



**T.C.
YEDİTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

WATER, ISLAND AND FECUNDITY IN COMPARATIVE MYTHOLOGY

by

Yasemin USTA DEMİRLİKAN

**Submitted to the Graduate Institute of Social Sciences
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Masters of
Comparative Literature**

İSTANBUL, 2014



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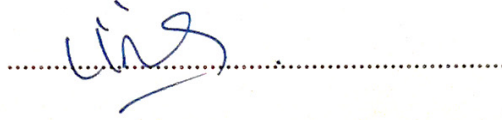
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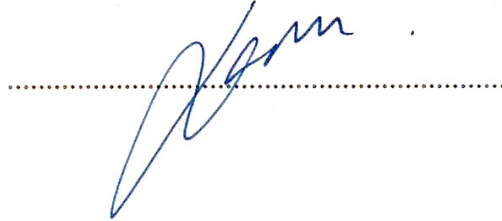
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ABSTRACT

The general objective of 'Water, Island and Fecundity in Comparative Mythology' is to discover the correspondance between the elements affecting creation in the beginning: 'water, island and fecundity.' By discussing and analyzing various myths, epics, sacred writings and narrations around the world, the interrelatedness among those aspects is to be examined. In relation to all birth symbols of fecundity and water forming a basis for the rise of patches of dry lands, a pattern of common deduction, 'the fecund characteristics of water giving rise to islands or earth an island', is to be reached. This work aims to examine the problem of creation on water, fecundity and earth level hence it is made up of three main sections; the first of which interrogates the fecund aspects of specific natural forms as mountains, mounds, plants and animals and feminine manifestation in symbols; the second discusses the fecund characteristics of 'water' functioning as a life-bearer and the last chapter questioning the steps, symbols and the function of 'island' as a primordial mound that is made up of a handful of slime, mud or sand which is to be found at the bottom of fecund water. The reseach hypothesis focuses on "the role that water plays as the fecund element in giving rise to an amount of mud, earth, or slime later expanding into an 'island'. The outcome of this work is to assemble all the major creation myths which assert that the primordial mound/mountain or that of a land had risen out of the primordial waters.

Keywords: Water, Fecundity, Island, Cosmogony, Creation.

ÖZET

‘Karşılaştırmalı Mitolojide Su, Ada ve Doğurganlık,’ın genel amacı başlangıçta yaratılışa etki eden faktörler olan ‘su, ada ve doğurganlık’ arasındaki bağıntıyı bulgulamaktır. Dünya’daki farklı ülke ve kültürlerden seçilmiş bir çok mit, destan, kutsal yazın ve söylencenin bu bağlamda analizi ‘Su, Ada ve Doğurganlık’ının arasındaki bağıntı çerçevesinde incelenecektir. Bu çalışma kapsamındaki özgül amaçlar dahilinde ‘dölleyici ve doğurgan suyun adaların kozmik yaratılışına ortam hazırladığına dair’ birçok sembol incelenecektir. Tüm doğurganlık sembolleri ve suyun kuru kara parçalarının oluşumunda oynadığı ‘ilk madde’ olma özelliği göz önünde bulundurularak ‘adaları ve/ya dünyayı bir ada olarak yaratan suyun doğurgan özelliklerine dair ortak bir çıkarıma ulaşılmaya çalışılacaktır. Bu çalışmanın, su, doğurganlık ve toprak düzlemindeki yaratılış probleminin üzerinde temellendirilmesinden hareketle; çalışma üç bölümden oluşturulmuştur. İlk bölüm, dağ, tepecik, bitkiler ve hayvanlar olarak doğada bereketin sembolize edildiği nesne ve yapıları, ve dışıl özelliklerin belirgin olduğu sembolleri incelerken; ikinci bölüm, hayat veren suyun doğurgan özelliklerini sorgulamakta ve son bölüm ise doğurgan suyun üzerini örttüğü bir avuç toprak, çamur ya da kumun oluşturduğu ilksel bir tepecik olan ‘ada’nın yaratılıştaki fonksiyonunu, oluşum aşamalarını, ve oluşumuna katkı sağlayan sembolleri incelemektedir. Araştırma tezi “doğurgan özellikler barındıran suyun bir miktar çamur, çamur maddesi ya da toprağa yaşam vermesi ve bu toprak parçasının sonrasında bir ‘ada’ya dönüşmesi” üzerinde temellendirilmiştir. Bu çalışma sonucunda ilksel sular tarafından hayat verilen tepe, dağ ya da bu hiçlik sularından yükselen ada ve adacıkların yer aldığı antik yaratılış metinlerinin bir araya toplanması hedeflemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Su, Doğurganlık, Ada, Kozmogoni, Yaratılış.

1. INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of this study is aimed at defining the correlation between ‘water, island and fecundity’ in comparative mythology, leaning on natural entities symbolizing the proofs in creation period that takes place in cosmogony. The reason for choosing such a heading was the lack of a steady and comprehensive work of assertion in the field of ‘Comparative Mythology.’ Thus the research hypothesis: “the role that water plays as the fecund element in giving rise to an amount of mud or earth later expanding into an ‘island’ ” was chosen. ‘Water’ and ‘Fecundity’ was already in there, there is a vast amount of literature review but no complied work of a joint study of ‘Water, Fecundity and Island.’ The first publications I met with on the context of ‘island’ fell under the discipline of literature starting from my high school education experiences leading up to undergraduate years. For centuries ‘island’ context represented an escapology approach to a getaway spot for happiness, utopic order, immortality, and adventure of romance which nourished ‘island literature.’ This tie is evident in *Thomas More’s Utopia*, *Jonathan Swift’s A Modest Proposal*, *Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe*, *Aldous Huxley’s Island*, *William Golding’s Lord of the Flies* and more works to be mentioned in world literature in reflecting the relation between human-nature via utopian and fictional islands. Turkish Literature hosts a unique work of *Akşit Göktürk’s Island*, probing samples of island context in English Literature ranging from middle ages to 20th century.

Myth-ritual theory and its supporters suggest that myths commence with poetic narratives read in rituals, songs sang or magical words said. Being the first narratives regardless of aesthetic concerns, all these forms also supplied a basis for literature to comprise and take shape. “Mythology is now often sharply distinguished from didactic literature such as fables, but its relationship with other traditional stories such as legends and folktales is much more nebulous. The main characters in myths are usually gods, demigods, or supernatural humans, while legends generally feature humans as their main characters” (Bascom, 1984:7-9), “but many exceptions or combinations exist” (Kirk, 1978: 22), these combinations made up of smaller components of mythic narrations appeared in various cultures.

It was right from the beginning that the correlation between ‘Island’ and those topics was already in there waiting for to be unearthed. The masters and pioneers of ‘Comparative Mythology’, have already touched the topics separately but no consolidated work of collection in the *Council of Higher Education Thesis Center* was evident. This unique work comes up with the problem of creation on water, earth and fecundity level and produces results with subtle evidence and mythologic cases in speech and thought of comparative authorities of the discipline “comparative mythology”.

The method, highlighting the path of the study, leans on geographical regions. The myths or narrations supporting the specific thesis under subtitles of the work, are not chronologically or synchronically distributed on account of the discoveries that had had place at noncontemporary time intervals in different geographical zones. This study is geographical-based now that all the resources approach and discuss the topics on a geographical level. It grounds the myth distribution on three publications which probes legends, myths and narrations inclusively at least 7 and 17 groups at the most¹ which are grouped by myth editors and myth encyclopedias’ authorities. The myths are chosen from a broad selection of mythologic sources and categorized under appropriate geographical zones depending upon the publications of *Rosenberg* (2003), *Graves* (1996) and *National Geographic Publications* (2008). The distribution of the mythic narrations are comparative-based; for while a cosmogonic event was taking place in a geographical region of a continent; another was taking place in a distant mainland at the same time. The resources imposed on this work ranges from: historical and literature backgrounds contributing into the work of ‘Comparative Mythology’; the essential constituents configuring fundamental structure of mythology, myths of cultures based on geographical grounds, epics, sacred texts and books, myriad of symbol explicators, several religion encyclopedias, dictionaries (etymologic dictionaries included) and internet resources. In each myth sample analyzations, each and every motif has been examined comparatively relying on various dictionaries of symbols.

¹ *Rosenberg*, (2003) splits the myths in 7 main and 28 sub categorized geographical zones ; *Graves*, (1996) groups the myths in 17 main geographical zones; *National Geographic Essential Visual History of World Mythology* groups as 12 main geographical zones. Zones covered in this study are as follows: 1. Ancient Near Eastern, 2. Asian (Central, Southern), 3. Indian, 4. Japanese, 5. Americans (North, Central, South, Canada), 6. Greek, 7. Finno-Ugric, 8. Teutonic, and 9. Australian and Oceanic (Polynesia, Melanesia, Indonesia and Micronesia).

The study is based on three sections all of which enlarge the main titles of the work: ‘Water, Island and Fecundity’. Each main section is analysed and sampled with subordinate sections that construct definitions of indispensable aspects of creation, functions of those aspects and symbols of nature signifying the stages of creation. The symbols, mythological cases and characters supply a basis for the work and demonstrate the correlation eloquently.

Before proceeding into the core body of the work, a preliminary section consisting of a general understanding of definition of ‘myth’, the functions of myths and a comparative perspective of world mythology is tried to be expanded for familiarizing the reader(s) with the advancing sections. Within the preliminary section; also a detailed study of ‘myth’ is given in a broad frame in order to list the contributors of the discipline and a brief time line of the progress of ‘comparative mythology’ is drawn. The last sequent of the preliminary section is ‘cosmogony’ in which all the events and cases of this work take place. Thus this subordinate section is in line with the arrangement of ‘mythology’ section as it expands in etymology, structure and function of cosmogonic myths. In addition to this, cosmogonic myths, which are to be mentioned in oncoming main sections, are classified according to their types and defined on an individual basis respectively.

The second chapter of this work initiates the theory of creations structuring upon “fecundity”. The earth, forming a basis of the cosmos, is formed by soil, symbolizing fecundity. This section will examine women thoroughly as a giver and mother of life, her occupation of central position before the creation of mounds, hills, mountains and eventually humans. Those topics will be addressed by comparative myth samples from the earliest myths from the Near East, old Europe and Greece depicting the creation of Cosmos from the body of mother goddesses. The fecund earth and its birth are symbolized in myths with specific natural forms as mountains, fertility stones, waters of grottoes or springs and animals. Those symbols are to be scrutinized thoroughly in this chapter.

The third chapter of the work analyzes ‘water’ functioning as a life-bearer. After a depiction of the primeval seas, the importance and essentiality of water in initiation of the birth of islands or Earth appearing as that of an island will be highlighted. The role of maternal water is to be studied in both polytheistic and monotheistic cosmogonies in order to reach a functional pattern. In the preceeding topics, the pre-existent waters and their

functionality are to be looked for in religious beliefs of cultures and sacred texts that attribute creation to a watery beginning. The functions of the water are to be focused on, in giving life to 'islands' by analyzing various myths around the world. The symbolism found in myth samples are to be rendered in search for traces of primeval birth of Earth and islands.

The fourth chapter of the work analyzes 'island' functioning as a primordial mound of a center that is made up of a handful of slime, mud or sand which is to be found in the fecund water. Earth supplying the necessary 'hylo'² for living beings is turned into expanding land; rising up as an island or creating the mainlands of Earth. All the major creation myths assert that the primordial mound/mountain or that of a land had risen out of the primordial waters. The creator/creatix appearing with or in advance of an appearing island is to be depicted with a group of subsidiary animals or as in the form of a diver animal who will initiate the cosmic dive that will pave the way for creation of it. The chapter will demonstrate etymology of 'island'; function of 'island' in mythology; 'island's' mere existence as itself or configuring the whole mainlands of earth; 'island' symbolism in myths; and animals as creators of 'island's' by analyzing various myths around the world in a geographical fashion.

This study presents a through comparison of motifs that have been covered in relevance with water, fecundity and island synchronically leaning on geographical method. The outcome has shown that the creation myths of various cultures scattered around the world present some basic resemblance to others in terms of pattern of creation and symbols. The resemblance can be explained with folkloristic approaches and theories as: 'The Evolutionistic Folklore Theory' which asserts that cultures share similarities in their traditions, religions and literature conceptions³; 'The Unilineal Evolution', referring to a set of sequential stages that humanity passes at specific time intervals in history; and 'Finnish Historical-Geographical Method' suggesting that 'folklore tales vary as a direct result of geographic change in location and evolution of time, all variations must link back to one common time and place.'⁴

² As *Eliade* suggests in 'Water and Water Symbolism' in *Dinler Tarihine Giriş* (2000).

³ For through information see *Taylor, Primitive Culture* (1891).

⁴ For through information see Dorson, R. Current Folklore Theories, *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 4, No. 1. (Feb., 1963), pp. 93-112.

As a consequence of all the findings in myth analyzations from various geographies, the work will reach the outcome of ‘the fecund characteristics of water giving rise to islands or earth as an island’ allowing cosmology to breed and flourish.

2. MYTHOLOGY

2.1 THE STUDY OF MYTH AND PRIMEVAL CREATION TYPES

Myth is a cultural reality of relatively utmost complex issues, the fundamental function of which is to put forward norms of human activities. In addition to narrating Earth's, plantations, animals and people's origin, myths give account of essential experiences advancing humanity to where it is today. If the Earth is in existence, the reason for it is the impact of the sacred deities in the beginning. Myths have thought the primitive and the modern people, the ancient narratives of existence in relevance with essence of his origins in cosmogony.

As *Leeming* suggests "in common use the word 'myth' refers to narratives or beliefs that are untrue or merely fanciful; the stories that make up national or ethnic mythologies describe characters and events that common sense and experience tell us are impossible. Nevertheless, all cultures celebrate such myths and attribute to them varying degrees of literal or symbolic truth. What, then, is the relation of myths to reality? How are myths alive-even true and not false- wheresoever they come from?" (*Leeming*, 2010: xvii) As a conclusion to *Leemings's* explanation of the word 'myth', *Malinowski's* words gives a comparative detailed assertion on future on the past use of the myth: "Myth contains germs of future epic, romance and tragedy; and it has been used in them by genius of peoples and by the conscious art of civilization. We have seen that some myths are but dry and succinct statements with scarcely any nexus and no dramatic incident; others; like the myth of love or the myth of canoe magic and of overseas sailing, are eminently dramatic stories." Comparing such studies, it might be possible to show why myth lends itself in certain of its forms to subsequent literary elaboration and why certain other of its forms remain artistically sterile.

As the comments of the myth authorities suggest myth is perceived as the ancient ingredient of world cultures in regeneration from the beginning of time and creation. Subsequent to explanation and meaning of the myth, its etymological background and function are to be worked on. At this level, the questions of why and how myths were appeared and their relevance with peoples are to be answered.

2.1.1 Etymology of the Word “Myth”

The word myth has an ancient use which appeared in antique Greece scriptures. “Starting with prose writers such as *Herodotus*, the word *mûthos* takes on a polarized tinge of ‘fictive narrative’, ‘tell-tale’ and ‘legend’. As such it contrasts with *lógos*, another term for ‘word’, which denote ‘true story’ to *Herodotus*; the father of history had no compunction about his own hodgepodge of legendary ‘*Lógoi*’ and reserving the term *mûthos* for things that not even he could believe. From *Plato* onward a technical sense of ‘myth’ begins to emerge in *mûthos*, while *lógos* take on ever more rational, philosophical and even transcendental overtones. ... ‘Mythology’ thus means originally and literally ‘storytelling’ and loosely used nowadays to denote a body of mythical narrative, but technically its proper modern sense is the ‘study of myth’, even as, for example, pathology studies the bulk of ailments.” (Puhvel, 1987: 1-4) Following this explanation of the etymology of myth, its structure and function is to be mentioned in the preceding section.

2.1.2 Structure and Function of Myths

This section presents the essence of the information on the structure and function of myths in which commentaries of authorities in the discipline are exhibited. “The most profound human questions are the ones that give rise to creation myths: Who are we? Why are we here? What is the purpose of our lives and our deaths? How should we understand our place in the world, in time and space? These are the central questions of value and meaning of myths.” (Sproul, 1979: 1) Thus, myths are needed to present the various ancient facts. As a microcosm, a human needs myths to comprehend his very existence on earth and find answers to his questions of: “Who am I? How do I fit into the worlds of society and nature? How should I live?” (Sproul, 1979: 1) These questions will be answered by referring to myth authorities specialized in ‘structuralism’.

When it comes to structuralism it is essential that the masters are to be listed in this section. “In the last thirty years, the investigation of mythical thought has attracted a number of philosophers. We may cite E. Cassier, Suzanne Langer, G. Gusdorf, G. Bachelard, Paul Ricoeur, Gilbert Durand and others. The majority of these authors approached the problem of the myth in a larger perspective: that of the study of language or of symbol, or that of the analysis of imagination. By far the most important contribution

to the structuralist interpretation of myth is that of *Lévi –Strauss*. *Lévi –Strauss* does not look for the ‘meaning’ of myth on the level of consciousness. Myth, being an expression par excellence of primitive thought, has as its purpose ‘to provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction’. For *Lévi –Strauss*, the kind of logic which is used in mythical thought is as rigorous as that of modern science and the difference lies not in the quality of the intellectual process, but in the nature of the things to which it is applied.” (Puhvel, 1993:11) As experienced in archaic cultures, the structure and functions of the myths can be listed as follows:

1. “Myth, creates the story of the actions of supernatural beings, the telling of events took place in the fabulous time of the ‘beginnings’. Myth, thus always gives an account of a ‘creation’ of one sort or another, as it tells of how something came into being. The actors are supernatural beings and myths disclose their activity and reveal the sacredness of their work. Thus, the history of this activity is considered to be absolutely true (because it concerned with realities) and sacred (because it is the work of supernatural beings.) The cosmogonic myth is ‘true’ because the existence of the world is there to prove it; the myth of the origin of death is equally true because man’s mortality proves it and so on.” (Eliot, 1976: 23)
2. “Myth is unsuccessful in giving man more material power over the environment. However, it gives man, very importantly, the illusion that he can understand the universe and that he does understand the universe.” (Strauss, 1979: 17)

3. "Since myth is always related to a creation (the world, man, a specific institution, etc.) it constitutes the paradigm for all significant human acts. By knowing it, one knows the origin of things and hence can control and manipulate them." (Eliot, 1976: 23)
4. "Myth as it exists in a savage community, that is, in its living primitive form, is not merely a story told but a reality lived. It is not the nature of the fiction, such as we read today in a novel, but it is a living reality, believed to have once happened in primeval times and continuing ever since to influence the world and human destinies." (Malinowski, 1948: 100)
5. "Myths may provide access to the stated beliefs of people. They are founts of ethnographic information." (Strenski, 1992: xx)
6. "Studied alive, myth, is not symbolic, but a direct expression of its subject matter; it is not an explanation in satisfaction of a scientific interest, but a narrative resurrection of a primeval reality, told in satisfaction of deep religious wants, moral cravings, social submissions, assertions, even practical requirements. Myth fulfills in primitive culture an indispensable function: it expresses, enhances and codifies belief; it safeguards and enforces morality; it vouches for the efficiency of ritual and contains practical rules for the guidance of man. Myth is thus a vital ingredient of human civilization; it is not an idle tale; but a hard-worked active force; it is not an intellectual explanation or an artistic imagery, but a pragmatic charter of primitive faith and moral wisdom." (Malinowski, 1948: 101)
7. "Myth, warranting the belief in immortality, in eternal youth, in a life beyond the grave, is not an intellectual reaction upon a puzzle, but an explicit act of faith born from the innermost instinctive and emotional reaction to the most formidable and haunting idea. Nor are the stories about 'the origins of rites and customs' told in mere explanation of them. They never explain in any sense of the word; they always state a precedent which constitutes an ideal and a warrant for its continuance and sometimes practical directions for the procedure." (Malinowski, 1948: 110)

8. "The historical consideration of myth is interesting, therefore, in that it shows that myth takes as a whole, cannot be sober dispassionate history, since it is always made ad hoc to fulfill a certain sociological function, to glorify a certain group, or justify an anomalous status. These considerations show us also that to the native mind immediate history, semi-historic legend and unmixed myth flow into another, a form of continuous sequence and fulfill really the same sociological function. And this brings us once more to our original contention that the really important thing about the myth is its character of a retrospective, ever-present, live actuality. It is to a native neither a fictitious story, nor an account of a dead past; it is a statement of a bigger reality still partially alive. It is alive in that its precedent, its law, its moral, still rules the social life of the natives. It is clear that myth functions especially where there is a sociological strain, such as in matters of great difference in rank and power, matters of precedence and subordination and questionably where profound historical changes have taken place." (Malinowski, 1948: 126)
9. "Myth serves principally to establish a sociological charter, or a retrospective moral pattern of behavior, or the primeval supreme miracle of magic- it becomes clear that elements of both explanation and of interest in nature must be found in sacred legends." (Malinowski, 1948: 144)
10. "It should be remembered that for each of these individuals, for the Australian as well as for the Chinese, the Hindu and the European peasant, the myths are true because they are sacred, because they tell him about sacred beings and events. Consequently, in reciting or listening to a myth, one resumes contact with the sacred and with reality and in so doing one transcends the profane condition, the historical situation." (Eliade, 1991: 59)
11. "The function of the myth, briefly, is to strengthen tradition and endow it with greater value and prestige by tracing it back to a higher, better, more supernatural reality of initial events." (Malinowski, 1948: 146)

As a conclusion; myths present the root of narrative events in creation of the Earth, natural entities and human beings which is comprehensible and valuable for a culture, they are retold and inherited from generation to generation and preserved in Holy Scriptures.

2.1.3 A Historical Perspective of World Mythology

In his 1991 release of *Masks of God; Primitive Mythology*, Joseph Campbell reveals an unearthed truth on comparative mythology. He attests that “no one has made any attempt to sum up the history and right ascensions of comparative symbolism, religion, mythology and philosophy by depicting one and only picture.” (Campbell, 1991: 13) He also states that “a whole comparative mythological approach strains the researchers of the cultural history of microcosm. Such themes as stealing the fire, the deluge, the realm of the death, the virgin’s bringing a child into the world and the awaken of the hero have spread through the world and they seem brand new in every compound; however they are the same in number as pieces of a kaleidoscope. The history of our kind is not only an explanation of the advent of the first toolmaker; but more of tragically prophets’ flamboyant dreams and earthy communities’ attempts of animating extraterrestrial engagements.” (Campbell, 1995: 11-13) On behalf of a broad and brief history of comparative mythology, pioneers and their advance proceedings in will be juxtaposed in the next section.

2.1.3.1 A Study of the Study of the Myth: Metamythology

In this section a more intensive inspection of the study of the myth; ‘mythology’ is to be done. Looking at the literature review of the authorities and masters and their contribution in the discipline, a sort of metamythology is aimed to be covered in terms of cosmogonical lore and stages of development of the discipline chronologically.

Puhvel (1993) gives a thorough examination of the history of myth studies in his book of *Comparative Mythology* starting with ancient Greek nature philosophers of “Thales of Miletus, Anaximander and Anaximenes, were each promoting a cosmological ‘first cause’ (water to áperion = the infinite and air respectively), which of course eschewed any mythical cosmogony. Their successors, *Xenopanes*, *Parmenides* and *Zeno of Elea*, pushed the search for ontological immutables to the point of affirming the illusory nature of movement and change.” He also gives credit to writers such as “Eusebius, Hippolytus, Lactantius, Arnobius and Firmicus Maternus sometimes played a valuable part as unintentional mythographers, recounting seamier traditions that normal circumspection would have caused to be lost to posterity.” (Puhvel, 1993: 7-10)

Puhvel (1993) chronically aligns the eras by listing the names of authorities known for their efforts in literature and mythology, he names *Giovanni Boccaccio* for the fourteenth century, who is better known for his other literary efforts, composing a handbook of Greek mythology, “titled *De genealogia deorum*, which was to remain an unsurpassed authority for a couple of centuries.” *Puhvel* gives account of eighteenth century as an era of rationalism and ‘enlightenment’ but this age “was not likely to embrace myth with ease and writers like Diderot and Voltaire were almost hypersensitive to ‘priestly deceit’ in all manifestations of religion.” He mentions *Bernard de Fontenelle*, who first mentioned of comparative myths in the eighteenth century. “In his *De l’origine de fables* (1724) Fontenelle pointed to a notable similarities between Greek and Amer-Indian myths and proposed a theory of the worldwide polygenesis of motifs at given levels of culture.” In the eighteenth century another figure was marking the discipline of myth, “Giambattista Vico in his *Scienza Nuova* (1744) was the first to grasp at last something of the complexity of myth, listing creative imagination, religious inspiration, impressions created by natural phenomena and reflections of social institutions as alternative and coexistent ingredients of mythogenesis.” (*Puhvel*, 1993: 7-10)

Puhvel (1993) gives account of some mythopoeic minds like *Goethe* who had the courage to follow *Plato*’s example through millennia and to elevate new myths and symbols on the soil of antiquity and *Grimm* who brought mythology into new focus and professional philosophers found in the symbolism of the myth a fruitful field for speculation. He points that the practitioners of the comparative mythology method were linguists. “Instead of Fontelle, De Brosses, Vico, Herder, or Schelling, they took their cues from second rate theoreticians such as Christian Heyne and Gottfried Hermann. Allegory remained the one mode of explanation, specifically nature allegory tinged with a monomaniacal reductionism to one single type; thus were born the storm gods of Adalbert Kuhn, the animal allegories of Angelo de Gubernatis, the fire mythology of Johannes Hertel, the moon myths of Georg Hüsing and above all the solarism of Max Müller.” (*Puhvel*, 1993: 13-18)

Malinowski gives account of nature mythologists coming into the comparative mythology seen as: “To take only the recent up-to-date theories advanced in explanation of the nature of the myth, legend and fairy tale, we should have to head the list, at least

regards output and self-assertion, by the so-called school of Nature-mythology which flourishes mainly in Germany.” (Malinowski, 1948: 96) Here in this point, *Schmidt* (1930) points out to a school concerned with peoples of the middle and higher culture, which characterized the school of nature-mythologists. (Schmidt, 1930: 31-39) *Malinowski* (1948) refers to writers of this school interest in natural phenomena. “In trying to express and interpret the phases of the moon, or the regular and yet changing path of the sun across the skies, primitive man constructs symbolic personified rhapsodies. To writers of this school every myth possesses as its kernel or ultimate reality some natural phenomenon or other, elaborately woven into a tale to an extent which sometimes almost masks and obliterates it.” (Malinowski, 1948: 96)

The last third of the nineteenth century, the nature mythologists start to be prominent in the discipline. According to *Schmidt*, “the first of these is Ch. De Brosses, with his book of ‘Du culte des dieux fétiches ou parallèle de l’ancienne religion de l’Egypte avec la religion actuelle de la Nigritie’, Paris 1760. The second, is N. S. Bergier, with his work ‘L’origine des dieux du paganisme’, Paris, 1767 who was the pioneer of the animistic school.” *Schmidt* (1930) adds up the developments in the scope “with students of comparative religion who had definitely bounded field to investigate, the Indo-Germanic peoples and the first school of historians of religion began to appear. Its pioneer was Adalbert Kuhn and his chief work was ‘Die Herabkunft des Feuers und des Göttertranks’, Berlin, 1859, besides his essay ‘Über Entwicklungsstufen der Mythenbildung’, in the Transactions of the Berlin Academy of Sciences, 1873, also published separately in 1874. Another work, *Mythologische Studien*, was published, after his death, at Gütersloh in 1886.” (Schmidt, 1930: 31-39)

Puhvel (1993) points to the rise of ethnological, ritualistic and psychoanalytic sciences in the first half of the twentieth century: “under the heavy stimulus of Darwinism, had inevitably stirred new theorizing into the nature and origin of religion.” He mentions of two approaches to myth: “The former, epitomized by the myth and ritual or Cambridge school beholden to the Oxonian E. B. Tylor’s *Primitive Culture* (1871) and with James G. Frazer’s *Golden Bough* as its central talisman, owes its theoretical underpinnings to Jane E. Harrison’s *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (1903) and *Themis* (1912).” (Puhvel, 1993: 13-15)

Puhvel, mentioning on psychology, mentions of two hypothesis predominating the scope: “one belongs to Viennese Sigmund Freud (1856-1938) and the other; Swiss psychiatrist C. G. Jung (1875-1961).” He cites of several myths analyzed by Freud, according to whom, “the function of the myth is based on its meaning and under all circumstances; myth is the most effective way of satisfying desires.” Leaning on psychoanalytic background *Puhvel* (1993) also mentions of *Otto Rank* and his respectable essay “The Myth of the Birth of the Hero, Sargon of Akkad, Moses, Karna in the Mahabharata, Oedipus, Paris, Telephus, Perseus, Gilgamesh, Cyrus, Tristan, Romulus, Hercules, Jesus, Siedfried and Lohengrin” published in 1914. Probing more thorough data on the psychoanalytic movement, he mentions Joseph Campbell’s *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, which in its pursuit of the collective unconscious and of racial memory and in its preoccupation with astrology and alchemy, risks its own entry into the mystical and the occult.” (*Puhvel*, 1993: 17)

Mentioning of ritualism, rooted in England and psychoanalysis in the German cultural orbit, *Puhvel* highlights the French contribution starting with the sociological school of *Emile Durkheim* and *Marcel Mauss*. He makes reference to *Durkheim*’s ‘collective representations’, *Mauss*’s seminar studies on gift giving and sacrifice and *Bronislaw Malinowski*’s views on myths as social ‘charters’ all recognized the paramount role of myths as catalysts in cementing structured human coexistence.⁵

Having spent his thirty years in America, the Roman historian of religion *Mircea Eliade* (1907-1986) is the leading researcher and writer of comparative mythology. *Eliade* notes that, “in traditional societies, myth represents the absolute truth about primordial time.”⁶ (*Eliade*, 1960: 23) According to the myths, “this was the time when the Sacred first appeared, establishing the world’s structure—myths claim to describe the primordial events that made society and the natural world be that which they are.” (*Eliade*, 1960: 6) The basis

⁵ For more information please see *Puhvel*, 1993: 7-18.

