stars. Finnish is Uralic, unrelated to any of its neighbours except Estonian.

- 7 The digging stars keep turning up, and Sotho calls them the female planter.**
Xhosa isiLimela, Sotho and Tswana Selemela, Sukuma, Kikuyu, Luganda, Umbundu, Makhuwa and Luba-Kasai all carry the inherited Bantu name from the verb meaning to cultivate. The Basotho name, Seleme se setshehadi, means the female planter.
- 8 The largest matrilineal society on earth reads Day 6 verse 16 as its own practice.**
Among the Minangkabau, property and name pass through the mother and a husband moves to his wife's household. Where a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, the verse describes what they do.
- 9 Three Scandinavian languages carry the first humans made from trees.**
Swedish, Danish and Norwegian readers hold Ask and Embla, found as wood on the shore and given breath, mind and colour by three gods. Behind them stand Ginnungagap, the yawning void, and Yggdrasil, the tree that holds the worlds.
- 10 The Amazigh call the same cluster the daughters of the night, and also the guide.**
Tuareg and other Amazigh peoples name the Pleiades Cat ahad, daughters of the night, and Amanar, the guide. A proverb reads the seasons by its falling and rising, to know when to prepare for heat and when for rain.

101. Swedish

Speakers: about 10 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Germanic · **Where:** Sweden, Finland · **Bible:** Gustav Vasa 1541

One What the language holds

Swedish has pitch accent, so two words spelled alike differ by the melody of the syllable. It marks nouns as common or neuter rather than masculine or feminine, and puts the definite article on the end of the noun.

The Gustav Vasa Bible of 1541 shaped written Swedish, as Luther's did German. Day 3 verse 7 reads **levande själ**.

Two What the tradition holds

Norse tradition holds **Ginnungagap**, the yawning void, before anything; **Ymir**, whose body becomes the world; and **Ask** and **Embla**, the first man and woman, found as wood on the shore and given breath by Odin and mind and colour by two others.

Yggdrasil, the ash tree, holds the worlds in its branches and roots. The Pleiades in Swedish folk usage is **Sjustjärnorna**, the seven stars.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 3 verse 7 into verse 8 meets a tradition whose first humans were wood and were given breath.

The crossing at Day 3 verse 10 into verse 11, into the garden with a tree in the midst, meets Yggdrasil.

102. Hebrew

Speakers: about 9 million · **Family:** Afroasiatic, Semitic · **Where:** Israel · **Note:** full study in the opening volume

One What the language holds

Hebrew received its full study at the head of the first volume. It stands here at its own number, which is where a count by

speakers puts it — behind Swedish and ahead of a Philippine language.

In brief: narrative runs on a chain of verb forms joined by **vav**, the letter whose old picture is a peg or hook. The two divine names alternate between the two tellings, and that alternation is the signal making the fourteen seams visible. At Day 3 verse 7 the man becomes **nephesh chayyah**, a living creature, a phrase used of animals in the same chapter. A dual is available at Day 6 verse 12 and is not used.

Two What the tradition holds

The seven days and the seventh set apart come from this account. Hebrew names the Pleiades **Kimah**, in Job 38:31 and Amos 5:8, and in the same speech in Job the morning stars sing together at the founding of the earth.

Hebrew was not a language of daily speech for some seventeen centuries and was brought back into ordinary use within living memory — the only such case anywhere.

Three At the seams

Hebrew makes the seams most visible, because the alternation of names is native rather than a convention of translation. The one live objection to the Day 3 placement also sits here, where the vav chain breaks at Day 3 verses 5 and 6.

103. Hiligaynon

Speakers: about 9 million · **Family:** Austronesian · **Where:** western Visayas, Philippines · **Bible:** from 1912

One What the language holds

Hiligaynon has two words for we, one including the listener and one excluding them, so Day 6 verse 8 takes a position. It is known for a gentleness of manner in speech and for the particle **gid**, used for emphasis in a way English has no single equivalent for.

Two What the tradition holds

The Visayan account has **Sicalac** and **Sicavay**, the first man and woman, emerging from a bamboo — recorded in the sixteenth century, before the Tagalog version was written down.

The **Hinilawod**, an epic of the region, runs to many thousands of lines and was chanted from memory. It was recorded only in the twentieth century, from one of the last chanters who knew it.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 6 verse 11 into verse 12 meets a people whose own account has the man and the woman come out of one plant together.

Day 6 verse 8 is answered by the language.

104. Min Dong Chinese

Speakers: about 9 million · **Family:** Sino-Tibetan, Sinitic · **Where:** Fuzhou and eastern Fujian · **Bible:** Foochow romanised, 1884

One What the language holds

Min Dong has an unusually complex system in which the sounds of a syllable change depending on what comes before it, so words shift shape in connected speech.

It had a romanised writing system, **Bang-ua-ce**, developed by missionaries, in which a full Bible was printed in 1884. 好 stands at every verdict in the Chinese a Min Dong speaker reads.

Two What the tradition holds

The Chinese material stands: Pangu and the separation, Nüwa and the clay and the loneliness, the Renri order with humans on the seventh day.

Fuzhou is a port, and its people carried both their speech and their sea-going traditions across Southeast Asia and beyond.

Three At the seams

As Mandarin. The romanised scripture meant that for a time a community could read the seams in their own speech rather than in characters.

105. Serbian

Speakers: about 9 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Balto-Slavic · **Where:** Serbia, Bosnia, Montenegro · **Bible:** Daničić and Karadžić, 1868

One What the language holds

Serbian is written in both Cyrillic and Latin, and educated speakers read both without effort. Its verbs mark complete or ongoing action, and it has a vocative used only for addressing someone.

Vuk Karadžić reformed the written language in the nineteenth century on the principle of writing as you speak, and translated the New Testament into it.

Two What the tradition holds

Cyrillic descends from the Glagolitic alphabet, made by Cyril and Methodius in the 860s expressly so that scripture could be put into a Slavic tongue. The script a Serbian reads was invented to carry this text.

Serbian epic poetry was sung to the **gusle**, a one-stringed instrument, and carried history by memory across centuries when there was no state.

Three At the seams

Aspect touches every seam and the vocative marks every act of address.

The crossing at Day 3 verse 2 into verse 3, into the genealogical record, meets a people who kept their past in sung verse.

