

repeatable, observable phenomena; origin science is not. Operation science is tested by falsifiability. Origin science is evaluated by plausibility. Operation science is based on the belief that the universe was created by a Creator who did not capriciously interfere with the laws of nature that He created. Therefore, acts of God are disallowed in operation science. However, the authors contend that the assumption that

God must be excluded from origin science is merely assumed by workers in the field and has never been demonstrated.

The case for the origin of life via chemical evolution as generally presented, especially in persuasive presentations for general consumption, sounds plausible. But by the very nature of origin science, it cannot be falsified and

'its apparent plausibility can easily be exaggerated beyond its true status as speculation and be regarded instead as knowledge.'

The authors do not apply this opinion to the gigantic extrapolations used in radiometric dating, the dates from which are also easily exaggerated beyond their true status as speculation.

I strongly recommend this book to anyone interested in chemical evolution.

Genesis and the Mystery Confucius Couldn't Solve

by Ethel R. Nelson and Richard E. Broadberry
Concordia Publishing House, 1994

Reviewed by Russell M. Grigg

'Of old in the beginning, there was the great chaos, without form and dark. The five elements [planets] had not begun to revolve, nor the sun and moon to shine. You, O Spiritual Sovereign first divided the grosser parts from the purer. You made heaven. You made earth. You made man. All things with their reproducing power got their being.'

This reads something like a summary of the creation account in Genesis chapter 1. In fact, it is from the Chinese book **Shu Ching** or **Book of History**, compiled by Confucius (551–479 bc). It is part of a ceremony called the Border Sacrifice in which bullocks were sacrificed in worship of *ShangTi*, the Heavenly Ruler. This ceremony dates back to the Emperor Shun in 2230 bc, immediately following the dispersion of the nations from Babel. It was held annually for over 4,000 years, at first on the border of China, and then from the 15th century AD in Beijing, until the deposal of the Manchu Dynasty in a d 1911.

By the time of Confucius, some

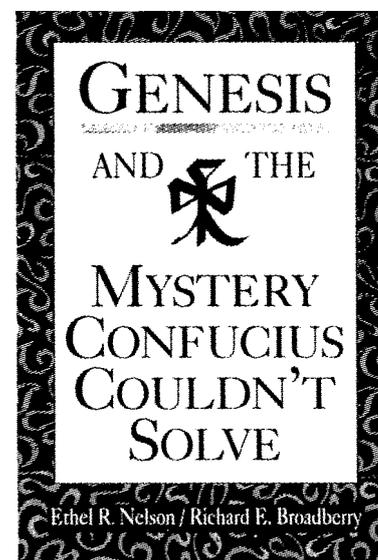
1800 years after the inauguration of the ceremony, its meaning had been lost, although Confucius himself wrote,

'He who understands the ceremonies of the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth . . . would find the government of a kingdom as easy as to look into his palm.'

The mystery, therefore, that Confucius could not solve was: Who was *ShangTi* and why was worship of him so important?

The authors of this book develop the thesis that the ancient Chinese were monotheists and that *ShangTi* was the Lord God Almighty, whose actions in history and interactions with humanity are described in the early chapters of Genesis, and who was self-existing, eternal and spirit — there was no image of him in the Temple of Heaven in Beijing. Compare this with the Hebrew *Shaddai* (Almighty), which is phonetically similar to *ShangTi*, especially in the Cantonese dialect, which pronounces, the name. *ShangDai*, and which is thought to be the closest to the original spoken Chinese.

Polytheism came with the



introduction of Confucianism and Taoism after the 6th century bc, followed by Buddhism from India in the 1st century bc, and *ShangTi* was largely forgotten as the one and only God of the Chinese. However, all traces and knowledge of the original God of China have not been erased. The authors believe that a beautiful history of the beginnings of the human race has been preserved in the ancient character-writing of the Chinese language, which was invented simultaneously with the development of the early Chinese culture.

The earliest form of writing in Egypt, Sumeria, China and other countries of the ancient world was in picture words (pictographs). The inventor of the Chinese pictographs found that by combining two or more

pictographs a story could be related and, thus, a new idea expressed. In this way the ideograph (idea-in-writing) character was born. Familiar historical events of a sacred nature, such as the creation of the first man and woman, the original relationship between God and people, how sin began and God's remedy for it, etc. appear to have been incorporated into ideographs.

As the Chinese writing has been modified over the centuries to the present 'shorthand' form of the pictographs and the ancient forms are more pictographic, the authors examine the most ancient character forms known, namely the bronzeware script used on ceremonial vessels dating back to the Shang dynasty (1771–1122 BC), and the ancient oracle bone script written on bones and tortoise shells that were used for the purposes of divination. In the following examples the ancient forms are used.

A bronzeware form of the radical *to produce, bring forth, create* shows God with arms upraised and the earth or dust. The character *to speak, to tell* combines *to create* with a mouth, so that within the one character we find all the elements of creation: God creates from the earth by speaking with his mouth (see Figure 1.1).

From the Chinese writing, we learn that in the *beginning* there were just *two persons* on earth, and that the original couple had sinless characters (see Figure 1.2).

The character for *ancestor, prototype* calls to mind that Eve was the mother of all living. Combined with the God radical it indicates that *ShangTi* is the ultimate ancestor in whose image Adam and Eve had been created (see Figure 1.3).

