

Solar Folklore and Storytelling

As described in the Stanford Solar Center:

<http://solar-center.stanford.edu/folklore/>



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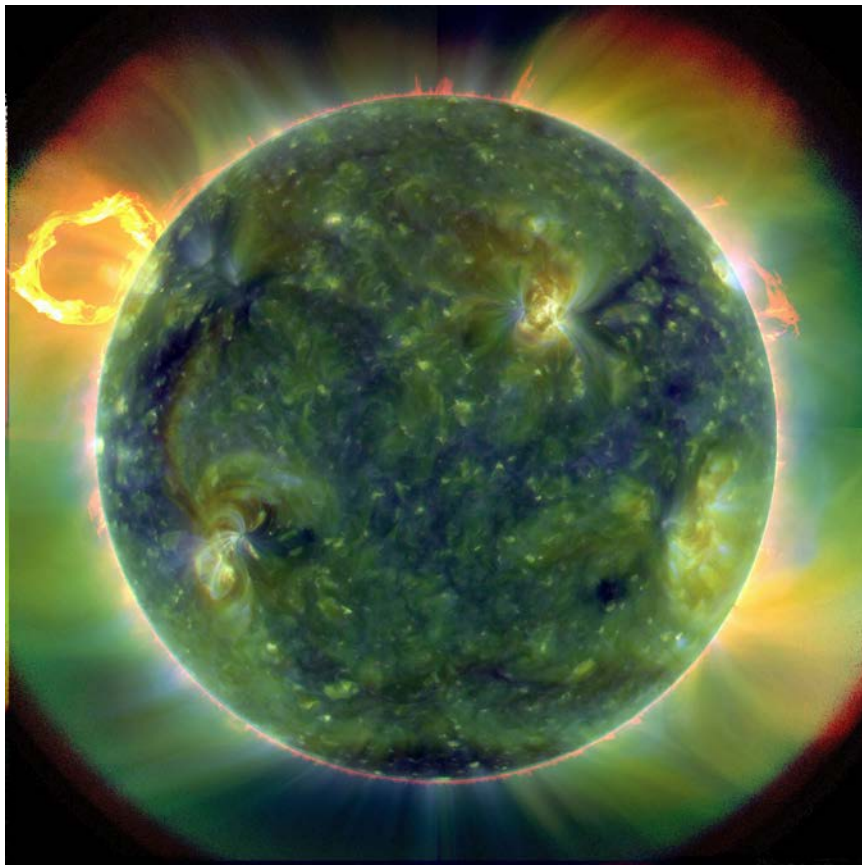
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Solar Folklore & Storytelling

For centuries, humans have attempted to explain the Sun in terms of their own worldviews. The Sun can be a god, a demon, a mischievous spirit, an omnipotent creator or a ruthless taker of life. Whatever role it plays, most cultures have recognized the significance of the Sun as prime controller of all life on Earth.

As you read these, remember they were not stories created to entertain, nor were they written for children. These myths, legends and accounts represent their culture's worldview, a peoples' attempt to explain, understand, and come to grips with nature's phenomena. To the people who tell them, these reports are as relevant and true, as deeply meaningful and spiritually important, as any scientific explanations.

These
also



stories are
online at:

<http://solar-center.stanford.edu/folklore/>

Image courtesy of NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory, AIA Instrument

Cover image credit: Kinstaadaal © 2007

http://shotridgestudios.com/store/agora.cgi?p_id=1006&cart_id=7456096.392*PL6EW2&xm=on&ppinc=1a

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Indigenous American

North American



Why There is Day and Night

Title: Why There is Day and Night

Region: Variants found throughout North American Indian lore

Object: Sun, daytime, nighttime

Source: [Lynn Moroney](#): used with permission

Image: The raven is a head-dress produced by the Haida tribe. It is owned by the Department of Anthropology, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institutes. Washington D.C. The photographer is Don Eiler. Nanabozho (rabbit) is the Ojibwe trickster figure and culture hero (these two archetypes are often combined into a single figure in First Nations mythologies). From <http://flavorwire.com/148411/chinese-new-year-2011-rabbit/comment-page-1>, no attribution given.

“Before there were people, there were only the animals and the birds. And in those days, the day and the night were exactly the same. One time, when Rabbit was going along, he began to think about the days and the nights and how they were alike and how there wasn't enough light. And then, in a loud voice, he said, ‘There is not enough light. I cannot see where I'm going. I need more light.’

“Just then, Rabbit heard a voice, and it said, ‘There is plenty of light.’ Rabbit could not see who was talking and so he called out ‘Who is there, who is speaking to me?’ ‘It is I. It is Owl. And I say there is enough light in the world.’ Then Rabbit said, ‘Well I say there is not enough light, and I will call the animals together. We will have a council. And I will ask them. I will ask them if they think there is enough light and they will agree with me and then you will know that there is not enough light in the world.’ But then Owl said, ‘I will invite all the birds of the air. We will join in the council and then you will see that the birds will agree with me and then you will note that there is enough light in the world.’



“Well, all the animals and all the birds came together and they all sat around in a great circle and waited for Rabbit and Owl to speak. Rabbit stepped forward and said ‘There is not enough light in the world. We need more light.’ Then Owl stepped forward and then he said, ‘There is too much light. We do not need more light.’

“Well, with that, all the animals and birds began to talk to one another. Bear said that there was way too much light, that he liked to sleep in the dark and, if there were more light, it would interrupt his rest. Some of the birds said that they wanted more light so that they could see to gather twigs for their nests. Raccoon said that he agreed with Owl. Raccoon did not want light. Frog said that there was enough light, and that he couldn't sing well when there was too much light. Then Buffalo said that, with so little light, he couldn't find enough grass and that he was often hungry. Then all of the animals and birds began to talk at once. Some of them agreed with Owl and some of them agreed with Rabbit.

“Finally, Rabbit and Owl decided that they would settle the argument by seeing which of them had the strongest medicine. And whoever had the greatest power, well, that person would have his way. So Owl began to say ‘Night, night, night, night.’ And then Rabbit spoke faster, ‘Light, light, light, light.’ And then Owl spoke even faster, ‘Night, night, night, night.’ Rabbit's friends warned him, ‘Rabbit, do not say Owl's word, or it will be night all the time.’, And Owls' friends warned him, ‘Owl, be careful. Do not say Rabbit's word or there will be light all the time.’

“Owl was saying ‘Night, night, night, night, night, night, night, night....’ when he heard his friends say the word ‘light’. And he accidentally said, ‘Night, night, night, night, light ... oh, oh,’ said Owl. But it was too late, he had already said the word ‘light’.

“And so it was that Rabbit won. And since that time, the day has had lots of light. But because some of the animals could not hunt or sleep with so much light, Rabbit declared that part of the time would be night after all. And that is why, in these days, we have both day and night. “

Raven and the Sun

Title: Raven and the Sun

Tribe: Tsimshian

Region: Northwest

Object: Sun

Source: Legend courtesy of [Starlore of Native America](#), assembled by Brad Snowden. Used with permission.