106. Tajik

Speakers: about 9 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Iranian · **Where:** Tajikistan, Uzbekistan · **Script:** Cyrillic · **Bible:** from 1992

One What the language holds

Tajik is Persian written in Cyrillic, separated from Iranian Persian and Dari by script rather than by speech. A Tajik and an Iranian can talk and cannot read each other.

No grammatical gender, one pronoun for he and she. The divine name is **Khudo**.

Two What the tradition holds

The Persian poetic inheritance belongs here — Rudaki, counted the first great poet of the language, was from what is now Tajikistan.

Behind it stands the Zoroastrian material: light against darkness, Gayomart the first man, and the plant from which the first couple grew. The Pamir mountains hold Ismaili communities with their own traditions.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 1 verse 5, the light divided from darkness and called good, meets the tradition that made that division the whole account.

The crossing at Day 3 verse 7 into verse 8 meets Gayomart and the plant.

107. Tigrinya

Speakers: about 9 million · **Family:** Afroasiatic, Semitic · **Where:** Eritrea, northern Ethiopia · **Script:** Ge'ez syllabary · **Bible:** from 1909

One What the language holds

Tigrinya is Semitic, written in the same syllabary as Amharic, and descends more directly from Ge'ez than Amharic does. The divine name is **Egziabher**.

Two What the tradition holds

The Ethiopian and Eritrean Orthodox canon includes **Enoch** and **Jubilees**, which no other major tradition holds as scripture. Jubilees retells the creation with its own day-by-day reckoning, and Enoch holds the Watchers and the courses of the stars.

Aksum, in Tigrinya country, was among the first kingdoms anywhere to adopt Christianity, in the fourth century.

Three At the seams

As with Amharic, a Tigrinya reader may bring a second day-by-day account to the crossings.

The crossing into Day 4 verse 2, the lights for signs, meets Enoch's account of the courses of the luminaries.

108. Balochi

Speakers: about 9 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Iranian · **Where:** Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan · **Bible:** partial

One What the language holds

Balochi is Iranian but has kept sounds and forms that Persian lost, having been separated in the mountains for a long time. It has no standard written form in wide use and little scripture.

Two What the tradition holds

Balochi carries a long tradition of sung epic and ballad, the **sher**, performed by professional singers who hold the genealogies and the histories of the tribes.

The Quranic Adam stands behind a reader. **Balochmayar**, the Baloch code, governs hospitality and refuge as Pashtunwali does.

Three At the seams

Largely unverified. The crossing at Day 3 verse 2 into verse 3, into the genealogical record, meets a people whose singers hold the genealogies.

109. Bulgarian

Speakers: about 8 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Balto-Slavic · **Where:** Bulgaria · **Bible:** from 1871

One What the language holds

Bulgarian lost the case system the other Slavic languages kept, and instead puts the definite article on the end of the noun, as Romanian and Albanian do.

It also has an evidential: verb forms that mark whether the speaker witnessed what they report or heard it from someone else. Among the Slavic languages this is unusual, and it puts Bulgarian alongside Turkish and Quechua in requiring a narrator to take a position.

Two What the tradition holds

Old Church Slavonic, the first written Slavic language, was based on the speech of the Slavs around Thessalonica and is the direct ancestor of the Bulgarian literary tradition. The Glagolitic alphabet made for it was invented to carry scripture.

Bulgarian folk tradition calls the Pleiades **Kvachka**, the brooding hen – the hen and chicks again.

Three At the seams

A Slavic language that marks how the narrator knows

Bulgarian requires a speaker to indicate whether an account is witnessed or reported. A translator narrating the seven days takes a position at every clause, as in Turkish and Quechua.

Whether the two tellings could take different marking, making the seams audible in the grammar, is the same open question raised there, now in a European language with a long translation history.

110. Central Kurdish (Sorani)

Speakers: about 8 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Iranian · **Where:** Iraq, Iran · **Bible:** from the 19th century

One What the language holds

Sorani lost the grammatical gender and case that Kurmanji kept, and uses a different system for marking who acts on whom. The two Kurdish languages are not fully intelligible to each other.

It is written in Arabic script and has official standing in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Two What the tradition holds

Yazidi belief, held by a Kurdish-speaking community, honours **Melek Taus**, the peacock angel, who declined to bow before Adam. In Yazidi teaching this is obedience to God alone rather than rebellion.

The **Yarsani** tradition, also Kurdish-speaking, holds its own account of the divine and of successive manifestations.

Newroz is kept at the spring equinox with fires on the hills.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 6 verse 7 into verse 8 and onward meets a reader who may hold an account in which a refusal to bow before the man is honoured.

111. Ilocano

Speakers: about 8 million · **Family:** Austronesian · **Where:** northern Luzon, Philippines · **Bible:** from 1909

One What the language holds

Ilocano has two words for we, so Day 6 verse 8 takes a position. It was the first Philippine language after Tagalog to receive a complete Bible.

Two What the tradition holds

The **Biag ni Lam-ang**, the life of Lam-ang, is the Ilocano epic — a hero who speaks at birth, is swallowed by a great fish, and is restored from his bones gathered by a rooster and a dog.

A man swallowed by a fish, and a man rebuilt from his bones and brought back.

The Philippine bamboo account stands alongside.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 3 verse 7 into verse 8, the man formed and given breath, meets a people whose epic has a man reassembled from his bones and given life again.

Day 6 verse 8 is answered by the language.

112. Kanuri

Speakers: about 8 million · **Family:** Nilo-Saharan · **Where:** northeastern Nigeria, Niger, Chad · **Bible:** partial

One What the language holds

Kanuri is Nilo-Saharan, a family unrelated to the Niger-Congo languages around it and to the Afroasiatic ones north of it. It is the language of the Kanem-Bornu empire, which lasted some thousand years.

It has been written in Arabic script for centuries and has an old tradition of Islamic scholarship.

Two What the tradition holds

The Quranic Adam. Bornu was Muslim from the eleventh century and maintained scholarly exchange with North Africa and Arabia across the Sahara.

Lake Chad, which the Kanuri lived around, has shrunk enormously in living memory, so the relation of a people to water is part of recent experience rather than old account.

Three At the seams

Largely unverified. The Quranic reading of the tree stands at Day 3 verse 21 into verse 22.

113. Khortha

Speakers: about 8 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Indo-Aryan · **Where:** Jharkhand, India · **Bible:** Hindi is used

One What the language holds

Khortha is counted as a dialect of Hindi and has no scripture of its own. It is spoken alongside Santali and other Munda languages, and has absorbed vocabulary from them.