⁶ “The primordial has to do with the problem of the basic stuff out of which the creation has emerged. In one sense what is before the creation may always be understood as chaos, for the only modes of order are those that are forthcoming in the created order itself. However, the meaning of this primordial order expresses in symbolic terms the intention of the creation. The primordial order may be spoken of in neutral terms or as alien and inimical or it may, as in the emergence myths. *Mircea Eliade* has spoken of two meanings of primordiality; one is the original primordiality, which may be seen in the symbols of water, earth, darkness, or nothingness. The other mode of primordiality is the first mode of ordering in the creation; this may be through a world egg, world parent, a creator deity, and so forth. It is at this stage that a specific meaning and direction is given to the creation of a world for human habitation, for this is the stage at which cultural heroes appear.” (*Eliade*, 1987 vol 2: 98)

time scope of this study is based on that of the 'Sacred Time' or 'Dream Time' when the first people wanted to make use symbols around themselves in order to explain the meaning of creation of their world.

Eliade argues that "all myths are, in that sense, origin myths: myth, then, is always an account of a creation." (Eliade, 1960: 6) According to *Eliade's* (1960) theory, "only the Sacred has value, only a thing's first appearance has value and, therefore, only the Sacred's first appearance has value. Myth describes the Sacred's first appearance; therefore, the mythical age is sacred time, the only time of value: 'primitive man was interested only in the beginnings (...), to him it mattered little what had happened to himself, or to others like him, in more or less distant times.'" (Eliade, 1960: 23-44) As *Eliade* postulates, the beginning was crucial for the primitive man, as it is for this work, when the cosmogonic events appeared in following stages and gave rise to generation of creation cases.

A respectable myth scholar and Turkish research specialist on ancient Turkish Language and Literature, Turkish Mythology and shamanism, *Bayat* postulates myth types with a categorization in view of scientific discipline as: "the ones emulating Gods, the creation history of humanity, the realms of Heaven and Hell and the sacred places, theogony⁷ and eschatology." (Bayat, 2005: 8-11) He categorizes the myths as: 'Cosmogonic Myths, Creation of the First Human Being, Parthenogenesis⁸ and Era Myths' and embodies a specific category as follows: Theogonic Myths, Root Myths, Myths of Eschatology, Totem Myths and Heroic Myths. (See *Bayat*, 2005)

Though categorized under a general family, cosmogonic myth is an essential entity of the myth discipline because it appears in any cultures origins and it has vast verges

⁷ "*Hesiod's Theogony* is a large-scale synthesis of a vast variety of local Greek traditions concerning the gods, organized as anarrative that tells how they came to be and how they established permanent control over the cosmos. It is the first Greek mythical cosmogony. The initial state of the universe is chaos, a dark indefinite void considered as a divine primordial condition from which everything else appeared. *Theogony* is a part of Greek mythology which embodies the desire to articulate reality as a whole; this universalizing impulse was fundamental for the first later projects of speculative theorizing." (Sandwell, 1996: 28)

⁸ "Ancient Greek traditions affirm that the earth existed before heaven, to whom the earth gave birth by parthenogenesis. Through such myths the power of creative possibilities of the earth are portrayed as limitless. The motif of parthenogenesis by the primordial earth reappears in myths that account for all the species of animals and plants as having been born from the body of a primordial being, as well as in myths of virgin birth such as the Greek accounts of Hera, who, alone and unaided by men, gave birth to Typhon, Hephaistos, and Ares. Izanami, the Japanese goddess of the earth, gave birth to a number of gods who issued from her own substance." (Eliade, 1987: 535)

involving the origin of the myths. Cosmogony, in other words; the conglomeration of earth in briskness, investigates the emergence and evolution of the earth. It is sacred and against chaos in that it is the inception presenting deific feature. By virtue of the sacrality in the first creation phase the following creation stages are also sacred. As *Bayat* suggests: “Cosmogony, depicting mythological earth model via cosmic myths, comprises the formation continuum and alignment of events which appear as cosmogonic myths that seem in the form of the tale of sacred genesis.” (Bayat, 2007: 77) Cosmogony, in this sense constitutes the preliminary stage of mythology to be valued as the essence opening.

Now that creation gives birth to cosmogony, investigation of ‘Water, Island and Fecundity’, probing the cohesion of creation, will take place in this “Sacred Time” of creation. If any comparative research is to be done, this work has to be counted in the phase of “Cosmogony” as cosmogony gives the full description of the kinesis of water; how the earth, obliquely the ‘Island’ came into existence and anthropogony proceeded; the whole domain of this study will take place in cosmogonic time. Among the most important sources of this work, creation cases will be leaned upon comparative reference books as: *Hesiod’s* Theogony, the Japanese Kojiki and Nihongi, the Popol Vuh of the Kiches of Central America, the Ramayana, Upanishads, Mahabharata and the Rig Vedas of the Hindus, the Koran of the Islamic society and The Genesis of the Jews, the Finnish Epic Kalevala and more to be mentioned.

2.2 COSMOGONY

Creation myths, namely, cosmogonic myths focus on the origin of the aspects of our world. From the ways they are structured, they tell how the earth came into existence. A great deal about the daily lives of the people can be learnt by creation myths, which represent the genesis of the world in a series of stages and creation may start with a type that is to be explained broadly in chapter ‘Types of Cosmogony’.

The stage of cosmogony is the phase that all the proceedings of water actions, fecundity and the creation of earth take place. As *Eliade* recalls the bond between the myth and time, he notes that “myth fulfills a specific function in societies; besides it is also important in what it reveals to us about the structure of time: As is generally admitted today, a myth is an account of events which took place in principio, that is, in the

beginning, in a primordial and non-temporal instant, a moment of sacred time.” (Eliade, 1991: 57) Thus, cosmogonic time will make for the timetable of the thesis ‘Water, Island and Fecundity’.

To make things more tangible about the cosmogonic period: a short sample of Hebrew creation myth will be mentioned, a general introduction will be given on the nature of the cosmogony myths by a profound explanation of the meaning and structure of the cosmogonic myths, while sampling the main headings, cosmogonic myths- the time interval nurturing the relationship of ‘Water, Island and Fecundity’ – will be annotated. In so far as cosmogonic myths are directly concurring with creation, they will be specifically analyzed in depth, the etymology of the word ‘cosmogony’ will be probed, functions and types of cosmogonic myths and orders of creation will be discussed.

2.2.1 Etymology of Cosmogony

Cosmogony derives from the mergence of two Greek terms, ‘kosmos’ and ‘genesis’. Kosmos refers to the order of the universe and genesis means coming into being. “Cosmogony thus has to do with myths, stories, or theories regarding the birth or creation of the order of the universe. These myths, which are present in almost all traditional cultures, usually depict an imaginative religious space and time that exist prior to the universe as a normal habitation for human beings. The beings who are the actors in this primordial time are divine, superhuman and supernatural, for they exist prior to the order of the universe as known by the present generation of human beings.”⁹ Thus, cosmogony is the word and time interval that structures the scope and sequence of this work: ‘Water, Island and Fecundity’.

2.2.2 Structure and Functions of Cosmogonic Myths

‘In the beginning’ or *in principio*¹⁰ is the forefather starting point to a watery, damp and shadowy realm. *In illo tempore*¹¹ accounts for the origin of the world and the nature of everything that follows it. In an account of creation it’s the microcosm’s turning point of questioning himself: “How creation happened and how he arrived at the notion in the first

⁹ <http://www.bookrags.com/research/cosmogony-eorl-03/#gsc.tab=0> (26.11.2014)

¹⁰ “in the beginning” <http://www.friesian.com/vocab.htm> (26.11.2014)

¹¹ “in that time (Latin)” <http://www.friesian.com/vocab.htm> (26.11.2014)

place. The origin of the things lies in their foundation: it is the creation which is both cosmogonic and ontogenic: in other words, creation is invoked whenever a new thing – from a seed in embryo to the revelation- is brought to life. With relatively few exceptions, peoples from around the world seek to explain their origins and thereby define their cultural identities in their creation myths.” (Stookey, 2004: 39) This section highlights the function of cosmogonic myths which narrates the universe’s coming into being and its habitants coming into existence, in view of the comments of authorities in mythic discipline:

1. “Cosmogonic myths in their narrative form give a rhetorical, stylistic and imaginative portrayal of the meaning of the creation of the world. These myths set forth a tonality and stylistics for the modes of perception, the organizing principles and provide the basis for all creative activities in the cultural life.” (Eliade, 1987 vol 4: 94)
2. “Creation myths are etiological insofar as they tell how the world came into existence, but what is important in the etiology of the creation myth is the basis for explanation is in the founding or creation of the world itself. In other etiological stories the ultimate cause is not of primary importance.” (Eliade, 1987 vol 4: 94)
3. “In the cosmogonic myth the symbols give expression to the religious imagination of the creation world. As the prototypical story of founding and creation, the cosmogonic myth provides a model that is recapitulated in the creation and founding of all other human modes of existence.” (Eliade, 1987 vol 4: 94)
4. “There are mythic meanings that may arise from ritual activity. R. R. Marett, the English anthropologist, surmised that myths might have arisen as attempts to give order to the dynamic rhythms and experiences of life that first found expression as ritual activities.” (Eliade, 1987 vol 4: 94)
5. “Pierre Bourdieu, the French ethnologist, has refined interpretations of ritual activities by making a distinction between two types of theories. There is a theory that is the result of speculative human thought and there is another kind of theory that arises out of practical activity. Myth as theory may be of either type, but in each case the myth is a distinctive expression of a narrative that states a paradigmatic truth; this is especially true in the cosmogonic myth.” (Eliade, 1987 vol 4: 94)

Supplying a portrayal of the creation of the world, cosmogonic myths explain the originality of coming into existence to the habitants and raise a cultural identity supplying a basis for the people and the activities that they ground on their religious beliefs. All cosmogonic myths tell of the stages of the emergence of earth and human beings, thus they are esteemed in the very culture that they belong as they depict a religious and sacred imagination of creation.

2.2.3 Types of Cosmogonic Myths

The core concept of 'Water, Island and Fecundity' is centered on the 'Time of the Sacred' or 'Dream Time' in other words in 'cosmogony'. Before existence, it is merely the 'water' that lies in tranquility, in a chaotic stage whose color is dark and blackish reminding the womb of a fertile deity. "Tales of creation, cosmogonic myths, which characteristically depict the emergence of order from a state of chaos, commonly begin with a description of the void; in many if not in most of these narratives, the original chaos is represented as the primal waters that exist before creation begins." (Eliade, 1967: 83) In this section the types of creation falling under the creation heading of 'Water, Island and Fecundity' will be analyzed and sampled briefly.

There are various types of cosmogonic myths. As *Eliade* categorizes: "1. Creation ex nihilo (a High Being creates the world by thought, by word, or by heating himself in a steam-hut and so forth); 2. The Earth diver motif (a God sends aquatic birds or amphibious animals, or dives, himself to the bottom of the primordial ocean to bring up a particle of earth from which the entire world grows); 3. creation by dividing in two a primordial unity (one can distinguish three variants: a. Separation of an original amorphous mass, b. the 'chaos'; c. the cutting in two of a cosmic egg); 4. creation by dismemberment of a primordial being, either a voluntary, anthropomorphic victim (Ymir of the Scandinavian mythology, the Vedic Indian Purusha, the Chinese P'an-ku) or an aquatic monster conquered after a terrific battle (the Babylonian Tiamat)." (Eliade, 1967: 83) According to their symbolic structures cosmogonic myths, corresponding 'Water, Island and Fecundity' will be classified in following types:

2.2.3.1 Creation from Nothing

Among creation types, the cosmogonic myth reciting creation from nothing are evident in monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. “The power of the deity in myths of this type establishes the cosmos as unrelated to and discontinuous from, all other structures prior to the statement of the creation of the cosmos and the human condition as enunciated in the myth. The deliberate process of the creation signifies willful volition and the fact that the creation is brought forth as a form of perfection from a supreme being. Ultimately, the creation from nothing emphasizes that the creation is not mere ordering or even founding but has come forth as a powerful religio-magical evocation from a powerful supreme being.” (Eliade, 1987 vol 4: 94-95) In this work, various creation myths of islands or earth as an island are to be listed in myth analyzations, for one example ‘Io’ of the Polynesians can be given who creates the earth as an ‘island’ with a conscious act stated explicitly in the sacred creation text of Polynesians.

2.2.3.2 Creation from Chaos

Chaos is the state of nothingness that is present before the creator brings the world into existence. In this study predominantly the ‘water’ myths are based on a primordial chaos which hosts a scene to two supreme primordial beings. Ancient Near Eastern mythologies and creation myths in Greek mythology retells the procreation of earth as means of theomacy between gods upon pre-existent primal matter; water., the theomacy causing visious battles between those divine beings is the stage of chaos which gives rise to the creation stage. According to *Stookey* (2004), in creation myths, during the stage of chaos, the order may evoke and rise either with the creator’s thoughts and words that are spoken, or an action that is performed. *Stookey* (2004) also points out in her *Thematic Guide to World Mythology* that “Sometimes the process of creation requires a sacrifice, usually the offering of a god and sometimes the cosmos is shaped from the dismembered body of a monster, deity or primordial being.” (Stookey, 2004: 40) In this study chaos myths are profoundly found in polytheistic religions’ cosmogonic myths interrelated with ‘water’ and ‘island’ chapters.

2.2.3.3 Creation from a Cosmic Egg

Known as the mundane egg (world egg) or cosmic egg, egg motif is profoundly seen in various myths belonging to different geographical zones. The universal egg, symbolizing the original potentiality of existence, gives a comprehensible account of the origin of cosmogony in ancient myths. *Stookey* points out “arising from the precreation void, the egg represents in microcosm all that will come to be when the world assumes its shape. In the process of creation, the oneness of the cosmic egg is broken open to reveal the differentiation that is necessary to order the universe.” (Stookey, 2004: 33) The cosmic egg motif is described in *Gertrude Jobes’s Dictionary of Mythology Folklore and Symbols*; as “the cosmic germ of the universe, creation, immortality, sun and triad,” and the earth is said to have developed the earth from an egg in some traditions. For those traditions egg is depicted of a chaotic mass from which order is born, but for some others earth is formed from the egg which hovered on the primeval sea.

Egg’s cracking and separating as the heavier part descending and the lighter part ascending; the earth is depicted to have separated as the same way; which constructed earth, sky and heaven in some cosmogonic myths. “According to one version of China’s several creation myths, the universe begins to take shape when a cosmic egg breaks open and its white and its yolk starts to separate. Yin, the white of the egg, rises to become the sky and yang, the heavier yolk, sinks beneath to become the earth. To prevent yin and yang from merging one again into the formlessness of chaos, the primeval giant Pan Ku, who also emerges from the cosmic egg, spends eighteen thousand years hoisting the sky higher and higher up above the earth. Only when Pan Ku’s task is completed and he has created a sufficient space between heavens and earth and the earth for living beings to exist does the process of the world’s creation continue.” (Stookey, 2004: 168) The cosmic egg motif will appear both in ‘water’ and ‘island’ myths in initiation of the cosmic beginning.

2.2.3.4 Creation by Word

In this study some of the myth samples of both polytheistic religions and monotheistic sacred texts, the cosmic beginning would start with the ‘word’ of *deus faber* or the creator god. Appearing both in polytheistic and monotheistic texts and narrations, a Supreme Being initiates the creation cycle by uttering words.

The use of ‘word’ in starting the cosmogonical cycle is seen in various ancient myths stretching from Siberia to Indian and Polynesia. ‘Word’ motif is both seen in polytheistic and monotheistic religions respectively as *Leeming* suggests: “The book of Genesis depicts the Hebrew creator beginning the whole process by speaking: ‘Let there be light.’ The Mayan creators said ‘Let there be Earth’ and there was. The Maori creator begins things by telling the original darkness to become light-possessing. The Polynesian creator Od Samoa spoke to an original rock and the creation was established. The sacred Indian sound, ‘Ohm’ conveys sense of the creation emanating from the all-encompassing essence of existence, Brahman. In Islam the sacred Qur’an is spoken to Muhammad by God by way of the angel Jibril (Gabriel), thus beginning what could be called the new Islamic creation.” (Leeming, 2010: 362) In the proceeding chapters many examples will be analyzed in exemplification of creation out of ‘word’.

2.2.3.5 Creation by Thought

The concept of creation by thought appears in both polytheistic and monotheistic creation beliefs. Among all the creation types it is ‘creation by thought’ that makes sense to contemporary humans because it is stated in sacred writings of Bible. *Leeming* states that “the God of the Bible created from his own thoughts and words. Nor is the creative work of the Indian Brahman far-fetched in this sense. For many Hindus, as expressed, for instance, in the Laws of Manu, creation is the result of the thought of the all-encompassing Brahman: the Self-Existent Brahman thought of the waters and they were. The same Brahman broke the cosmic egg, in two by thought and it became Heaven and Earth.” (Leeming, 2010: 354) Examples of ‘creation of thought’ will be presented in the proceeding chapters both in sacred texts of monotheistic writings and polytheistic narratives and texts.

2.2.3.6 Creation from World-Parents

Some creation myths recounts making up of earth as the result of the fertile cosmic powers of primordial parents. *Eliade* best explains of this type as: “The birth of offspring from the world parents is often portrayed as an indifferent or unconscious activity. Even the sexual embrace of the world parents is without passion or intent. The sexual embrace does not appear as the result of a desire or an intention; it is simply the way things are. In

this way the sexual embrace of the world parents is like the twins contained within the world egg and the embrace itself recapitulates an original androgyny.” (Eliade, 1987: 96-97) In this study the prominent example of world-parent myth is to be scrutinized in water section which tells about the separation of waters that used to be mingled in a single body. In world-parent myths the supreme deities turn into cultural heroes as in the case of Tiamat and Marduk (for detailed explanation see ‘water’ chapter) who drags each other into a vicious battle which reminds of the type: theomacy. After the chaotic stage, light illuminates the realm of darkness setting forth a symbol of birth both for the rising of earth and humanity.

2.2.3.7 Creation from Theomachy

In view of *Stookey*’s explanation: “theomacy, a word derived from Greek roots meaning god and war, is a specialized term used in myth study referring to accounts of great battles that are waged among deities and other primal beings. In some narratives, including those from the ancient Mesopotamian and Greek traditions, strife among the gods occurs during the process of creation and prior to the existence of human beings. In these myths, the usurpation of the original creators by a younger generation of deities is represented as necessary to the emergence of a cosmic order. Whereas wars lead to the beginning of the world in narratives from Mesopotamia and Greece, in other traditions, including those of the Norse, the Aztecs and the Zoroastrians of the ancient Persia, the great battles of the gods bring to the world to its end. For both the Norse and the Aztecs, the death of the old order is followed by the birth of a new and different world, but in the apocalyptic vision of the Zoroastrians, the final battle between the lords of good and evil marks the end of time. In still other instances of theomacy in myth, the conflict between cosmic powers is represented as an unending struggle for mastery of the universe.” (Stookey, 2004: 173) As the content of this study suggest the relation between ‘Water, Island and Fecundity’ only some wars in relevance with cosmogonic myths, especially the ones linked with ‘water’ will be listed in the cosmogonic phase.

2.2.3.8 Creation through a Process of Emergence

In emergence type of creation stories the world exists without a being in existence but peoples living in a world down below the present earth surroundings. Emergence type

of creation is concerned with uprising of human beings to the habitable world. Their aim is to find a proper place as a habitat rather than the cosmic creation center.

Emergence myths follow a pattern as the earth being the ‘the mother to all’ within whose womb the beings first hatching in a seed form and later on with maturation they ascend upward through the layers of earth and make their appearance on the surface of the earth from a navel, *Eliade* explains this process as: “The emergence myth describe the creation of the cosmos in the symbolism of gestation and birth. The most prominent symbol in myths of this kind is that of the earth as a mother. The earth is depicted as the source of all powers and potencies. Within this womb of the earth are all the seeds and egg of the world; they exist in embryonic form within the earth. The emergence of the forms of the world from the womb describes a process whereby the maturation of the forms within the earth take place before appearing on the face of the earth.” (Eliade, 1987: 97) Emergence myths highlight the superiority of ‘mother’ rather than a *deus faber* who is the creator god. It is the fecund aspects of Mother Nature that acts a womb which can be likened to a vessel that contains the life source.

Emergence myth type is not so common in this work as earth diver stories but below one exists highlighting the relatedness among fecundity and water:

“A large number of myths emphasize the role of the earth in the origins of human life. As mentioned above in the Zuni creation myth, the solitary creator became the sun and impregnated the great waters with two seeds from his own substance. These germs of men and of other creatures eventually hatched in the darkness. Poshayank’ya, the great sage (who perhaps represents the nocturnal sun), then emerged from the foamy body of the earth mother, who possessed four wombs, one on top of another Eventually, the twins led out, one after another, six distinct groups of people, the ancestors of the six human races. They emerged on the surface of the earth still bearing signs of their fetal existence in the ground: their toes were webbed and their ears, like those of bats and other creatures of the night, were attached to their heads by large membranes. They could not yet stand erect but crawled on their bellies like lizards or hopped like frogs.” (Eliade, 1987 vol 10: 536)

In this myth the correlation of fecundity and water and island is quite clear. According to the Australian creation myths, the earth was originally surrounded by water and in it were many spirits. Through an action of one of those spirits a movement started and the earth grew warm, that gave rise to the emergence of the first man. According to the Zuni Indians- whose creation myth takes after also those of the Australian creation myths- “a complex network of waterways circulates underground; the first Zuni were born there, at the lowest level. A pair of twins created by the Sun then made climb to the surface. A pond marks the spot where they finally saw the light of a day.” (Eliade, 1987 vol 15: 351) In relevance with the assertion of fecundity correlation, *Eliade*’s notes on the image of mother and its perspective on the earth suggests as: “The image of the Earth perfectly correspond to that of the Mother: the anthropogeny¹² is described in terms of ontogeny¹³. The formation of the embryo and the birth repeat the cosmic act of the birth mankind, conceived as an emergence from the pro-fondest Cavern-womb in the chthonic¹⁴ depths. So the Zuni myth tells us, perfectly clearly: in the deepest of the Cavern-wombs the human beings lived like larvae; they were a grumbling throng, moaning and reviling each other in the dark. Their progression to the light is homologous with the emergence of mind.” (Eliade, 1960: 162) *Eliade* suggests that myths of this type show us that water was present in the world from the most ancient times on and those myths ascribe water in various situations.

2.2.3.9 Creation through the Help of an Earth Diver

Earth diver, or cosmic diving myth type is a referent for the waters to be fertilized by the act of diving by the help of a subsidiary animal or the god transformed into a form of an animal. *Eliade* presents detailed data on earth-diving and water as: “In earth-diver myth water constitutes the primordial fetch stuff of the beginning. Water, in its undifferentiated indeterminacy, covers everything in the manner of chaos. A culture hero, usually an animal, dives into the primordial waters in an attempt to bring up a particle of

¹² “Anthropogeny, is the study of human origins. It is not simply a synonym for human evolution, which is only a part of the processes involved in human origins. Many other factors besides biological evolution were involved, ranging over climatic, geographic, ecological, social, and cultural ones.” (Gregory, 1985: 29)

¹³ “The biological development or course of development of an individual organism.” (Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of The English Language Unabridged, 1981: 353)

¹⁴ “In or under the earth. Of a divinity or a spirit: dwelling or reigning in the underworld.” (Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of The English Language Unabridged, 1981: 1157)

sand, mud, or earth, any substantial form of matter out of which a more stable mode of order might be established. Several animals make the attempt and fail; finally, one of the animals succeeds in bringing up a piece of earth, mud, or sand. Upon coming to the surface of the water the bit of matter, which is usually so minuscule that is lodged under the animal's fingernails, expands to great proportions, thus constituting the landmass of the world on which all beings reside." (Eliade, 1987 vol 4: 97) Earth diver type accounts for the most of the myth samples contained in this work now that the interrelatedness occurs between water and slime. This type is to be prominently observed in myths of 'fecundity', 'water' and 'island' sections respectively.

The animals making the cosmic dive belong to the family of the birds. According to various cosmic earth-diver myths this animal is in an appearance form of a waterfowl, a loon or a goose, which masters the skill of diving and coming back. Some more information as *Eliade* suggests is as follows: "Birds appear in the myths of creation that center on the theme of the cosmogonic dive or the earth diver. In the beginning, when only the waters exist, aquatic birds; ducks, swans, geese or swallows dive to the bottom of the primeval ocean to fetch a particle of soil. Birds dive sometimes by God's order and sometimes by their own initiative, but in some variants God transforms himself into a bird and dives. This motif of the diving bird, common among such Altaic peoples as the Buriats and the Yakuts, also found among the Russians and such Uralic peoples as the Samoyeds, the Mansi, the Yenisei and the Mari. Earth divers also appear in a certain number of Indian cosmogonic myths of North America. The result of the courageous dive is always the same: a small particle of soil that has been brought up grows miraculously until it becomes the world as it is today." (Eliade, 1987 vol 2: 225) Apart from bird types acting as aquarius, a number of various animals will appear in 'water' chapter doing the same act of cosmic diving for fetching a piece of mud or slime which will initiate the process of cosmogony.

Earth diver myths' psychoanalytical mode asserted by *Alan Dundes* interrelates with water and fecundity as well. The waters are seen as a symbol of primordial womb and it is only by an antagonist that the matter can be brought into the surface as a starting point of creation. Dundes speculates that this is an expression of birth envy on the part of the male. The waters, which can be seen as a primordial womb, are potent but cannot give

birth; it is only through the earth diver that the necessary form of matter is brought to the surface as a basis for the creation.” (Eliade, 1987 vol 4: 98) In this study various earth-diver myths belonging to different geographical zones will be presented in chapters of ‘fecundity’, ‘water’ and ‘island’ respectively.

3. FECUNDITY

The earth is the honored unique source that gives birth to earthly creatures, nourish them and create the fertile seed. The earth, forming a basis of the cosmos, also has religious symbolic meanings and dimensions. Long before the earth myths, earth was a religious entity, forming a whole cosmic cycle and symbolizing immensity and the active wholeness of the variety of flora and fauna.

The earth as the soil was a theophany symbolizing immense fertility that is to say fecundity. Prior to a fecund goddess or a primordial goddess, the earth was a *Tellus Mater*, id est 'Mother'. Male divinities do not possess any role on the creation state. A father is only a virtue in terms of a social being but has no role biologically where Mother is the binder. Here *Neumann's* vessel formula best explains the interrelatedness between femininity and the immense fertility of earth: "If we combine a body-world equation of early man in its first unspecific form with the fundamental symbolic equation of the feminine, woman=body=vessel, we arrive at a universal symbolic formula for the early period of mankind: Woman=body=vessel=world. The natural elements that are essentially connected with vessel symbolism include both earth and water. This containing water is the primordial womb of life, from which in innumerable myths, life is born. It is the water below, the water of the depths, ground water and ocean, lake and pond." (Neumann, 1970: 43-49) As the core content of this study suggest in three chapters of this work, water will act as the primordial womb of life where potential seeds of birth lay inert.

Ancient creation myths tell about the interrelatedness between water and mother explaining maternal principles that created earth. The correspondence between water and mother was accepted as universal in the ancient texts and belief system of ancient Greeks, because the act of giving birth was not attributed to God but the maternal earth and maternal waters. Correspondingly anything in relevance with fecundity goes under the eclipse of femininity, earth and water. In this section, the relation between earth-feminine and water is to be analyzed under topics of the comparative role of fecundity in cosmogony, how this role has shifted from female to male deities, earth as mother figurine, feminine sacrality in nature, the widespread characteristics of the goddess and symbols of fertility.

3.1 THE ROLE OF FECUNDITY IN COSMOGONY

According to *Ferguson* (1995) it is no wonder that “the early myth makers would look to a mother as source of fecundity for creation.” *Ferguson*’s view can be best explained with the idea of the ‘fertile feminine goddess’ taking a responsibility for bringing the world into being, helping it grow and flourish and allowing its regeneration after a period of death. Leaning on the fact that a mother could bring forth a child, she could also create the cosmos. *Walker* also states that “Creation / birth was inseparable from the figure of the Mother. The oldest myths made her the divider of waters, maker of heaven and earth. When a god came into the picture, he was at first only her subordinate consort, one of the beings she had created: sometimes a disembodied phallus, in the form of a serpent.”(*Walker*, 1983: 184) Taking the role of supreme creator of her inner self, a feminine figure takes the leading position in this chapter, whereas in ‘water’ and ‘island’ chapter her superior role would transform into an inferior one and ‘the creator god’ as the *deus faber* will dominate her status.

The feminine fecundity presents potential of fertility as she holds a great power of reproduction within herself. Thus for *Ferguson*, “the fecund feminine as the great mother has the power of abundance and nurturance for nature and it’s not surprising to see the nude expressions of her connection with life in all forms.” *Ferguson* also enriches her idea of fertility in nature with the evidence of items found in sacred places, such as temples or other worship sites, indicating that “the mediators of the deity were often women in Paleolithic and Neolithic times. The archeologists also discovered some figurines of men, but female statues predominated at a rate of 20 to 1. Some historians have tried to dismiss these feminine figurines made of clay, stone, marble and copper as dolls, but the cups found in their headdress contained remnants of oil and carbon, indicating sacrificial offerings of religious nature.” (*Ferguson*, 1995:1-2) But the patriarchal cultures changed the status of the goddesses’ creative status with that of their male gods who would dominate the pantheon until the dominancy of the creator goddess would completely fade.

As *Ferguson* traces the writing and rewriting of myths, she notices a change in the status and function of the mother goddess. “A common theme is that the creatrix of the universe, earth, heavens, gods, goddesses and eventually human bears a son, who becomes her lover. She, who has no need for a consort, finds this son/lover elevated to the position

of consort.” (Ferguson, 1995: 57-58) *Ferguson* also highlights the fall of the creator mother goddess in sacred scriptures in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, as the mother goddess’s complete disappearance and her replacement by a god who, creates alone in the myths.