Image: <http://maria-jaujou.deviantart.com/art/Raven-Stealing-the-Sun-Tattoo-40797754>



“Once the sky had no day. When the sky was clear there was some light from the stars but when it was cloudy it was very dark. Raven had put fish in the rivers and fruit trees in the land but he was saddened by the darkness. The Sun at that time was kept in a box by a chief in the sky. The Raven came to a hole in the sky and went through. He came to a spring where the chief's daughter would fetch water. He changed himself into a cedar

seed and floated on the water. When the girl drank from spring she swallowed the seed without noticing and became pregnant. A boy child was born which was really Raven. As a toddler he begged to play with the yellow ball that grandfather kept in a box. He was allowed to play with the Sun and when the chief looked away he turned back into Raven and flew back through the hole in the sky., bringing the Sun to our world.”

Three-legged Rabbit

Title: Three Legged Rabbit

Tribe: Western Rocky

Region: Rocky Mts.

Objects: Sun, Moon, Stars

Source: Legend adaption courtesy of [Starlore of Native America](#), assembled by Brad Snowden



A three legged rabbit made himself a fourth leg from wood. The rabbit thought the Sun was too hot for comfort so he went to see what could be done. He went east at night to the place where the Sun would rise. When the Sun was half way up the Rabbit shot it with an arrow. As the Sun lay wounded on the ground the Rabbit took the white of the Sun’s eyes and made the clouds. He made the black part of the eyes into the sky, the kidneys into stars, and the liver into the Moon, and the heart into the night. "There!" said the Rabbit, "You will never be too hot again."

Coyote and Eagle Steal the Sun and Moon

Title: Coyote and Eagle Steal the Sun and Moon

Tribe: Zuni

Region: New Mexico, Arizona

Object: Sun, Moon

Source: Legend retelling courtesy of [Starlore of Native America](#), assembled by Brad Snowden. See also <http://www.manataka.org/page785.html>

Image: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EwyVDadt7QE>



Back when it was always dark, it was also always summer. Coyote and Eagle went hunting. Coyote was a poor hunter because of the dark. They came to the Kachinas, a powerful people. The Kachinas had the Sun and the Moon in a box. After the people had gone to sleep the two animals stole the box. At first Eagle carried the box but Coyote convinced his friend to let him carry it. The curious Coyote opened the box and the Sun and Moon escaped and flew up to the sky. This gave light to the land but it also took away much of the heat, thus we now have winter.

Boy and the Sun

Title: Boy and the Sun

Tribe: Hopi

Region: Northern Arizona

Object: Sun, Moon, Milky Way

Source: Legend from [Starlore of Native America](#), assembled by Brad Snowden. Used with permission.

Image: Hopi Sun Symbol

<https://www.pinterest.com/ziads1/hopi-designs/>



A boy once lived with his mother's mother for he didn't know who his father was. His grandmother said to ask the Sun about his father, surely the Sun would know. One morning the boy made a flour of crushed tortoise shell, cornmeal, coral, and seashells. He threw the flour upwards and it made a path into the sky (Milky Way). He climbed the path and when he found the Sun he asked "Who is my father?" and the Sun replied, "You have much to learn." The boy fell to Earth. He then made a wooden box from a Cottonwood tree and sealed himself in it as it floated west down a river to find the Sun again. The box washed ashore where two rivers join. He was freed from the box by a young female rattlesnake. Together they traveled west to find the Sun. They saw a meteor fall into the sea on its way to the Sun's house. They asked it for a ride. In this way they made it to the Sun's house. There they met the Sun's mother (the Moon) who was working on a piece of turquoise. That evening when the Sun came home from his days work, the boy asked again, "Who is my father?" And then the Sun replied "I think I am."

Creation of Light

Title: Creation of Light

Tribe: Cherokee

Region: Southeastern United States

Source:

http://cherokeerose.socialparadox.com/mod/groups/topi_cposts.php?topic=32263&group_guid=30859

Object: Sun

Image:

http://cherokeerose.socialparadox.com/mod/groups/topi_cposts.php?topic=32263&group_guid=30859



When the Earth was dry, the animals came down. It was still dark, so they got the Sun and set it in a track to go across the island east to west every day. It was too hot this way and the Red Crawfish had his shell scorched to a bright red and it spoiled the meat. The Cherokee do not eat it.

The conjurers raised the Sun again and again seven times until it was right and left it there. Every day the Sun goes along this arch and returns at night to the starting place.

The Theft from the Sun

Title: The theft from the Sun

Tribe: Siksika / Blackfoot

Region: Alberta, Canada

Object: Sun

Source: <http://www.native-languages.org/blackfoot-legends.htm>

Image: <http://siksikanation.com/wp/>



Naato'si is the Blackfoot sun god, ruler of the Sky People.

"Naato'si" literally means "holy one," though it is often used to refer to the Sun in everyday speech as well. Naato'si is married to the Moon, Komorkis, and his son is the hero Morning Star, Ipisowaahs.

Once Old Man was traveling around, when he came to the Sun's lodge, and the Sun asked him to stay awhile. Old Man was very glad to do so. One day the meat was all done, and the Sun said, "Kyi! Old Man, what say you we go and kill some deer?" "You speak well," replied Old Man. "I like deer meat."

The Sun took down a bag and pulled out a beautiful pair of leggings. They were embroidered with porcupine quills and bright feathers. "These," said the Sun, "are my hunting leggings. They are great medicine. All I have to do is put them on and walk around a patch of brush, when the leggings set it on fire and drive the deer out so I can shoot them." "Hai-yah!" exclaimed Old Man. "How wonderful!" He made up his mind he would have those leggings, even if he had to steal them.

They went out to hunt, and the first patch of brush they came to, the Sun set on fire with his hunting leggings. A lot of white-tail deer ran out, and they each shot one. That night, when they went to bed, the Sun pulled off his leggings and placed them to one side.

Old Man saw where he put them, and in the middle of the night, when everyone else was asleep, he stole them and went off. He traveled a long time, until he had gone far and was very tired and then, making a pillow of the leggings, lay down and slept.

In the morning, he heard someone talking. The Sun was saying, "Old Man, why are my leggings under your head? He looked around, and saw he was in the Sun's lodge, and thought he must have wandered around and got lost, and returned there. Again the Sun spoke, and said, "What are you doing with my leggings?" "Oh," replied Old Man, "I couldn't find anything for a pillow, so I just put these under my head."

Night came again, and again Old Man stole the leggings and ran off. This time he did not walk at all, he just kept running until pretty near morning, and then lay down and slept.

You see what a fool he was. He did not know that the whole world is the Sun's lodge. He did not know that, no matter how far he ran, he could not get out of Sun's sight.

When morning came, he found himself still in the Sun's lodge. But this time the Sun said: "Old Man, since you like my leggings so much, I will give them to you. Keep them." Then Old Man was very glad and went away.

One day his food was all gone, so he put on the medicine leggings and set fire to a piece of brush. He was just going to kill one deer that was running out when he saw that the fire was getting close to him. He ran away as fast as he could but the fire gained on him and began to burn his legs. His leggings were all on fire. He came to a river and jumped in, and pulled off the leggings as soon as he could. They were burned to pieces.

Perhaps the Sun did this to him because he tried to steal his leggings.

Sun and Her Daughter

Title: Sun and her Daughter

Tribe: Cherokee

Region: Tennessee, North Carolina

Object: Sun, Moon, Sun Dance

Source: Legend from [Starlore of Native America](#), assembled by Brad Snowder. Used with permission.