Two What the tradition holds

Jharkhand is Adivasi country, and a Khortha speaker lives among peoples who hold their own accounts of the beginning. The Santal account, described below, is the nearest.

The **Sarhul** festival is kept when the sal tree flowers, marking the new year and the earth's renewal, with the tree itself at the centre.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 3 verse 10 into verse 11, the plants into the garden, meets a region whose new year begins when a particular tree blossoms.

114. Kikuyu

Speakers: about 8 million · **Family:** Niger-Congo, Bantu · **Where:** Kenya · **Bible:** from 1926

One What the language holds

Kikuyu has noun classes with agreement throughout and is tonal. The divine name is **Ngai**, who dwells on **Kirinyaga**, Mount Kenya, the mountain of brightness.

Two What the tradition holds

Gikuyu and **Mumbi** are the first man and woman. Ngai took Gikuyu to the mountain, showed him the land, and gave it to him.

Gikuyu and Mumbi had nine daughters, and the Kikuyu clans descend from them, each clan named for a daughter.

A people whose clans are named for women. Prayer was made facing Kirinyaga, under a **mugumo**, a fig tree, which was not to be cut.

The Pleiades carries the inherited Bantu digging name.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 6 verse 12 into verse 13, male and female, and onward to the blessing, meets a people who trace every clan to a daughter.

The crossing at Day 3 verse 10 into verse 11, into the garden with its trees, meets a people who prayed beneath a tree that could not be cut.

115. Marwari

Speakers: about 8 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Indo-Aryan · **Where:** Rajasthan, India · **Bible:** limited

One What the language holds

Marwari is counted as a dialect of Hindi in official use and has an older literature than that suggests, including the verse of **Mirabai**, who left a royal household to sing devotion and whose songs are still sung across northern India.

Two What the tradition holds

Rajasthan is desert, and its traditions turn on water: stepwells dug many storeys down, and observances for rain.

The **Bishnoi**, a community of the region, hold twenty-nine precepts including the protection of trees and animals, and in 1730 several hundred died defending a grove of khejri trees from being cut.

The pan-Indian material stands, with the nakshatras.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 3 verse 10 into verse 11, the plants into the garden, meets a people among whom some died rather than let trees be felled.

116. Mossi (Moore)

Speakers: about 8 million · Family: Niger–Congo, Gur · Where: Burkina Faso · Bible: from 1983

One What the language holds

Moore is tonal and sorts nouns into classes marked by suffixes rather than prefixes, which distinguishes the Gur languages from the Bantu ones.

The divine name is **Wende** or **Naaba Wende**, chief Wende, and the same word is used for the sun and for the sky.

Two What the tradition holds

Mossi tradition holds the earth as belonging to the **tengsoba**, the earth–priest, who is of the people who were there before the Mossi kings arrived. Land is not the king's to give.

The **naba yiri**, the royal drums, and the mask traditions carry the ancestors. A great deal is held by griots, who keep genealogies by memory.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 3 verse 2 into verse 3, into the genealogical record, meets a people whose genealogies are held by specialists and recited.

The word for God being also the word for sun places Day 1 verse 5 and Day 4 verse 7 close together in the language.

117. Rwanda-Rundi

Speakers: about 20 million combined · **Family:** Niger-Congo, Bantu · **Where:** Rwanda, Burundi, eastern DR Congo

One What the language holds

Kinyarwanda and Kirundi are close enough to be treated as one language by some counts and two by others, and this entry stands for the cluster as a whole. Both received their own studies in the previous volume.

Sixteen noun classes, tone throughout, and the divine name **Imana** in both.

Two What the tradition holds

The proverb that Imana spends the day elsewhere and comes to sleep in Rwanda. The Pleiades is **Kelemera**, from the inherited Bantu name meaning to dig.

Cattle bind people: the gift of a cow makes a relationship, and the practice has a name of its own.

Three At the seams

The crossing out of Day 4 verse 1 into verse 2 meets the digging stars. The crossing at Day 6 verse 3 into verse 4 meets a people for whom a cow given is a bond made.

118. Sukuma

Speakers: about 8 million · **Family:** Niger-Congo, Bantu · **Where:** Tanzania · **Bible:** from 1961

One What the language holds

Sukuma is the largest single language of Tanzania by first-language speakers, though Swahili serves as the country's shared tongue. Noun classes and tone as across the family.

Most Sukuma read and worship in Swahili, so a language of eight million meets the text in another.

Two What the tradition holds

The Pleiades carries the inherited Bantu digging name.

Sukuma dance societies, the **bagika** and **bagalu**, compete in performance, and the dances carry teaching and history. Cattle are central, and the Sukuma are among the largest cattle-keeping peoples of East Africa.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 6 verse 3 into verse 4 meets a cattle-keeping people and a grammar that sorts every creature as it is named.

The crossing out of Day 4 verse 1 into verse 2 meets the digging stars.

119. Xhosa

Speakers: about 8 million · **Family:** Niger–Congo, Bantu, Nguni · **Where:** South Africa · **Bible:** from 1859

One What the language holds

Xhosa has click consonants, taken into the language from Khoisan neighbours, and uses them in ordinary vocabulary. The name of the language begins with one.

Noun classes as in Zulu: people in class 1, animals in class 9, the tag compulsory on every noun. At Day 6 verses 4 to 7 the grammar sorts every creature as it is named.

The divine name is **uThixo**, taken from a Khoi word, alongside **uQamata**.

Two What the tradition holds

The digging stars, and the month of new life in man

isiLimela, from the inherited Bantu name meaning to dig. The Xhosa watched for its first appearance in June, and the month of isiLimela was held to mean new life in man.

The coming-out of the initiation school, when boys became men, was timed by its appearance.

Day 4 verse 2 gives the lights for signs and for seasons. Day 4 verse 1 says it is not good that the man should be alone.

Xhosa tradition holds ancestors present and consulted, and a person who has died may appear as a snake, as in Zulu.

Three At the seams

The crossing out of Day 4 verse 1 into verse 2 meets a star whose season was held to mean new life in man and which set the timing of becoming a man.

The crossing at Day 6 verse 3 into verse 4 runs through a naming in which the grammar tags every creature.

120. Santali

Speakers: about 7.6 million · **Family:** Austroasiatic, Munda · **Where:** Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha, Bangladesh, Nepal

Script: Ol Chiki, created 1925 · **Bible:** from 1914

One What the language holds

Santali is Munda, a branch of Austroasiatic, and is unrelated to the Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages around it. It is among the oldest language families in India, older in the subcontinent than Sanskrit.