For a creation state to start, the role of fecundity should be attained first. “The Bible’s highly derivative version says the earth was without form and void: and darkness was upon the face of the Deep. The Deep was the Mother’s womb. In Egypt she was Temu, mother of the abyssal elements: Water, Darkness, Night and Eternity.” (Walker, 1983: 183) Thus in creation phase a deity’s existence is indispensable. And water is the next essential entity adjuncting the state of creation as it is essential for the power of life procuring fertility. For literary evidence one can analyze some myths that were committed to writing. These written literary pieces can be sampled from Egyptian creation myths, Sumerian creation myths, Canaanite goddess myth in the Hebrew Scriptures and the Japanese creation myths and more to count on. Below are some myths around the world interrelated with the cosmic birth, fecundity and water symbolism to be listed in order to sample the relationship between “Water, Fecundity and Island”. Some of these myths are to be explained thoroughly in ‘Water’ section.

The myths revealing the interrelevance between cosmic birth and fecundity appears in Asian, Babylonian, Egyptian, Japanese, Greek and Celtic cultures. Asian mythology denotes of a goddess giving birth to nature. “The name of the great Goddess who is found in Asian mythology is Umay. Umay means ‘uterus-placenta’ and is generally accepted to represent the uterus and ovaries in drawings in the shape of a horn. The way Tibetans brides wear their hair during their marriage ceremonies with it brushed back to give it a hornlike appearance is the continuation of a tradition that goes back to antiquity. This arrangement which is used today is said to express the branches of uterus that is fertility.” (Ateş, 2000: 87)

An early Babylonian myth describing the creation state of the universe to the goddess Tiamat, who, as in the Sumerian myth, is identified with the primordial sea. Rosemary Ruether depicts Tiamat as “the idea of a primal mother described like a watery womb that contains within herself the male principle of fertilization.” (Ruether, 1985: 39) “The waters of this primal sea are a mixture of sweet and salty but are mingled together as

in one body. These waters are also be considered the primary parent in that the gods and goddesses are begotten and born from this primal body called the goddess Tiamat.” (Ferguson, 1995: 59)

Another fertility and feminine related myth belongs to Egyptian culture. Above those elements, the sacred feminine is associated with water. “Egyptian mythology includes a version of creation by the goddess Nun. She is called the ‘primeval ocean that filled the universe,’ similar to a cosmic egg. Nun gave birth to the sun god Atum, whose children became gods and goddesses of sky and earth. The sky goddess, Nut, daughter of Atum, appeared to have creative power in that she was the mother of Ra, the god from whom the pharaohs traced their heritage.” (Ferguson, 1995: 60) Veronica Ions, an Egyptian mythologist, ascribes the role of the mother goddess as: “Like many primitive peoples, the ancient Egyptians seem early on to have worshipped a universal mother-goddess. She took many forms and her tradition can be traced in a number of goddesses who survived into the pantheon of historical times”. (Ions, 1983: 38)

The Japanese mythology also recalls of feminine and birth elements together in terms of giving life to creation. “The Japanese creation story of their island and of later humans depicts the work of a pair of deities in the *Kojiki*, completed around 712 CE. At this time the heavenly deities, all with one command, said to the two deities Izanagi-no-mikoto and Izanami-no-mikoto.” The two parent gods forms all the islands of Japan together with Sun, Moon and Earth and earthly beings.

The west mythic lore mentions the relevance between the feminine and birth in the Mediterranean culture. “On the islands of Malta and Gozo in the Mediterranean can be seen the clearest connection between the cave, the tomb and the temple-all three being the body of the Great Mother. Malta and Gozo were an ancient sacred center for the religion of the Great Mother. In myth, Gozo was the island-realm of Calypso, the daughter of Uranus. It was on Gozo that the patriarchal hero Ulysses was believed to have stayed, enchanted by the sorceress Calypso, for seven years. In myth, the huge temple of Ggantija, was built by a giant Titan-woman with a baby at her breast. Single-handedly, in one day, she hauled the huge blocks of stone to the building site- and built the temple walls by night. What was she seeking? Probably what we could call the living darkness- the stillness of the tomb, the breathing silence of the womb of the Earth Mother. This was the center of something- as

Malta and Gozo are indeed at the geographic center of the Neolithic Great Goddess culture, stretching from Africa to Scandinavia, from Sumerians to Spain (or to the sunken continent of Atlantis, as some believe). In this sacred space priestess of the Great Goddess contacted the spirits of the dead, consulted oracles, prophesied and performed ritual healing.” (Sjöö & Mor, 1989: 113)

Celtic culture also tells about sacred islands inhabited and ruled by sacred feminines. “According to Irish texts the Tuatha de Danaan came from such an island in the North, where they had learned science, magic, art and ancient wisdom from priestess of the Goddess Danu.” (Sjöö & Mor, 1989: 113-114)

Those myths show us the essential role of water out of which a fertile deity appears which is similar to a cosmic egg, or on which a deity floats and starts the creation by word, or a deity, a primary parent, that gods and goddesses to be begotten after her division into two polar sides. By creation a handful of soil expands and a territory rises from the waters. This motif is mostly clear in the *Kojiki Chapter 3* or as a raise of a cosmic mountain above the waters. After the rise or word creation, the fecundity state starts in order to give birth to the fertility of the ‘earth’, the plantation and animal life and the human beings. Thus, many societies have originated myths that involve goddesses who were the main creatrix for bringing the world into being.

3.2 EARTH AS THE PRIMORDIAL MOTHER FIGURINE

Creation myths present a symbolic birth: in which conditions before the initiation of birth is depicted as in a uterine environment: darkness, a watery atmosphere and churning movements (as to be seen in detail in ‘water’ section) causing a flux associated Mother. What underlies all the cosmogonic myths of ancient polytheistic religions is the very existence of a female earth that gives birth to all beings.

Eliade (1987) notes, “that the Mother-letter M (Ma) is an ideogram for waves of water. Most myths in state of creation give account of a watery womb of chaos representing the Great Mother as Tiamat, Man-Nu, Themis etc. Mother is an image drawn from the lack of discrimination from the self and other- or self and mother in the case as experienced by the unborn in the womb. The pregnancy period of the unborn young and

the act of process of giving birth are seen as a sum up of the cosmic birth of humankind and creation. That is; the primary pattern of birth is cosmogony.” (Eliade, 1987: 537-538)

Eliade also suggests in his *Encyclopedia of Religion* series (1987) that “the fecund earth, the fertility of cosmic being, is represented by specific fruits or forms that take life from her. A human mother simply receives children in their embryonic state. She is a container that helps the larval life of the earth attain a specifically human form. The subterranean womb is the true *fons et origo*¹⁵ of embryological life.” (Eliade, 1987: 537-538) Within this perspective, *Eliade*’s ‘container’ and *Neumann*’s ‘vessel’ formula is the same combination symbolizing the feminine fecund cradle for a new being to sprout. As a mother gives birth to a newborn, the earth as the soil itself included is seen as the fountain of source that gives birth to humankind. The most widespread characteristic of a goddess is her fecundity as in the case of the Earth’s power of fertility of the soil.

On the grounds of the statements above, it can be said that the feminine character has always mystically been shoulder to shoulder with the earth; giving birth to a newborn can be likened to that of the fertility of the soil. ‘The Feminine’ releases what is contained in her into life and light; thus she is bestowed as ‘the Great Mother’ of all life. In various religions mother earth was bestowed with fertilization without the help of a male deity namely in Mediterranean Goddess cultures and that of Gaia in *Hesiod’s Theogony*. Also the plantation on which more statement will be mentioned proceedingly is under ‘Feminine Sacrality in Cultivation and Plantation’. The first edible plants were cultivated by the feminine thus she became the symbol of fertility of the ‘harvest’ which granted her with the religious and mystical prestige of superiority. And her relation with earth, cultivation, harvest rises from the ancient mythic cosmic discourse: ‘The Earth Mother’.

3.3 FEMININE MANIFESTATION IN NATURE

The role of women as the fecund creatrix, manifests itself in each sacred entity of nature proceeding the primordial creation. The effects remain to be seen in symbolism of cultivation, waters, mounds, rocks and mountains, darkness, night and the Moon. These symbols are hidden in various iconographies as animals, colors and forms etc. giving a

¹⁵ Is a Latin term meaning: “source and origin”.

start to the beginning of life. In this section the correspondence of those entities with the feminine is to be explained briefly.

3.3.1 Feminine Manifestation in Cultivation and Plantation

The earth must be acknowledged as the ‘ultimate womb’ and mother to all of us, it is personified as the fecund mother giving birth to humans, plants and other entities in various myths. For *Eliade*, “the goddesses, interpreted as earth figures are usually complex deities, whose connection with the fertile earth is only one aspect of their personalities. A variety of female figures, whose sexuality and fecundity are strongly stressed, are usually referred to the earth mother complex.” (Eliade, 1987 vol 1: 145) While some myths emphasize a symbolic relation between cultivation and human beings; sexual fecundity and vegetal fecundity and the ‘motherly’ aspect of the cultivate earth, the others pay more attention to the origin of plants or cultivation techniques. Among those, the only ones related with water and islands are listed below to be considered in this work.

3.3.1.1 Toraja of Sulawesi

Rich in symbols, this myth signifies the fecund characteristics giving birth to plantation, “*a fisherman often left his wife to go on fishing expeditions; when he came back, he always found a large pot full of rice, but his wife would not tell him from whence it had come. One day, he spied on her through a fissure on the wall of their dwelling and saw that she rubbed her hands together over the pot and thus filled it with rice. Disgusted by this discovery, he reproached her for this unclean procedure; as a result of his reproaches the woman transformed herself into a rice plant and he became a sago palm.*” (Eliade, 1987 vol 1: 147) the morphology of the myth is deciphered by referring to dictionaries of symbols as follows:

Rice is the solstice of the whole myth meaning the basic food of Asians which is symbolic and used in rituals. “Rice, originating with gods takes its place in the primeval gourd on the same footing as the human species. It is both the staff of life, the food of immortality and also symbol of spiritual food.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 800) In this myth it symbolizes wealth, abundance, fertility and primeval innocence as it appears every other day in a cycle.

In the myth, the pot is used to conserve the rice grains which are the seeds of mystic fertility. The pot, encapsulating the rice grains resembles to that form of a uterus in terms of fertility bearing, so it clearly represents the earth-womb. “Pot, is an everyday object signifying water and especially a female symbol.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 770) “The manner in which we have assimilated people and things which exist in the universe is the primary basis behind all mythology logic. With this analysis in mind, the fecund belly of a goddess was identified with pots and pans and fertile earthenware jars. Jars, kettles, pots and pans are all symbols of the Great Mother. In fact, the organs that nurtured and gave life to the goddesses such as Hathor, Rhea, Aphrodite etc. were in the form of earthenware jars which were frequently decorated with symbols of the Moon.” (Ateş, 2000: 169) As rice fills the pot another symbol comes to light as ‘wisdom’ since fullness of the pot corresponds to wisdom and a state of repose in Buddhist teachers’ philosophy of karma. As the woman’s trick is learned, she transforms herself into a rice plant, the plant of the grain itself which is already the sacred one, which symbolizes that of ‘water’. “Because waters bear seeds which transform themselves into a growth form of plant in a cycle, the cosmic process itself is revealed. Plants, the first stage in life, above all symbolize perpetual birth, the ceaseless flow of life-giving energy.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996:761) “Palm and branches of foliage are regarded universally as symbols of victory, ascension, regeneration and immortality.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 734) Palm symbolizing victory, is a kind of gift to the male as ‘immortality and a victorious rebirth’ who brings the truth into daylight.

3.3.1.2 Yam Woman

“The yam and taro growers of Melanesia and New Guinea have similar myths (in New Guinea, the myths are about Yam Woman, who miraculously produces yams from her body), but a complex myth very similar to the American and Indonesian myths, is to be found among the Maori of New Zealand and accounts for the origin of the kumara (sweet potato). The goddess Pani took care of two young orphaned nephews and nourished them with baked kumara; the two brothers, who loved this previously unknown food, kept asking where it came from, but Pani would not tell them. One day, one of the brothers spied on her and discovered that she drew her sweet potatoes from her own body while lying in water.” (Eliade, 1987 vol 1: 147)

As an inference of the two samples of water-cultivation myths, it is clear that such myths present cultivation as a symbol of fertility as well as a crisis. The 'Feminine' characters in these myths appear as the source of fertility, a close interrelation is structured with the femininity and earth fertility with proof of archeologic discoveries of numerous Stone Age statues supporting the theory that a 'Great Mother', or a 'Mother Goddess' once personified the earth, whom can be found in many ancient myths.

3.3.2 Feminine Manifestation in Waters

*"In the beginning ... was a very female sea. For two-and-a half billion years on earth, all life forms floated in the womb-like environment of the planetary ocean-nourished and protected by its fluid chemicals, rocked by the lunar-tidal rythms."*¹⁶

Water is the most common entity in emergence myths and descent of human beings into earth. The first –primal and eternal- element in which creatures breed and matter dissolves, water appears in multiple cosmogonic myths as the primordial fluid, giving life to all beings.

According to symbolic interpretations, it is an element that is essential for life, which is considered to be of great importance for procuring the source of life to divine beings, goddesses or human beings. "Even during the twentieth century, in some regions of rural Europe, souls of children were said to emerge not only from caves but also from grottoes, pools and springs. Versions of the Native American emergence myth replace the usual cave of emergence with a lake. The waters that precede the birth of the earth become even more explicitly amniotic in the earth diver myths common in Siberia and on the west coast of North America." (Eliade, 1987: 305) Those myth samples suggest that it is the water where creation begins with fluid. As it is ancient and primal referring to the primal myths, water, especially the 'ocean' is depicted as the mother of the mothers. She is the 'Great Round' within whose fluid the life begins in and from whose fertile seed banks the pioneers of living beings scuttle upon earth.

¹⁶ "Darwin believed the menstrual cycle originated here, organically echoing the moon-pulse of the sea. He concluded that the female principle was primordial. According to Darwin, life did not gestate within the body of any creature, but within the ocean womb containing all organic life. There were no specialized sex organs; rather, a generalized female existence reproduced itself within the female body of the sea." (Sjöö & Mor, 1989: 2)

In most creation myths, waters appear as a sacred fluid within the earth-womb and in cosmogonic myths it appears as a womb from which the earth is born. The myths in which earth is born out of waters can belong to two different geographical zones one located in India the other in the Teutonic zone. According to the Hindu myth, “the world’s source is a gigantic male who sleeps upon a serpent in the primal waters. A lotus or tree grows from his navel; both are symbols of the cosmos. Alternatively, an egg is born from the waters and then breaks apart; its two halves evolve into heaven and earth. In the Finnish epic Kalevala, a bird lays the cosmic egg on a knee that the Mother of Waters raises, so that the bird will have a place for her rest.” (Eliade, 1987: 305) As those myth samples suggest, water plays the leading role in the fertilization process of the birth of earth, those myths are to be intensively scrutinized in proceeding chapters.

It is understood from myth samples that “the notion of primordial waters and an ocean from which all things began is virtually universal.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 1082) As such; water is the substantial shape which manifests itself as the origin of life as the symbol of fertility and birth that is to be found in darkness which is depicted in this chapter as ‘the primordial womb’.

3.3.3 Feminine Manifestation in Primeval Mounds and Mountains

Water is not only the manifestation of the feminine of earth, it is the mounds and mountains which rise upon water and takes the form of an ‘island’ while the stage is being completed. “Ancient Egyptian mythology generally depicts the creation as mound of silt emerging from the waters. A great lotus came out of the primeval waters; ... such was the cradle of the sun on the first morning.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 1088) Such ridges are also counted as sacred and feminine is attributed to them in various myths; “any protuberance or extension of the earth may be viewed as a special concentration of the feminine. Hence mounds are often associated with the feminine sacred and are honored as earth navels-places where the earth first rose above the waters.” (Eliade, 1987: 306) Mounds are coined as the Earth Mother herself; where the new-life emergents sprouted from. The mounds can take on the symbolism of the ‘mountain’ as an omphalos.

In cosmological legends mountains are thought to be brought up from the bottom by the help of a stick which a sky deity churns up the primordial ocean. They are mostly

represented as ‘The Great Mother’ more than any other natural objects as *Walker* suggests “In every land the mountains were identified with breasts, belly or mons veneris of Earth, as well as the paradise where gods live.” (Walker, 1983: 695) They are considered as the center of the world which constitute a link between heaven and earth. This type of mountains are considered as ‘cosmic’ referring to ‘axis mundi’ which functions as the center of the world. The summit of this cosmic mountain is considered as the highest point on earth and itself as the navel from where the creation began.

Cosmic mountains also function as a fertile source. There are various examples to those in different cosmogonic zones. *Eliade* exemplifies them by referring to fecund aspects “of the mountain and rice field kami in Japan” he also points out the fertile mountain “in Morocco, where fruits are said to grow spontaneously. And on the mythical Mount Meru¹⁷ the divine trees are said to yield fruit as big as elephants, which burst into streams of nectar when they fall and water the earth with divine waters.” (Eliade, 1987: 133) Here again the symbol of earth and water embraces each other in terms of fecundity. The concept of mountain also signifies the essentiality of stone which stretched into four cardinal direction creating earth. As *Eliade* states: “The Holy One created the world like an embryo, affirms rabbinical text. As an embryo proceeds from the navel onward, so God began the creation of the world from its navel onward and from thence it spread in different directions.” (Eliade, 1991: 43) This creation type is also seen in oceanic mythology: the importance of stone is vital for islanders out of which life sprouts, ensuring a dwelling place for living beings to breed and multiply.

3.3.4 Feminine manifestation in darkness, night and moon

Darkness is the foetal status of the world before it is born. It creates up a ground for pre-cosmogonic and pre-natal phase proceeding birth where germination and creation take place. According to *Biedermann*: “Darkness is the complementary opposite of light in a

¹⁷ “One of the most important cosmic mountain as a sacred center was thought to be *Mount Meru*, or *Sumeru*, the mythical mountain that has ‘centered’ the world of the majority of Asians- Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain. According to Hindu cosmology, four lotus-petal continents spread out from *Meru* at the center and beyond them the seven-ring shaped seas and ring shaped continents of the wider universe. *Mount Meru* rises heavenward as the seed cup of the world lotus. *Meru* has four sides of different colors and is flanked by four directional mountains. Above *Meru* stands the polestar, and daily the sun drives his chariot around the mountain. The heavenly Ganges in its descent into four rivers that run in the four cardinal directions to water the earth. Like other cosmic centers, *Mount Hara Berezaity* is the pivot around which the sun and the stars revolve, and like many other sacred mountains, it is also considered to be the source of heavenly waters.” (Eliade, 1987 vol:10; 130-131)

fundamental duality, which is first of all a symbol of primeval chaos.” (Biedermann, 1992: 236) *Cooper* defines darkness and light as “the dual aspects of the Great Mother as creator and destroyer; birth, life and love.” (Cooper, 1990: 50) Creation myths interpret ‘darkness’ as emptiness before separation begins. Darkness symbolizes the solitude of chaos, resembling that of uterus which is specific to the “feminine” from which an egg is born and cut into two, giving a rise to the creation of earth and soil.

Night, associated with mysterious darkness and the protection of the womb, symbolizes the period of germination which will burst out into life in broad daylight. *Cooper* defines the symbol of moon signifying maternal and fecund elements in his *Illustrated Encyclopedia of Dictionary of Symbols* as: “Like darkness, night signifies the pre-cosmogonic, pre-natal darkness preceding rebirth; but it is also chaos and reversion to the foetal state of the world. Night is also, according to *Hesiod*, the ‘Mother of the Gods’ the enveloping maternal aspect of the feminine power usually symbolized by a female figure or by the crescent moon.” (Cooper, 1990: 112)

Looking back in ancient history, the moon is specifically related with feminine divinities and it was the chief symbol of the goddesses such as; Umay, Isis, Ishtar, Hecate and Artemis. The myths related to the moon configures the core of any religion: birth-death-rebirth. The moon, is the goddess who dies and revives eternally, she is the seed that produces out of itself with the power of life over death. As the moon dies and rises again as the new moon, it is reborn.

Chevalier & Gheerbrant gives a full explanation to the interrelatedness among moon, femininity and fertility in their *Dictionary of Symbols* (1996): “The interrelation between moon and femininity appears in fertility myths symbolizing effects of magical power manifesting itself in cultivation, fertilization, menstrual cycles and bleeding. The root word for both moon and mind was the Indo-European *manas*, *mana*, or *men*, representing the Great Mother’s wise blood in women, governed by the moon. The ancient people believed that the Moon Mother created the society. Thus the moon is linked with femininity and fertility as well as its nocturnal aspects. As the passive source of water, the moon is both well and symbol of fertility, identified with the primeval waters from which came manifestation.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 670) In ancient cultures moon was thought to have been ‘female’ because of the parallel likeness of woman’s menstrual cycle

and the lunar cycle of the moon. *Ateş* also backs up this evidence with his notion of the interrelatedness between The Moon and woman: “It is just not possible to believe that this thought didn’t carry any clear scientific clout back in ancient times. This is because the basis for all primitive beliefs concerning Moon were connected with the full moon and the counterpart appearances of the periodic changes of a woman’s egg during the formation process.” (Ateş, 2000: 163) Thus moon was usually represented as the feminine power, the ‘Mother Goddess’ which is an extremely common motif used in goddess symbolism in which waxing and waning of it relates to women’s menstrual cycle. The moon’s attributing maternal aspects to woman was not only limited to Indo-Europeans, it was evident in the Finn cultures as the creatress Luonnotar (Luna, the Moon)¹⁸ who is to be referred to in proceeding chapters, Polynesians, Scandinavians and Chinese cultures. In all these cultures The Moon is portrayed with feminine power with narrations of its beams’ fertilizing aspects and it is associated with pregnancy, moisture, wetness and darkness all of which are also attributed to woman, womb and water in this study.

3.3.5 Feminine Manifestation in Animals

The animals that inhabit the earth are profoundly seen in myths and traditions. They either serve as gods or deities or helpers in creation myths. Animals are often considered to have a special relationship with the divine feminine; they are symbolically represented in myths attributing great value to core function of physical and spiritual cosmic powers. Animal symbols functions as the manifestation of becoming and being.

The symbolism of fertility in mythology is represented with several animals which are identified with insemination and primordial period. As *Stookey* suggests in her *Thematic Guide to World Mythology* animals commonly serve as messengers, guardians, or protective spirits and in creation tales from several cultures, it is an animal-characteristically the turtle- that carries the world upon its back. (Stookey, 2004: 39) *Eliade* explains the manifestation of animals in cosmogonic levels as: “Many of the fantastic creatures found in every culture’s lexicon of beings can be seen as representations of philosophical synthesis, depicting the relationship of human, animal and deity as a unity, a philosophical conundrum. Such creatures link together different and discrete cosmic

¹⁸ Luonnotar broods over vast body of primeval waters in order to reveal the ‘cosmic’ egg out of which Earth is to unfold i series of cosmogonic events. See section 4.3.2 for further information.

levels and may imply, the deity whose identity is emergent in the physical form of the creature.” (Eliade, vol 1: 295) The animals represented with divinities can be categorized in two in this work as subsidiary animals and creator animals. Those animals appearing in myths lead their role as a helper and act as a mediator between the deity and primordial abyss.

3.3.5.1 Subsidiary Animals

The animals falling into this category are the ones that were seen in cosmogonic myths such as: turtles and tortoises, serpents, ducks, loons, waterfowls and geese. In creation state those animals act like a helper to his creator/creatix. In the Earth-diver motif the animals with an ability of diving such as ducks, loons, waterfowls and geese - can be categorized as ‘amphibious’- receiving orders, acting as a mediator between the sky deity and water. They dive and bring a piece of earth, sand or mud which gives a start to primordial creation phase. They dive into the depths of the unfathomable primeval ocean to take a grain of mud which initiates the earth to become into a being. The diver characterized amphibious animals; ducks, loons, waterfowls, geese, muskrat, beaver and otter are to be mentioned “Water” in detail.

3.3.5.1.1 Tortoise

Tortoise is a universally mythic animal comprising “a whole cosmography in itself with its shell, the upper half curved like the Heavens- a characteristic relating to the dome- and lower flat like the Earth.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 1016) *The Book of Symbols* define tortoise as follows: “Myths and legends depict it as the earth’s immense antiquity, solidity, continuity and wisdom, or in its domelike upper and flattened lower shell, comprising the totality of the cosmos.” (Ronnberg & Martin, 2010: 192) “The tortoise was depicted throughout mythological history as to be affiliated with feminine character, the moon and water, immortality, eternal birth and plentitude. It also represents the mythical ancestors of the Iroquois Indian tribe of North America.” (Ateş, 2000: 137) The tortoise cult appears in the myth analyzation samples in chapters’ of ‘fecundity’ and ‘water’ at the same time. Because in the mythic lore, tortoise has always been depicted in relation with the feminine characters, birth and wisdom. Below is a creation story of the Iroquois in

which turtle rescues the divine feminine being and supports her in rising of a land which will turn into Earth then.

“According to the Iroquois, when the Grandmother of mankind fell from the sky there was no Earth. The Turtle rescued the Grandmother on his back and the Muskrat covered it with mud from the bottom of the sea. Thus the first island gradually took shape on the Turtle’s back and this grew into the whole Earth.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 1017)

This Iroquois myth tells how a primordial creature act as an helper and saves a man from death and supplies her with a life by creating an island on his back. This initial creation gives rise to the formation of earth by expanding as the supportive force of earth’s center as an island. *Ronnberg and Martin’s* argument might be comprehensible in analyzing the tortoise’s dive in this myth. They argue that the turtle’s capacity to descend into the dark, cold depths of ocean inspired ambivalent fantasies of being carried and meditated by this spirit of the sea to nethermost regions of mystery and regeneration. “The Grandmother” of mankind is saved and passed into a next level of regeneration which saved the ancestry of mankind and let the rest breed and exist.

3.3.5.1.2 Fish

Fish, symbolizing the watery element that is affiliated with femininity, appears as a divine figure symbolizing life power. The correlation between the fish’s procreative ability and fecund watery aspects are also clear in different zones ranging from Near-East myths, Teutonic societies, Greek and Roman mythologies and the Mediterranean cultures. “The created of the watery element, ‘fish’ symbolizes procreation, the power of the waters as origin and preservation of life. It is associated with all aspects of the Great Mother Goddess as the world wide symbol of which is the pointed-oval sign known as vesica piscis, Vessel of the Fish.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 383) “In ancient Near East and the Mediterranean world, fish were associated with the great goddesses, archetypal images of femininity, love and fertility. Astarte was worshiped in the form of a fish. In Ancient Greece, Rome and Scandinavia, the goddess Aphrodite, Venus and Frigg were assimilated to fish and on Friday, the day sacred to them, fish were eaten as a way of participating in their fecundity.” (Eliade, 1987 vol 5: 346) The correlation in between ‘the great mother’ –

the creator and water is quite clear in *The Book of Symbols*¹⁹: “Moderns rarely locate God at the bottom of the sea, but the ancients did. To ancient poets the sea intimated the great mother as matrix of being, whose son-lovers were fish.” The symbol of fish is to be studied in detail in ‘water’ chapter.²⁰

3.3.5.2 Animals as Creators

As subsidiary animals helping the creator/creatix to form the creation period, there also exists animals acting as the creator/creatix itself in the mythic lore. *Cooper* denotes of serpent as “a highly complex and universal symbol, which is polyvalent: it can be male, female, or the self-created. The serpent was believed to be androgynous and it is the emblem of all self-creative divinities and represents the generative power of earth.” (Cooper, 1990: 142) In this chapter, the serpent figure is to be analyzed in correlation with a creator, coming from the water. Serpent cult will also be scrutinized in ‘island’ chapter attributing to its fertilizing aspects of raising islands by ‘word’.

3.3.5.2.1 Serpent

Among animals in creation myths the “serpent” appears as the creator animal. ‘The World Serpent’ is thus an emblem of creative energy, giving birth to other animals and living things from its very own existence in most ancient of myths. It profoundly appears as the shaper of the cosmos. The presence of a ‘serpent’ symbolizes ‘pregnancy’, ‘procreation’, ‘regeneration’ and fecund surface waters universally. It is an embodiment of ‘water of life’ springing from the depths of ‘Mother Earth’.

The fecund uterus grasps all the activities of creation thus; a close relationship can be retained between the feminine, the serpent and water, in complexity, serpents has the feature of renewal, which reminds the menstrual cycle of women creating a new basis for the placenta. *Cooper* also argues that “cosmologically the serpent is the primordial ocean from which all emerges and to which all returns, the primeval undifferentiated chaos. It can also support and maintain the world, or encircle it as OUROBOROS (q.v.), the symbol of cyclic manifestation and reabsorption. Serpents are the controllers of the powers of the waters, encircling the waters and are both water-confining and water-bringing.” (Cooper,

¹⁹ For more information see Ronnberg&Martin (2010)

²⁰ Please see ‘Acquatic Animals’.

1990: 147) Signifying the procreative male force the serpent cult is universally affiliated with fertilizing fecund primeval waters and it accompanies the cosmic Great Mother.

The serpent figure esteemed as a divine animal in myths, often symbolize the power of cosmic forces and in various myths and narrations the serpent figure is associated with the earth and its fertility. In some creation myths of Near-Eastern societies chaos appears in the form of a serpent monster which was often associated with water as in the Babylonian myth, Marduk cuts it in half and forms the heavens and earth from its body. Ateş gives another account from Hindu mythology, “we encounter symbolic motifs showing the head of a serpent metamorphosing into hundreds of smaller serpents. In this manner, an attempt was made to explain through such symbolic metaphors like the serpent, which has been divided into infinitesimal fragments finally transforming itself into visible tiny serpent species.” (Ateş, 2000: 119) This anthropomorphic figure and the water it floats on is an epiphany of a unique, innate, eternal energy belonging to the cosmic essence supplying prospective microcosmic life forms.