As the Sun traveled across the sky she would stop in the middle each day to have dinner at her daughter's house. Now the Sun hated people because they would always squint when they looked at her. "They screw up their faces at me!" she told her brother the Moon. "I like them," said the Moon, "they always smile at me." The Sun was jealous and decided she would kill the people by sending a fever. Many people were dying and those remaining decided they would have to kill the Sun. With some magic, one of the people was turned into a rattlesnake and sent to wait by the daughter's door, to bite the Sun when she stopped for dinner. But when the daughter opened the door to look for her mother, the snake bit her instead. The snake returned to Earth with the Sun still alive and the daughter dead. When the Sun discovered what had happened she shut herself up in the house and

grieved. The people no longer had the fever but now it was cold and dark. So, seven people were chosen to visit the land where ghosts dance to see if they could retrieve the daughter. As she danced past them they struck her with rods so she fell down, then they trapped her in a box. On the trip home she complained of not being able to breathe so they opened the lid just a crack. She became a redbird and escaped, flying back to the land of ghosts. Seeing the seven people return empty handed, the Sun began to cry. This caused a great flood. To amuse the Sun and stop the flood, the people danced.



This is why the people do the Sun dance to this very day.

Spider and the Sun

Title: Spider and the Sun

Tribe: Cherokee

Region: Tennessee, North

Object: Sun, Milky Way

Source: Legend from [Starlore of Native America](#), assembled by Brad Snowden. Used with permission. See also

<http://www.playrific.com/m/4690/grandmother-spider-steals-the-sun-indian-folk-tale>

Image: <http://www.playrific.com/m/4690/grandmother-spider-steals-the-sun-indian-folk-tale>



In the beginning there was only darkness and people kept bumping into each other. Fox said that people on the other side of the world had plenty of light but were too greedy to share it. Possum went over there to steal a little piece of the light. He found the Sun hanging in a tree, lighting everything up. He took a tiny piece of the Sun and hid it in the fur of his tail. The heat burned the fur off his tail. That is why possums have bald tails. Buzzard tried next. He tried to hide a piece of Sun in the feathers of his head. That is why buzzards have bald heads. Grandmother Spider tried next. She made a clay bowl. Then she spun a web (Milky Way) across the sky reaching to the other side of the world. She snatched up the whole Sun in the clay bowl and took it back home to our side of the world.

Little Brother Snares the Sun

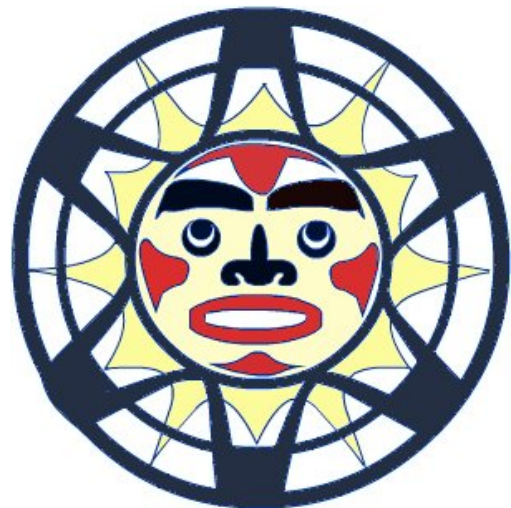
Title: Little Brother Snares the Sun
Tribe: Winnebago (Hotcak)
Region: Michigan
Object: Sun
Source: Legend from [Starlore of Native America](#), assembled by Brad Snowder.
Used with permission
Image: <http://www.sundance.tv/series/the-red-road/videos/the-red-road-up-next-episode-6-snaring-of-the-sun>



In the old days people were not the chiefs and did not hunt animals. Animals were the chiefs and hunted people. They killed all the people except one girl and her little brother. They hid in a cave. The boy learned to kill snowbirds with a bow and arrow and made a robe from the feathers. They made soup from the bodies of the birds and that was the first time people ate meat. The bright Sun ruined the robe one day and the little brother swore revenge. His sister helped him fashion a snare. He traveled to the hole in the ground where the Sun rises every morning. As the Sun rose he snared it and tied it up so that there was no light or warmth that day. The animals were afraid and amazed by the boy. They sent the biggest and most fearsome animal to try to free the Sun. This was Door Mouse, who in those days was as big as a mountain. The mouse chewed through the snare freeing the Sun but meanwhile the intense heat shrunk him down to his present size. Since that time the people have been the chiefs and the hunters.

One Who Walks all Over the Sky

Title: Walks All Over the Sky
Tribe: Tsimshian
Region: Pacific Northwest
Object: Sun, Moon, Stars
Source: Legend from [Starlore of Native America](#), assembled by Brad Snowder. Used with permission.
See also:
<http://chronos.plutospeaks.info/class/barb.html>
Image:
<http://chronos.plutospeaks.info/class/barb.html>



Back when the sky was completely dark there was a chief with two sons, a younger son, One Who Walks All Over the Sky, and an older son, Walking About Early. The younger son was sad to see the sky always so dark so he made a mask out of wood and pitch (the

Sun) and lit it on fire. Each day he travels across the sky. At night he sleeps below the horizon and when he snores sparks fly from the mask and make the stars. The older brother became jealous. To impress their father he smeared fat and charcoal on his face (the Moon) and makes his own path across the sky.

Tsohanoai, the Navaho Sun God

Title: Tsohanoai

Tribe: Navaho

Region: American southwest

Object: Sun

Source:

http://www.windows2universe.org/mythology/tsohanoai_sun.html

Image:

<http://pueblosoriginarios.com/norte/suroeste/navajo/tsohanoai.html>



For the Navajo Indians of North America, Tsohanoai is the Sun god. Every day, he crosses the sky, carrying the Sun on his back. At night, Tsohanoai lets the Sun rest by hanging it on a peg in his house.

Tsohanoai's two children Nayenezgani (Killer of Enemies) and Tobadzistsini (Child of Water) were separated from their father and lived with their mother in the far West. Once they were older, they tried to find their father, hoping he could help them fight the evil spirits tormenting mankind. They met Spider Woman, who gave them two feathers to keep them safe on their journey. Finally, they found Tsohanoai's house, and he gave them magic arrows to fight off the evil monsters, Anaye.

For more Indigenous American starlore, see

[Starlore of Native America](#)

<http://www.firstpeople.us/>

Mezo & South American

Fifth World

Title: The Fifth World

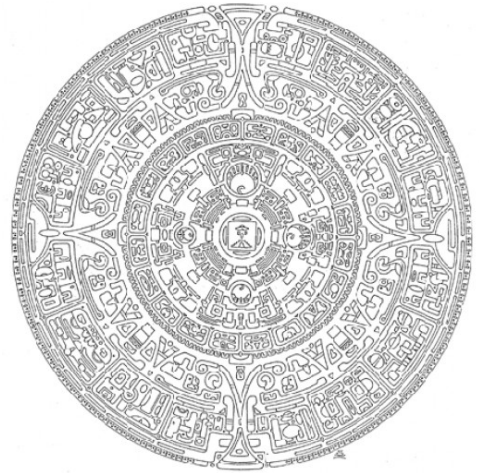
Tribe: Toltec

Region: Central America

Source: Legend from [Starlore of Native America](#), assembled by Brad Snowden. Used with permission.