It distinguishes singular, dual and plural: a form for exactly two, separate from more than two. At Day 6 verse 12, male and female created he them, Santali has a form that says exactly two, as Arabic and Hebrew do.

The **Ol Chiki** script was created in 1925 by Raghunath Murmu so that Santali could be written in an alphabet of its own rather than borrowed.

Two What the tradition holds

Clay first, and it did not take

Thakur Jiu, the supreme one, first shaped human figures from clay. They were destroyed before life could be breathed into them.

He then brought forth a pair of birds from himself and gave them life. They floated on the water with nowhere to rest.

A tortoise and then an earthworm brought earth up from under the water, and land was made. Plants and trees grew on it.

Then the female bird laid two eggs, and from them hatched the first man, **Pilchu Haram**, and the first woman, **Pilchu Budhi**.

Water, then land, then plants, then a man and a woman together. And before all of it, clay that did not receive breath.

The Santal later survive a flood in a gourd. **Marang Buru**, the great mountain, is the chief of the bongas, the spirits, and the sacred grove of each village is where they are honoured.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 3 verse 7 into verse 8, the man formed of dust and given breath, meets a people whose account has clay figures that were not given breath, and a second making that worked.

The crossing at Day 6 verse 11 into verse 12 meets a language with a form for exactly two, and an account in which the man and the woman came at the same moment.

121. Afrikaans

Speakers: about 7 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Germanic · **Where:** South Africa, Namibia · **Bible:** 1933, from the Dutch

One What the language holds

Afrikaans has shed grammatical gender, case and nearly all verb inflection, more than any other Germanic language. A translator is rarely required to specify something the source left open.

skaam — ashamed. In Afrikaans this concerns standing before other people rather than a private feeling.

Day 3 verse 7 reads **lewende siel**, from the Dutch, from the Latin, from the Greek.

Two What the tradition holds

Afrikaans grew among Dutch settlers, enslaved people brought from Southeast Asia and Madagascar, and Khoi speakers, and carries words from all of them. Its earliest surviving texts were written in Arabic script by Cape Muslims.

The Reformed tradition is the dominant inheritance, with its covenant theology and its long attention to the household.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 6 verse 17, naked and not ashamed, meets **skaam** and carries more weight than the English does.

Elsewhere the seams read as in Dutch and English.

122. Gulf Arabic

Speakers: about 7 million · **Family:** Afroasiatic, Semitic · **Where:** Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, eastern Saudi Arabia · **Bible:** Modern Standard Arabic

One What the language holds

The dual and the cognate vocabulary as in the other Arabics. Gulf Arabic carries Persian and South Asian vocabulary from centuries of sea trade.

Two What the tradition holds

The Quranic Adam. The Gulf tradition is maritime: pearl diving sustained these societies before oil, and the sea determined the year.

Navigation by the stars was a working skill here, and Arab navigators produced manuals of it. The **anwa** system for reading rain and the star names that entered European astronomy came from this world.

Three At the seams

The crossing out of Day 4 verse 1 into verse 2, the lights for signs and for seasons, meets a people who sailed by them for a living.

Day 5, the waters bringing forth abundantly, meets a people who went down into the water for pearls.

123. Kashmiri

Speakers: about 7 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Dardic · **Where:** Kashmir · **Bible:** from 1899

One What the language holds

Kashmiri belongs to the Dardic branch, which sits apart from both Indo-Aryan and Iranian and keeps features older than either. It puts the verb second in the sentence, as German does and as no other South Asian language does.

It is written in Perso-Arabic script and also in Devanagari and Sharada, depending on community.

Two What the tradition holds

Kashmir Shaivism holds that all things are the self-expression of one consciousness, and is among the most developed non-dual traditions anywhere.

Lal Ded, Lalleshwari, a fourteenth-century woman who left her household and wandered composing verse, is revered by Hindus and Muslims alike. Her four-line verses are among the oldest surviving Kashmiri, and they are still quoted in ordinary speech.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 3 verse 7 into verse 8 meets a tradition in which the self within is held to be of one substance with what made it.

124. Kongo

Speakers: about 7 million · **Family:** Niger–Congo, Bantu · **Where:** DR Congo, Angola, Republic of Congo · **Bible:** from 1905

One What the language holds

Kikongo has noun classes with agreement throughout. The divine name is **Nzambi** or **Nzambi Mpungu**, and among the Bakongo Nzambi has been identified as both sky father and sky mother, which is rare in the region.

The Kongo kingdom received Christianity in 1491 by the choice of its own king, not by conquest, and Kikongo scripture goes back centuries.

Two What the tradition holds

An emptiness with power inside it, and a line of water

The Kongo account says the world in its beginning was **mbungi**, an emptiness, a hollow with no visible life, but with real forces moving within it. Then **kalunga**, a force, emerged inside the emptiness and became the source of life.

Day 1 verse 2 says the earth was without form and empty, and darkness was on the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters.

The **Kalunga line** is a boundary of water separating the world of the living from the world of the dead, which souls cross and may cross back. Day 2 divides the waters from the waters, and receives no verdict.

The **dikenga**, a cross within a circle, maps a life through four turnings as the sun moves through a day, and predates Christian contact.

Three At the seams

The crossing into Day 1 verse 2 and through Day 2 meets an account of an emptiness with power inside it and a water that divides.

Kikongo also carried these across the Atlantic: Haitian, Cuban and Brazilian traditions hold Kongo material brought by people taken in the slave trade.

125. Makhuwa

Speakers: about 7 million · **Family:** Niger–Congo, Bantu · **Where:** northern Mozambique · **Bible:** partial

One What the language holds

Makhuwa is the largest language of Mozambique by first-language speakers, while Portuguese is the official one. Noun classes and tone as across the family.

Its scripture came through Portuguese, so it carries Portuguese decisions, including **alma vivente** at Day 3 verse 7.

Two What the tradition holds

The Pleiades carries the inherited Bantu digging name.

Makhuwa society traces descent through the mother, and initiation rites for both girls and boys carry the teaching of what it is to be an adult.

The **mapiko** masked dance of the region is performed by initiated men and represents the dead.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 6 verse 15 into verse 16, where a man leaves his father and his mother, meets a people who trace descent through the mother.

The crossing out of Day 4 verse 1 into verse 2 meets the digging stars.