Figure 3.1 “Shesha, the king of all Nāgas (serpent deities), one of the primal beings of creation and according to the Bhagavata Purana, an avatar of the Supreme God.”²¹

“In Hindu (post-Vedic) tradition, Shesha is the king of all Nāgas (serpent deities), one of the primal beings of creation and according to the Bhagavata Purana, an avatar of the Supreme God In the ‘Puranas’, Sheshanaga is said to hold all the

²¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shesha> (20.11.2014)

*planets of the Universe on his hoods and to constantly sing the glories of Vishnu from all his mouths. He is sometimes referred to as Ananta Shesha which translates as 'endless'. It is said that when Adishesa uncoils, time moves forward and creation takes place. When he coils back, the universe ceases to exist.”*²²

Goddess Ananta is depicted as lying on a multi-headed serpent with the symbolism of the flower of creation: lotus, stemming from the belly button of the creator denoting of a umbilical cord. The serpent (naga) symbolizes 'water' in Hindu mythology; accordingly that figure of paramount anthropomorphic creature is depicted as the first creator, the Ultimate Reality or the God, Viṣṇu who is the infinite and eternal force signifying nature. The secret within the god is 'cosmos', resembling that of an inborn in a fetus, a primordial perfectionism is constructed in this stage depicting the illustration above.

In ancient myths, the serpent appears in theomorphic form of countless deities including Zeus, Apollo, Persephone, Hades, Isis, Kali and Shiva. *Sjöö* and *Mor* also names another goddesses in affiliation with the serpent cult: “Everywhere in world myth and imagery, the Goddess-Creatrix was coupled with the sacred serpent. In Egypt she was the Cobra Goddess; the use of the cobra in her ceremonies and icons was so ancient that the inscribed picture of a cobra preceded the names of all goddesses and became ‘the hieroglyphic sign for the word Goddess’. Isis was also pictures as a Serpent Goddess. Far away, in Australia, the aboriginal Goddess Unna, who established the earth, was pictured, with rainbow snake held up in her arms.” (Sjöö & Mor, 1989:57-58) The serpent form and cult in myths thus has always conveyed power of life and death. And it acted as the mediator of hidden processes of transformation in relevance with women, femininity and fertility. It is the manifestation of life giving water coming out of the deep sources of Earth Mother, symbolizing the life giving energy.

²² <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shesha> (15.08.2014)

3.4 CONCLUSION

Prior to a fecund goddess the earth was seen as a 'Tellus Mater'. The primordial womb of life, the water abyss in cosmogonic period is closely interrelated with 'water' in uterus which makes a correspondence between water and mother in mythic lore, so deep was a mother's womb and deep was the Earth Mother containing abyssal elements. "It is woman who goes through the sacred transformations in our own body and psyche- the mystery changes of menstruation, pregnancy, birth and the production of milk. It is woman who first shaped a seed in food, earth into pottery, fire into a tool, the struggle for survival into human culture. Woman as procreator and producer-creator. Women's mysteries are blood-transformation mysteries: The experience of female bodily transformations magically fused with her conscious and willed transformations of matter. Matter: the mud: the Mother. She transforms herself." (Sjöö & Mor, 1989: 51) The role of mystic women as the fecund creatrix manifests itself in cultivation, water, mounds, mountains, darkness, night and moon myths. From this, we can see the notion that women's bond with today's life begins in 'Sacred Times'.

In most of the myth analyzations in this chapter it is the 'feminine figure' who acts in the supreme roles of cultivator and life bearing force of mother. The feminine figure is always pronounced with the very existent 'cosmic waters' which supplies a natural vessel likened to a womb of a mother. Water's essential importance is emphasized in this chapter again with the mysterious power of the feminine figure who represents the universal symbol of the life force. There is a clear interrelatedness between water and mother in the myth samples that explain earth's creation by maternal principles. Thus anything in relevance with fecundity goes under the eclipse of fecundity and water and later on 'earth' whose importance for this triadic equation will be scrutinized in 'island' chapter.

The divine feminine figure first appears in myths and narrations as a source of fecundity for creation, thus she is symbolized as the 'fecund goddess' creating the cosmos. The act or 'birth' would only be affiliated to a 'Mother' not the 'male' character which authorities think of only 'a feminine figure' taking the role of supreme creator within herself. Along with a deity's existence in the creation phase water is the next essential element adjuncting the state of creation now that it is essential and indispensable for the power of life procuring fertility.

As analyzed in this chapter, the Great Mother, appearing as the cosmic divine potter and cultivator, her fecundity aspects attributed to symbols of darkness, night and moon, she is depicted as the mistress of groundwater owner whose belly-womb region of procures birth of seeds and emergence of earthly beings out of navels. *Sjö* and *Mor* defines the navel of 'the Great Mother' as "the center of the Earth-of us-from which the universe is nourished, by our conscious participation, as we are nourished by it." (Sjö & Mor, 1989: 52) The feminine divine figure's representation as the Goddess signifies a form of sacred epiphany as the parts of her body are perceived as sources supplying life to beings contained in forms of seeds.

4. WATER

“The Saints have given many names to the Supreme Being, according to the country in which they lived and the language used by them. But all Saints recognize that no name is adequate. No name can ever describe God or convey any fair conception of his attributes. It is not well to contend for name. What is the difference whether we say Radha Swami or Rama or Allah? It is quite immaterial whether we say pani (Urdu), eau (French), amma (Cherokee Indian), hudor (Greek), aqua (Latin), or water. They all mean exactly the same.”

(Cosmogony of masters, God and
The Great Hierarchy of The Universe: 287)

4.1 INTRODUCTION: NOTHINGNESS WAS WATER

Various cosmogonic mythic verses start the creation of cosmogony on nothingness structured with darkness, void and chaotic water. Water is seen as the mother of all beings for the first living being would take the form of an embryo in a warm womb-like vessel as it does in cosmogony lying in cosmic waters from which a piece of land will sprout. The findings of both monotheistic and polytheistic religions suggest that it was all water before nothing existed. In this chapter some creation myths of monotheistic and polytheistic religions are to be sampled and a general understanding of the role of the fecund water in creation is to be reached.

Cirlot (2001) makes the characteristics of water clear by giving it master the role of fertilization and emergence of living beings by categorizing its features as (i) fertilization; (ii) purification; (iii) dissolution. For him, “these three qualities have so much in common that their relationship can be expressed in variety of ways that it is bound up with the functions of fertilization and regeneration of the material. It is water that appears in the midst of solid areas of the cosmos with the power of destroying the corrupt and of initiating a new cycle of life.” (Cirlot, 2001: 364) According to *Sjöö&Mor*, “Water is pure, potential and unformed matrix from which all life on earth takes its being, - water that is not a thing, but a flow, a dance. It is from the involution of the unformed but forming Waters that the egg crystalizes, takes shape, by the turning-in on itself of energy, of matter

of consciousness.” (Sjöö & Mor, 1989: 56) Water appearing as the source of life and renewal also stands for the uncontrolled and formless thus it also consists of a mysterious aspect which can also be attributed to ‘woman’ as explained thoroughly in ‘fecundity’ chapter. Thus in this chapter, myths of origin it plays a key role in the emergence of the solid earth and earthly beings acting with aspects likened to that of a ‘fecund mother.’

Pre-existent body of waters connotes the future of seeds carrying potentiality and all promises of evolution. Peoples of the early times localize cosmic power in water and they attribute it with a notion that it is the “Great Mother” of all prospective beings. Thus a vast body of water or a deep dark ocean lying in tranquility is a universal manifestation of the first element which all things began in cosmogony. This symbol of cosmic stillness is the primal mother giving birth to a piece of land, an island, or a continent. Down below sacred texts of polytheistic cosmogonies from various cultures are to sample the creation period of a piece of land arising.

4.1.1 Etymology of Water

The etymology of water leaning to antiquity, seems to have impact on various languages affecting each other. “Old English wæter, from Proto-Germanic **watar* (cognates: Old Saxon watar, Old Frisian wetir, Dutch water, Old High German wazzar, German Wasser, Old Norse vatn, Gothic *wato*; water); from PIE **wod-or*, from root **wed-* (1) water, wet cognates: Hittite watar, Sanskrit udrah, Greek hydor, Old Church Slavonic and Russian voda, Lithuanian vanduo, Old Prussian wundan, Gaelic useage water; Latin unda ‘wave’. Word-forming element meaning ‘acqua,’ derives from Latin ‘aqua’ water; the sea; rain cognates with Proto-Germanic **akhwo*. Water is source of Old English ea ‘river,’ Gothic ahua ‘river, waters,’ Old Norse Ægir, name of the sea-god, Old English it is the source of ‘island’.”²³ In Sumerian language ‘a’ means water but it has other meanings of ‘seed’, ‘conception’ and ‘generation’. In Mesopotamian engravings water symbolizes fish and fecundity. General symbolical conception of water leads us to an understanding of its fecund features procuring life forms whether as in embryological or terrestrial context.

²³ Available at <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=aqua->, (08.10.2014)

Glasgow tells about a short literature review of water in his comprehensive work of ‘The Concept of Water’ as its being the first element, according to “the philosophers of ancient *Miletus*; it is the Mother of all the things; The Arche. According to most accounts, the history of Western Philosophy begins with Thales of Miletus, who lived some 26 centuries ago. *Thales*, it is said, was the founder of philosophy, the proto-philosopher. The same accounts then explain that Thales’s most renowned credo was that everything is made of water. From Thales’s perspective; Unfathomable in depth and boundless in expanse, oceans exclude a sense of the infinite, always seeming to stretch beyond whatever limits one might set. In Aristotle’s account Thales accordingly conceived of the earth itself as floating like a log upon an immense expanse of water. For Plato; it is the source of all the potentialities in existence; the first form of matter and the ‘liquid of the whole verification.” (Glasgow, 2009: 11-14) *Glasgow*’s interpretation of philosophers’ ideas follows a parallel pattern with waters appearance in cosmogonic myths as the pre-existent element and generating life source out of primordial waters.

These notes show us that water is the premise element in cosmogony. It is a warm dark vessel for seeds to be fertilized and transform into life forms. This metaphysical feature of water blends with its religious and sacred beliefs. Several polytheistic and monotheistic religions initiates the creation period with preexistence of it. It is prominent in myths, cults and rituals of people and there is a deep symbolism attached to its features because it is thought that all the fullness of various life sources are contained in the mystery of water. Water is a symbol of feminine principle; it is soft, mild and resilient as women should be. In view of its etymology and classification in history, next chapter will be enriching and analyzing water as a vast body nothingness lying on earth before the creation period begins. Its roles and functions are to be determined and studied for deep understanding.

4.1.2 Water in Polytheistic Cosmogonies

In all traditions of cosmogony whose creation starts with water it is clear to see water playing a primordial role which embraces the feature of fecundity. At first as inanimate and passive, bustling with the divine cosmic power, agitation starts. From this stage a new phase is ready to crack; the infinite waters give rise to a piece of sand, mud, or

earth by the help of a subsidiary animal. In this section, the importance and role of water is to be analyzed by leaning on the earliest writings denoting ‘cosmogony’.

Glasgow approaches the case of cosmogony in a comparative fashion by denoting of the fecund aspects of water in different cultures raging from the Japanese *Kojiki* (collection of mythological texts), in which the divine pair, Izanagi and Izanami, thrust a lance into the sea and when they withdrew it, its salty drops became the first ‘land’²⁴. He also attributes water as a medium of emergence of new life, as stated in the Hindu myth in which Brahma, is born of a golden egg awash in the water. “According to the early Hindu legal text *The Laws of Manu*, the universal spirit Brahman willed first the waters into being and then an egg- floating on the surface- from which after a year Brahma-Narayana hatched forth to produce the sky, the earth and the rest of creation.” (Glasgow, 2009:29) In this sense, Brahmana represents both the vast body waters stretching in an infinite fashion and the egg he is in symbolizing the energy which will give rise to creation, according to this tradition Brahma is symbolized as the ‘water-mover’ or ‘the one who sports on the waters’. The depiction of infinite water and the appearance of the cosmic egg awashed in waters symbolizes the stillness that precedes cosmogonic stages.

Various dictionaries attributes the aspects of water to maternity, life-possessing and procurement of the first beginning. *Cirlot* gives a detailed comment on the role of water in Indian culture as: “In the Vedas, water is referred to as *mâtritamâh* (the most maternal) because, in the beginning everything was like a sea without light. In India, this element is generally regarded as the preserver of life, circulating throughout the whole of nature, in the form of rain, sap, milk and blood. Limitless and immortal, the waters are the beginning and the end of all the things on earth.” (Cirlot, 1971: 364) *Chevalier & Gheerbrant* also gives account of water in another culture’s creation epic: “In the Babylonian myth of creation *Enuma Elish*, water itself possesses generating forces: both divinities: Apsu, the male sweet water ocean and Tiamat, the female salty sea, mingle and generate new gods, the sky (Ansar) and the Earth (Kisar). Water stands for the life-bestowing, nourishing and fertile principle.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 1081) The notion of primordial waters procuring the life force is also evident in other cultures narrations and myths as; Polynesians and Southern Asians, who gives account of ‘cosmic water’ in the in beginning

²⁴ The Island of Onogoro

as the origin of life. In those creation myths water symbolizes fertility, fecundity, wisdom and wisdom. It is perceived as the medium that initiates life on earth.

In those samples of polytheistic religions of cosmogonic myths still water occurs as the life-bestowing, fertile and fecund element housing a vessel for all living things for fertilization. It is the symbol of fertility and takes the leading role of a channel bestowing life. The fecund water supplying life is to be found in ancient cosmogonic writing of Japanese *Kojiki* and *Nihongi* texts, Mesopotamian engravings, early Hindu legal text *The Laws of Manu* and *The Vedas*, old Babylonian clay tablets, Siberian cosmogonic myths and Oceanic mythologies.

4.1.3 Water in Monotheistic Cosmogonies

Monotheistic cosmogonies also refer to water in cosmogonic phase as the polytheistic ones do. Water appears as the first element in tranquility, from which all life springs. All the sacred monotheistic religions of Christianity, Islam and Judaism denotes of water before creation begins. As a preexistent element it contains all the life-bearing qualities lying in vastness as of primordial waters. In later stages within the command of the creator it bustles and starts to agitate. The vast void from which darkness emanates gives rise to cosmogony and cosmology.

Chevalier & Gheerbrant tells about the water symbolism in detailed as: “In Jewish and Christian tradition, water in the first place symbolizes the beginnings of creation. The Hebrew letter men (M) symbolizes tangible water and this is the mother and womb. As the source of all things water makes manifest the transcendent and from this very fact should be regarded as a revelation of holiness. According to *Tertullian*, the Holy Spirit chose ‘Water’ from all the elements and preferred it above the others because, from the very beginning, it seemed a perfect matter, simple and fertile and wholly translucent.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 1082-1085)

According to *Genesis* earth rises out from water in stages. In the first day of the creation the chaos, symbolizing ‘darkness’, is separated from light which makes a day and night. Out of formlessness it is only water and darkness resembling to that of a womb that God hovers above. *Genesis* mentions of water in 6, 7, 14 and 15 that God divided the primeval waters into two by placing a platform-like surface (that of Earth) between

heavenly bodies. In the definition of Earth, a chaotic, dark, gloomy empty vastness lies upon the surface of the waters that is defined as ‘tehom’ rendered as ‘deep’ in English. Deep is the sea, bearing all the affinities of germs; seeds of life. God’s spirit hovering over the sea is a reference to a next step of movement, which brings forth agitation of waters. On the next phase a chaotic act as that of division of waters is to be expected:

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”²⁵

After the creation of day, night, morning and evening, there starts the separation of waters which necessitates a vast body of existing water covering earth.

“Then God said, ‘Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters and let it separate the waters from the waters’. God made the expanse and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so. God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.”²⁶

After the separation of water earth comes into being by forming out of water.

“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.”²⁷

In Muslim tradition, water keeps a vast importance before and during the creation phase. *Noble Quran* also gives account of ‘Water’ in creation phase. 86:8 surah denotes that “*Man himself was created from spreading water²⁸*”, the *Qur’an* mentions water on many occasions relevance with the creation of humans, the *Qur’an* states that water is the very source and origin of life, here bustling waters give rise to fecundity as a mother does and let a protoplasm start a life. 21:30 surah denotes that “*Do not the Unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of creation), before we clove*

²⁵ <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1> (09.10.2014)

²⁶ <http://www.teachinghearts.net/dre09creationnotes.html> (26.11.2014)

²⁷ <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1> (09.10.2014)

²⁸ <http://www.bookofsigns.org/2009/04/life-originated-from-water-quran-modern-science-in-harmony/> (26.11.2014)

*them asunder? We made from water every living thing.”*²⁹, 25:54 surah denotes that *“It is He Who has created man from water: then has He established relationships of lineage and marriage: for thy Lord has power (over all things).”*³⁰, lastly 24:45 surah denotes that *“And God has created every animal from water: of them there are some that creep on their bellies; some that walk on two legs; and some that walk on four. God creates what He wills for verily God has power over all things.”*³¹ Water is the life-bestowing first element in *Noble Quran* and creation takes place by the command of Allah which is an example to creation by word. It is the fecund water which bustles first and give rise to every living thing: *“We made from water every living thing.”*³² Surah 21:30.

Torah also mentions water in creation. Cosmogony of *Torah* depicts the stages with an initiative of a vast void from which darkness emanates and a primordial abyss from which all water springs forth.

“On the first day of creation God produced ten things: the heavens and the earth, Tohu and Bohu, light and darkness, wind and water, the duration of the day and the duration of the night. Though the heavens and the earth consist of entirely different elements, they were yet created as a unit, ‘like the pot and its cover.’ Tohu is a green band which encompasses the whole world and dispenses darkness and Bohu consists of stones in the abyss, the producers of the waters. On the second day God brought forth four creations, the firmament, hell, fire and the angels. The firmament is not the same as the heavens of the first day. It is the crystal stretched forth over the heads of the Hayyot, from which the heavens derive their light, as the earth derives its light from the sun. This firmament saves the earth from being engulfed by the waters of the heavens; it forms the partition between the waters above and the waters below. It was made to crystallize into the solid it is by the heavenly fire, which broke its bounds and condensed the surface of the firmament. Thus fire made a division between the celestial and the terrestrial at the time of

²⁹ <http://www.bookofsigns.org/2009/04/life-originated-from-water-quran-modern-science-in-harmony/> (26.11.2014)

³⁰ <http://www.bookofsigns.org/2009/04/life-originated-from-water-quran-modern-science-in-harmony/> (26.11.2014)

³¹ <http://www.bookofsigns.org/2009/04/life-originated-from-water-quran-modern-science-in-harmony/> (26.11.2014)

³² <http://www.bookofsigns.org/2009/04/life-originated-from-water-quran-modern-science-in-harmony/> (26.11.2014)

*creation, as it did at the revelation on Mount Sinai. The separation of the waters into upper and lower waters was the only act of the sort done by God in connection with the work of creation. All other acts were unifying. It therefore caused some difficulties. When God commanded, 'Let the waters be gathered together, unto one place and let the dry land appear,' certain parts refused to obey. They embraced each other all the more closely. In His wrath at the waters, God determined to let the whole of creation resolve itself into chaos again. Up to the third day the earth was a plain and wholly covered with water. Scarcely had the words of God, 'Let the waters be gathered together,' made themselves heard, when mountains appeared all over and hills and the water collected in the deep-lying basins.'*³³

Water appears in *Torah* Cosmogony as one of the leading elements giving life to beings. As one of the basic elements of ten, it appears with darkness supplying a fruitful atmosphere as a cover and fecund vessel like that of 'pot' which is related with fecundity and fertilization in the first day of the creation. Water is the only source that is present before God appears or after; it is the only pre-existent element, which represents its vitality for the whole creation beings to sprout. God commands waters to be gathered and land to be up risen, however it is the chaotic and dark characteristic nature of water that certain parts of it resists to obey, which hauls the earth into a chaos of destruction. At that time the singer of God, trying to pacify him, starts singing praises which makes him withdrew his command of destruction. The separated waters of above and below and on the third day he commanded by word that mountains appeared out of water and land started to enlarge.

Both polytheistic cosmogonic myths and monotheistic sacred texts show us that water has been present in the world from ancient times on and it is water which creates a mysterious bond with the emergence of lands and the birth of the first men. 'Waters' as the principle of potentiality and procreative forces, bearer of all the seeds and the foundation of all kinds of cosmic manifestation symbolizes the first elixir of life. The preexistent 'water' in cosmogony is a source of life, reserving all forms potentially. It is the source of whole existence: '*fons et origo*' meaning 'the source and origin'³⁴.

³³ <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/loj/loj103.htm>, (10.10.2014)

³⁴ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fons%20et%20origo> (10.10.2014)

4.2 THE FUNCTION OF WATER IN COSMOGONY

Given the mythic system of cosmogonies in various cultures, water appears as the fundamental element of life thus it plays a crucial role in religious beliefs and sacred texts. Water appears in many cosmogonies in conjunction with the origin of life ‘in the form of a primordial ocean or subterranean lakes’, cosmogonic myths describe it as a created or already preexistent original substance. In the cosmogonical context water can be best described as the elemental chaotic power, preexistent as a chaos-like Primordial Ocean leading to the appearance of the first piece of land proceedingly main lands. Thus it is associated with fertilization, fecundity and maternal elements. Diversely functioned, “water was what existed before the unleashing of cosmogonic process or the state of the world in the first phases of its history.” (Eliade, 1987: 351) In this section the functions of water are to be listed and sampled by referring to myth examples from various cultures.

4.2.1 The Simplest Element

Water appears in most cosmogonies as the primeval and basic element that is pre-existent before or at the time of the appearance of the *Deus faber*. “In its fluidity and elusiveness water may suggest the absence of form, the insubstantiality and confusion from which the world will emerge. Inert, water has no power; a god or other beings dependent of water will be the sole agents of creation. For instance, the following tale was told in the *Admiralty Islands*.” (Eliade, 1987: 351):

“In the beginning, there was nothing but an immense sea; in it swam a great serpent. Wanting a place where he could rest, he said, ‘Let a reed arise!’ A reed then arose from the water and turned into dry land.”(Eliade, 1987: 351)

In this text of creation, the inert water symbolizes the primordial vastness of sea, which contains the source of life. Water, generating the power of life is “ancient and primal, it is the mother of mothers, The Great Round within whose fluid containment life began and from whose fertile precincts the first bold pioneers scuttled out upon sand.” (Ronnberg&Martin, 2010: 36) Here water plays a key role for the birth of emergence of a piece of land to dwell upon and creation of the rest of beings. “It represents the original state of formless, from which life develops through the intervention of divine forces” (Stuckrad, 2007: 1964): serpent, “phallic and the procreative male force, whose presence is

almost universally associated with pregnancy.” (Cooper, 1990: 147) Here it accompanies the female deity of Great Mother; ‘vast water’ and carries secret, enigmatic forces which drives him to let an island arise as a generative power of earth.

4.2.2 Formlessness

All of the cosmogonies that proceed from water, it is depicted in a formless vast bodies stretching over mud or soil in tranquility. “Water has no form of its own, but rivers have a bed and the sea has a bottom. This simple fact inspires several myths. The original ocean can thus cover some solid element. Moreover, despite its fluidity, water itself has substance; it is itself matter and may contain suspended matter here is a Siberian example.” (Eliade, 1987: 352):

“In the beginning, water was everywhere. Doh the first shaman, flew over the primordial ocean in the company of some birds. Finding nowhere to rest, he asked the red-breasted loon to dive into the ocean and bring back some earth from the bottom. This the loon did and on his third attempt, he managed to bring back a little mud in his beak. Doh made of this an island on the original ocean which became the earth.”

This Asiatic myth is an example of water covering solid elements as clay, sand or mud from which lands will stretch and cosmology will sprout. A vast body of tranquil water is a sign of a womb-like vessel, on it the first movement begins with the fluttering of a bird. Here the bird signifies the transcendence of the Shamans’ spirit into a divine power that gains a skill in creating a connection with gods. Shamans’ transcendence give rise to the first words of creation. Asking for a place to land on that necessitates a piece of land, cosmic diving begins and the third dive of a cosmic bird - loon- is a success. Transforming the piece of mud into a land, Doh lets an island to up rise that leads the birth of cosmology. Water, possessing fecund powers is as a mother to an island as a mother giving birth to a being.

4.2.3 Contains Life in Itself

Water appears pre-existent in all of the cosmogonic myths that opens up even nothingness with vast bodies that stretch over soil, mud or slime, the union of which gives

‘dough’ the basic element that cosmology is made up of. “Water possesses a true existence. The gods use it, but it remains inert. This is the case in a story told by the Muskogee of North America” (Eliade, 1987: 352):

“Before creation, they say, a vast expanse of water was the only thing visible and two pigeons flew over the waves. At one end, they noticed a blade of grass growing on the surface of the waves. From this grass the earth gradually took shape and at last the islands and continents took on their present form.”

This myth sample from North America shows a clear example of the water functioning as a life-bearer, which supplies life power for existence. It is associated with birth symbolizing feminine principles. Here it acts as *prima materia*, the first matter supplying a fountain of life. The myths follow the same pattern of a vast body of water lying inert and possessing suspended genuine power of creation. Here a referent of *Eliade* can be made leaning on the mysterious cosmic power that waters are in possession of: “Something happens in the original waters, without the intervention of any power external to the waters themselves. They therefore possess a certain intrinsic power. Myths of this type show us water as present in the world from the most ancient times on. (...) In seeking the origin of all things, many peoples relate how water appeared in the course of cosmogonic events.” (Eliade, 1987: 351) Waters characterized with maternal elements, carrying fecund features, is inseminated with a command of a creator or an appearance of a fertilizing symbol as that of a serpent. The pattern follows the same route of an arising land and transforming into an island which is making room for a dwelling place for flourishing and breeding of new beings.

4.3 PRIMEVAL WATERS

“In the beginning was water: this is the overriding theme of creation myths. The water may be a primordial ocean that is older than the time itself; it may be a cataclysmic flood; it may even be the meltwater of dissolving ice. Out of this soup of creation came the first land and the first life.” (Ferguson, 2000:17)

According to numerous cultures initially only were dark and eternal ‘waters’ bearing seeds of fecundity. They contribute the earth land to be conquered out of it; it

enriches and helps the growth of the universe. In some societies water is accepted as a manifestation of the sacred creator on earth. An archaic hymn denotes of water; “All was as an unilluminated sea.”³⁵ Thus water has been credited as the most pure and profound matter of rituals. “The life-bearing and generative qualities of the primordial waters become manifests in the later stages of cosmogony.” (Eliade, 1987: 353) Water appearing as substantive but inert; initially constitutes primordial waters. The common characteristics of these waters seen in cosmogonic myths were: amniotic quality, formlessness, carrying life within itself and acting as a fertilizer giving birth to a piece of land or a part of a land or a whole body of continents. In this section myth samples denoting of existence of primeval waters will be listed by referring to creation types. The prominent type seen in those myths can be interpreted as ‘creation out of chaos’ and ‘earth diver types’. The reason behind the motif of water in creation myths lies in a basic answer: because it is the simplest basic element that gives rise to creation in all of those myths. The common ground of all the creation narrations, texts and myths denote of water regardless of its kinetic nature or existing in stillness; as vast bodies stretching above the fecund slime of mud which refers a chaos proceeding creation stages.

In this chapter according to their movements primeval water myths are to be categorized in three sections. Placid ones, bearing seeds and waiting for creation will be listed under: ‘Still Waters’; fluctuating ones will be put under the topic of ‘Bustling Waters’; and lastly restless and chaotic ones will be classified under ‘Churning Waters’. For each category a deep understanding of the concept is to be explained and at least a myth sample is to be exemplified.

4.3.1 Still Waters

Symbolizing nothingness and void at first, still waters are bound up with divine powers and generative forces. As a fluid matter; it symbolizes an amorphous material that will be used by god in the latter phases of cosmogony. There are two things in cosmogonic myths that are not created by the creator agency: water and wind. Still waters appear in myths as a pre-existent element before the creator initiates the birth of earth. Such myths use the same pattern of features: the earth is without a form and full of waters, then the face of the God hovers above the waters of the deep, which gives a rise to a first motion.

³⁵ Rig Veda, X. 129.3. for more information please see: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/rigveda/rvi10.htm>

The creator agency is defined as a divine breath that creates light and illuminates all the gloom and darkness that lie in waters. Subsequently the firmament rises upon by division of those waters. This stage is a transition to a proceeding phase: ‘Bustling Waters’³⁶. This chapter consists of “Whatever there is that might be is simply not there: only the pooled water, only the calm sea.”(Tedlock, 1996: 64) Still waters appear in various cosmogonic myths in world mythology and narrations of cosmogonic myths are profound in Polynesian cultures, here is an example: “A Polynesian myth tells how their supreme god, Io, created the world. In the beginning there were only waters and darkness. By his word and thought Io separated the waters and created Earth and sky. He said: Let the waters be separated, let the heavens be formed, let the Earth be.” (Sproul, 1979: 345)

*“The ancient and original sayings.
The ancient and original words.
The ancient and original cosmological wisdom.
Which caused growth from the void,
The limitless space-filling void,
As witness the tidal-waters
The evolved heaven,
The birth-given evolved earth.”* (Sproul, 1979: 345)

According to the myth the only thing that exists is water buried in darkness and there appears a light, Io looks upon the waters which compasses him and commands the waters to be separated, in a while the earth lays stretched. The words of the creator procure existence out of void and this cosmogonic myth example structures a biological, spiritual conception for all Polynesians. The words still impresses the minds of Polynesian ancestors and they are to be transmitted through generations. They are still referred to by priests.

Eliade gives a clear example of profoundness of the myth that Hare Hongi, a contemporary authority, comments as: “And now my friends, there are three very important applications of those original sayings, as used in our sacred rituals. The first occurs in the ritual for implanting a child within the barren womb. The next occurs in the ritual for enlightening both the mind and the body. The third and the last occur in the ritual

³⁶ See section 4.3.2.

on the solemn subjects of death and of war, of baptism, of genealogical recitals and such like important subjects, as the priests most particularly concerned themselves in.” (Eliade, 2000: 392). The main function of the myth highlights the meanings of the rituals and actions of the whole cosmic beings. As a common characteristic feature of fecundity, water bears the same function as a womb does. Implanting an embryo into a barren womb resembles to that of implanting the seed of earth into dark and calm waters which will beget lands to appear and stretch abroad.