Object: Sun, Earth

Image: <http://hubpages.com/hub/The-Mysterious-Toltec#>



Five worlds and five Suns were created, one after the other. The first world was destroyed because its people acted wrongfully. They were eaten by ocelots and the Sun destroyed. The second Sun saw its people turned into monkeys due to lack of wisdom. The third Sun had its world destroyed by fire, earthquakes, and volcanoes because the people didn't make sacrifices to the gods. The fourth world perished in a flood that also drowned its Sun. Before creating the fifth world, our world, the gods met in the darkness to see who would have the honor of igniting the fifth Sun. Tecciztecatl volunteered. The gods built a big fire on top of a pyramid and the volunteer prepared to throw himself into the flames. He was dressed in beautiful hummingbird feathers, and gold and turquoise. Four times he tried to force himself into the suicidal fire but each time his fear drove him back. Then the lowliest of all the gods, Nanautzin, dressed in humble reeds, threw himself into the fire. Tecciztecatl was so ashamed that he too jumped into the fire. The new Sun rose into the sky giving light to the fifth world.

Huitzilopochtli

Title: Huitzilopochtli

Tribe: Aztec

Region: Central America

Source:

http://www.windows2universe.org/mythology/huitzilopochtli_sun.html

Object: Sun, Moon

Image: Sketch based on a drawing from the Florentine Codex, a sixteenth-century colonial manuscript compiled by Fray Bernardino de Sahagun.



Huitzilopochtli, whose name means "Blue Hummingbird on the Left," was the Aztec god of the Sun and war. He was shown as a blue man fully armed with hummingbird feathers on his head.

His mother Coatlicue became pregnant with Huitzilopochtli when a ball of feathers fell from the heaven and touched her. Huitzilopochtli's siblings thought that their mother Coatlicue had dishonored them with her mysterious pregnancy. One sister of Huitzilopochtli, Coyolxauhqui, encouraged her star sisters and brothers to kill their mother Coatlicue. However, Huitzilopochtli sprang out of his mother and saved her.

Coatlicue regretted such violence. Thus, Huitzilopochtli cut off Coyolxauhqui's head and threw it in the sky to become the Moon.

Aztecs used to offer human sacrifices to Huitzilopochtli. The victims were usually prisoners captured in the frequent wars that Aztecs were fighting against their neighbors. The sacrifices were intended to secure rain, harvests and success in war. The most common form of sacrifice practiced by Aztecs was to tear out the heart of a living body and offer it to the Sun.

Inti, the Incan Sun God

Title: Inti, the Incan Sun God

Tribe: Incan

Region: Peru

Object: Sun god. Sun clock

Image: <https://www.pinterest.com/bappl/inti-raymi-peruvian-farvest-festival/>

Machu Picchu image courtesy of Deborah Scherrer



The Inca Empire was the largest empire in pre-Columbian America. The Inca were an advanced and mostly peaceful group of people living in the area of what is now Peru. The Inca venerated their dead and considered the royal family to be semi-divine, descended from the Sun. Inti was considered the Sun god and the ancestor of the Incas. Inti and his wife Pachamama, the Earth goddess, were regarded as benevolent deities. The Inti's wife was the Moon. According to an ancient Inca myth, Inti taught his son Manco Capac and his daughter Mama Ocollo the arts of civilization and sent them to the Earth to instruct mankind about what they had learned.

Inti ordered his children to build the Inca capital where a divine golden wedge they carried with them would fall to the ground. Incas believed this happened in the area of Cuzco, the ancient capital of the Incan world.

Inti is celebrated even today in Peru during the Festival of Inti Raimi in Cuzco. Inti Raymi, meaning "resurrection of the Sun", and it is Latin America's second largest festival. It is celebrated every year on June 24th, and was once the most important ceremonial day of the Inca Empire. See <https://www.pinterest.com/bappl/inti-raymi-peruvian-farvest-festival/>.

In the remains of the ancient Incan city of Machu Picchu, it is possible to see a shadow clock that describes the course of the Sun through the day and seasons. The Sun God Inti was thought to be tethered to this "hitching post" to keep the god connected to the people.



Greenland / Inuit

Malina

Title: Malina

Tribe: Inuit

Region: Greenland

Objects: Sun, Moon

Source:

http://www.windows2universe.org/mythology/malina_sun.html

Image: Wiki Commons



Malina is the Sun goddess of the Inuit people who live in Greenland. The word "Inuit" means "people."

Malina and her brother, the Moon god Anningan, lived together. They got into a terrible fight and Malina spread dirty, black grease all over her brother's face. In fear, she ran as far as she could into the sky and became the Sun. Anningan chased after her and became the Moon.

Anningan often forgets to eat, so he gets thinner as the days go by. Every month, the Moon disappears for three days while Anningan eats. He then returns to chase his sister once again.

This eternal chase makes the Sun alternate in the sky with the Moon.

Indigenous Australian / Aborigine

No one knows what the earliest humans thought about the sky, for no records exist. However, the cultures of the Australian Aborigines, which have been passed down via legends, songs, and dances for more than 40,000 years, give us a glimpse of how these earliest known astronomers may have interpreted the Sun and stars.

The Indigenous people of Australia, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, represent the world's oldest and most long-lived cultures, a heritage rich in wisdom and insight. Before European intrusion, indigenous peoples inhabited most areas of the Australian continent. With more than 700 separate languages, distinctive lifestyles, and religious and cultural traditions in different regions, these adaptable and creative peoples had complex social systems with highly developed traditions reflecting their deep connection with the land and environment. Their view of the cosmos is based on their concept of the



Dreaming -- a distant past when the Spirit Ancestors created the world. Aboriginal songs, dances, and tales convey how, long ago, the Spirit Ancestors created the natural world and entwined the people into a close interrelationship with nature and the sky. For more information see the Australian Museum's website [Indigenous Australia](http://www.ciolek.com/WWVVL-Aboriginal.html) and <http://www.ciolek.com/WWVVL-Aboriginal.html>.

An Aborigines View of the Sun and Moon

Title: An Aborigines View of the Sun and Moon

Tribe: Aborigine

Region: Australia

Source: legend described by Roslynn Haynes, in *Sky and Telescope*, September 1997. pp. 72-75.

Object: Sun, Moon

Image: [Malcolm Jagamara](http://cauldronsandcupcakes.com/2014/01/21/eating-the-sun-meditation/) – “Inapaku dreaming” from

<http://cauldronsandcupcakes.com/2014/01/21/eating-the-sun-meditation/>

"To the Aborigines, the Sun was seen as a woman who awakes daily in her camp in the east, lights a fire, and prepares the bark torch she will carry across the sky. Before setting out, she decorates herself with red ocher, which she spills, coloring the clouds red. Upon reaching the west, she reapplies her paint, again spilling reds and yellows in the sky. The Sun-woman then begins a long passage underground back to her camp in the east. During this subterranean journey her torch warms the earth, causing plants to grow.



"The Moon, by contrast, was regarded as male. Because of the association of the lunar cycle with the female menstrual cycle, the Moon was linked with fertility and was accorded great magical status. A solar eclipse was interpreted as the Moon-man uniting with the Sun-woman."