126. Tachelhit

Speakers: about 7 million · **Family:** Afroasiatic, Amazigh · **Where:** southern Morocco · **Script:** Tifinagh, Arabic, Latin
· **Bible:** partial

One What the language holds

Tachelhit is Amazigh, the language of North Africa before Arabic arrived, and is Afroasiatic — the same wider family as Hebrew and Arabic, reached from another direction.

Tifinagh, its own script, descends from an ancient Libyco-Berber alphabet and has been revived for official use in Morocco.

The divine name is **Rebbi**, from the Arabic, and older **Yakuch**.

Two What the tradition holds

Amazigh peoples name the Pleiades **Cat ahad**, daughters of the night, and also **Amanar**, the guide, and **Tagemmunt**, the group. A Tuareg proverb reads the seasons by its falling and rising: when it falls, look for the water bag; when it rises, look for a cloth to wear.

Amazigh tradition holds the **agurram**, a holy man whose blessing carries **baraka**, and the agadir, communal granaries built as fortresses and held by the whole village.

Three At the seams

The crossing out of Day 4 verse 1 into verse 2 meets a people who call that cluster the guide and read the seasons by it.

The crossing at Day 3 verse 7 into verse 8 meets a language whose family includes the one the verse was written in.

127. Southern Quechua

Speakers: about 7 million · **Family:** Quechuan · **Where:** Peru, Bolivia · **Bible:** from the 19th century; modern versions from 1988

One What the language holds

Quechua requires the speaker to say how they know

Every statement takes an ending: **-mi** for what the speaker witnessed or vouches for, **-si** for what was handed down, **-cha** for what is supposed. There is no neutral form.

A translator cannot narrate one verse of the seven days without taking a position.

Andean custom attaches **-si** to what is inherited and **-mi** to what the speaker knows.

The genealogical record of the second telling may take different footing from the seven days. If so, the fourteen seams would become audible in the grammar.

One word for breath, life and rest

samay — breath, the animating force, and rest, in one word. It is a living term in Andean practice, not an old one.

allpa — earth, soil.

At Day 3 verse 7 the man is formed of the ground and given breath. At Day 7 God rests. In Quechua those two share a root.

Two halves making one

yanantin — paired complementarity: two unlike halves forming one complete thing.

warmi-qhari — woman-man, naming the married pair as one social person.

Quechua also distinguishes a we that includes the listener, **ñuqanchik**, from one that does not, **ñuqayku**, so Day 6 verse 8 takes a position.

Two What the tradition holds

Wiraqucha creates at Lake Titicaca, makes a first race, destroys it, and makes another from clay or stone, then withdraws. Earth-formed humanity, a prior creation that did not stand, and a creator who departs.

Pacha means time and space as one undivided word, and **pachakuti** names the overturning of an age.

The Pleiades is **Qullqa**, the storehouse, and its clarity at rising was read to forecast the rains and the harvest — a practice studied and found to track real weather patterns.

Three At the seams

The crossing out of Day 4 verse 1, not good to be alone, meets **yanantin**, where a person alone is incomplete by definition. This is among the strongest crossings anywhere in these volumes.

The crossing at Day 3 verse 7 into verse 8 meets **samay** and **allpa**, and carries the verse with less loss than most languages manage.

The crossing at Day 6 verse 7 into verse 8 is forced by the language. And the crossing into Day 4 verse 2 meets Qullqa, read for the coming harvest.

128. Turkmen

Speakers: about 7 million · **Family:** Turkic · **Where:** Turkmenistan, Iran, Afghanistan · **Bible:** from 2016

One What the language holds

Turkmen marks evidentiality as Turkish does, so a narrator of the seven days takes a position on how they know. It has vowel harmony and vowel length that distinguishes words.

Script changed from Arabic to Latin to Cyrillic and back to Latin within a century.

Two What the tradition holds

The Turkic material stands, with **Tengri** the sky and the Pleiades as the place where the creator met the Sky Spirits and sent an eagle down as the first shaman.

Magtymguly, the eighteenth-century poet, is held as the voice of the language, and the carpet patterns of each tribe function as an identity carried in wool.

Three At the seams

As Turkish, with the same open question about whether the grammar could mark the two tellings differently.

The crossing out of Day 4 verse 1 into verse 2, and onward toward the birds of Day 5, meets the eagle sent down from that cluster.

129. Umbundu

Speakers: about 7 million · **Family:** Niger-Congo, Bantu · **Where:** central Angola · **Bible:** from 1920s

One What the language holds

Umbundu is the largest Angolan language by first-language speakers, with Portuguese official. Noun classes and tone as across the family.

Its scripture came through Portuguese and carries Portuguese decisions at the load-bearing verses.

Two What the tradition holds

The divine name is **Suku**. The Pleiades carries the inherited Bantu digging name.

The Ovimbundu were traders who moved goods across central Africa for centuries, and their oral tradition carries the routes and the genealogies of the trading houses.

The **olusapo**, proverb, is used in speech and in judgment, and a case may be argued by citing them.

Three At the seams

The crossing out of Day 4 verse 1 into verse 2 meets the digging stars.

The crossing at Day 3 verse 2 into verse 3, into the genealogical record, meets a people who kept theirs for trade as well as for kinship.

130. Armenian

Speakers: about 6.7 million · **Family:** Indo-European, its own branch · **Where:** Armenia and the diaspora
Script: Armenian alphabet, about 405 · **Bible:** 5th century

One What the language holds

An alphabet invented to carry this text

Around the year 405, **Mesrop Mashtots** devised the Armenian alphabet so that scripture could be written in Armenian. It had not been written before.

The first sentence put into it is said to have been from Proverbs: to know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding.

The translation that followed is called the Queen of Translations for its quality, and it is the reason Armenian literature exists at all. The alphabet is still in use and is unrelated to any other.

Armenian is its own branch of Indo-European, with no close relatives. It has no grammatical gender and one pronoun for he and she.

Two What the tradition holds

Armenia adopted Christianity as a state religion in 301, the first to do so. What stood before survives in fragments: **Vahagn**, born out of fire and reed and sea in a hymn preserved by a historian who disapproved of it.

Mount Ararat stands in view of the capital, and the ark's resting place is named for it.

Three At the seams

An Armenian reader meets the seams in letters that exist because someone needed to write this account down.

The crossing at Day 3 verse 7 into verse 8 meets a tradition whose oldest surviving hymn has a birth out of reed and fire.