Another myth example for still waters is *Popol Vuh*. “Popol Vuh is an example of a world-wide genre- a type of annals of which the first portion is pure mythology, shading off into pure history, evolving from the hero-myths of saga to the recital of the deeds of authentic personages. The name ‘Popol Vuh’ signifies ‘Record of the Community,’ and its literal translation is ‘Book of the Mat,’ from the Kiche words pop or popol, a mat or rug of woven leaves on which the entire family sat and vuh or uuh, paper or book, from uoch, to write.” (Spence, 1994: 188) Popol Vuh is a divine text of the ancient Quiche Maya of Central America. The first part of Popol Vuh defines of nothing in existence but an expanse of sky and infinite sea pooled under it, resting in calmness. The verse also gives no account of a living being or geographical figures but a vast body of water lying in serenity. The myth asserts that in the beginning whose name meant ‘Heart of Heaven’, hovered upon vast body of unfathomable water which lay in darkness. ‘Heart of Heaven’ calls out and by his words which are an example to creation ‘by word’ the first land appears:

*“There is not yet one person, one animal, bird, fish, crab, tree,
rock, hollow, canyon, meadow, forest. Only the sky alone is there; the
face of the earth is not clear. Only the sea alone is pooled under all
the sky; there is nothing whatever gathered together. It is at rest;
not a single thing stirs. It is held back, kept at rest under the sky.
Whatever there is that might be is simply not there:
only the pooled water, only the calm sea, only it alone is pooled.”³⁷*

³⁷ <http://www.holybooks.com/wp-content/uploads/POPOL-VUH-THE-MAYAN-BOOK-OF-THE-DAWN-OF-LIFE-translated-by-Dennis-Tedlock.pdf> (15.10.2014)

Water is commented upon as a womb possessing the essential element for giving birth. It is in water that the sea god, the 'Plumed Serpent' rests in glittering light. Existence of a serpent in water is a sign of primordial eternal life-force. Procurer of potential energy, the serpent is said to talk, think and agree with the creator. Then they reached accord in light which give rise to the division of the calm waters of Primordial Ocean. "While the Mayan imagery suggests a process of ritual sacrifice, the process of separation and individuation may also be considered a matter of work, a labor that involves shaping and crafting the cosmos from the immense silent waters, giving form to what has been formless." (Glasgow, 2009: 26):

*"Let it be this way, think about it: this water should be removed,
emptied out for the formation of the earth's own plate and platform,
then comes the sowing, the dawning of the sky-earth. But there will be
no high days and no bright praise for our work, our design, until
the rise of the human work, the human design,' they said.
And then the earth arose because of them, it was simply their word
that brought it forth. For the forming of the earth they said 'Earth.'
It arose suddenly, just like a cloud, like a mist, now forming,
unfolding. Then the mountains were separated from the water,
all at once the great mountains came forth."*

The first five lines of the myth represent the creation as a mental activity of thought. The formation of the world here is an example to creation by thought: it is thought, dreamed and spoken. In Popol Vuh, 'mountains' and 'plains' are the integrative ridges that supply a comprehensible figure of 'earth' and they are created by naming. Here is another example of water giving birth to a place of dwelling for beings, a piece of land supposedly a 'mountain' stretched out of darkness and mist and the act of sprout gave birth to the great mountains at all once.

4.3.2 Bustling Waters

A powerful water droplet is an ambient source of a procreator that gives an end to darkness and lets an illuminative phase to begin. Such dynamic water type consists of seeds which advance life. Thus, water is an inseminator and it is interrelated with the

feminine figure. Mother appears in *Genesis* with a movement on the face of the waters. She is the personification constituent of ‘prima matter’: Water.

Bustling waters appear in water cosmogonies with symbolisms of darkness, femininity, movement, cosmic birds and divers. As in that case of still waters, they share the same characteristics of fecundity, they are full of life lying in a vast void of darkness but this time with a difference of movement. The face of the creator/creatix agitates the water, which lets the next phase of initiation of creation. In this chapter samples of ‘Bustling Water’ myths are to be scrutinized in terms of symbols and their interrelatedness with water and fecundity are to be highlighted. Here is the first example to an agitated form of vast body of water myth from Finland-Ugrians:

“The Samoyed Yuraks in their account tell of the Supreme God, Num, who wondered one day if any part of the earth were visible, although he could see only water. He sent several birds in succession to explore watery depths until one of them, a diver bird, returned with a small fragment from the bottom in its beak. Num made a floating island of it, which he slowly consolidated and extended in ways that vary from one account to another.” (Grimal, 1963: 423)

In this myth the appearance of a piece of land, an island, is described. But a limitless stretch of water was pre-existent already. It is water who bears life seeds for land to uprise and sprout. The creation of the birds is not mentioned respectively but they are existent with the Creator himself as subsidiary animals hosting cosmic powers. Out of several, a diver bird makes it to the bottom which lays inert under water, brings it to its creator in its beak and completes its mission. This piece of earth/mud supplies a base element for the next step of cosmogony. The Creator uses it as a basic element to turn it into an island to dwell upon and later on he extends it in a fashion of the earth itself.

Another sample of the same cosmogonic pattern that consists of the birth of an island out of water is *Kalevala*³⁸. This myth recounts of waters that are formed by an agent

³⁸ “In about 1828 the Finnish scholar Lönnrot conceived the idea of gathering together the popular songs of ancient Finland. He then began to travel the contry, visiting the humblest vilages where he collected a considerable quantity of songs or runot (runes) which had been handed down by generation after generation of peasants. By patient comparison and arrangement he combined all these songs into a heroic epic which he entitled the *Kalevala*. The poem appeared in 1835 it contained about twelve thousand

of creation along with a cosmic animal again: a teal. The Creatrix, the Mother of Waters, tries to spot a dry place for a nest in shifting seas and she lifts her knee out of the ocean, the teal lays seven eggs on it. By the immersion of the eggs in primordial waters, a next step of procreation begins. The eggs divide into pieces transforming into elements of the universe. Below is a shorter version of the myth depicting the creation of earth:

*“Short the time that passed thereafter;
Scarce a moment had passed over
Ere a beauteous teal came flying
Lightly hovering o’er the water,
Seeking for a spot to rest in,
Searching for a home to dwell in.
Eastward flew she, westward flew she,
Flew to north-west and to southward,
But the place she sought she found not,
Not a spot, however barren,
...
Then the Mother of the Waters,
Water-Mother, maid aerial,
From the waves her knee uplifted,
...
From the blue waves of the ocean
And she thought she saw a hillock,
Freshly green with springing verdure.
There she flew and hovered slowly,
...
And she laid her eggs all golden,
Six gold eggs she laid within it,
...
Water-Mother, maid aerial,
Rolled eggs into the water,*

verses. By successive additions it continued to grow and in the definitive edition of 1849 there were twenty-two thousand eight hundred verses.” (Graves & Guirand, 1968: 299)

*Down amid the waves of ocean,
 And to splinters they were broken,
 And to fragments they were shattered.
 In the ooze they were not wasted,
 Nor the fragments in the water,
 But aondrous change came o'er them,
 And the fragments all grew lovely.
 From the cracked egg's lower fragment,
 Rose the lofty arch of heaven,
 From the yolk, the upper portion,
 Now became the sun's bright lustre;
 From the white, the upper portion,
 Rose the moon that shines so brightly."* (Sproul, 1979: 177)

In the Finnish epic of *Kalevala*, an interrelated web of elements that are apparent in water cosmogonic myths are easy to distinguish: a creator/creatix, namely Mother-Daughter of Nature (Luonnotar³⁹), is in existence with the pre-existence of fertile water; the water acts as a life bearing force that impregnates her; breath of the wind is referred to caressing her bosom who floats on the white crests of waves; this act is an initiator of bustling waters in which an intrinsic force of fertility sets a motion. While floating for seven centuries and lamenting for her stability, subsidiary animals of birds appear.⁴⁰ Constituting powers of diving, nesting and laying eggs, this animal nests its seven eggs on the fertile mother's knees. Eggs, which symbolize the life principle, are the germs of all creation nests. The number seven symbolizes the totality of the universe; it is the macrocosm. Seven eggs nesting on the Mother's leg for three days, the number which symbolizes 'fate' in Teutonic Mythology, roll down to their end. In here the fate of the eggs is left to an abyss -Here 'abyss' defines the primordial source of the universe which also contains the fecund elements in itself- not lost in darkness they rise up as fertilized new life forms of; heaven, sun, moon, stars and clouds. Egg is a symbol of androgyny; the unconditioned state of wholeness and primordial perfection. The chaotic fate of the eggs represents obscurity but it is perceivable that creation will come out of the watery abyss.

³⁹ See section 4.3.2 for further information.

⁴⁰ In two different versions of the myth the bird either appear as a teal, duck or an eagle.

And there begins the creation of islands emerging from the waves and the earth displays its solid mass.

4.3.3 Churning Waters

Water, symbolizing formlessness, harbors a chaotic stage of primal condition, in company with portrayal of mist, darkness, void and a vast abyss. This formlessness is a metaphor to be deciphered into ‘primordial chaos’, which has the potentiality to overcome its own formlessness by bearing the seeds of life forces within it. Precisely, ‘Churning Waters’ can be defined as waters of chaos shifting from disorder to order, involving primeval battles of great procreators. In this section vigorous waters in motion are to be studied by sampling analyzes of myths. The first myth analyzation will take us to the land of the Babylonians whose cosmogony owes a great deal to Sumerian mythology. The myth is a theological justification in order to glorify their magnificent procreator Marduk over his divine struggle with ‘the sea’; Tiamat. The second sample myth of ‘Churning Waters’ takes place in Japanese cosmogony, which is also a great example of the account of Japanese islands arising from water by two primeval deity; Izanami (Female-Who-Invites) and Izanagi (Male-Who-Invites) who become ancestor of all things after the they set the cosmogonical order.

4.3.3.1 The Babylonian Creation Epic: Enuma Elish⁴¹

Written in a special dialect this myth is of vital importance for Babylonians. In addition to consisting of a religious testimony, this poem of creation is a political document which can be explained by referring to the origins of the First Dynasty in Babylon. The Babylonian Enuma Elish is generally believed to stem from “1900 BCE, the principal version of which is preserved in the ‘Seven Tablets of Creation’ now in the British Museum and originally part of the library of Assurbanipal at Nineveh.” (Spence, 1994: 166) The myth shows how the child of a proceeding generation, Marduk, slays his ancestor –Tiamat- to be granted with the leadership of the pantheon and ruling over the universe. The myth, listed under the topic of ‘Churning Waters’ is an exemplary for chaotic waters consisting of opposite cosmic forces.

⁴¹ Meaning as: “When on High”

Tiamat embodies a radical duality of formlessness, a chaotic unity of separation but in one hand she is the sign of fecundity that gives rise to an offspring with her mingling with the god of the primeval fresh waters, Apsu, out of which the world begins to shape. Marduk, proving himself to be the agent of order, defeats the forces of primordial chaos by separating Tiamat into two and establishes a cosmological order that leads to initiate the process of cosmogony. Though Tiamat's slaying represents of churning waters harboring chaos within, the next step tracing the path of cosmogonical order is division of waters; the upper of which will create the heaven and lower will seas and oceans. "According to this tale, prior to the formation of the skies above and the earth below, all that existed were the god Apsu (god of the primeval fresh waters) and the goddess Tiamat (goddess of the primeval salt waters.) These two original deities came together and as their offspring were born the world began to take shape." (Glasgow, 2009: 22):

*"When there was no heaven,
No earth, no height, no depth, no name, When Apsu was alone,
The sweet water, the first begetter; and Tiamat; the bitter water and that
Return to the womb, her Mummu, when there were no gods-
When sweet and bitter mingled together, no reed was plaited, no rushes muddied
water,
The gods were nameless, natureless, futureless, then from Apsu and Tiamat
In the waters gods were created, in the waters silt precipitated."* (Sproul, 1979: 93)

It can be recounted that the Babylonian cosmogony also starts with nothing above or below; but waters. Water is the primordial element in the myth, from the union of which of Apsu, signifying sweet water and Tiamat, signifying salt water; all beings arose. "The Apsu, which here is personified, was a kind of abyss filled with water which encircled the earth. The earth itself was a round plateau. This plateau was bounded by mountains on which rested the vault of heaven and it floated on the waters of the Apsu. Tiamat was a personification of the sea and represented the feminine element which gave birth to the world. In continuation of the story she represents the blind forces of primitive chaos against which the intelligent and organizing gods struggle." (Graves & Guirand, 1968: 49) The Abyss- Mother; Tiamat is disturbed by the wind and waves of the water; which is a sign of bustling body of water raising new possibilities of creation. Tiamat, meaning 'the

sea', as a vast body of water was consistent of seeds of life within, was not divided yet. The sea is a symbol of chaos and trouble, as witness the Scriptural promise, 'and there shall be no more sea.' Then in the deep waters of the primeval Apsu, Marduk is born, who will symbolize the cosmic order and the sun whose warmth dispatches the gloom of the sea and establishes a supremacy over the pantheon. From here the myth rises into a climax of conflicts that Tiamat wants to avenge the death of her spouse Apsu, which ends with her slewing, separating of heaven and Earth out of her body and finally setting up Babylon as a dwelling place.

4.3.3.2 The Creation of the Japanese Islands: Izanagi and Izanami

Another myth sample of churning waters is from that of Japanese scriptures from *Kojiki*⁴² and *Nihongi*⁴³. In these texts the creation of the Japanese islands is recounted according to *Kojiki and Nihongi* (Chronicles of Japan). Heaven and earth was united thus; In and Yo (the male and female principles) weren't separated from each other. *Nihongi* states that the female and male principles formed an egg which contained germs in it, signifying a potential chaos, denoting of potential birth. Reviving with life, the egg divided; whose lighter part became heaven and heavier part settled down as a terrestrial sphere and start floating on water. In a chaotic nothingness of shapelessness but bearing seeds arouse 'a thing', like a reed, which is supposed to be a deity and following her other

⁴² "The oldest chronicle in Japanese is the *Kojiki*, or 'Records of Ancient Matters.' It was compiled in 712 A.D. by the court Noble Futo no Yasumuro, 'an officer in the Upper Division of the First Class of the Fifth Rank and of the Fifth Order of Merit', and includes the earliest doctrines of native Shinto nature worship and polytheism as well as borrowings from Chinese thought." (Sproul, 1979: 210) "The *Kojiki* contains various songs/poems. While the historical records and myths are written in a form of Chinese with a heavy mixture of Japanese elements, the songs are written with Chinese characters that are only used to convey sounds." <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kojiki> (18.10.2014)

⁴³ "The *Nihon Shoki*, sometimes translated as *The Chronicles of Japan*, is the second oldest book of classical Japanese history. The book is also called the *Nihongi*. It is more elaborate and detailed than the *Kojiki*, the oldest, and has proven to be an important tool for historians and archaeologists as it includes the most complete extant historical record of ancient Japan. The *Nihon Shoki* was finished in 720 under the editorial supervision of Prince Toneri and with the assistance of Ō no Yasumaro. The *Nihon Shoki* begins with the Japanese creation myth, explaining the origin of the world and the first seven generations of divine beings (starting with Kunitokotachi), and goes on with a number of myths as does the *Kojiki*, but continues its account through to events of the 8th century. It is believed to record accurately the latter reigns of Emperor Tenji, Emperor Temmu and Empress Jitō. The *Nihon Shoki* focuses on the merits of the virtuous rulers as well as the errors of the bad rulers. It describes episodes from mythological eras and diplomatic contacts with other countries. The *Nihon Shoki* was written in classical Chinese, as was common for official documents at that time. The *Kojiki*, on the other hand, is written in a combination of Chinese and phonetic transcription of Japanese (primarily for names and songs). The *Nihon Shoki* also contains numerous transliteration notes telling the reader how words were pronounced in Japanese. Collectively, the stories in this book and the *Kojiki* are referred to as the Kiki stories." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nihon_Shoki (18.10.2014)

deities come into being: “Japanese mythology tells us that at the time when heaven and earth began, three divinities were formed in the plain of high heaven. They were born of themselves and then hid. Later, when the earth was young and like floating oil, moving like a jelly-fish, from something which sprang up like the shoot of a reed there were born two divinities and they too hid. After that came seven generations of gods and the last couple were called Izanagi and Izanami.” (Graves & Guirand, 1968: 407) They are the universal parent creators of Japan who produced the Japanese islands, mountains, rivers trees, wind and the deities ruling the natural forces. After receiving the command of consolidation they ascend by raising a question of whether there is land to dwell upon or not.

“Izanagi no Mikoto and Izanami no Mikoto stood on the floating bridge of Heaven and held counsel together, saying: ‘Is there not a country beneath?’

Thereupon they thrust down the jewel-spear of Heaven and groping about therewith found the ocean. The brine which dripped from the point of the spear coagulated and became an island which received the name of Ono-goro-jima [Spontaneously – congealed-island].

The two Deities thereupon descended and dwelt in this island. Accordingly they wished to become husband and wife together and to produce countries. So they made Ono-goro-jima the pillar of the center of the land.” (Sproul, 1979: 212)

The couple standing on the floating bridge of Heaven begins to coagulate the sea with jeweled spear dipping its point into formless brine which symbolizes “the evoking of the erect phallus and the divine sun ray.” (Ronnberg & Martin, 2010: 494) In cosmic creation stories a spear is used for penetration the original wholeness in order to transform the matter into a new one. It symbolizes the life giving force of fertility that is specific to the masculine. The drops from the spear sets water in motion which ends up in whirlpools.

The whirlpools coagulate as a body of terrain and transform into the first land ‘the island of Onogoro’ (that coagulates of its own accord) to which the couple descends in order to finish their work of creation. On descend, the couple settle on an island which appears to be a place of safety and refuge from the sea of chaos. The island appearing to be a safe place for initiation of creation is also transformed into a pillar of the center which symbolizes “the world axis; the vertical axis which both holds apart and joins Heaven and

Earth.” (Cooper, 1990: 130) The pillar proceedingly is turning into a ritual center for mating of the couple will let them realize their deep fecund aspects:

“Then he inquired of the female deity, saying: ‘In thy body is there aught formed?’ She answered and said: ‘In my body there is a place which is the source of femininity.’ The male deity said: ‘In my body again there is a place which is the source of masculinity. I wish to unite this source-place of my body to the source-place of thy body.’ Here upon the male and female first became united as husband and wife.” (Sproul, 1979: 213)

Graves & Guirand denotes of the birth of the first island out of this union as: “From the first primordial union a leech child is born whom his parents are unwilling to own. So they put him on a raft of reeds and set him adrift. Then the island of Awa is born, but they also refuse to recognize it as their child.” (Graves & Guirand, 1968: 407) Having completed the rite of initiation in the wrong way, the couple consults the gods. This time carrying out the rite correctly they give birth to many islands which constitutes what today is “Japan as well as numerous gods- The god of Wind, of Trees and of Mountains”⁴⁴ and lastly of Fire whose birth caused Izanami a dreadful suffering from the burn he left:

“Now when the time of birth arrived, first of all the island of Ahaji was reckoned as the placenta and their minds took no pleasure in it. Therefore it received the name of Ahaji no Shima; the island which is unsatisfactory. Next there was produced the island of Oho-yamato no Toyo-aki-tsu-shima; rich-harvest-of-island. Next they produced the island of Iyo no futa-na and next the island of Tsukushi. Next the islands of Oki and Sado were born as twins. This is the proto-type of the twin-births which sometimes take place among mankind. Next was born the island of Koshi, then the island of Oho-shima, then the island of Kibi no ko. Hence first arose the designation of the Oho-ya-hima country; great-eight-island country. Then the islands of Tsushima and Iki, with the small islands in various parts, were produced by the coagulation of the foam of the salty water. After this Izanagi no Mikoto and Izanami no Mikoto consulted together, saying: ‘We have not produced the Great-eight-island-country, with the mountains, rivers, herbs and trees. Why

⁴⁴ <http://www.openbase.in.th/files/New%20Larousse%20Encyclopedia%20of%20Mythology%20part%207.txt> (26.11.2014)

should we not produce someone who shall be lord of the universe?’ They then together produced the Sun-Goddess, who was called Oho-hiru-me no much; Great-noon-female-of-possessor. ...Their next child was Kagu tsuchi; god of fire. Now Izanami no Mikoto was burnt by Kagu tsuchi, so that she died.” (Sproul, 1979: 213-214)

As in the case of Izanami, her bottom burnt to boil is merely destroyed but new essences of life emanates from her embodiment. When she was lying down waiting for her end, she lastly gave birth to Goddess of Earth and the Goddess of Water. “On her head were produced the silkworm and the mulberry tree and in her navel five kinds of grain.”⁴⁵ Different versions of the myth recounts Izanami giving birth to all things; but this version that we have recounted above gives the denotation of her burning to death while giving birth to God of Fire. Her burnt lower body – in the myth supposedly the womb center of creation is destroyed, thus her initiation of a Creatrix ends with her descend to the underworld where she transforms into a monster-like creature by her eating of the underworld fruit which is not permitted to upper world beings.

Representing the deep uterine of the primordial womb and phallic symbolism of cosmogonic emanations, the myth of the pair is an example to dark churning waters also referred in the myth as ‘curdlecurdle’ (koworokworo). The male twin, Izanagi descends down from heaven and stirs the depth of dark womb-like still water with the phallic symbol of spear and from here brining of the water droplets give initiation to the creation of whole Japanese islands.

4.4 WATER SYMBOLISM

In all the myth samples that are scrutinized in this work, water acts as the means of a creation, supplying life to terrestrial grounds and human beings whether the nature of the event is cosmogonic or biological. Waters are formless, the feature of which supplies a state of fertilization by sheltering a safe place for seeds. And “everything that has form manifests itself above the Waters, by detaching itself from them.” (Eliade, 1991: 152) As to be analyzed in the proceeding myth samples of water symbolism and animals associated

⁴⁵ http://archive.org/stream/nihongichronicl00astogoog/nihongichronicl00astogoog_djvu.txt (26.11.2014)

with water in cosmogony, terrestrial grounds are to be created by the aid of these subsidiary helpers by detaching themselves from Waters.

The words of *Eliade* (1991) best exemplifies the symbolism and the interrelatedness of water and island as: “Waters symbolize the entire universe of the virtual; they are the *fons et origo*, the reservoir of all the potentialities of existence; they precede every form and sustain every creation. The exemplary image of the whole creation is the ‘Island’ that suddenly ‘manifests’ itself amidst the waves. Contact with water always goes with regeneration, on the one hand because dissolution is followed by a ‘new birth’ and on the other hand because dissolution is followed by a ‘new birth’ and on the other hand because immersion fertilizes and multiplies the potentialities of life. To the aquatic cosmogony correspond- at the anthropological level- the hylogenies, the beliefs according to which mankind is born of the Waters. For Tertullian (De Baptismo, III-V); water was the first seat of the divine Spirit, who preferred it to all other elements. It was water that was first commanded to produce living creatures.” (Eliade, 1991: 153) In this chapter water takes the role of a womb-like vessel providing environment for fecundation and uprising of ‘islands’ by manifesting itself in symbolism of darkness, life in the uterus and the cosmic egg. Under those headings the underpinnings of the myth samples are to be explained thoroughly.

4.4.1 Darkness

“Darkness is our first reality, the looming riddle of our becoming. Like the macrocosmic galaxy hypothetically plunged in a globe of ‘dark matter’ and permeated with mysterious ‘dark energy,’ so our own microcosmic being, quickening in the womb, is enveloped by the dark matter and dark energy of our ancestral inheritance.”

(Ronnberg & Martin, 2010: 102)

Darkness, perceived as a universal phenomenon, is portrayed as an overwhelming ambient shelter for water. She is the goddess of veil enclosing vast body of waters. As water supplies limitless opportunities to seeds, the darkness in and above the water also paves a way for the fertilization of water as its guardian. “While light is quick, propulsive, transparent, darkness is still and waiting and opaque. Darkness is tunnel, abyss, maw, the

city in blackout. It is the veiled face and cloaked body. It is the massive iceberg, concealed beneath the pitchy surface of the sea. Darkness often evokes the teeming formlessness of the beginning: ‘Darkness there was’ the Rig Veda declares, at first concealed in darkness this All was indiscriminate chaos.” (Ronnberg & Martin, 100) In *Noble Koran*’s chapter light, darkness is described as a vast veil on water: “darkness on a vast abysmal sea... layer upon layer of darkness. In traditional symbolism, along with water darkness represents the state of undeveloped potentialities which give rise to chaos and initiation process of cosmogony.”⁴⁶

Water emanating in cosmogonic myths as the basic maternal uniform element, is the first entity symbolizing the mysterious; purity and simplicity at the same time. It is chosen as the best and perfect element for initiation of cosmogonic phases in numerous myths. Speaking of mystery; it is precious as a fertilizer. A powerful water droplet is sufficient for the creation of earth and dispatching darkness. What is essential for the imagination of a victorious power is that of an image of just a water droplet. Water characterized as with such a dynamic is equal to the power of a seed, bringing in momentum to life-power.

Gaston Bachelard emulating the subparagraph of *Paul Claudel* denotes of waters’ fecund features as (Bachelard, 2006: 16):

*“As a fecund droplet fertilizes a mathematical figure by embodying the exuberant initiation of
Factors of a theorem,
The body of triumph fills with passion under the body of mud as such,
And the night,
Desires to melt within apparency.”*

In Indian mythology, comprising the most profound and sophisticated cosmogonic myths around the world, it is darkness, leading the absolute role that the world did not arise out of being or not-being but it was darkness that initiated the procurement of the creation. Here are the beginning stanzas of *Rig-Veda X*, cxxix: The Beginning:

“When neither Being nor Not-being was

⁴⁶ <http://www.online-literature.com/standalone-books/koran/24/> (26.11.2014)

*Nor atmosphere, nor firmament, nor what is beyond.
 What did it encompass? Where? In whose protection?
 What was water, the deep, unfathomable?
 Neither death nor immortality was there then,
 No sign of night or day.
 That One breathed, windless, by its own energy
 Nought else existed then.
 In the beginning was darkness swathed in darkness;
 All this was but unmanifested water.”*

It is the darkness in here symbolizing the foetal state of the world, not born yet; the seeds housed in the water are waiting for an act into initiation. It is the main element grasping the origins or the tendencies of the prospective happenings. Darkness is the primigenial element fertilizing the earth along with water in cosmogonic myths. Equated with the maternal and germinant, darkness preexists before the manifestation of a movement or the initiation of creation as the ‘One’s face hovering above waters. Before the vault of heaven and the expanse of the sky and the existence of atmosphere, darkness was already in there embracing water which was impossible to measure. It is the existence of neither death, nor immortality; or the figure of ‘0’ equating non-existence; but darkness wrapped in darkness below which stretching out vast body of dark waters waiting for procurement of seeds of fecundation. “India furnishes manifold ideas concerning the origin of the universe and man. At the first, says the Rig-Veda, there was neither non-entity nor entity and all was water wrapped in gloom. Then desire (Karma) arose in it, which was the primal germ of mind (....) the bond between entity and non-entity. The following hymn from the Rig-Veda” (Spence, 1994: 159): the vigorous translation of which is by the late Dr Muir, gives some account of the process:

*“There was neither aught nor naught, nor air, nor sky beyond.
 What covered all? Where rested all? In watery gulf profound?
 Nor death was then, nor deathlessness, nor change of night and day.
 The One breathed calmly, self-sustained; naught else beyond it lay.

 Gloom, hid in gloom, existed first-one sea, eluding view.*

*That One, void in chaos wrapped, by inward fervor grew.
Within it first arose desire, the primal germ of mind,
Which nothing with existence links, as sages searching find.*

*The kindling ray that shot across the dark and dear abyss-
Was it beneath? Or high aloft? What bard can answer this?
There fecundating powers were found and mighty forces strove-
A self-supporting mass beneath and energy above.*

*Who knows, who ever told, from whence this vast creation rose?
No gods had then been born- who then can e'er the truth disclose?
Whence sprang this word and whether framed by hand divine or*

Its lord in heaven alone can tell, if even he can show.” (Spence, 1994: 159)

Seemingly mysterious and evil, darkness is the ground of light which emerges from its own self, in this sense it manifests light. Symbolically pre-cosmogonic darkness is a pre-natal element in which germination and creation take place preceding birth along. Darkness in relation with the maternal and germinant, preexists as primigenial chaos. In symbolic tradition, the notion of darkness is signified with murk but in the myth samples above darkness corresponds to pregenital chaos leading into creation of islands or the continents of the earth in the next phase.

4.4.2 Life Sprouting out of a Womb

A symbol of manifest and the totality of potentialities and plenitude, womb is symbolized by all waters that are enclosing. Womb is the matrix that is likened to that of the Great Mother, that supplies life to earth. Water is the resource of life and growth in the design of life. In iconographies it is signified as the cosmic power of life but never is the earth giving birth to creation directly, it is the water in pre-existence that initiates the stages of cosmogony. Water is antecedent and the protagonist of the testimony of all the universes and the whole system of creation. As it is the basic matter sheltering the total seeds of life, it can be likened to that of a womb because there are samples of numerous myths that the earth, sand, mud or islands are born of water: “the symbol of cosmogony has an articulated

form made up of waters-lotus (or island).” (Eliade, 2000: 246) It is the hylos, the primordial elements that constitute everything in the universe, which is found in the bottom of the water. The destiny of water is sketched around potentiality, seed and mysterious powers leading procreation. Anything that has a form has risen out of water; in return the matter that comes out of water transforms into a new shape; as in the case of mud-island transformations. Thus anything that falls under fecundity goes, can also be categorized under the heading of water, fecundity and island. This chapter focuses on creation out of water which is likened to that of a primordial womb, the notion of which is discussed thoroughly in ‘fecundity’ chapter.

The context of primordial womb giving birth to earthly beings is seen in emergence and creation from chaos myths. Along with earth-diver type, the emergence type best fits the case of a womb as the immature beings resident in the inner strata of earth ascends upward and leave their nest with full maturation by leaving an opening spot behind them. The ambient nest ensuring aspects of a watery and dark realm can be likened to that of a mother’s womb giving birth to a newborn. *Leemings’* speculation on the birth imagery out of womb, best describes the case of birth from chaos, darkness and vast body of waters: “As it is the female, rather than the male who gives birth, it is also natural that symbols and images of the feminine play a primary role in these myths.” *Leeming* also exemplifies life sprouting out of a womb along with the fecund watery aspects in the myth of Jicarilla Apaches, in which the people begin their existence in an underworld that is like a great swelling womb and enter the world by an opening at the top of a mountain after the waters of the earth have broken. (Leeming, 2010: 309-310) In the design of the myth waters exist as a source of life and growth, after the separation and the earth coming into existence, the cosmogony rises upward from the matrix of the Great Mother.