Australian Aborigine Creation Myth

Title: Australian Aborigine Creation Myth

Tribe: Aborigine

Region: Australia

Source: http://dept.cs.williams.edu/~lindsey/myths/myths_13.html

Object: Sun, Moon, Earth

Image: http://dept.cs.williams.edu/~lindsey/myths/myths_13.html

[*verbatim from the source:*] There was a time when everything was still. All the spirits of the Earth were asleep - or almost all. The great Father of All Spirits was the only one awake. Gently he awoke the Sun Mother. As she opened her eyes a warm ray of light spread out towards the sleeping earth. The Father of All Spirits said to the Sun Mother,

"Mother, I have work for you. Go down to the Earth and awake the sleeping spirits. Give them forms."

The Sun Mother glided down to Earth, which was bare at the time and began to walk in all directions. Everywhere she walked plants grew. After returning to the field where she had begun her work the Mother rested, well pleased with herself. The Father of All Spirits came and saw her work, but instructed her to go into the caves and wake the spirits.

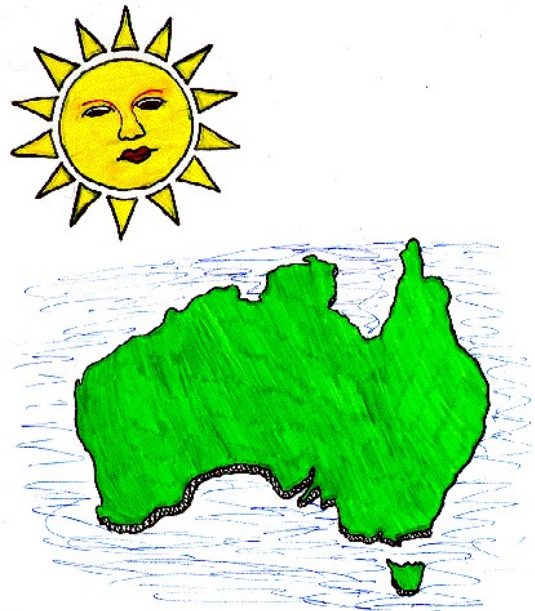
This time she ventured into the dark caves on the mountainsides. The bright light that radiated from her awoke the spirits and, after she left, insects of all kinds flew out of the caves. The Sun Mother sat down and watched the glorious sight of her insects mingling with her flowers. However once again the Father urged her on.

Next, the Mother ventured into a very deep cave, spreading her light around her. Her heat melted the ice and the rivers and streams of the world were created. Then she created fish and small snakes, lizards and frogs. Next she awoke the spirits of the birds and animals and they burst into the sunshine in a glorious array of colors. Seeing this the Father of All Spirits was pleased with the Sun Mother's work.

She called all her creatures to her and instructed them to enjoy the wealth of the Earth and to live peacefully with one another. Then she rose into the sky and became the Sun.

The living creatures watched the Sun in awe as she crept across the sky, towards the west. However when she finally sunk beneath the horizon they were panic-stricken, thinking she had deserted them. All night they stood frozen in their places, thinking that the end of time had come. After what seemed to them like a lifetime the Sun Mother peeked her head above the horizon in the East. The Earth's children learned to expect her coming and going and were no longer afraid.

At first the children lived together peacefully, but eventually envy crept into their hearts. They began to argue. The Sun Mother was forced to come down from her home in the sky to mediate their bickering. She gave each creature the power to change their form to whatever they chose. However she was not pleased with the end result. The rats she had made had changed into bats; there were giant lizards and fish with blue tongues and feet. However the oddest of the new animals was an animal with a bill like a duck, teeth for chewing, a tail like a beaver's, and the ability to lay eggs. It was called the platypus.



The Sun Mother looked down upon the Earth and thought to herself that she must create new creatures less the Father of All Spirits be angered by what she now saw. She gave birth to two children. The god was the Morning Star and the goddess was the Moon. Two children were born to them and these she sent to Earth. They became our ancestors. She made them superior to the animals because they had part of her mind and would never want to change their shape.

Story of the Aboriginal Flag and its Sun symbol

The Australian Aboriginal Flag was designed in 1971 by Aboriginal artist [Harold Thomas](#), who is descended from the Luritja people of Central Australia. The flag was originally designed for the land rights movement, and it eventually became a symbol of the Aboriginal people of Australia.

- Black – represents the Aboriginal people of Australia
- Yellow circle – represents the Sun, the giver of life and protector
- Red – represents the red Earth, the red ochre used in ceremonies and Aboriginal peoples' spiritual relationship with the land



The Middle East

Sumeria and Mesopotamia

Gilgamesh and the Sun

Title: Gilgamesh and the Sun

Region: Mesopotamia

Source:

Legend described by E. C. Krupp in *Sky and Telescope*, September 1997. pp. 80-81.

Object: Sun, Earth

Image: [Winged-Sun-Disk](#) Relief Depicting Gilgamesh Between Two Bull-Men Supporting a Winged Sun Disk, Fr. Tell-Halaf, Syria

Mesopotamia, in "the cradle of civilization", offers us the ancient *Epic of Galgamesh*, probably first composed around 2000 BC. In this ancient Sumerian story, Gilgamesh, king of Uruk, sets out on a quest for immortality to the Garden of the Sun, the land of everlasting life. To reach it, Gilgamesh must pass through the Sun's gate in the mountain of the horizon. The setting Sun disappears there and emerges from it at sunrise. A pair of terrifying scorpion-people stationed at the Gate of Heaven guard the Sun's path. But eventually Gilgamesh gains entrance to the next level.



E. C. Krupp postulates: "Around the 17th century BC., Mesopotamian boundary stones began to carry astronomical symbols, including that of the terrifying scorpion-man... Some scholars identify this creature as the Mesopotamian antecedent of Sagittarius, the Archer. Although no one is sure that the boundary stone scorpion-man is also meant to be the Sun's bodyguard at the gate of heaven, the constellation could have evolved from the earlier imagery through its association with the Milky Way. In the second millennium B.C., when the stars of Capricornus hosted the winter-solstice Sun, Sagittarius could have been posted as the advance guard at the crossroads of the Sun's path and the Milky Way."

[More information about *The Epic of Gilgamesh*](#)

The Sumerians – Early Sun Worshipers

The Sumerians (c 3000 BC to 1400 BC) were some of the very first Sun worshipers in recorded history (though many cultures no doubt worshipped the Sun before that). Sumerians were living in the region of Mesopotamia that corresponds to the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

In Sumerian culture, every divinity (god) is imagined as a celestial being. Within their culture there existed two triads of gods, the first were considered great gods while the second triad, the triad of Planetary gods, included the Sun god named Utu. Utu was not considered to be a great god. The other two gods of the Planetary triad were named Nanna - Suen (the Moon) and Inanna (Venus).



Image: The king seated in the stele is Hammurabi and it is from Shamash, the Sumerian Sun god, that he receives the code of justice as denoted by the Sun disc symbol above.

<http://firstlegend.info/themarriageofadamandeve.html>

Shamash

Title: Shamash

Region: Sumeria

Source:

http://www.windows2universe.org/mythology/shamash_sun.html

Object: Sun

Image:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tablet_of_Shamash



Shamash was the Sumerian Sun god. Since he could see everything on Earth, he also represented the god of justice. That is why Shamash was depicted as a ruler seated on a throne. Shamash and his wife, Aya, had two important children. Kittu represented justice, and Misharu was law.