131. Albanian

Speakers: about 6 million · **Family:** Indo-European, its own branch · **Where:** Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia · **Bible:** from 1827

One What the language holds

Albanian is its own branch of Indo-European with no close relatives, like Armenian and Greek. It puts the definite article on the end of the noun, as Romanian and Bulgarian do.

It also has an admirative: verb forms expressing surprise at what is being reported, a mood few languages mark grammatically.

Two What the tradition holds

The **Kanun**, a customary law code transmitted orally for centuries, governs hospitality, refuge and the settling of blood. A guest under one's roof is inviolable, a rule stated in absolute terms.

Albania holds Muslim, Orthodox and Catholic communities together, and a proverb holds that the religion of Albanians is Albanianism — meaning that the obligation to each other stands above the difference.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 3 verse 11 into the garden, where the man is placed in a prepared place and given leave to eat freely, meets a people whose highest law is what is owed a guest.

The admirative means Albanian can mark astonishment at a report as part of the verb, which no other language in these volumes can do.

132. Bambara

Speakers: about 6 million first language, far more as second · **Family:** Niger-Congo, Mande · **Where:** Mali · **Bible:** from 1961

One What the language holds

Bambara is tonal and, unlike the Bantu languages, has no noun classes at all — it marks number simply and leaves the rest to

context. Mande and Bantu are both Niger-Congo and behave quite differently.

The divine name is **Ngala** or **Ala**, the latter from Arabic. It has its own script, **N'Ko**, devised in 1949 for the Manding languages.

Two What the tradition holds

Bamana cosmology, as recorded from initiates, describes creation proceeding by pairs and by the spoken word, with the world unfolding from a seed and knowledge held in stages by those initiated into successive societies.

Faro governs water and the word. The **jeli**, the griot, holds genealogies and histories and is the one who may speak them.

The **Sundiata** epic, recited by griots, is among the great oral works of Africa.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 3 verse 2 into verse 3, into the genealogical record, meets a society where holding and reciting genealogies is a hereditary office.

A tradition in which creation proceeds by the word meets an account in which God speaks and it is so.

133. Guarani

Speakers: about 6 million · **Family:** Tupian · **Where:** Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia · **Bible:** from 1913

One What the language holds

Guarani is co-official in Paraguay and spoken by most of the country, including people with no indigenous ancestry. It is the only indigenous language of the Americas in that position.

It distinguishes a we that includes the listener from one that does not, so Day 6 verse 8 takes a position. It also marks nouns for whether the thing is present or absent, past or still existing, which no European language does.

Two What the tradition holds

Speech was the first thing unfolded

The **Ayvu Rapyta**, the foundation of human language, is a body of sacred Mbya Guaraní text recorded in the twentieth century.

It tells that **Ñamandú**, the true Father, the first one, arose out of himself in the midst of the primordial darkness. And that having arisen, he unfolded the foundation of human speech, and made it part of his own divinity — before the earth existed, before there was anything.

Speech before the world.

Guaraní tradition also holds the **yvy marañe'y**, the land without evil, which is sought rather than remembered, and for which whole communities have moved.

Three At the seams

The crossing into Day 1 verses 1 and 2, where God speaks and it is so, meets a tradition whose own account has speech unfolded first of all, out of the darkness, as part of the divine.

The crossing at Day 6 verse 7 into verse 8 is forced by the language.

134. Ibibio

Speakers: about 6 million · **Family:** Niger–Congo · **Where:** southeastern Nigeria · **Bible:** from 1930s

One What the language holds

Ibibio is tonal and has an unusually large set of verb forms marking how and when something happened. The divine name is **Abasi**.

Two What the tradition holds

Ibibio tradition holds Abasi as supreme, with the earth and the sky as a pair. One account tells that Abasi's wife persuaded him to let the first man and woman live on earth, on condition that they return to eat with him and do no work and bear no children.

They broke both conditions: they farmed, and they had children.
Death came into the world with the breaking.

A first couple, a condition, a breaking, and children on the other side of it.

Nsibidi is a system of signs used across the region, carrying meaning without being an alphabet, and used in the societies and on cloth.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 3 verse 21 into verse 22, the command into the verdict, meets a people whose own account also turns on a condition given and broken.

The crossing at Day 6 verse 15 into verse 16, the blessing and the children, meets an account in which having children was the thing forbidden.

135. Kabyle

Speakers: about 6 million · **Family:** Afroasiatic, Amazigh · **Where:** northern Algeria · **Bible:** from 2000s complete

One What the language holds

Kabyle is Amazigh, Afroasiatic, and so in the same wide family as Hebrew and Arabic. It marks gender and has a system of tense and aspect distinct from Arabic.

It is written in Latin script in Algeria, and Tifinagh is also used.

Two What the tradition holds

The Amazigh names for the Pleiades — daughters of the night, the guide, the group — belong here.

Kabyle villages were governed by the **tajmaat**, an assembly of all household heads, with written village codes. The tradition of collective decision is old and is still spoken of.

Kabyle oral poetry, much of it composed and sung by women, carries a great deal of what the tradition holds.

Three At the seams

The crossing out of Day 4 verse 1 into verse 2 meets a people who call that cluster the guide.

The crossing at Day 3 verse 7 into verse 8 meets a language in the same family as the one the verse was written in, at a distance of several thousand years.

136. Kanauji

Speakers: about 6 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Indo-Aryan · **Where:** Uttar Pradesh, India · **Bible:** Hindi is used

One What the language holds

Kanauji is counted as a dialect of Hindi and has no scripture of its own. It is spoken around Kannauj, which was a capital of northern India for centuries.

Two What the tradition holds

The pan-Indian material stands. Kannauj is also the centre of Indian perfumery, where attar has been distilled from flowers by the same method for centuries, with the season of each flower determining what is made.

Three At the seams

Met in Hindi. The crossing at Day 3 verse 10 into verse 11 meets a place whose trade is the season of flowers.

137. Libyan Arabic

Speakers: about 6 million · **Family:** Afroasiatic, Semitic · **Where:** Libya · **Bible:** Modern Standard Arabic

One What the language holds

The dual and the cognate vocabulary as in the other Arabics, with an Amazigh substrate and some Italian from the colonial period.

Two What the tradition holds

The Quranic Adam. Libya holds Amazigh and Tuareg communities with their own traditions and their own names for the stars, and the Sahara itself as the fact that organises everything.

Cyrene and Leptis Magna were Greek and Roman cities here, and the Jewish community of Cyrenaica was ancient; a man of Cyrene carried the cross in the Gospels.