Earth-diver myths can set example to life sprouting out of womb. The beginning waters stretching in darkness attributed with maternal aspects is likened to that of waters in a foetal state. *Leeming’s* metaphor of earth diver animals and sperm like divers is a smart example to this natal context. “Here it is usually small animals who become the sperm like divers into the maternal waters. The piece of mud or sand retrieved by the little animal who manages to survive the dangerous dive becomes the basis for the growing Earth, which will eventually become the human home. The power of the birth imagery comes from the

fact that it is something with which humans can easily identify. It creates an analogy between the creation of the world and the creation of individual humans and thus gives us a meaningful and natural place in creation.” (Leeming, 2010: 309-310) Below is a North-American creation myth that the essential aspects of earth-diver creation can be clearly seen. With symbols of depth, darkness, water and wetness depicting ‘The Great Mother’s Womb’ she finds a shelter to hatch her fertilized womb; and small animals appear for making the cosmic dive in search for fetching the initial matter that will form the beginning of earth crust.

The Huron Indian’s of the North America region story concerns a female figure, a goddess named Ataentsic, fertilized by some nameless being, she is casted out of heaven and she starts to fall. The falling divine, later on initiating the birth of earth, is the main character among cosmic diver myths. Falling and gently spinning through the space of void, impregnated to twins, she finds out that there is no place for her to lie on. She falls into a watery waste with what is contained as the seeds of humanity within her womb. With no land in sight, a turtle appears from the depths, which is also a symbol of the womb, to give her a shelter on its back. It is on the turtle’s back that she brings forth the fecund event of giving birth to two spiritual beings.

Meanwhile, with the appearance of a muskrat, which is also a diver animal that is portrayed as a sperm-like diver into the maternal waters, fetches up solid ground from ocean’s depths, as that of hylos giving a start to the earth as the initial matter, which forms the beginning of the earth as we know. Here an analogy can be constructed with the falling of Red Indian goddess Ataentsic and that of the Greek Titaness Leto, who had the same trouble of giving birth to her twins; the Sun and the Moon. The sea, womb of fertilization did not let her lay on its waters neither did the land, yet finally the Aegean island of Delos sprout out of the depths of a womb-like watery body to supply her with a shelter for her young off springs to descend to the earth.

As *Jung* suggests “in the womb of nature, in the primal ground of creation, the secret key to all things lie hidden.” (Walker, 1983: 1092) The symbolism of womb according to the myth sample explanation above accounts for the central organ of all the motion, fecundation and birth from which all functions derive their life and locate them on body of lands sprouting from the cosmic water as islands.

4.4.3 The Cosmic Egg

The cosmic egg is common in various mythologies stretching from chaos creation myths, with a sign of a major symbol of birth metaphor. It appears in all Orphic, Greek, Egyptian, Finnish, Buddhistic and Japanese mythologies. The junction point of these myths is the depiction of nothingness in a boundless void, but primeval waters of creation stretching out in passivity. Egg is the mystical symbol of the Creatrix, in which the universe is contained in an embryo.

Egg symbolizes the same sign with that of an embryo in a woman's womb. "Whatever form it takes, the primeval chaos can be seen as feminine principle. Whether the waters, a drop of milk, the primal mound, a mysteriously appearing birth sac, or, most especially, the cosmic egg, the source of creation in the creation from chaos myth is undifferentiated mother. A creator might create but, as *Charles Long* suggests, 'He does not create from 'nothing,' but from the creative stuff of the feminine structures of being'. In the creation from chaos myth the feminine egg definitely comes before chicken." (Leeming, 2010: 15) Here, the foetal features of the 'egg' summarize the information that is supplied in fecundity and water section.

As the water, egg self-contains of the full energy of life within, as the seed bearing, life-giving feature of water, egg can be likened to an ovum in a sea of sperm depicting the fecundity within water. "Just as life gestates in the egg ... the egg evokes the beginning, the simple and the source. ... The egg is the mysterious 'center' around which unconscious energies move in spiral-like evolutions, gradually bringing the vital substance to light." (Ronnberg & Martin, 2010: 14) Egg consists of the two polar sides of light and heavy elements both of which gives initiation to creation. With the divine androgyny, egg splits into two with in the primordial stage of creation, after which ultimate chain of events follow each other. Many of the 'cosmic egg creation' myths associate the creation with the ancient story of the primeval waters to reproduce and sprout. In this chapter the cosmic egg myths samples in relevance with the specific features of primeval water creation are to be scrutinized thoroughly.

4.4.3.1 The Hinduistic Creation Myth: Satapatha Brahmana

As mentioned in ‘The cosmic egg’ section the universe is said to hatch from a universal (mundane) egg which consisted of everything within itself. Considered as the life-giving energy and the soul of the primeval creation waters ‘the egg cult’ appears with its splendor in Indian sacred texts. “In India the sacred Satapatha Brahmana relates the tale of the primeval water’s desire to reproduce. The waters, through a series of prolonged rituals, became so hot that they gave birth to a golden egg. Eventually, after about the time it takes for a woman or cow to give birth, the creator, Prajapati, emerged from the egg.” (Leeming, 2010: 313) The waters embodying the soul of the creator makes a will that can be likened to that of creation by thought, heats up in principle of begetting an egg that will bring the great creator, Prajapati. The egg containing everything that bring forth the mountains, oceans and the whole cosmogonic and cosmologic elements within is produced by primordial waters. The supreme creator god emerges from it and starts the creation initiation in a ritualistic fashion. Noticing the submergence of the earth’s solid crust in water, the great creator transforms into a wild boar who acts as a cosmic force and makes the dive in search for bringing the essential solid ground over waters. Down below are the stanzas of the hymn as follows:

*“In the beginning the Golden Embryo
Once born he as the one Lord of every being;
The heaven and earth did he sustain...
What god shall we revere with the oblation?”* (Sproul, 1979: 181)

Sproul interprets Prajapati’s coming into existence step by step, and she comments on the reason of his very being as: “The unification of the divine power is named as ‘one’ functionally, the Lord of everything will be named as Prajapati after he is born from a spawn egg in the proceeding stanzas. With all the reverations he is envisioned as the life force of all the gods. The myth’s ritualistic usage is clear from its repetitive nature and its rhythmic appeal, ‘What god shall we revere with this oblation?’ ” (Sproul, 1979: 181)

*“Giver of life, giver of strength,
Whose behest all must obey,
Whose behests the gods obey,*

Whose shadow is immortality,
Whose shadow death...
What god shall we revere with the oblation?
King of all that breathes and blinks the eye,
Who rules all creatures that have two feet or four...
What god shall we revere with the oblation?
By whose might the snowy peaks,
By whose might, they say, the sea” (Sproul, 1979: 181)

Here, it is waters, the primeval sea that stretches vastly, wishes to reproduce and they start to get hot. It takes a year for Prajapati to form in a shape of an egg that can be likened to that of a fecund woman’s pregnancy period before she gives a birth.

“With Rasa (the earth-encircling stream),
By whose might the cardinal directions
Which are his arms,
What god shall we revere with the oblation?” (Sproul, 1979: 181)

Graves&Guirand, depicts the scene before creation as: “Before being and not-being there was a dark and watery chaos. Then a germ of life gifted with unity came to life by developing a sort of spontaneous heat, the ‘tapas’, which was at once and the same time heating, sweat and ascetic fervor. This principle felt and after wars manifested the need to beget. (X, 129).” (Graves & Guirand, 1968: 346) “Prajapati is born from the primordial waters that moved, conceived the all/as an embryo [just as the water bears seeds], giving birth to fire. Prajapati is also his own father in a sense that he ‘looked upon the water’ with power and thereby caused them to sacrifice that is himself.” (Sproul, 1979: 181) which presents an example to the case of sacrification of a divine primordial being proceeding the making of earth.

Prajapati, previously symbolized as the center of creation in an egg which is identified with waters, comes out from the ‘Great Round’ containing the universe and dives into the submerged waters. Diving act in here is the cosmic symbol of the initiation of creation; the boar represents the life force of the divine power which is associated with femininity and watery principles when it becomes lunar. “Essential to the life of plants,

animals and men alike, water can be identified with the life-bearing forces and with fecundity itself. The regenerative nature can appear in a less biological fashion. We read in the *Satapatha Brahmana* (11.1.6.1.): ‘In the beginning, the waters and the ocean alone existed. The waters had a wish: ‘How shall we procreate?’ They made an effort. They practiced ascetic heating [tapas] and so it happened that a golden egg appeared.” (Eliade, 1987: 353) As a consequence, water in this myth plays the leading role as well as the egg itself. Water is depicted in Indian mythology stretching with a vast darkness above in the beginning. They are the creative force, a symbol of ailment, life-giving and ripening force which is a start for the natural cycle of the earth.

4.4.3.2 The Pelasgian Creation Myth: Eurynome

Many of the themes in this creation myth are similar to that of Finnno-Ugric and Indian myths as the Creator/Creatrix rises out of waters of chaos in the beginning of cosmogony, there appears an egg which is the symbol of the hidden origin and mystery of being who supplies the life principle in cosmic time and space and order is established by the divine deity’s controlling planetary powers- the Pelasgian creation myth’s most distinct feature is the primacy of the mother goddess Eurynome (wide-wandering) and chaos appearing from a void, signifying creation out of nothingness. In various forms in and above the water she appears before creation of land. The great Goddess of Eurynome (likened to that of Gaia in the pantheon), lays the universal egg which preserves the whole potentiality for life awashed in waters.

“In the beginning there was the great goddess Eurynome, who emerged naked from chaos and divided the waters from sky so she could dance lonely upon the waves. As she danced she created the wind. She caught the north wind and rubbed it and it became the serpent Ophion. Ophion coupled with the dancing goddess and she was full.

Now as a dove, Eurynome laid the world egg and she ordered Ophion to encircle it until it hatched the sun, moon, stars and Earth with all of its creatures and plants.

The goddess and her companion lived on Olympus until Ophion became arrogant and had to be banished- his head flattened and his teeth broken- to the darkness under the earth.

Later Eurynome made the Titanesses and Titans to control the planets and finally she made the first man, Pelasgus.” (Leeming, 2010: 117)

Here Eurynome is depicted as the Goddess source of all things as well as the ocean, which paves a way for her universal egg to rest. The Goddess, taking the form of a dove, which signifies the spirit of life depicting femininity and maternity she broods on the waves, the waters which procure a secure place for her fecundity. The snake, Ophion symbolized with darkness and womblike caves of the underworlds coils the egg seven times until it hatches and splits in two. In many myths the snake encircling the whole world, as Ophion encircling the egg, builds a circular course of the fecund waters surrounding the earth. In Orphic symbolism which can be likened to that of Pelasgians, it is the circling act around the cosmic egg that initiates and designates the life-span of the universe.

In those accounts of cosmic egg, creation begins with waters stretching beyond limits and supplying a place for the egg to hatch and crack. “As an object prone to fertilization, the egg is an appropriate symbol and metaphor for the idea of potential creation. It is pre-creation chaos waiting to become cosmos. It contains within itself male and female, light and dark, all opposites in a state of union. It is perfect entropy and signals the existence of creative power from the very beginning.” (Leeming, 2010: 314) In some accounts creation begins with a serpent or birds laying fertile eggs on the primeval waters as in that of Eurynome and the *Finnish Epic Kalevala*, while in others an egg simply arises from the empty void as in that of *Satapatha Brahmana*. In these creation stories the appearance of an egg suggests an explanatory account of the beginning of the cosmos that develops from a primordial seed hatching in water which supplies the egg and its seed to lay in a secure and fecund place.

4.5 ANIMALS ASSOCIATED WITH WATER IN COSMOGONY

Myriad of animals appear in myths of rites, initiation, cosmology, also in almost all creation myths, animals are created before humans and they play a key role under the supervision of the Creator/Creatrix in the creation phase. “Almost universally in earth-diver myths, animals are sent to the primeval maternal waters to find the necessary material-mud, sand or clay.” (Leeming, 2010: 304) That the highlight of the study is on cosmogony, the earth-diver myth type fits as the best example for animals in relevance with, femininity,

water and mud or earth. As the primeval waters play a crucial role in cosmogony, so do the animals play an essential one. As *Leeming* notes, they create a balancing force equalizing the evil and the good forces in a dualistic tension. (Leeming, 2010: 24) It is earth-diver creation myths that stresses the primeval waters with cosmic diver animals directed by a creator appearing with an intention to create the earth in this study. These animals are sent to cosmic maternal waters to dive into dark depths in search for the primal material: a handful of soil, slime or mud that will initiate the beginning of creation process. *Leeming* gives a comparative list of earth-diver type myths around the world many of which are studied in this work: “Several strains within the earth diver myth type are evident. These are Indian, the Central Asian, the Algonquian North American, the Siouan North American and a major variant, the Iroquoian North American, which contains the motif of the woman who falls from the sky. Elements of the earth-diver form exist among many California Native Americans and among peoples as far afield as the Finns and Hungarians, the Fiji Islanders, the Ainu of Japan and the Yoruba of Africa.” (Leeming, 2010: 24) The diver animals in watery creation giving rise to birth of an island or a body of land will be outlined in three sections as ‘Birds’; ‘Amphibious Animals’; and ‘Aquatic Animals’. For each section a myth sample is to be examined thoroughly in order to find logical connections between the roles of those animals in the making up of a terrestrial region sprouting out of water.

4.5.1 Aquatic Birds

Birds appear in creation myths as subsidiary animals directed by the supreme creator in aiding him the cosmic dive. A great deal of myths features one or several protagonists in relevance with the victory over the command of the creator/creatix from the natural world covered with vast body of waters. These protagonists are subsidiary animals to the Creator/Creatix which initiates in fetching a particle of soil which then expands into a mound as an island or a continent or as a huge island what we know today as the earth itself. Most frequently the birds appear as the cosmic divers who plunge into depths to bring round the land that will later expand to become the earth. The cosmogonic myths, in which birds make an appearance as subsidiary animals, follow a pattern of water in pre-existence stretching in tranquility, unique to the region either; a waterfowl, duck, goose, or

a wagtail makes the cosmic dive to the bottom of the primordial ocean in order to fetch the primal matter that will give rise to creation of earth in proceeding stages.

Signifying divinity, victory and royalty; birds act as messengers of divine beings. As *Eliade* notes, “birds dive sometimes by God’s order and sometimes by their own initiative, but in some variants God transforms himself into a bird and dives. This motif of the diving bird, common among such Altaic peoples as the Buriats and the Yakuts, is also found among the Russians and such Uralic peoples as the Samoyeds, the Mansi, the Yenisei and the Mari. Earth divers also appear in a certain number of Indian cosmogonic myths of North America.” (Eliade, 1987: 225) Subsidiary animals grouped as birds will be listed in sampling myths in order to show the correspondence between life, sprouting out of primeval waters by their agencies and landforms transforming into lands, mainland and islands. Almost universally in all earth diver myths primal material- which initiates the creation of lands, will be searched for and the existence of primeval maternal waters that act as a womb for the cosmic dive will be pursued. Among the cosmic diver myths, a pattern is to be reached by focusing on those elements of creation above. In essence the Finnish myth is simply an example:

4.5.1.1 The First Sign of Firmament by the Aid of an Eagle

“There was water everywhere and an eagle flew over it looking out for a dry spot to lay its eggs. Suddenly it caught sight of the knee of the sorcerer Vainamoinen protruding (first movement initiating the sign of creation) above the water. The bird took it to be a strip of firm earth and laid its egg there.” (Grimal, 1963: 424)

Water, symbolizing the universal womb consists of the feminine principles that paves a way for the hatching of eggs, all in all a place for bearing fertilization. As the embryo found in the egg is the germ of all creation, a stage for advancing into creation is ubiquitous because it is water which is already there, supplying a fecund base for the germination. It is eagle which is the symbol of all sky gods, who inseminates the Great Earth mother and the foetal waters, flies over vast body of waters by making the first initiative movement on the track for creation. And it is Vainamoinen⁴⁷, who procures a

⁴⁷ “Vainamoinen is one of the heroes of the Finnish epic, the Kalevala. An Orpheus-like musician-
enchanter, he is also the creator-hero of an earth-diver or more commonly a cosmic egg creation.

secure place for the eagle to initiate creation by laying its eggs on the knee. Due to the information in *Ronnberg & Martin's* work (2010), "the knee contains cerebrospinal fluid, which is also considered the sap of life, synonymous with offspring. The Latin genus, 'birth' is cognate with the English 'knee'." Vainamoinen's knee is the only solid surface that sprouts out of water that ensures a place for fertilization. The eagle takes the knee, rising as an island from the water as a strip of firm earth and lays its egg there.

4.5.1.2 The Floating Island of Num

"The Samoyed Yuraks in their account tell of the supreme god, Num, who, wondered one day if any part of the earth were visible, although he could see only water. He sent several birds in succession to explore the watery depths until one of them, a diver bird returned with a small fragment from the bottom in its beak. Num made a floating island of it, which he slowly consolidated and extended in ways that vary from one account to another." (Grimal, 1963: 424)

Here in this myth the existence of vast body of waters is clear. The water, with fecund characteristics can be likened to that of a womb and the bird to that of a fertilizer actor. It is the small fragment of soil at the bottom that consists of prima matter, the hylo⁴⁸, which consists of the primal elements of life form, that is fetched to the divinity. The divine power, by using the initiative element of mud or slime, transforms it into a floating island which then expands, takes the form of earth and bears life on itself.

4.5.1.3 In the Beginning the World Was Slush: Ainu Islands

"In the beginning the world was slush, for the water and the mud were all stirred together. All was silence; there was no sound. It was cold. There were no birds in the air. There was no living thing. At last the Creator made a little wagtail and sent him down from his far place in the sky. 'Produce the earth,' he said. The bird flew down over the black waters and the dismal swamp. He did not know what to do. He did not know how to begin. He fluttered the water with his wings and splashed it here and there. He ran up and down in the slush with his feet and tried to trample it

Vainamoinen is said to have been born miraculously of teal's egg, in effect a cosmic egg." See Leeming (2010)

⁴⁸ For more information please see *Eliade* 2000, p. 199.

into firmness. He beat on it with his tail, beating it down. After a long time of this treading and tail-wagging a few dry places began to appear in the big ocean which now surrounds them- 'the islands of the Ainu'⁴⁹. The Ainu word for earth is moshiri, floating island and the wagtail is revered.” (Sproul, 1979: 215)

The Japanese myth of the birth of ‘Ainu island’ is a clear example of the union of fecund watery features, containing the primal matter leading creation as that of hylogenies⁵⁰ and the existence of a cosmic diver bird using its wagtail, a phallic sign, forming dry places by impregnating the fecund waters. Here in this myth, with the very existence of water and mud; the fertile earth inseminated by bred waters and the source of fertility is visible. With the command of the creator a wagtail is made and sent to the depths of this slime. “The marsh continues to be an apt metaphor for those developmental transitions or temporary passages within a larger process where consciousness experiences itself in the muck between the permanently dissolved and the yet to be, a space of extreme potential and extreme vulnerability, vital, slippery, unpredictable and emergent.” (Ronnberg & Martin, 2010: 120) Fluttering the water with his wings, the bird initiates the movement. The cosmic diver bird initiating the action with its movement of fluttering its wings above water and diving into the depths “forms a link between heaven and earth, conscious and unconscious, the bird is almost universally seen as the symbol for the soul or anima, as the breath of the world, or the world soul hidden in matter.” (Ronnberg & Martin, 2010: 238) With the wagtail forming firmament of the slushy soil, a dry place is created and sprouted by beating the mixture of water and mud with his wings and the island of Ainu appears.

All in all there are numerous junction points alike in those three cosmogonic type myths samples:

- It is water laying in limitless stretch and procuring a fecund foetal feature for the cosmic divers;

⁴⁹ “The Ainu (or Ezo) are indigenous people of the far northern islands of Japan who speak a non-Japanese language. As is the case with many cultures their name means human or the people.” (Leeming, 2010: 35) “Subjugated by the Japanese in 812 A.D. and forced to retreat to the north islands of Hokkaido and Sakhalin, the 16,000 remaining Ainu are hunters and fisherman. Not Mongloid, they are probably remnants of a proto Nordic people that once spread over western Asia. Their language is unrelated to any other.” (Sproul, 1979: 214)

⁵⁰ For more information please see *Eliade* 2000, p. 199.

- the cosmic divers are granted with extraordinary skills to have the victory over water in bringing the first slime;
- “The cosmic divers share the same universal feature of the breath of the world or the world soul hidden in matter” (see Ronnberg & Martin, 2010) and they are described in those myths as the creation initiator who aids divine powers endowed with the forces by the divine deity.
- with the ‘diving act’ the first slime containing the essential matter of life is taken out of fecund water and transformed into a piece of land, drifting a floating island or an island that will give rise to proceeding life activities.

4.5.2 Amphibious animals: Beaver, Otter, Muskrat and Tortoise

Commonly beaver, otter, muskrat and tortoise symbols are used in cosmogonic diver myths, either adaptable to water, air and land they symbolize the binding act between upper and lower levels of water conserving the essential primal matter of slime beneath. *Eliade* suggests that, these amphibious animals emerging in the primordial phase of earth “are often envisioned as morally pure, true to the principles of their place and incapable of acting immorality. Such creatures link together different and cosmic discrete levels and may imply, rather than represent, the deity whose identity is emergent in the physical form of the creature.” (Eliade, 1987: 293). And *Leeming* gives a geographical map of the distribution of animals in various cultures as: “The earth diver creation myth type can be found in many parts of the world, but is particularly important to Central Asia, India and Native North America. Several strains within the earth-diver myth type are evident.” (Leeming, 2010: 24) In this section, myth types consisting of amphibious animals aiding their divine power, or assisting in the role of a creator in raising an island will be listed. Among those the role of an amphibious animal in giving support to the creator with his role of fetching soil which will lead to creation of an island: The Turtle island and ‘island’ in the Iroquoian creation story.

4.5.2.1 Ojibwa⁵¹ Creation Myth: Turtle Island

⁵¹ “The Ojibwa are a woodland people of northeastern North America. In the mid-seventeenth century there were approximately 35,000 Ojibwa on the continent. The Ojibwa call themselves the Anishinabeg (also spelled Anishinaabeg, or if singular, Anishinabe) for first or original people. In the eighteenth century the French called Ojibwa living near the eastern shore of Lake Superior Salteaux or Salteurs, People of the



Figure 4.5.2.1 The

Turtle Island

In this second creation story, a post-flood story, a second chance is being chased in order to find a piece of mud and expand it for stretches of land. It is the narration of Algonquian speaking tribes in the north-east of today is where Canada is. “The Anishinabe (Ojibwa) have a post-flood story in which the culture hero Nanabhozho and a few animals survive to create a new world.” (Leeming, 2010: 26) This myth highlights the success of the Turtle in bringing forth a piece of soil and using it in the cosmogonic initiation:

“Nanabhozho dove into the waters hoping to find mud for a new earth, but the waters were too deep for him. Several of animals tried as well but failed until, finally, the lowly muskrat took his turn. After a long time, he floated to the surface dead, but in his closed paw was a bit of earth. Out of this mud the culture hero made the world on the back of Turtle, who generously volunteered his services. Nanapush was the Lenape flood survivor and the cultur hero-creator. He, too, sent various animals into the depths of the water that covered the old world to find soil and finally it was the muskrat who succeeded and Turtle who sacrificed his freedom to become the supporting surface for Earth, otherwise known as ‘Turtle Island.’ Flat Pipe was the Arapaho culture hero and Turtle was the successful diver. Turtle

Falls. These terms now used only in Canada.” For more information: <http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Le-Pa/Ojibwa.html#ixzz3J2lmoKuL> (30.10.2014)

returned from her dive and she spit out a piece of land onto Flat Pipe. Earth as we know it and humans grew from this mud.” (Leeming, 2010: 26)

In this myth the amphibious animals are; the muskrat who initiates the diving activity and returns with a piece of soil in its paw and the turtle, which is a phallic figure performing the act of diving into fecund waters, aids the hero with its own sacrifice in order to support the surface of Earth. With the muskrat’s fetching soil and the Turtle’s volunteering to support the expanding surface the ‘Turtle Island’ was made and advancing cosmogonic events proceed. “Often, it is the turtle who allows the new material to be placed on its back, where it grows and grows into the world appropriately known by many Indian nations as Turtle Island.” (Leeming, 2010: 304) “Mythic lore has associated the turtle especially with fertility and sageness of the great goddess, the moist, shadowy and the primeval waters in which all things have their (supported) beginning.” (Ronnberg & Martin, 2010: 192) The turtle signifying longevity ensures a solid place for life-bearing activities. The image of diving of turtle into dark waters has a prolific aspect, the dive into dark waters with foetal features symbolizing fertility supplies a potential life-power leading ongoing cosmogonic activities.

4.5.2.2 Iroquoian⁵² Creation Story

Another myth sample setting a good example for ‘the island’ born out of waters is from the Iroquois tribe, *Leeming* states that “the role of animals in creation is of crucial importance in Native North America. Iroquoian, Siouan and Algonquian speaking people, as well as several California tribes, [who] have creation myths of the earth-diver type in which creator requires primary material- prima material- with which to begin creation of Earth.” (Leeming, 2010: 304) As noted in Ojibwa creation myth from Algonquian speaking tribes in the north-east of Canada, Iroquoian creation myth is also an example to earth-diver type in which cosmic diver animals are sent to primordial waters to fetch the essential slime of primal matter that will later be used in procurement of today’s North America.

⁵² “The Iroquois are a confederacy of six eastern Native American tribes that speak the Iroquois language. The confederacy includes the Mohawk, the Seneca, the Oneida, the Onondaga, the Cayuga, and the Tuscarora. The Iroquois are matrilineal. The clan mothers or matriarchs traditionally choose the chiefs. The Huron and Cherokee speak languages related the Iroquois language and are sometimes referred to as Iroquoian.” (Leeming, 2010: 434)



Figure 4.5.2.2 Map of Iroquois community today the zone known as ‘North America’

“The Iroquois narrated that when their primitive female ancestor was kicked from the sky by her irate spouse, there was as yet no land to receive her, which certain amphibious animals, the beaver, the otter and the muskrat, seeing her descent, hastened to dive and bring up sufficient mud to construct an island for her residence. Dry land was wanting, but earth was there, though hidden by boundless waters. Consequently, they spoke distinctly of the action of the muskrat in bringing it to the surface as a formation only. Michabo directed him and from the mud formed islands and main land.”⁵³

The non-existence of a piece of land but a vast body of waters was evident. It is the aid of those amphibious animals; the beaver, muskrat and otter that a piece of mud was to be fetched from the depth of the waters to be transformed into an island for the divine figure to reside. The beaver signifying industriousness and chastity and the otter signifying purity fails to bring the essential ‘mud’ but it is the muskrat that succeeds in fetching the life-bearing particle that will ensure the rise of islands and lands. In this version ‘the aiding action of the amphibious animals’ is scrutinized but next one following is the another version of the creation story, leading the rise of a mountain that rises near the falls of the Oswego river which can be likened to that of island rising out of primeval waters in the first version of the myth.

⁵³ http://www.gutenberg.org/files/19347/19347-h/19347-h.htm#Footnote_196-2_294 (30.10.2014)

“The Iroquois tribes believe that their female ancestress fell from Heaven into the waste of primeval waters; but the dry land bubbled up under her feet and quickly grew to the size of a continent. Several of these tribes, however, are of opinion that some amphibious animals, such as the otter, beaver and musk-rat noticed her fall and hastened to break it by shoveling up earth from the mud beneath the waters. Indeed, the Indians of this family won’t to point to the mountain so raised near the falls of the Oswego River.” (Spence, 1994: 179-180)

In both myths the existence of vast primeval waters stretching beyond and the search for a piece of solid land is evident; “The Sky Woman as a creator and culture hero, who provides the people with the means to survive, speaks to the existence among the Native Americans of matrilinealism.” (Leeming, 2010: 81) and the amphibious animals act as helpers to the divine figure in bringing sufficient amount of mud that will become the ‘Turtle Island’ commonly known by the Indians as ‘earth’. In both myths those divers penetrate into the waters as a sperm cracks into the womb off the egg and fertilizes it; the amphibious animals also helps the germination act of expanding stretches of land so called as ‘islands’.

4.5.3 Aquatic Animals: The Fish and the Shell

Aquatic animals are assigned with subsidiary powers acting with their creator along. They can only reside in water not on land and preserve sacred features of procreation and preservation of life. The aquatic animals noticed in the rise of islands are; the fish and the shell. Those animals are to be studied in Japanese and Micronesian narrations of creation myths.

Also there are other scriptures and narrations backing up the assertion of aquatic animals and the value of water supplying a life force; here is some information for a general understanding and background information for the role of aquatic animals and entities in cosmogonic phases: “Qur’an does trace the origins of life itself- i.e. the other species- back to a watery beginning, with ‘every living thing’ being made ‘from water.’”⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Qur’an, 21:30.



Figure 4.5.3. Pisces in Ottoman miniature craft⁵⁵

The early Greek thinkers too intuited the importance of water in the evolution of life. *Glasgow*, referring to *Anaximander* states that “living creatures first arose from the moist element and humans evolved from fish.’ The puzzling fact that humans require such an extended period of infant nursing (which raises the question of how the first ever person actually survived babyhood) is resolved by proposing that we were originally incubated inside fish-like creatures.” (Glasgow, 2009: 32) the highly esteemed authority of the Religion Historian *Mircea Eliade* also mentions of “oyster, sea-shell, the snail and the pearl figures’ participation, in the sacred powers which are concentrated in the ‘Waters’.” (Eliade, 1991: 125-130) In this section two myths are to be scrutinized in order to represent the significance and provide the symbolic details of aquatic animals in cosmogony.