Every morning, the gates in the east open up, and Shamash appears. He travels across the sky, and enters the gate in the west. He travels through the Underworld at night in order to begin in the East the next day.

In Babylon, located in the south of Mesopotamia, the symbol of Shamash was the solar disc with a four-pointed star inside it.

Judeo-Christian-Islam

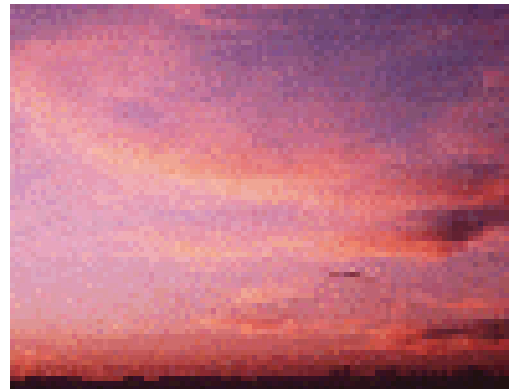
Creation

Title: Creation

Region: Middle East

Source: This creation account is taken from the Bible, Genesis chapters 1 and 2, which is also the First Book of the Hebrew Pentateuch, known as the Five Books of Moses. By academic description, a myth is any account that attempts to explain natural phenomena. The Old Testament creation accounts are generally called Hebrew Myths or the Myths of Genesis. The Jewish name for Genesis is Bereshith, or "In the Beginning". The text is said to have been written by several individuals and proclaimed as the Law of God in Jerusalem by the Hebrew Priest, Ezra, 397 BC. It was expanded and worked on until about 300 BC. Elohim, the Hebrew word for the Creator, is the plural of "el" and is always translated as *God*. ” *Information from Virginia Hamilton and Barry Moser's "In the Beginning," Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, San Diego, 1988*

Object: Sun, heavens, Earth, animals, plants, humans



In the beginning Elohim, God, created the heavens and the Earth. Now the Earth was without form and void; darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God hovered over the waters.

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning--the first day.

And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning--the second day.

And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning--the third day.



And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the Earth." And it was so. God made two great lights--the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the Earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning--the fourth day.

And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the Earth across the expanse of the sky." So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the Earth." And there was evening, and there was morning--the fifth day.

And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the Earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole Earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the Earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground--everything that has the breath of life in it--I give every green plant for food." And it was so. God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning--the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the Earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy. Because, on that day, God rested from all his work which he had done in creation.

Islam shares the creation myth of Judaism and Christianity. The Qur'an states that God created the world and the cosmos, made all the creatures that walk, swim, crawl, and fly on the face of the Earth from water. He made the angels, and the Sun, Moon and the stars to dwell in the universe. He poured down the rain in torrents, and broke up the soil to bring forth corn, grapes, and other vegetation; the olive and the palm, the fruit trees and the grass.

This narrative is further developed in many verses in the Qur'an. According to the Qur'an, the skies and the Earth were joined together as one "unit of creation", after which they were "cloven asunder". After the parting of both, they simultaneously came into their present shape after going through a phase when they were smoke-like. The Islamic creation account, like the Hebrew one, involves Adam and Eve as the first parents, living in paradise.

Joshua Halts the Sun

Title: Joshua Halts the Sun

Region: Middle East

Source: Torah, Bible, Qur'an

Object: Sun, Moon

Image: <http://s8int.com/page35.html>



"On the day the Lord gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to the Lord in the presence of Israel: "O Sun, stand still over Gibeon, O Moon, over the Valley of Aijalon." So the Sun stood still, and the Moon stopped, till the nation avenged itself on its enemies, as it is written in the Book of Jashar. The Sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day." *Joshua 10:12-13*

This account of Yahweh, the Judaic & later Christian god, stopping the movement of the Sun was the basis for the Catholic Church's refusal to acknowledge Galileo's proofs that the Earth went around the Sun. The Inquisition panel argued that the Sun could not have been stopped if, indeed, it didn't travel around the Earth.

Africa

Ancient Egypt

Ra, the Egyptian Sun God

Title: Ra, the Egyptian Sun God

Region: Ancient Egypt

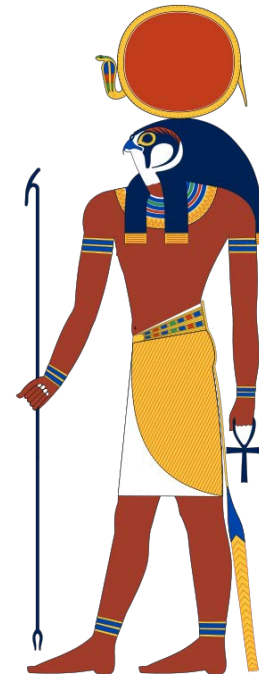
Source: Excerpted from Wikipedia

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ra>

Object: Sun

Image: Wiki Commons

In ancient Egyptian culture the Sun was considered the manifestation of god. He was called Ra. But his full name is Ra - Atum - Khepri. (Ra - the Sun at the zenith (noon), Atum - the setting Sun, and Khepri - the rising Sun). Ra created the first divine couple, Shu and Tefnut, who are the parents of the Earth and sky. Man was born from the tears of Ra, and as man is created in his image and is issued from his flesh, the Earth was created to provide care and support for mankind.



To the Egyptians, the Sun represented light, warmth, and growth. This made the Sun deity very important, as the Sun was seen as the ruler of all that he created. The Sun disc was either seen as the body or eye of Ra.

Ra was thought to travel on two solar boats called the *Mandjet* (the Boat of Millions of Years), or morning boat, and the *Mesektet*, or evening boat. These boats took him on his journey through the sky and the *Duat*, the literal underworld of Egypt. While Ra was on the *Mesektet*, he was in his ram-headed form. When Ra traveled in his Sun boat he was

accompanied by various other deities including Sia (perception), Hu (command), and Heka (magic power).

[Apophis](#), the god of chaos, was an enormous serpent who attempted to stop the Sun boat's journey every night by consuming it or by stopping it in its tracks with a hypnotic stare. During the evening, the Egyptians believed that Ra set as [Atum](#) or in the form of a ram. The *Mesektet*, or the Night boat, would carry him through the underworld and back towards the east in preparation for his rebirth. These myths of Ra represented the Sun rising as the rebirth of the Sun by the sky goddess Nut; thus attributing the concept of rebirth and renewal to Ra and strengthening his role as a creator god as well.

West Africa

Liza, the Sun God

Title: Liza, the Sun God

Region: West Africa

Source:

http://www.windows2universe.org/mythology/liza_sun.html

Object: Sun, Moon

Image: Unattributed



Liza was the Sun god to the Fon people of West Africa. His sister was the Moon god Mawu. Liza was also the god of heat, work, and strength. Mawu was the goddess of night and motherhood. The two were twins, but also lovers. Together, they created the universe with the help of the cosmic serpent, Da. Mawu and Liza had fourteen children, seven sons and seven daughters, and they divided the responsibilities of the world among them. Mawu is also the Goddess of motherhood, since it was she that created the first humans out of clay, and she gives humans their souls.