Three At the seams

As the other Arabics, with the Amazigh layer beneath unsearched.

138. Luba-Kasai

Speakers: about 6 million · Family: Niger-Congo, Bantu · Where: DR Congo · Bible: from 1927

One What the language holds

Tshiluba has noun classes and tone as across the family. It is one of the four national languages of the DR Congo alongside Lingala, Kikongo and Swahili.

Two What the tradition holds

The divine name is **Mvidi Mukulu**, the great spirit. The Pleiades carries the inherited Bantu digging name.

Luba tradition holds the **lukasa**, a memory board of beads and pegs on wood, read by trained members of a society to recall the history, the migrations and the royal line. A written record that is not writing.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 3 verse 2 into verse 3, into the genealogical record, meets a people who kept theirs on a board of beads read by specialists.

The crossing out of Day 4 verse 1 into verse 2 meets the digging stars.

139. Luganda

Speakers: about 6 million first language, more as second · **Family:** Niger-Congo, Bantu · **Where:** Uganda · **Bible:** 1896

One What the language holds

Luganda has noun classes and tone, and a system of over fifty clan names each tied to a totem animal or plant that members do not eat.

The divine name is **Katonda**, the creator, built from the verb meaning to create.

Two What the tradition holds

The first man is alone, with one cow

Kintu is the first man on the earth. He has nothing but his cow, and lives on its milk. He wanders for many days alone.

Then **Nambi** and her sister come down from the sky. Nambi sees him and is curious, not knowing what he is or what the cow is. She stays.

Her father Ggulu sets Kintu trials to prove what he is. Kintu passes them, and Ggulu gives him Nambi, with cattle and a banana plant and millet to take back to the earth.

Nambi is warned to leave quickly and not turn back, because her brother **Walumbe**, whose name means death, will follow. She turns back for millet she forgot. Walumbe follows them down.

Day 4 verse 1 says it is not good that the man should be alone. This account begins there.

The Pleiades carries the inherited Bantu digging name. Clan totems mean many Baganda will not eat a particular animal.

Three At the seams

The crossing out of Day 4 verse 1, not good to be alone, meets an account whose whole shape is a first man alone until a woman comes down to him.

The crossing at Day 6 verses 4 to 7, the naming and the search, meets a people whose clans are each named for a creature they will not eat.

140. Northern Thai

Speakers: about 6 million · **Family:** Kra-Dai · **Where:** northern Thailand · **Script:** Tai Tham · **Bible:** limited

One What the language holds

Northern Thai, or Lanna, has its own script, **Tai Tham**, used for Buddhist manuscripts on palm leaf. It is read now by few, and most speakers read standard Thai.

Six tones, no grammatical gender, no change of verb for time.

Two What the tradition holds

Theravada Buddhism, with no creator and no first moment. Alongside it, the **Lanna** tradition keeps spirit practice and the **sueb chata**, a ceremony to extend the life of a person, a river or a forest.

The **Yi Peng** festival sends lanterns into the sky at the full moon.

Three At the seams

Day 1 verse 1 arrives without a competing account. The crossing into Day 4 verse 2 meets a people who send lights up into the sky by the moon's reckoning.

141. Southern Sotho

Speakers: about 6 million · **Family:** Niger-Congo, Bantu · **Where:** Lesotho, South Africa · **Bible:** from 1881

One What the language holds

Sesotho has noun classes and tone. The divine name is **Modimo**, used across the Sotho-Tswana languages and older than any translation.

Two What the tradition holds

The female planter

The Basotho call the Pleiades **Seleme se setshehadi**, the female planter, from the same inherited Bantu root meaning to cultivate.

Its disappearance in April, the tenth month by the Sotho reckoning, together with the appearance of the star Achernar, marks the beginning of the cold season.

Day 4 verse 2 gives the lights for signs and for seasons, for days and years.

The **lifela**, songs composed by men travelling to the mines, carry a whole modern tradition of sung poetry. Basotho tradition holds the first people coming out of a reed bed, as the Zulu do.

Three At the seams

The crossing out of Day 4 verse 1 into verse 2 meets a star named the female planter, which sets the cold season and the year.

The crossing at Day 3 verse 7 into verse 8 meets a tradition where the first people came out of reeds.

142. Tswana

Speakers: about 6 million · **Family:** Niger-Congo, Bantu · **Where:** Botswana, South Africa · **Bible:** Robert Moffat, 1857, the first complete Bible in an African language south of the Sahara

One What the language holds

Setswana has noun classes and tone, and the divine name **Modimo**.

Moffat's translation of 1857 was the first complete Bible into any African language south of the Sahara, and it set patterns that later southern African translations followed.

Two What the tradition holds

The Pleiades is **Selemela**, from the inherited root meaning to cultivate, and its position at sunset was read for when to begin planting.

The **kgotla** is the assembly where matters are spoken in public and anyone present may speak, and it remains part of Botswana's governance.

Botho is the Tswana word for what Zulu calls ubuntu: a person is a person through other people.

Three At the seams

The crossing out of Day 4 verse 1, not good to be alone, meets **botho**, and then verse 2 meets Selemela.

Both halves of that crossing are answered by the tradition, which is rare.

143. Bundeli

Speakers: about 5.6 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Indo-Aryan · **Where:** Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh · **Bible:** Hindi is used

One What the language holds

Bundeli is counted as a dialect of Hindi. It carries the **Alha**, a long heroic ballad sung in the rainy season, which has been performed for some eight hundred years.

Two What the tradition holds

The pan-Indian material stands. Bundelkhand holds the Khajuraho temples, whose sculpture covers the whole range of human life including its generation, placed on the outside walls of places of worship.

Three At the seams

Met in Hindi. The crossing at Day 6 verse 15 into verse 16, the blessing into one flesh, meets a region whose temple walls make no separation between the sacred and the generative.

144. Croatian

Speakers: about 5.6 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Balto-Slavic · **Where:** Croatia, Bosnia · **Bible:** from 1831

One What the language holds

Croatian marks complete and ongoing action on every verb and has a vocative for addressing someone. It is written in Latin script.

Croatia kept the **Glagolitic** alphabet in liturgical use for centuries after the rest of the Slavic world moved to Cyrillic — the oldest Slavic alphabet, made expressly to carry scripture, survived longest here.

Two What the tradition holds

Glagolitic was permitted for the Mass in Croatian lands when Latin was required elsewhere, so ordinary people heard the liturgy in a Slavic tongue for a thousand years.