The character for *garden* is made up of God with upraised arms, on the summit of a *mountain*; below is a *mouth* representing communion, and beneath this are *two persons*, the second emerging from the side of the first. The garden is *enclosed* by a boundary (see Figure 1.4).

In the character for *to restrain, control* we find a *mouth* for eating superimposed on a *tree*. The tree symbol

slashes through the mouth radical suggests, 'Don't eat; control yourself!'. The Chinese combined this character with the *God* radical to express that God's command was the law (see Figure 1.5).

The authors describe over 200 characters, the meanings of which they trace back to the first chapters of Genesis. A small number of these are additions to the details given in Genesis and no doubt crept into the story with time as the Chinese culture developed without access to the original Hebrew Scriptures (although the authors do not actually state this). Examples are: that there was a mountain within the Garden of Eden where the two trees were located and where Adam and Eve went to worship God (a possibility also hinted at in a number of biblical passages), that the animal from which God provided coats for Adam and Eve was slain by Adam with a knife, that the time of expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden was in the evening, that the garden had a gate, and that Adam and Eve subsequently came to this gate to offer sacrifices and to enquire of God

at the border of the garden.

This latter point is the origin of the Border Sacrifice offered in China for over 4,000 years, which is the mystery Confucius couldn't solve. The authors go on to show from the Gospels that Jesus was the fulfilment of God's plan of redemption for the human race and that the Chinese emperors continued the annual offering of bulls at their Border Sacrifice ceremonies in ignorance of this.

In the appendix the authors discuss the dates of the biblical Flood and the dispersion from Babel, and compare this with the 'Legendary Period of Five Rulers' prior to the first Chinese dynasty in 2205 BC, during which time a ruler, Shun by name (c.2230 BC) 'sacrificed to *ShangTi*'. They suggest that these five patriarchs in the Chinese family were in fact Noah, Shem, Arphaxad, Salah and Eber, the patriarchs of the five generations between the Flood and the Tower of Babel, thereby providing the link between the Chinese pictographs and the Genesis account of origins.

A very interesting book with some intriguing linguistic data which the

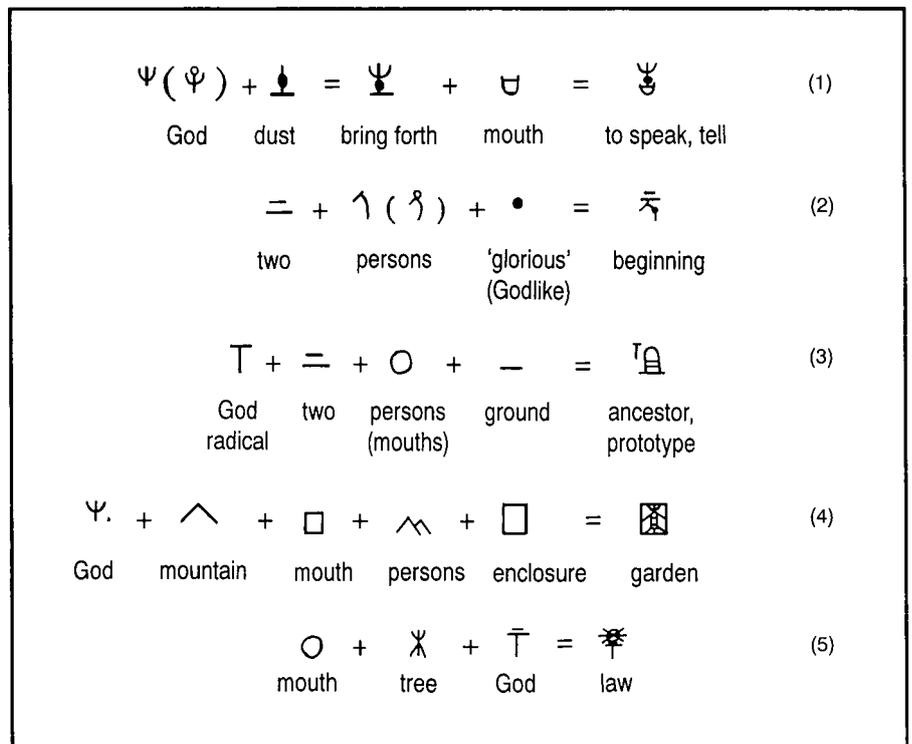


Figure 1. Examples of the suggested derivation of some Chinese pictographs from the presumed constituent radicals.

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authors present as evidence of how the knowledge of the true God could have spread to China following the Babel Dispersion. Should it be taken as adding to our knowledge of what actually happened to Adam and Eve both inside and outside the Garden of Eden?

Perhaps this is a mystery which each discerning reader must solve for himself or herself!

I can recommend this book to all students of human history, and particularly anyone who is interested or involved with evangelism amongst

ethnic Chinese speakers. It is fascinating to read, but its insights connecting the Chinese language and people back to Genesis should be useful as a 'bridge-builder' in evangelism. Some missionaries already use this strategy.

QUOTABLE QUOTE: The Big Bang Theory

'Despite widespread acceptance of the big bang theory as a working model for interpreting new findings, not a single important prediction of the theory has yet been confirmed, and substantial evidence has accumulated against it. . . . We conclude that the evidence does not support the theory, and that it is time to stop patching up the theory to keep it viable, and to consider fundamentally new working models for the origin and nature of the universe in better agreement with the observations.'

Van Flandern, T., 1994. Did the universe have a beginning?
Meta Research Bulletin, 3, p. 25.

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