4.5.3.1 The Creation of the Far Northern Islands of Japan: The Ainu Myth

“In the beginning there was a mixture of mud and water in what would become the world; no living things existed. The gods and demons and animals lived in a series

⁵⁵ The creation of universe along with the earth, the sun, the moon and the stars on blue sky. The stars are created by the Supreme Being for guidance, precursor and embellishment. According to *Yusuf Has Hacib* the pisces represent the water element, created in cosmogonic period. For more information please see *Yusuf Has Hacib’s Kutadgu Bilig*.

of heavens above and worlds below our world. In the highest heaven there was the creator Kamui. His compound was protected by an immense wall with an iron gate. Kamui decided to build the world on the back of a huge fish that took in the waters and blew them out to create ocean tides. The creator sent a small bird, a wagtail, to make Earth habitable. Confused, the bird flew down and fluttered about and beat its wings at the mushy surface until a few dry spots emerged, forming the islands where Ainu live now.” (Leeming, 2010: 34)

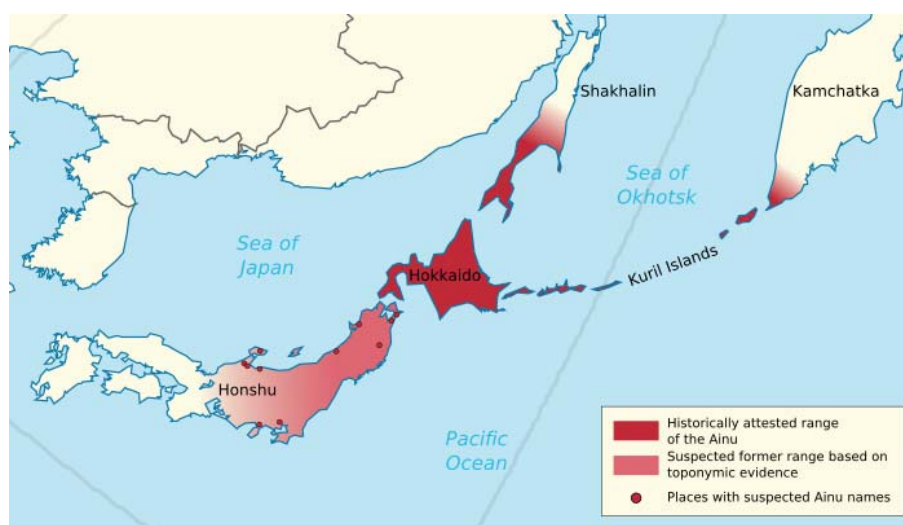


Figure 4.5.3.1 The Map of Ainu Island

As highlighted in the ‘Fecundity’ chapter, the created of the watery element, ‘fish’ symbolizes procreation, the cosmic force of the water in the beginning of origin. Fish is associated with aspects of the ‘Great Mother Goddess’ as the world wide symbol of which is the pointed-oval sign known as vesica piscis⁵⁶, Vessel of the Fish. “The Ainu myth can be called a derivative of the earth-diver creation type so common in Central Asian and Native American cultures. As always in earth-diver creations the primal waters and mud symbolize the possibility of birth-of new life or renewal. They are the birth element.” (Leeming, 2010: 36) Here in this myth ‘fish’ acts as a subsidiary animal in creation of Ainu islands; diving feature represents the union with fecund water and reaching up for the fertile life-bearer source of slime. Fish, a symbol of the procreation of life, signifies the power of the waters in origin of the Ainu Islands. Its taking in water implies the associated force of motion along with Kamui, the creator.

⁵⁶ For more information see Chevalier & Gheerbrant (1996).

4.5.3.2 Creation from a Shell: Nauru Island



Figure 4.5.3.2 Map of Nauru (Nauru)

“The people on the Nauru Island have an Earth-Heaven, primal entity division myth in which we are told of the beginning as a time when there was only the sea, in which the god Areop-Enap lived in a mussel shell. It was dark in there, but the god found a big snail and a little snail living with him, so he made the big one into the sun and the little one into the moon. He got a worm to separate the parts of the shells to become the sky and the earth. The worm’s sweat made the sea as we know it.” (Leeming, 2010: 113)

Nauru Island creation type is an example to namely, aquatic cosmogony as there was nothing in the beginning but water and natural elements as a tree and clam shells whose appearance is an indicator of animistic creation. *Eliade* (1991) notes that “sea shells participate in the sacred powers which are concentrated in the Waters, in the Moon and in Woman; they are, moreover, emblems of these forces for a variety of reasons.” (Eliade, 1991: 125) He highlights the point of the resemblance between the marine shell and the genital organs of woman. All appears in the waters is the shell which represents feministic features or fertility and germination in watery principle which necessitates darkness; the essential key element for pre-cosmogonic creation events paving a way for germination.

Though mentioned as ‘God’, Areop-Enap would be the initiative source of creation germinating in a shell, but representing feministic fertility features. The animistic creation element of the clam shell is seen in this myth and it invokes a sense of birth with its

alikeness to the genital organs of a woman as stated above later on parts of which comprises the sky and earth. *Cooper* (1990) interprets snail, “matching up with the actions of appearing and disappearing, it symbolizes the lunatic phases. Also the sea snail represents the androgyny as the dual principles of fire and water combines, later which will be turned into sun and the moon itself.” (Cooper, 1990: 154) Worm, represents death, later which will dismember in sacrifice of creating earth, dissolve and separates the parts of the shell to become earth and sky. “Jung defines the worm as a libidinal figure which kills instead of giving life. This comes from its underground associations, its base characteristics, its connexion with death and with the biological stages of dissolution and the primary.” (Cirlot, 2001: 378-379) The worm signifying death but dissolution and giving life in the next stages, transforms its sweat into sea, containing all potentialities within, which will enable procurement of subsequent life forms.

4.6 PLANTS ASSOCIATED WITH WATER IN COSMOGONY

As *Chevalier&Gheerbrant* refers to the link between water and plants, water prepares a maternal ground for seeds of plants to reproduce: “Waters bear seeds, all seeds. [Thus] it is easy to understand why the two symbols, plants and water, should be linked. Plants -roots, shrubs, lotus blossom- display the manifestation of the cosmos and the appearance of form. Plants symbolize the first stage in life; above all they symbolize perpetual birth, the ceaseless flow of life-giving energy.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1994: 616; 671) the plant type that water-island-fecundity focuses on is the one born at the bottom of fecund waters but on the surface of fertile slime and mud; ‘Lotus’.

The mythic lore of accepts the cosmic ‘lotus’ as the first flower of all the flowers, rising through and blooming upon the cosmic waters generating birth. The lotus flower blossoming on murky waters is imagined in Indian cosmogony as the first sign of life which bloomed on the primordial waters. *Chevailer* and *Gheerbrant* (1994) probes thoroughly on the subject as referring to the major writers of Hinduism making the lotus “a symbol of spiritual fulfilment from its rising out of darkness to blossom in full sunlight.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1994: 616; 671) Considering lotus in a depiction of stagnant and

dark waters the figure reminds as that of ‘Zahra’ mentioned in *Quran* only once meaning the ‘flower of the world’⁵⁷ rendered by Arabs as the flower of ‘splendor’ and ‘beauty’.

4.6.1 Primeval Lotus

Primeval lotus appearing as the flower in the beginning in Vedic cosmogony, is a cosmic flower representing the cosmos rising from the chaotic fecund waters. As the sun rises from the lotus at the beginning of the world in Vedic cosmogony, lotus depicts sustainment of order and birth. For *Cooper* “lotus is the flower of Light, the result of the interaction of the great creative forces of the fire of the sun and the lunar power of the waters. It also forms the cup of the receptive feminine principle. The lotus depicts spiritual unfolding as it starts with its roots in the slime and growing upwards through the opaque waters, it flowers in the sun and the light of heaven. Its root signifies indissolubility, the stem of the umbilical cord attaching man to his origins.” (Cooper, 1990: 100) Lotus rests on the primordial waters as the executer of darkness as it closes petals at night and opens them at sunrise. In bud form, it symbolizes potentiality; when in bloom it is the source of light from the murky waters.

Glasgow (2009) highlights the importance of ‘lotus’ in Vedic India with its association with the conceptual realm of water, fertility and with the creator God Brahma. (Glasgow, 2009: 29-30) As a depicter of the creator god, the cosmic lotus also acts as the ‘mover on the waters’, seeds of which refers to virginal manifestation of fecundity and either petal signifies a support of existence.

In this section the symbol of the fecund creation; the divine lotus is to be scrutinized. According to Hindu faith, waters consist of maternal features and fecund elements and lotus is their reproductive organ. Personified as the ‘Primal Goddess’, ‘Cosmic Lotus’ is named as the most sacred form of earth and also it is attributed to ‘Goddess of Wetness’ and ‘Goddess of Earth’ and creation initiates with its will.⁵⁸

“The creator, Singbonga, arises out of the primordial waters through the stem of a lotus. He sits on the lotus and from that position sends a series of animals into the depths of waters to find the mud with which he plants to create the world. After

⁵⁷ <http://guranicnames.com/zahra/> (30.10.2014)

⁵⁸ Translated from Zimmer (2001)

many animals fail in this task, the leech succeeds by swallowing some of the mud and spitting it into the creator's hand when he emerges exhausted from the waters. It was this tiny bit of mud that Singbonga used to create the world and its humans." (Leeming, 2010: 67)

It is the creator, Singbonga that arises out of primordial waters signifying proceeding cosmogonical events of the world rising from the watery element. The people of central India tells of an earth-diver creation myth in which the creator comes out of primeval waters by way of the stem of a lotus whose "seed pot is the fecundity of creation"⁵⁹. Here the flower symbolizes the divine birth of a deity from the muddy waters which signifies the potentialities of germination. The lotus after it is born and developed, transforms into a mover on the face of waters signifying unfolding possibilities of germination, regeneration and cosmogonic origin.

Ronnberg and Martin mentions of this cosmic flower as 'mud-born' which is a Sanskrit poetic term for the Indian lotus. "As poetic image and visual icon, the lotus symbol evokes the realization that all life, rooted in mire, nourished by decomposed matter, growing upward through a fluid and changing medium, opens radiantly into space and light. The mire and fluidity symbolize the grosser, heavier qualities of nature, including the mind's nature." (Ronnberg & Martin, 2010: 158) As it is seen in all of the earth diver types, the creator grants some animals with initiative features for the creation phase to start with a piece of mud to be fetched. The mud, the receptive earth impregnated by the fertilizing waters, is fetched and brought out of water by a leech. In the proceeding step a bit of mud that is brought is used for creating the world out of the water as a rising gigantic island.

4.7 CONCLUSION

Water is the utmost element of creation in cosmogony. Representing various features, the common trait of creation myths is water. Because of their limitless vast bodies, waters existed in ancient cosmogonies of various cultures in images of "the primal undifferentiated state of primeval formlessness. Such was the ocean upon which Vishnu slumbered. It was 'arnava' the dark and shapeless sea, the Lower WATERS over which

⁵⁹ For more information see Cooper 1990.

the Spirit of God broods and from which arises the primeval burgeoning of EGG; LOTUS, REED or ISLAND.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 837) Almost all creation myths open up life on earth in water. “The undifferentiated mass of waters stands for the infinite nature of the possible, containing all that is potential, unshaped, the seeds of seeds and promises of evolution. [Water] is a passing phase of regression and disintegration which brings with it a progressive phase of reintegration and regeneration. The notion of primordial waters and of ocean from which all things began is virtually universal.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 1081) It is to be found in polytheistic cosmogonies and monotheistic sacred texts as well as in Polynesia, Melanesia, Siberia, North America, Japan, Finno-Ugric cultures, Sumerian sacred texts and southern Asia. Those regions attribute creation to cosmic power in water.

Initially, it is the sole element in existence before the being and non-being; life rises upon water as does the microcosm afterwards. It is the symbol of the creation potentiality, fertility and a foetal status procuring life in the beginning. “In many creation myths standing water occurs as the protoplasm of the Earth from which all life sprang. In some Turkic myths from central Asia, water was the mother of the horse. In Babylonian cosmogony, at the beginning of all things, before Heaven and Earth existed.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 1088) Water pre-existed in forms of: still, bustling or churning types. Macrocosmic events initiates with and within waters in Hinduistic, Polynesian, Finno-Ugric, Mesopotamian, Japanese, Siberian and Central&North American ancient literatures constituting of oldest layers of scriptures and as well as monotheistic sacred writings.

As for the polytheistic belief; Japanese islands have risen out of water, the Vedic Brahma gives account of water in creation and Babylonians attribute the separation of waters and creation of gods who will suspend an order to the cosmic power of water who is symbolized by two divine deities; Apsu and Tiamat. In addition to this, monotheistic beliefs ground cosmogony on water as evident in Jewish, Christian and Muslim traditions. According to *Genesis*; the earth rises out of water; as for Muslims; water keeps a vast importance in creation. *Torah* also mentions water in creation. The cosmogony of *Torah* depicts the stages of cosmogony with a depiction of a vast void from which darkness emanates and a primordial abyss from which all water springs forth. Both polytheistic

cosmogonic myths and monotheistic sacred texts attribute the creation to pre-existence of water in the beginning.

Water symbolizes the principle of potentiality and procurement of all kinds of cosmic manifestation initiations; it symbolizes the elixir of life which is the universal symbol of fertility and fecundity. “Primordial water, water nascent from Earth and the pale dawn, is female. In this instance the Earth is associated with the Moon, as a symbol of fecundation fulfilled; the Earth being gravid, the water emerges, so that now fertilization has taken place, germination can begin.” (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996: 1086) “Without divine water, nothing exists, according to Zoismus. On the other hand, among the symbols of the female principle are included those which figure as origins of the waters (mother, life), such as: Mother Earth, Mother of the Waters, One should not be misled by the word “divine”. Water symbolizes terrestrial and natural life.” (Cirlot, 2001: 367) The symbols of fecundity manifest themselves in the cosmic water where germination of a new life begins in it as an embryo germinates in a womb. Such denotations are all evident in water cosmogonies bearing life to patches of lands and/or islands.

‘Coming into being’ the ancient cosmology seems cling to the pre-existence of formless simple matter which was ‘water’. “But why water? Water was a reasoned choice. First, water was essential to life and perhaps even embodied a vital principle. All living things were wet inside. Second, water was the only substance known to the ancients that existed in all three phases; liquid, solid and vapor. ... Third, water came both up from under the ground and down as rain. So it was natural to conceive of water as surrounding the Earth i.e. that part of the world where men dwelt.”⁶⁰ Cirlot also suggested the impact of evidence in his *The Dictionary of Symbols* that science that has confirmed that life did in fact begin in the sea. (2001: 241) In sum, on the grounds of all the mythic narrations; scriptures and sacred texts; water can be regarded as the source of procurement to all patches of lands and living beings, which symbolizes the universal potentialities which maintain procurement of all life forms and creations of lands.

⁶⁰ http://www.mukto-mona.com/new_site/mukto-mona/Articles/brent_meeker/cosmology.htm (31.10.2014)

5. ISLAND

5.1 INTRODUCTION: “ONLY WAS THE WATER THAT GAVE RISE TO ISLAND”

The creation of islands bindingly owes its coming into existence to pre-existence of the fecund waters and feminine elements giving birth to new beings. Waters pre-existence was mentioned in monotheistic sacred texts and polytheistic narrations and myths. In all of the cosmogonic myth samples analyzed, creation of the world follows the same pattern in which a vast body of water stretches over the seeds of the solid material which gives form and brings an order to formlessness. In this study all of the Supreme Beings, creator gods/or goddesses worked with primal matters that pre-existent in darkness: ‘Water’.

Wrapped with an endless darkness and/or fog, the creator’s face was hovering above the cosmic waters. As a cosmic element they harbored mystic forces out of which arose ‘Islands’ at once. *Ronnberg* and *Martin* interprets the symbolism of ‘island’ as follows: “In creation myths, island portrays the beginnings of consciousness, small, vulnerable bits of earth fetched from the bottom of the cosmic sea that are easily submerged.” (Ronnberg&Martin, 2010: 124) Contact with water always bore a new beginning or a creation in cosmogonic myths because thawing of seeds trails a new birth as in the case of islands sprouting from the womb of maternal waters.

In this section, myths, stories or theories regarding the birth of islands or masses of lands sprouting out of water and transforming into earth as itself are taken into consideration. Island myths are present in almost all traditional primitive cultures. These myths and narrations supply rhetorical and imaginative portrayals of a rationale of the creation of islands and land masses. “These myths set forth a tonality and stylistics for the modes of perception, the organizing principles and provide basis for all creative activities in cultural life.” (Jones, 2005: 1985) A broad selection of islands whose emergence from cosmic waters are evident will be analyzed; the study will embody ‘Oceanic Mythology’ consisting of Polynesian, Micronesian, Melanesian, Indonesian and Australian mythic narratives; North American, Central Asian and Indian cosmogonic narratives and/or texts.

The Marshall Islands' creation depicts creation from chaos and the *deus faber* Lowa, who creates islands by 'word'. "The myth was recounted by James Milne, a Marshallese, in the early 50s." (Sproul, 1979: 334):

"Long, Long, long ago there wasn't any land at all, only ocean, but there was a god named Lowa who came down to an island (may be this island was Ailinglaplap). This god made a command followed by a magical sound, 'Mmmmm' and all of the islands were created. He went back to heaven and sent down four other men to this island. These four men each went different directions, one to east, one to west, one to the south and one to the north. After these men were in their places, Lowa sent another man (name forgotten) down to arrange the islands. He put all the islands in a basket [not known how, or if they were in the water first] and, starting from the Carolines, put them into their present positions. Then he started placing all the Marshall Islands of the two chains into proper order. As he came from Ailinglaplap to Jaluit, one island fell out of the basket. This island which fell was Namorik and that is why it is out of line today. He is just let it go and didn't bother to put Namorik back in order. He placed Jaluit, then Ebon and then threw away the basket which became Kili (named after Kilok, a kind of strong working-basket plaited by men out of coconut leaflets. This ended island forming."

The Marshall Islands⁶¹ myth recounts the origin of the island group by referring cosmogonic events. By the depiction of a chaotic portrayal, waters' pre-existence, who are to supply life-force for next generation is evident. Creator, Lowa already in existence initiates the creation stages by the word 'Mmmmm'; which sounds like the Buddhist sacred creation word 'Om'. "Hindus believe that as creation began, the divine, all-encompassing consciousness took the form of the first and original vibration manifesting as sound 'OM'." (Maheshwarananda, 2004: 15) Both words voicing nearly the same can be said to be the primordial sound that initiates the creation for Hindus, the universe; for Marshallese; the islands. After the creation period the creator calls upon arranging them and assigns a man to put them all into a basket. Being contained in a basket, depicting rebirth and powers of life the islands are rearranged into the proper order of their own position today.

⁶¹ See Figure 5.4.3

5.2 ETYMOLOGY OF ISLAND

According to the notes of *Skeat* (1882), “the ‘s’ is inserted by confusion with French isle into the word derived in English as island. The word, island derives from land which Anglo-Saxons brought into use literally ‘water-land’. For the original Teutonic’s⁶² the original form of the word was agwia, conveying linguistic feminine features, meaning; belonging to water, an adjective formed from ahwa, meaning; ‘water’, represented by Anglo-Saxons as ‘ea’, connoting with the Latin word ‘aqua’, water.” Due to *Onion’s* explanation (1966), “island is the land completely surrounded by water with uses of egland, iegland, igand and later island; it is compounded of water and sea. Old High German used the word in coinage with ouwa, meaning water, or a watery meadow.” With respect to the etymological meaning, the interrelation between island and water is clear in the derivational word groups as; ‘water-land’, ‘watery meadow’ as suggested above and fecund aspects of water are also evident in the derivation of the word ‘island’.

5.3 FUNCTION OF ISLAND IN MYTHOLOGY

Island creation myths attempt to explain the original emanation narratives of ancient cultures and how and why those myths came into being. Those islands are real and can be spotted on world map out of which people created myths to explain the origin of lands they live on.

Eliade defined the word myth and the reason of an ‘island’ coming into being in his *Myth and Reality* as: “Myth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial Time, the fabled time of the ‘beginnings.’ In other words, myth tells how, through the deeds of Supernatural Beings, a reality came into existence, be it the whole of reality, the Cosmos, or only a fragment of reality – an island, a species of plant, a particular kind of human behavior, an institution.” (Eliade, 1964: 5) For recounting of how beings come into existence, dwelled and breed, first a spot, a patch of land or part of soil is needed to be dwelled upon. In this chapter samples island myths from Japan to Polynesia, from Canada to Hawaii, either hatching of an egg or creation by chaos or other types of cosmogony.

⁶² “A general term for English, Dutch, German, Gothic, and Scandinavian.” For more information see Walter (1882): xiii.

All those myths claim that the center of the creation place: 'island' emerged from the ocean by the command of the creator in aim for accommodations for the next generation to breed and multiply. Those myths and narrations follow the same pattern of depiction- sometimes the pattern alternates in stages of cosmic dives- of darkness suspending above the fertile water which is in quest for bearing life, then the face of the noble creator appears and starts to hover above the waters; with his command, a subsidiary animal appears or already in existence, aids him with the cosmic dive in which a patch of earth or soil is brought to him to initiate cosmogonic events that leads to the sprout of islands.

The stages of the pattern may change as the myth witnesses the demiurge's fishing islands out of cosmic water. With the will of the creator, the small island patches expand, serving a place for sexual intercourse⁶³ of the proceeding couple to be sent. After this cosmogonic event, the developmental process of cosmology yields.

5.4 ISLAND SYMBOLISM IN MYTHS

Island is a complex symbol denoting various meanings for the signified. In various myths analyzed, island represents the cradle of a new beginning '*in illo tempore*', as the newborn generation needs a dwelling place to live and multiply. Thus islands may also be represented as signifier of a flat solid surface before the evolution of the whole mainlands has finished.

According to *Jung*, "It is the synthesis of the consciousness and the will. Here he is following the Hindu belief that –as *Zimmer* notes- the island is to be seen as the area of metaphysical force where the forces of the 'immense illogic' of the ocean are distilled." (Cirlot, 2001: 160) *Jung*'s suggestion of an 'immense illogic' is clear in the separation of waters, the fight between the feminine and the masculine cosmic power, the darkness laying over the water; later on giving a way for the light to exist with the will of the creator

⁶³ "Procreative desire may give rise to land as well as the animals that inhabit it. The emergence from the sea of the volcanic islands of Japan is explained in terms of childbirth, the islands being the offspring of two heavenly spirits, Izanagi and Izanami. The first children of the pair, however, were abortions, caused by the fact that, when their parents first joined together, it was the woman who had first exclaimed at the man's beauty. The second time round, the order of precedence was corrected, the man spoke first, and the births were successful, forming the eight islands of Japan, and all their forests, mountains, rivers, and valleys. While sexual desire serves as the explanatory model for these myths of creation, there exist other myths that purport to explain the origin of sexual desire itself." For more information see: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Cosmogony.aspx> (03.10.2014)

and illuminate what has been created out of water and bring it into illumination of consciousness.

Jung's proposal of 'consciousness and will' is also evident in the cosmogonic period when the creator's face appears over a void of darkness stretching above unfathomable body of waters and his words command for the 'conscious will' of creation by a grain of slime, sand or mud beneath the depth of fecund waters. *Cooper* (1974) also denotes of island "as a place of safety and refuge from the sea of chaos." As seen in myth samples, island is a place that harbours safety for myriad of creatures and/or the Creator or the divine figure contemplating the will of creation initiation. In this section the universal symbols of cosmogonic process and initiation which consist of the cosmic egg, darkness, mud, stone and fire will be scrutinized in island cosmogony.

5.4.1 Creation of an Island out of Cosmic Egg

The appearance of an egg in the myths is universal, "it is a primal scene: an ovum in a sea of sperm; the breath/spirit moving with the eaters of life and light emerging, making form visible; the opening of an eye." (Ronnberg&Martin, 2010:14) "The image of the cosmic egg is known to many mythologies. 'In the beginning this word was merely nonbeing', we read in a sacred work of the Hindus 'It was existent. It developed. It turned into an egg. It lay for a period of a year. It was split asunder. One of the two eggshell parts became silver, one gold. That which was of gold is the sky. What was the outer membrane is the mountains. What was the inner membrane is cloud and mist. What were the veins are the rivers. What was the fluid within is the ocean. Now, what was born there from is yonder sun.' The shell of the cosmic egg is the world frame of space, while the fertile seed-power within typifies the inexhaustible life dynamism of nature." (Campbell, 1972:276-278) As a symbol of 'birth' theme and signifying potential creation egg is a referent of primordial chaos transforming into sustaining order and creation of cosmos.

The correlation explained in chapters of 'fecundity' and 'water' creates a unique bond with 'island' as well. Egg appears in myths of Buddhistic sacred texts, the Finnish epic *Kalevala*, Egyptian and Japanese cosmogony and Oceanic mythologies. In oceanic mythologies there are numerous creation myths referring to that of an egg's cracking up and making earth. Below is a myth of the Samoans referring to the creation of their

dwelling places and reasoning of origin of life to them. The myth recounts creation on the maternal waters. The supreme being of the Polynesians appear in a cosmic egg which is a referrent to the birth theme. With the break of this universal egg and the parts of the shell fertilize the primordial waters, which causes the formation of the Samoan Islands. The Samoan Island myth consists of earth-diver features as well as the apperance of the cosmic egg, its cracking and pieces of which fertilize fecund primeval waters procuring Samoan Islands.

5.4.1.1 Samoan Islands⁶⁴

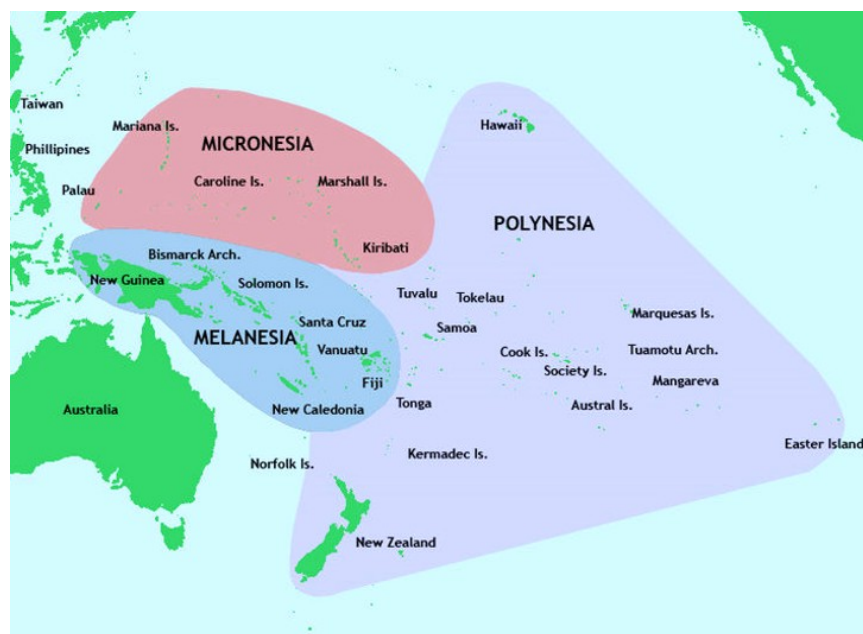


Figure 5.1 A map of Oceanic Islands Showing Samoan Islands

As *Leeming* recounts the birth of Samoan Islands, he highlights the existence of the cosmic egg theme along with pre-existent primal element of water and he puts the myth under ‘earth-diver’ category: “Some Samoans say that Tagaloa-Langi, the creator, lived in a cosmic egg and that when the egg broke, the pieces of the shell fell into the waters and became the Samoan Islands. Again, the primary purpose of this myth is to establish the importance of Samoa. An outgrowth of the primary myth is the story of Tagaloa’s son, Tuli. This myth has an earth-diver creation aspect.” (Leeming, 2010: 237):

⁶⁴ “Samoa, in the South Pacific, was settled as early as 1000 B.C.E. by Polynesian peoples. By 200 B.C.E. Samoans were the center of a trading relationship and cultural exchange with the islands of Tonga and Fiji. As widely scattered as their islands are, there are many similarities between the mythologies of the various Polynesian groups.” (Leeming, 2010: 236)

“Tuli, the son of the Creator, descended to primordial waters, as a bird but found no place to land. Returning to his father, he requested help. His father dropped a stone down. The stone became the earth. Some say that the Creator had to bring the stone up beneath the waters. In any case, took up residence on the stone but found that the sea constantly swelled over it. Again, the Creator helped, at this time by using a fish hook to raise the rock. Various other rocks sprang up and eventually the rocks gave forth a kind of grass called fue. Now Tuli complained that there was no one to live on the rocks. The Creator told his son to pull up some of the fue to let it rot. Eventually two grubs appeared on it and Tagaloa in his various forms molded the grubs into two male beings. When one of the creatures died, the creator ordered him re-animated and turned into a female. The male and the female mated and human beings came into being.”

This Polynesian myth tells about the cosmogonic structure of Tutuila, the word derives from the couple that is sent with the command of the God Tagaloa-Langi, the creator of Samoan islands and humans. Initially appearing in a cosmic egg which is then broken and the pieces of the shell, reflecting the watery, feminine discipline gives birth to islands and a dwelling place for life-bearing forces. This earth-diver creation myth opens up with vast body of waters stretching as is seen in all earth-diver types, the cosmic dive starts with the creator's messenger's attempt. The messenger is sent to the surface of the ocean and contact with water. His contact gives rise to emanation of islands.

The eastern group of islands rises to the surface as that of a lotus, which is the first of all the flowers that blossoms on stagnant and murky waters signifying the very first sign of life upon primordial vastness of waters. The western group of islands also rises out from the primordial waters as the eastern group did in the form of a lotus. It is the fecund maternal waters and the word of the creator – the myth signifying creation by word characteristics in here- that gives a way for the procurement of the Samoan Island group. The Creator then appears in a form of cloud, signifying the primordial unknowable state before he manifests to see the cosmogonic chain of events his messenger initiated. Seeing that beautiful land masses generated out of fecund waters, he creates a pair of human beings to initiate the life upon the islands- whose names have also named the islands in use today.