Croatian folk tradition calls the Pleiades **Vlasici**.

Three At the seams

Aspect touches every seam, and the vocative marks every act of address.

A Croatian reader belongs to a tradition that held onto a vernacular liturgy longer than almost anywhere in the Western church.

145. Danish

Speakers: about 5.5 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Germanic · **Where:** Denmark · **Bible:** Christian III, 1550

One What the language holds

Danish marks nouns as common or neuter and puts the definite article on the end. Its **stod**, a catch in the voice, distinguishes words that are otherwise alike.

Day 3 verse 7 reads **levende sjæl**.

Two What the tradition holds

The Norse material stands: Ginnungagap, Ymir, Ask and Embla made from wood on the shore, and Yggdrasil holding the worlds.

Denmark also holds **Kierkegaard**, who wrote at length on Abraham on the mountain, and whose question about what faith asks of a father and a son is put in Danish.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 3 verse 7 into verse 8 meets first humans made from trees and given breath.

The banner's own header cites Genesis 22 and the hand not laid on the son, which is the passage Kierkegaard spent a book on.

146. Minangkabau

Speakers: about 5.5 million · Family: Austronesian · Where: West Sumatra, Indonesia · Bible: partial

One What the language holds

Minangkabau is close to Malay and has two words for we, including and excluding the listener, so Day 6 verse 8 takes a position.

Two What the tradition holds

The largest matrilineal society in the world

Among the Minangkabau, property, house and lineage name pass from mother to daughter. A husband moves to his wife's household. Ancestral land is held by the women of the line and cannot be sold by an individual.

They are also strongly Muslim, and hold both together under the saying that custom rests on religion and religion rests on the Book.

Day 6 verse 16 says a man shall leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife. Among the Minangkabau that is what happens.

The **rumah gadang**, the great house, has a roof shaped like buffalo horns and belongs to the women of the family.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 6 verse 15 into verse 16, the blessing into one flesh, meets a people for whom the verse states their practice rather than reversing it.

The crossing at Day 6 verse 7 into verse 8 is forced by the language.

147. Wolof

Speakers: about 5.5 million first language, most of Senegal as second · **Family:** Niger-Congo, Atlantic · **Where:** Senegal, Gambia · **Bible:** from 1987

One What the language holds

Wolof sorts nouns into classes marked by a consonant that attaches to the article rather than the noun, which is unusual. It has no grammatical gender.

It is written in Latin script officially and in **Wolofal**, an Arabic script, in religious use, and much devotional literature exists only in the latter.

Two What the tradition holds

Teranga is the Wolof word for hospitality, and Senegal is known by it. A guest is fed before questions are asked.

The Sufi orders, above all the Mouride and Tijani, shape daily life, and **Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba**, who taught non-violence under colonial rule, is central to Senegalese memory.

The **griot** holds genealogies and histories and may speak what others may not.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 3 verse 11 into the garden, where the man is placed and given leave to eat freely, meets a people whose word for who they are is hospitality.

The crossing at Day 3 verse 2 into verse 3 meets the griot tradition of held genealogies.

148. Finnish

Speakers: about 5.4 million · **Family:** Uralic · **Where:** Finland · **Bible:** Agricola's New Testament 1548; full Bible 1642

One What the language holds

Finnish is Uralic, unrelated to the Germanic and Slavic languages around it and related to Hungarian at a great distance. It has no grammatical gender and one pronoun for he and she.

It has fifteen cases, builds long words by adding endings, and has no future tense — what will happen is said in the present.

Mikael Agricola made the first Finnish written works in order to translate scripture, and the language's literary existence begins there.

Two What the tradition holds

The world from broken eggs

In the **Kalevala**, compiled from oral poetry in the nineteenth century, **Ilmatar** floats alone on the waters. A bird seeking somewhere to nest settles on her raised knee and lays its eggs.

The eggs roll off and break. From the pieces come the earth and the sky, and from the yolk the sun, and from the white the moon, and from the speckled parts the stars.

The sun, the moon and the stars out of one broken thing.

The Kalevala's other great theme is the **sampo**, a made thing that produces without end, and the word, since its heroes contend by singing rather than by striking.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 4 verse 2 and verse 7, the lights made and set and called good, meets a tradition where sun, moon and stars come from the same broken shell.

Finnish having no future tense means the whole account is narrated in a language that does not grammatically separate what will be from what is.

149. Kalenjin

Speakers: about 5.3 million · **Family:** Nilo-Saharan, Nilotic · **Where:** Kenya · **Bible:** from 1960s

One What the language holds

Kalenjin is Nilotic, not Bantu, so it does not have the noun class system of its Kenyan neighbours. It is tonal and marks number in ways that differ from the Bantu pattern.

The divine name is **Asis**, which is also the word for the sun.

Two What the tradition holds

Asis being both God and the sun means prayer was made facing the rising sun. Day 1 verse 5 calls the light good, and Day 4 verse 7 calls the greater light good; in Kalenjin the two verses touch the same word.

Kalenjin society is organised by age-sets, with a whole generation passing through together and the name of the set carried for life.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 1 verse 5, and again at Day 4 verse 7, meets a people whose word for God is the word for the sun.

The crossing at Day 3 verse 2 into verse 3, into the genealogical record, meets a people who count generations as named sets.

150. Norwegian

Speakers: about 5.3 million · **Family:** Indo-European, Germanic · **Where:** Norway · **Bible:** from 1858; modern versions in both written standards

One What the language holds

Norwegian has two official written standards, **bokmal** and **nynorsk**, the second built in the nineteenth century from rural dialects to give the country a written form not derived from Danish. Scripture exists in both.

So a Norwegian reader may meet the same seams in two written languages, both official, both Norwegian.

Pitch accent, definite article on the end of the noun, and **levende sjel** at Day 3 verse 7.

Two What the tradition holds

The Norse material stands: Ginnungagap the yawning void, Ymir divided to make the world, Ask and Embla made from wood on the shore and given breath, and Yggdrasil.

Norway holds the stave churches, built of wood in the twelfth century with carved dragon heads on the gables — the older tradition carved onto the newer one.

Three At the seams

The crossing at Day 3 verse 7 into verse 8 meets first humans made from trees and given breath by a god.

The crossing at Day 3 verse 10 into verse 11 meets Yggdrasil, a tree holding the worlds.

Cross Linguistic Study of the New Creation Story / Man on Day Three in Genesis — languages 101 through 150
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