Asia

China

Ten Suns

Title: Ten Suns

Region: China

Source:

http://www.windows2universe.org/mythology/ten_chinese_suns.html

Object: Sun

Image: The image is a sketch based on an early stone rubbing showing one of the ten Chinese Suns crossing the heavens.



Chinese people believed that there existed ten suns that appeared in turn in the sky during the Chinese ten-day week. Each day the ten suns would travel with their mother, the goddess Xi He, to the Valley of the Light in the East. There, Xi He would wash her children in the lake and put them in the branches of an enormous mulberry tree called fu-sang. From the tree, only one sun would move off into the sky for a journey of one day, to reach the mount Yen-Tzu in the Far West.

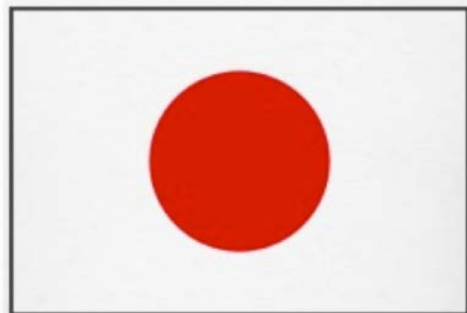
Tired of this routine, the ten suns decided to appear all together. Their combined heat made life on Earth unbearable. To prevent the destruction of the Earth, the emperor Yao asked Di Jun, the father of the ten Suns, to persuade his children to appear one at a time.

They would not listen to him, so Di Jun sent the archer, Yi, armed with a magic bow and ten arrows to frighten the disobedient suns. However, Yi shot nine suns, only the Sun that we see today remained in the sky. Di Jun was so angry for the death of nine of his children that he condemned Yi to live as an ordinary mortal in the Earth.

Japan

Amaterasu

The Japanese call their country Nippon or Nihon, which means "origin of the Sun". Even their flag depicting a red ball on a white background symbolizes the Sun. Their legend of the Sun goddess Amaterasu traces the Japanese ancestry and tells how the Japanese islands were formed.



Title: Amaterasu

Region: Japan

Source: http://www.windows2universe.org/mythology/amaterasu_sun.html

Object: Sun

Amaterasu was the Sun goddess of the oldest Japanese religion, Shinto. When her brother Susanowo treated her badly, she hid in the cave of heaven and closed the entrance with an enormous stone. This made the world dark, and evil spirits came out of their hiding places.

In despair, a conference of the gods decided to trick Amaterasu into coming out by having a party near the cave. They put a big mirror in front of the cave and hung beautiful jewels on a tree. Uzume, the goddess of laughter, began a dance accompanied by loud music.

Hearing the music and laughter, Amaterasu was so curious that she took a look outside to find out what was going on. She was so fascinated by her own brilliant reflection in the mirror that she came out of the cave. Finally, the light covered and colored the world.



Classical Greece and Rome

The reverence of the Sun as a god came from the east to Greece. In antiquity, the Sun god was represented as the driver of a fiery chariot who wore a crown of thorns or fiery rays. The chariot was the Sun that was pulled through the sky above the clouds by four horses that represented the four seasons.

The Sun was the most powerful astrological body in the ancient world and was worshipped as the image of God in ancient Greece. The Neo-Pythagorean philosophers

believed that God, called "The One," whose image was the Sun, talked to Man through the divine medium of geometry, arithmetic, words, signs, symbols and even the letters of their alphabet!

Helios

In Greek mythology, Hyperion was the Titan of light, the father of the Sun, the Moon, and the dawn, and Helios was his son. Each morning at dawn, Helios rose from the ocean in the east and rode his chariot, pulled by four horses - - Pyrois, Eos, Aethon, and Phlegon, across the sky to descend at night in the west.



Helios was usually represented as a youth with a halo, standing in a chariot, occasionally with a billowing robe. Many ancient reliefs depict him this way. He is also shown on more recent reliefs, concerning the worship of Mithra such as in the Mithraeum under the St. Prisca at Rome. In early Christian art, Christ is sometimes represented as Helios, such as in the necropolis beneath St. Peter's in Rome.

Apollo

Apollo, also the Greek/Roman god of the Sun, eventually replaced the Titan Helios as the Sun god. It is unclear how Apollo eventually became identified with Helios. The Greeks didn't delete Helios completely but referred to both of them as the Sun gods. Apollo and Helios remained separate beings in literary and mythological texts until the 3rd century CE.



In Greek mythology, Apollo was the son of Zeus (Jupiter) and Leto (Letona) and the twin brother of the goddess Artemis. Although Apollo served as god of the Sun, he also became the patron god of music, poetry, mathematics, medicine, logic, and reason, and was also a fine musician and healer.

Image: <http://www.greek-mythology-pantheon.com/apollo-greek-god-of-light-music-and-poetry/>

Phaethon Drives the Sun Chariot

Source: <http://www.eastbayastro.org/articles/lore/eridanus.htm>

Phaethon lived with his mother Clymene, who told him that he was of divine birth and that his father was Apollo, god of the Sun. At school, however, Phaethon was taunted by his fellows, who demanded proof of his claims. He went to his mother, who said that if he needed to know more he must ask for his father's acknowledgement. So he travelled to the east until he came to the palace of the Sun, aloft on columns glittering with gold and precious gems. Approaching his father, the youth was welcomed, and he asked, "Give me some proof by which I may be known as yours." Apollo replied, "My son, I confirm what your mother has told you. As further proof, ask what you will and the gift shall be yours." Phaethon immediately asked to be allowed to drive the chariot of the Sun one day.

But Apollo demurred, saying, "I have spoken rashly, for your request is not safe for you, nor for any of the gods but myself—not even for Jupiter. Yet the oath is sworn and must be kept, if you must have it so." Phaethon was adamant, as daring but unwise youngsters are, and he was led to the stables where the diamond-studded golden chariot was ready for the dawn. Apollo admonished the youth to hold tight the reins and to steer a straight and middle course, avoiding both the southern and the northern zones. Led by the morning star, the stars withdrew.



The snorting steeds began their journey, but sensed that they were being driven by an inexperienced charioteer. They veered to the right, and the Great and Little Bears felt a scorching pain and would have plunged into the sea had they been able. The boy looked to his left and saw the reaching claws of the Scorpion: his courage failed him and he dropped the reins. The horses dashed headlong, now high, now low almost to the mountaintops, the trees and fields withering and ablaze. The deserts remain dry forever more.

Earth called on Jupiter, ruler of the gods, to deliver all from the awful scene. And Jupiter, recognizing the peril, launched a lightning bolt against the charioteer, striking him from his seat and sending him into the river Eridanus, like a shooting star that marks the heavens with its brightness as it falls. Afterward, to console Apollo for the loss of his son, Jupiter placed the river in the sky.

Icarus

In Greek mythology, Icarus is the son of the master craftsman Daedalus. Daedalus had been imprisoned by King Minos of Crete within the walls of his own invention, the Labyrinth. But the great craftsman's genius would not suffer captivity. Icarus and his father attempted to escape from Crete by means of wings that his father constructed from feathers and wax. Daedalus cautioned Icarus not to fly too low nor too high, else the sea's dampness might clog his wings or the Sun's heat melt them.

But the ecstatic Icarus, full of self-confidence and complacency, forgot his father's warning. Icarus daringly flew too close to the Sun, whereupon the wax in his wings melted and he fell into the sea. This tragic theme of failure at the hands of hubris contains similarities to that of Phaethon's, above.



Image: Jacob Peter Gowy's The Flight of Icarus.

Norse

Freyr

Title: Freyr

Region: Scandinavia

Source:

http://www.windows2universe.org/mythology/freyr_sun.html

and <http://www.pantheon.org/articles/f/freyr.html>

Object: Sun

Image:

<http://www.ivodominguezjr.com/Panpipes/Pagan/Chant/Site/chants/ingvi-freyr.html>

According to Norse mythology, Freyr was the god of the Sun and rain, the patron of bountiful harvests, and the god of peace and fertility. His parents were the sea god Njord and the giantess Skadi, and his sister was Freya, one of the preeminent goddesses in Norse mythology.



On a journey to the underworld, Freyr saw and fell in love with the giantess Gerd. He sent his servant, Skirnir, on a journey to convince Gerd to marry him. Freyr also gave Skirnir a magic sword to use. Skirnir, however, could not convince Gerd to marry his master. It wasn't until he threatened her with the magic sword that Gerd agreed to meet Freyr in a grove of trees to become his bride.

Skirnir's journey into the underworld is symbolic of the winter months in the Norse lands, where there are long periods of darkness.

Polynesia

Maui Captures the Sun

Title: Maui Captures the Sun

Region: Polynesia, Hawaii, New Zealand

Source:

<http://homepages.ihug.co.nz/~rickja/page5.htm>

Object: Sun

Images:

<http://www.worldoflegendsart.com/MediaFiles/collections/23.jpg>

<https://tinefis.wordpress.com/2010/03/20/maui-and-the-sun-fashion-show/>



Maui is the principal deity in Polynesian culture and takes on a variety of roles in the folklore of these Pacific Ocean peoples. In New Zealand Maori legends, Maui is credited with creating the islands and of snaring the Sun.

An old Maori folktale as told by Dame Kiri Tekanawa:

“Maui had often heard his brothers talking about how there was not enough sunlight during the day. Night after night they would sit round the fire and discuss this problem. No matter how early they got up, still there weren't enough hours of sunlight for all their village duties and for hunting and fishing. So Maui thought about what he could do to solve their problem. Then he announced to his brothers that he had found a solution: 'I think I can tame the Sun.'

“Maui, don't be so ridiculous!' they replied. 'No one can tame the Sun. For a start, if you

got anywhere near him you would be burnt to a cinder. There is no way of taming the Sun. He's far too big and powerful.'

“But Maui said, with great authority this time, 'Look, I can tame the Sun. Get all the women of the tribe to go and cut as much flax as possible - I want a really huge pile - then I will show you how to make a net that will be strong enough to capture the Sun. I will make sure that he won't go so quickly across the sky in the future.'

“The brothers obeyed him and when they had collected mounds of flax Maui showed them how to plait it into strong ropes. He made long ropes and short ropes, and tied some of them together to make a net gigantic enough to catch and hold the Sun. After many hours of plaiting they finally had enough rope and nets to please Maui. Then he set off, equipped with his special axe, with his brothers and some men from the tribe and it took several days to reach the Sun's resting place in the East.

“After a short stop they started their preparations. They found the cave from which the Sun would be rising next morning and they quickly set to work covering the entrance with the net of plaited ropes. When they were sure they had done a really good job they camouflaged the ropes with leaves and branches. They also made themselves clay walls as a protection against the Sun's fierce heat, and smeared the clay all over their bodies. Then they hid.



“Maui crouched down on one side of the cave and the rest of the men were on the other side. It wasn't long before they saw the first glimmer of light from the cave. Then they felt the scorching heat. The men were shaking with fear as the light grew more and more blinding and the heat more and more stifling. They were sure that Maui's plan would not work.

“Suddenly they heard a sharp shout from Maui, 'Pull! Pull the ropes as hard as you can.' The net fell like a huge noose over the Sun. Although the men were terrified that the Sun would kill them all, they pulled and strained as hard as they possibly could so that the Sun could not escape.

“The Sun, who was raging at being held captive, struggled and roared. Maui knew he had to do something more than just hold the Sun in the net so he yelled to one of his brothers

to take his end of the rope. He rushed out from the protection of his wall and, with his special axe raised high above his head, he ran towards the Sun. Even though the heat was singeing his body and his hair, he started to attack the Sun with his axe.

“The Sun roared even louder. 'What are you doing? Are you trying to kill me?' he screamed. 'No. I am not trying to kill you,' answered Maui, 'but you don't understand. You go too fast across the sky, and we are all unable to do our daily work. We need more hours of light in our days for hunting and fishing, for building and repairing our village houses.'

“Well,' said the Sun, 'you have given me such a battering that I don't think I could speed across the sky now, even if I wanted to.' 'If we release you,' said Maui, 'will you promise to slow your journey down?' 'You have so weakened me that now I can only go slowly,' answered the Sun.

“Maui made him solemnly promise to do what he had asked and then he released the ropes. Maui's brothers and the men of the tribe watched as the Sun, slowly and stiffly, began to lift into the sky. They all smiled at Maui - they were proud of him.

“To this day, the Sun travels on his long lonely path across the sky at a very slow pace, giving us many more hours of sunlight than he used to do.“



How Modern Solar Observers Tell Their Stories

Ground-based Observing

- Big Bear Solar Observatory: <http://www.bbso.njit.edu/>
- Cerro Tololo Interamerican Observatory, Chile: <http://www.ctio.noao.edu/noao/>
- Crimean Astrophysical Observatory:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crimean_Astrophysical_Observatory
- El Teidi Observatory, Canary Islands: <http://www.iac.es/eno.php?op1=3&lang=en>
- Mauna Loa Solar Observatory:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_Altitude_Observatory
- McMath-Pierce Solar Telescope, Kitt Peak:
<http://www.noao.edu/outreach/kptour/mcmath.html>
- Mees Solar Observatory: <http://www.solar.ifa.hawaii.edu/>
- Mt. Wilson Solar Tower: <http://obs.astro.ucla.edu/intro.html>
- Stanford's Wilcox Solar Observatory: <http://wso.stanford.edu/>
- Udaipur Solar Observatory, India: <http://www.prl.res.in/~uso/>
- US National Solar Observatory: <http://www.nso.edu/>

Satellites and spacecraft Solar Observing

- ESA/NASA Solar and Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO):
<http://sohowww.nascom.nasa.gov/>
- NASA Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO): <http://sdo.gsfc.nasa.gov/>
- NASA Interface Region Imaging Spectrograph (IRIS): <http://iris.gsfc.nasa.gov/>
- NASA Magnetospheric Multiscale Mission (MMS): <http://mms.gsfc.nasa.gov/>
- NASA STEREO: <http://stereo.gsfc.nasa.gov/>
- NASA HINODE: <http://hinode.msfc.nasa.gov/>
- NASA TRACE: <http://science.nasa.gov/missions/trace/>
- NASA RHESSI: <http://hesperia.gsfc.nasa.gov/rhessi3/>



NASA's SDO Observatory