5.4.2 Creation of an Island out of Darkness

Darkness, symbolizes the primordial chaos is a preparation stage for the foetal state of islands and all other beings. In this chant of Hawaii it is darkness which acts as a womb to giving birth to embryotic forms of slimes which will transform into patches of lands and into an island it the end, a dwelling for other myriad of creatures that are created by the womb of the darkness: Night. “More than any other Polynesian myth, the Hawaiian creation chant (the Kumulipo) celebrates the wondrous fertility of the seven stages of the primordial night. ‘Nothing but darkness that/Nothing but darkness this,’ the night is a chaos of potentiality and pre-being. Evolved from the primordial slime and divided into male and female principles, its stages give birth to staggering numbers of life forms: first simple sea creatures; then fish, insects and birds, reptiles, mammals and people. And finally, when all have evolved in this time of the past, the day breaks and the created world is established. Most notable for its depiction of the sheer abundance and richness of creation, the Kumulipo presumes no single, supreme creator. Fertility itself and the desire to reproduce give birth to “all the myriad creatures.” (Sproul, 1979: 359) The chant opens up with heat in a chaotic portrayal where slime signifies the source of earth from which islands will be created:

*“At the time when the earth became hot
At the time when the heavens turned about
At the time when the sun was darkened
To cause the moon to shine
The time of the rise of the Pleiades
The slime, this was the source of the earth
The source of the darkness that made darkness
The source of the night that made night
The intense darkness, the deep darkness
Darkness of the sun, darkness of the night
Nothing but night.*

The night gave birth

Born was Kumulipo in the night, a male

Born was Po'ele in the night, a female

Born was the coral polyp, born was the coral, came forth..."

Depicted in a nighty night wrapped in deep darkness, the first couple appears as in that of monotheistic texts, along with slimes turning into reefs which will then create a dwelling land for next generation of creatures and humans. The chant is made up of VIII parts; the first part depicting: the chaotic atmosphere where a couple and myriad of sea creatures begin to be created on propping earth; the second part gives account of various animals born into the very dark ocean-like womb and a sea of coral; the third section tells about land appeared and plantation on it and along with those land animals but still in darkness; the next chapter depicts of family of crawlers in the night while the fifth section tells about different types of people ranging from common class to high chiefs but still in darkness; the sixth section depicts of cultivation and food; the seventh: fear for the night's passing; the eighth chapter tells about man's coming on earth and the order of things, the couples mate and give birth to little ones, increasing in numbers.

5.4.3 Creation of an Island out of Mud and Sand

The compound of water and earth gives us the mud or dough. Dough is the basic theme of worldliness, eliminating formlessness of water and effecting the first trial of the solid matter. Water assumes the role of bonding with its syndetic characteristics. As ash is the dust of fire; mud is the dust of water. Ash, mud, dust and smoke barter their own elements till eternity. Via those minimized forms; basic elements connect with each other. In other words those elements signify the dust of those four basic elements. And mud is the most and far esteemed and valued one. Water seems to be a fecund habitat for soil.⁶⁵

For *Leeming* the soil represents a medium of forming primal basic matter 'water' in transforming it into a being. "Soil of some kind is a common way of creating a world- especially in earth-diver myths, but also in many of the creation from chaos myths. In the Salishan Indian tradition, the Sky Chief, made earth out of a lump of clay, which he rolled out like a piece of dough. More often earth-as dust, mud, or especially and more logically,

⁶⁵ Translated from Bachelard, 2006: 120-125.

as clay- is used to create humans. When the Central Asian Altaic creator Ulgen saw mud floating on the primeval waters, he saw a human face reflected in the waters and gave it life.” (Leeming, 2010:11) In this chapter islands, sprouting from water and uniting with soil and creating sandy habitable lands will be scrutinized.

5.4.3.1 The Hill Nunne Chaha

“Like the other Muskhogean tribes, the Choctaws believed that before the Creation a great body of water alone was visible. Two pigeons flew to and fro over its waves and at last espied a blade of grass rising above the surface. Dry land gradually followed and the islands and the mainland took their present shapes, in the center of the hill Nunne Chaha, was a cave, the house of the Master Breath. There he took clay and fashioned the first men; and as at that period the waters covered the earth, he raised a great wall to dry them on. When the soft mud had hardened into flesh and bone, he directed waters to their present places and gave the dry land to the men he had made. The fact that the Choctaws were divided into eight clans had been cited by Brinton in confirmation of the view that the myth of their origin was akin to those American legends which give to the majority of the Indian tribes a descent from four or eight brothers who emanated from a cave. Such a myth was in vogue among the Tupi-Guarani of Brazil, the Muyscas of Bogota, the Nahua of Mexico and many other tribes. They possessed an ancient tradition that the present world will be consumed by a general conflagration, after which it will be made a much more pleasant place than now it is and in that then the spirits of the dead will return to the bones and once more occupy their ancient territory.” (Spence, 1994: 306)

This myth sample also highlights vast body of waters signifying fecund characteristics. The movement begins with the birds flapping their wings above water. In the mythic lore, birds have always been related to the divine figure as they have the power of control of ascending to heaven and descending to earth with their own will. In the cosmogonic myths, they are represented with the “ability to communicate with gods or enter into a higher state of consciousness.”(Cooper, 1979: 20) Here in ‘The Hill Nunne Chaha’ myth it’s not clear whether the birds are sent as subsidiary animals receiving

consciousness of a solid surface or the transcendent of the divine manifestation espying a dwelling, covered with a patch of grass which will commence the initiation of birth.

The search for the 'consciousness' of lands blooms and ends with the expansion of the blade of grass into dry land gradually transforming into islands. Pre-existence of water gives birth to patches of soil, which then turns into dry land. "Dryness is the principle directly opposed to that of organic life. The latter is associated with the fertility of the soil-plants and animal life. The waters here symbolize debased existence, subject to time and to things transitory, behaving in accordance with the feminine principle of 'wetness'." (Cirlot, 2001: 89) In the myth the divine creator takes mud in the point where the hill has arisen out of waters; and he fashions the first man.

Mud appears in the myth sample as the symbol of fertile primeval matter that is hidden in the depths of fecund water. *Chevalier&Gheerbrandt*, defines mud "as a mixture of Earth and Water, mud joins the receptive womb-principle (earth) with the energizing principle of change and transformation (water). All levels of cosmic and moral symbolism range between Earth brought to life by Water and Water polluted by Earth." (Chevalier&Gheerbrandt, 1996: 686) In this myth mud symbolizes the beginning of beings and development of the earth as land.

Deus Faber, 'The Master Breath' is depicted as pending for the 'soft mud's hardening into flesh and bone' which "signifies the union of purely receptive principle (earth) with the power of transition and transformation (water)." (Cirlot, 2001: 222). Mud is regarded as a medium for the forming of matter. Thus, 'The Master Breath's' initiation of taking mud is a representative of unregenerate man that will be fashioned into an evolving being that will possess life and use the life power to breed and multiply on those group of islands that have been created.

5.4.3.2 The Marshall Islands⁶⁶



Figure 5.2 “Map of the Marshall islands today showing Bikini, Kili and the positioning of Rallick Chain.”

The second myth sample in this section is the signifier of sand, in symbolic view signified with “instability and impermanence.” (See Cooper, 1979: 144) According to geographical features sand presents different meanings to different cultures; “in Islam, sand signifies purity since it is used for ritual ablutions.”(Cooper, 1979: 144) As the words of *Cirlot* (2001) suggest, sand highlights divinity: “sandbanks and even islands were, in antiquity, the objects of religious awe.” From this point of view, ‘sand’ may also be deified for the Pacific Islanders. This myth recounts how the group of Marshall Islands appeared following the same pattern of cosmogonic creation as this study suggests and the significance of sand in creation:

⁶⁶ “This group of Pacific islands was settled as early as the second millenium B.C.E. by a Mayo-Polynesian Micronesian people. The islands have come under the control of various outside powers, including most recently, the United States. A Marshall Islands creation story contains a description of the origins of Bikini Island, where the first atomic bomb test took place and the bikini bathing suit got its name.” (Leeming, 2010: 187)

“In ancient times when there was only water, Lowa, the uncreated, was alone. When he made a humming sound the islands emerged, along with the reefs and sandbanks. He hummed again and the plants and animals arrived. Lowa made four gods for the four directions and a gull god to constantly circle the sky. Lowa also created a man, who put the islands into a basket made from coconut leaves and tried to set them in order- the Carolines to the west and the Marshalls in a straight line, except for Namorik, which fell out of the basket. After he had placed all the islands, he threw away the basket and it became the Kili Island. Only one of the islands had coconut trees at the time. This was little sandy island of Bikini (from bok, meaning sand and ni, meaning coconut). Lowa sent his tatooists down to the islands to give each creature its own mark.” (Leeming, 2010: 187)

With the emphasis of the creator’s being sole and single, the scene of creation opens up with water which is the source of all potentialities in existence. The pre-existent water sets in motion with the creator’s act of creation ‘by word.’ The motion gives rise to fertilization of cosmic waters and the rise of precious slime beneath. The slime enables sandbanks, reefs and islands to uprise. The dry land signifying firmness of initiation bringing birth to cosmogonic cycle. With the creation of man, the figure of ‘basket’ appears with the aim of setting the islands in order. The basket signifies “offerings of fertility and sanctity and being contained in it depicts rebirth.” (Cooper, 1979: 18) The islands coming out of basket set in a straight line with a rebirth and the basket also attributed with feminine principles turns into another island. (See Figure 5.3)

5.4.4 Creation of an Island out of Stone

Symbolizing the manifestation of a divine being or creator, stone is a form that presents the supreme reality of coming into existence. Signifying immortality and static life, the stone symbol appeared in cosmogonies of numerous cultures. *Biedermann* defines stone in his *Dictionary of Symbolism*, with its characteristic durability and permanence, stone is for many cultures a symbol of divine power.” (Biedermann, 1992: 326) “Stone is a symbol of being, of cohesion and harmonious reconciliation with self. Stones constitute the first solid form of the creative rhythm- the sculpture of essential movement and the petrified music of creation.” (Cirlot, 2001: 314) Intuitively in view of its solid form and

durability human beings have regarded ‘stones’ as the source of human life in ancient religious beliefs and myths.

According to Oceanic cosmogonic lore, whose myths also consist of islands arising from stone, it is clear that rocks gave birth to all the beings on the islands. As seen in ‘Fecundity’ chapter, the feminine manifestation in nature relating that of “a stone, rock, mountain, tree or grove, all of which are associated symbolically, can represent the cosmos in its entirety. In primitive symbolism stones can give birth to people and have a life-giving potency.” (Cooper, 1979: 160) The islands that bear creation out of stone are evident in myths of Pacific, Indonesian, Micronesian and Alaskan myths. In the Pacific, The Polynesian group tells of Tangaloa who created islands out of throwing a rock into the sea. Such a myth alike is also evident in Micronesian island groups of Rallick Chain⁶⁷ and Admiralty Islands aforementioned in ‘Water’ chapter.⁶⁸

Another myth sample to be analyzed is that of Kodiak Island that is located in the south coast of the U.S. of Alaska which makes the second largest island after Hawaii. All those myths follow the same pattern of creation; the pre-existing element water is already there for supplying the fecund characteristics that give way for creation of the islands. Either fished, or commanded by word, or showing earth-diver characteristics, those islands are made up of stone or reefs on which a handful of soil or sand is sprinkled procuring a habitable spot for new life forms.

⁶⁷ See Figure 5.4.3

⁶⁸ Please see: ‘Primeval Waters’: 75

5.4.4.1 Tongan Islands⁶⁹ :

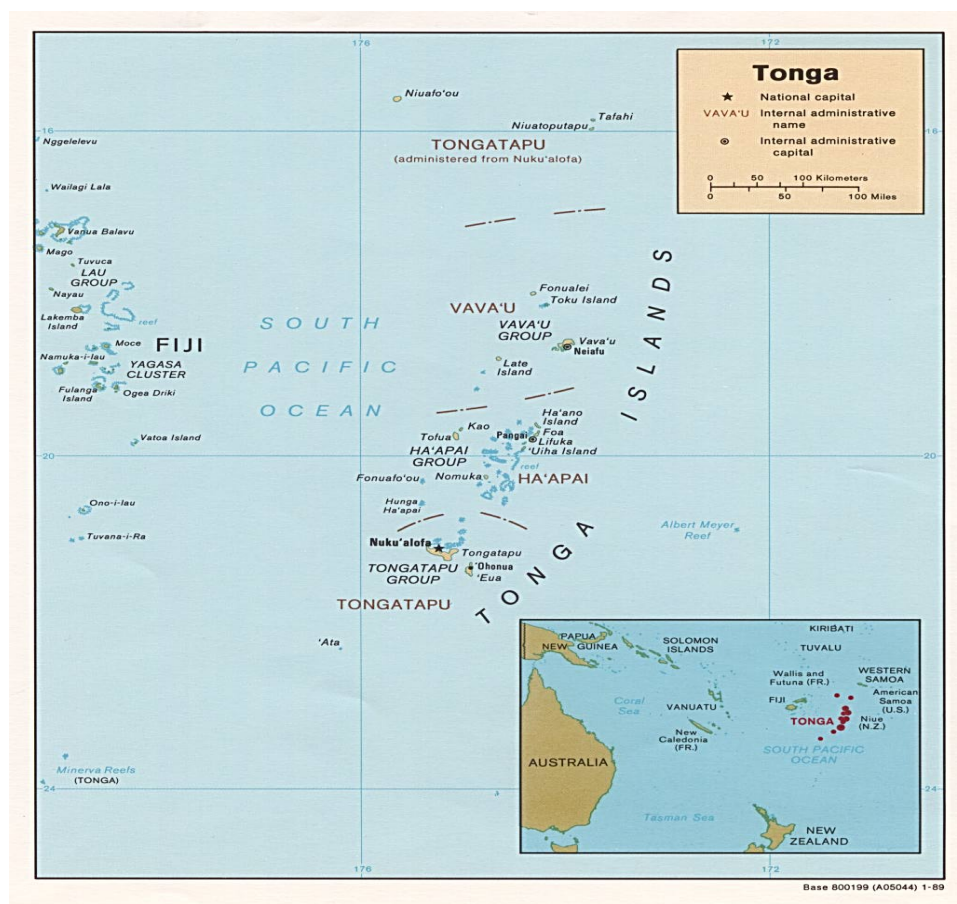


Figure 5.3 Tonga Islands

Tongan Island creation myth tells about vast primeval sea bearing fecundity within and later on the figure of a 'stone' appears as the manifestation of the creator. The creator depicted with a tortoiseshell would be rendered as the significant importance of water which initiates the 'creation'. Also signifying fecundity and regeneration; the mantle is the indicator of the supportive animal which took an active role in the creation of the world. And according to the Tongoans the islands geographical positioning today is related to that of the mantle and the fish hook, which are the residual signs that appeared in cosmogonic cycle. "Legends report and Scientifics agree that Tongans settled their islands only about three thousand years ago. Their legends do not mention migration. They say that the gods Maui and Tangaloa created islands and the people." (B. Flood&W. Flood&Strong, 1999: 149) This interesting finding is also undergird by Briggs' remarks on the relation between the creation and geographical and sociological structure of Samoan Islands: "Furthermore,

⁶⁹ See Figure 5.4.4

certain parts of this particular myth seem to reflect Samoa's geography- rock plays an enormous role, fitting for a volcanic island and common plants of Samoa play a significant role in the ordering of the original world. The Samoan myth of creation suits its island geography and society; unique and original, yet adept at explaining other cultures and their relation to the Samoans.

One of the most significant aspects of this myth is the way in which Tangaloa creates by word. His command brings something from nothing, in the same way that God's commands do in the Bible.⁷⁰ Showing parallel evidences with cosmogonic myth types, this myth sample is a clear explanation of cosmogonic process for islanders in sense-making the present form of the islands with the fish hook and the stone that it caught.

5.4.4.2 Kodiak Island

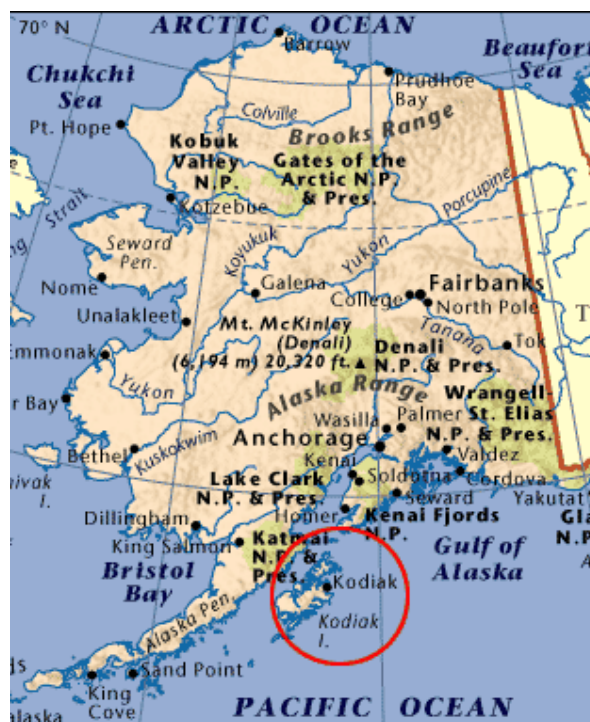


Figure 5.4 Map of Kodiak Island

This Alaskan myth takes us from Oceanic territories to South America; Kodiak Island located in Alaska, in whose mythic lore the role of 'Raven' is seen both as a creator or a 'trickster'. Raven in here manifests as the Creator himself by securing daylight which signifies cosmic creation. Raven's bringing light for dispatching darkness can be signified

⁷⁰ <http://www.laits.utexas.edu/doherty/plan2/briggs.html> (09.11.2014)

as an attempt to a new beginning in which life forms will sprout. The dichotomy in-between darkness and light is an example to dualistic creation which characterizes and categorizes this ancient myth in ‘creation from chaos’ myth type:

“Raven brought light from the sky and at the same time a bladder, containing a man and a woman, came down. By pushing and stretching it, the man and woman made the bladder into the world. By pushing with their hands and feet, they made mountains. Trees came into being when the man scattered his hair about. The woman urinated and spit to make the oceans, lakes, rivers and ponds. The man made a knife out of one of the woman’s teeth and cut some wood to make wood chips, which he then threw into the water to make fish. The man and the woman had a son, who played with a stone that became an island. They left another son on that island with a female dog that became his wife. These were ancestors of the Kodiak people.” (Leeming, 2010: 164)

The illumination bearing the primordial life, brings forth the creation of a couple. The pattern cycle staggers in here by changing the stages of ‘human creation’ with ‘cosmogonic creation’. But what is intriguing is the woman’s fecund powers’ association with water. From her urine water seas, rivers and lakes originate and come into existence. Water, bearing all the potentialities to new life forms, generates a habitat for the couple and their son. The stone, supposedly the toy of their son’s, regenerates into an island that will later on own a life-giving potency for the people today living on this island: Kodiaks, who believe the power of the myth that the couple and the dog are their ancestors.

5.4.4.3 The Railik Chain⁷¹

Though not pronounced exactly the same as the word, ‘stone’; reef “is a rock, sandbar, or other feature lying beneath the surface of the water.”⁷² Thus reef can be categorized under the heading of ‘stone’. The Railik Chain myth sets an example to creation from stone myths.

⁷¹ See Figure 5.4.3

⁷² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reef#Geologic_reef (12.11.2014)

In his *Oceanic Mythology*, Dixon (1964) recounts this myth with a conception of a primeval sea on which a deity was hovering that repeats the characteristics of the Marshall Group or at least of that portion of it which is comprised in the Railik Chain.

“At the very first there was only the sea, which was limited to the south by a low, far-reaching reef and to the north by a swamp. A being named Loa said to the sea, “Behold thy island reef,” and a reef appeared; and again he spoke, “See thy sand,” and the reef was covered with soil.” (Dixon, 1964: 102)

As seen in other myths the pre-existent water is present and ubiquitous for the creation state to initiate. So this feature renders the creation type as ‘creation from water’ later on sprouting out of it as an island. Among the creation myths of islands The Railik Chain myth is the unique one in describing the cardinal directions. The very existence of sea is limited by a reef in the south, the one of the main cardinal direction which symbolizes darkness and the feminine element. The other cardinal direction is the opposite; north which symbolizes water based features, yin (feminine element) and The Black Tortoise as primordial chaos (see Amphibious Animals in ‘Water’ chapter) which gives life to cosmology then. North is also limited with a swamp whose fecund ooze of murky waters hides a source of new life.

Drawn with feminine features comprising water and hidden sources of new lives, a reef form appears out of waters by word based creation. First, the reef appears as an island than it is covered with sand, the element which is deified by islanders and in various myth samples appearing as one of the elements concurrent with water, procuring new forms that generate life.

5.4.5 The Earth as an Island: The Myth of Io

Most of the narratives, myths and sacred texts analyzed explain the origin of the earth coming out of sea. In Oceanic mythology there are numerous islands that are procured out of sea to be listed as: “the earth simply came out of sea (New Zealand), from a rock which existed in the sea (Minahassa); or again, a deity sometimes a snake (Admiralty Islands)⁷³ floating on the sea creates the earth there (Railik Group of Marshall Islands).”

⁷³ To be referred to in chapter “Animals in creation of islands”.

(Graves&Guirand, 1968: 466) In the next myth sample the rise of earth as an island is to be analysed by rendering cosmogonic symbols. The myth appeared in east coast of Maori and it features esoteric elements of religious doctrines inherent in Maori culture. Structured as a form of chant, the 'Myth of Io' makes appearance in ritual applications whose divine words are potent in both cosmic cycle and everyday lives of people.

"In the middle of the nineteenth century, East Coast Maori priests, notably Te Matorohanga and Nepie Pohuhu, revealed a different creation myth which celebrated Io, 'the hidden face.' (Sproul, 1979: 344):

*Io dwelt within breathing-space of immensity.
The Universe was in darkness, with water everywhere.
There was no glimmer of dawn, no clearness, no light.
And he began by saying these words,-
That he might cease remaining inactive:
 'Darkness, become a light-possessing darkness.'
And at once light appeared.
...
(Io) then looked to the waters which compassed him about,
And spake a fourth time, saying:
 "Ye waters of Tai-Kama, be ye separate.
 Heaven, be formed." Then sky became suspended.
 "Bring-forth thou Tupua-horo-nuku."
And at once the moving earth lay stretched abroad.*

According to Sproul, "the words by which Io created the Universe are used in rituals for implanting a child in a barren womb, to enlighten and cheer, the words used by Io are used in rituals to overcome and dispel darkness, as he transformed darkness into light which fashioned the initiation of earth rising. And as the third occasion Io's words are commemorated for the treat of successive formations within the universe and the genealogical history of man. The myth of Io shares similarities water creation myths and island creation myths as well. The existence of darkness and primeval waters stretching is already in existence with the creator god, who is the Supreme Being. It is the god's will that starts cosmogonic cycle by word. Pre-cosmic natal darkness symbolizing germination

and birth transforms into light that manifests the cosmic creation and life along.”(Sproul, 1979: 346) Following the same pattern of various myths, the creator Io creates the earth by ‘word’; illuminates darkness with light which signifies a new era referring to ‘birth’ and he separates waters, forms heaven and the sky, then he arises Earth out of waters as a rising island.

5.5 ANIMALS IN CREATION OF ISLANDS

Animals, studied throughly in “Fecundity” and “Water” chapters, also appear in creation of islands. Created before cosmology, they make a presence in cosmogonic stages of islands as the *Deus faber* himself, or as a helper named as “subsidiary animals” in fecundity chapter. As seen in myth analyzations ‘raven’ and ‘serpent’ appear in the cosmogonic scene of islands as they subside the first movement which will engender other beings by bringing forth a piece of mud or slime to the creator. Symbolising both spirtual and physical cosmic powers those animals play a key role in creation of the islands.

5.5.1 Raven

In various late customs and narrations raven symbolizes negative aspects, although it symbolizes wisdom. *Ronnberg&Martin* (2010) describes the animal as “the minister of veiled mysteries”. *Chevailer&Gheerbrant* (1996) suggests the reason “as the linkange between “mankind’s settlement and development of agricultural communities but in most ancient beliefs the raven depict the bird as a solar hero and often as a Demiurge. The bird appears as a guide, ... his keen sight pierces the darkness and he is not led astray. It would seem as if this positive aspect is linked to the beliefs of nomadic hunters and fisherfolk.” The cultures ascribing negative aspects to raven, attribute it with mischievous acts and define it as a trickster whereas some minor cultures attribute positive aspects to raven as the *deus faber* who created the earth.

As *Leeming* suggests both the positive and negative aspects of raven, the animal “might be said to be the Coyote of parts of Siberia, Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. He is at once a creator and a mischievous and often dangerous, highly self-centered trickster who can change shapes and follows the directions of his strong appetites even as he sometimes behaves as as pseudo-culture hero for humanity.” (Leeming, 2010: 343) Nearly in most spots but in some places raven symbolizes positive aspects. In North-West Pacific it is the

‘Real Chief’ and the demiurge who made the world, the book of *Genesis* also mentions about raven in the eschatologic myth of Noah, for his clear-sightedness he was sent out to seek land forms that arose from water. ‘And it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made: And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.’ (8: 6-7). Comprising of mostly negative aspects but also positive aspects for some ancient cultures raven is to be studied in Northern California, of Yuki Indians, whose creation myth tells about raven acting as the creator god and dividing primeval waters and procuring creation:

“There was only water and over it a fog. On the water was foam. The foam moved round and round continually and from it came a voice. After a time, there issued from the foam a person in human form. He had wing feathers of eagle on his head. This was Taiko-mol (Solitary Walker). He floated on the water and sang. He stood on the foam, which still revolved. There was no light. He walked on the water as if it were land. He made a rope and laid it from north to south and he walked along it, revolving his hands one about the other and behind him, the earth was heaped up along the rope. But the water overwhelmed it. Again he did this and again the water prevailed. Four times this was done. Taiko-Mol was constantly talking to himself. ‘I think we had better do it this way. I think we had better try it that way.’ So now he talked to himself and he made a new plan. He made four liae (stone markers) and planted one in the north and others in the south, west, east. Then he stretched them out until they were continuous lines crossing the world in the center. He spoke a word and the earth appeared. Then he went along the edge and lined it with whale-hide, so that the ocean could not wash away the earth.”(Doty, 2004: 42)

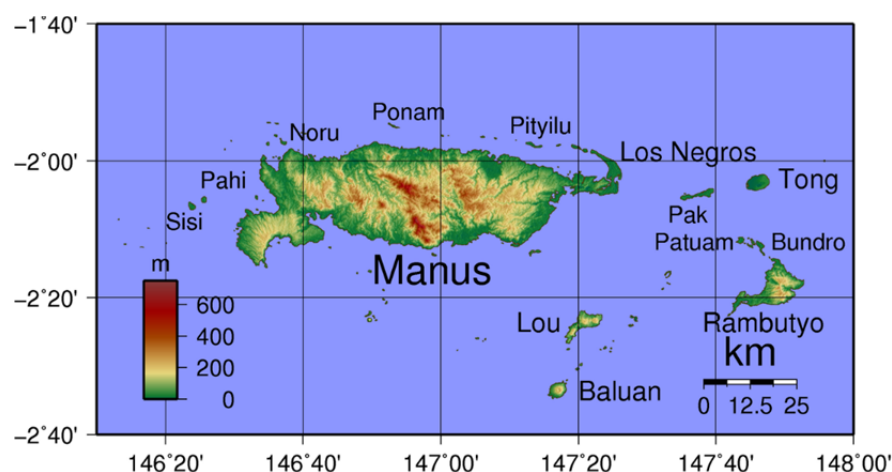
This Yuki Indian creation myth, opens up with the presence of pre-existent waters, above which fog is depicted to hover. Fog, likened to that of mist carries a close symbolism with it in signifying the “intermediate world between formal and non-formal; as well as signifying the upper waters” (Ciriot, 2001: 50) The waters procures a life-form as in that of Aphrodite’s birth from a piece of foam on the shore of Cyprus Island. The new being, created out of water transforms into a bird, raven, which holds the capacity for some cultures as a creator, a demiurge symbolizing wisdom. The creature, making sounds in

sheer darkness calls for a creation initiation referring to cosmic stages. By making a rope that symbolizes the cord of binding possibilities of infinite extensions, he binds the cardinal directions of north and south; which represents cold and warmth respectively. The warmth as seen in ‘cosmic egg’ myths would act as an initiator to creation, but failing in his attempts with the rope, this time he turns to stones which is a divine asset in the creation myths of the Pacific islanders, marks the main cardinal points in seek of binding them up to a central point (the axis mundi).⁷⁴ Lastly, the Raven as Pacific Islanders name him ‘One Whose Voice Is to Be Obeyed’ does the same act for Yuki Indians by using this voice and creates by word.

5.5.2. Serpent

The serpent cult⁷⁵ as seen in every mythology in a form or another, the serpent has a symbolic meaning for Melanesians who say ‘to slough one’s skin’ attributing to eternal features. For Melanesian *Admiralty Islanders* the serpent symbolizes more that eternity, the *Deus faber* who created their island. The Admiralty islanders believe that in the beginning there was nothing but a vast sea; and a great serpent desiring a place on which he could rest:

“In the beginning, there was nothing but an immense sea; in it swam a great serpent. Wanting a place where he could rest, he said, ‘Let a reef rise!’ A reef then arose from the water and turned into dry land.” (Jones, 2005: 9698)



⁷⁴ See Leeming&Page’s *Myths of the Female Divine: Goddess* for another myth sample in which a divine deity ‘Sus’sistanako’ initiates creation by pointing four cardinal directions.

⁷⁵ For more information see Serpent in “Fecundity” and “Water” chapter.

Figure 5.5 Map of Admiralty Island Group

The inert water hiding fertile seeds allows fertilization of her womb for a genealogical creation. The sole agent of creation, the fecund water presents potentiality for a patch of land to escalate by a reef⁷⁶ rising. The serpent, as the cosmic creator, initiates the creation by word of a reef which then turns into Admiralty Islands, “an archipelago group of eighteen islands in the Bismarck Archipelago, to the north of New Guinea in the South Pacific Ocean”⁷⁷ as known today.

5.6 CONCLUSION

Water is mysteriously tied to the fate of first dwelling places arising out of itself as a determiner of the destiny of humanity and the divine powers and islands owe their very existence to fecund, life-bearer waters. “For many peoples waters constitute the limits of the universe. They make up a vast expanse, in the middle of which lies the earth, like an island.” (Eliade, 1987: 354) The cosmic waters harboring mystic forces of birth give rise to manifestation of islands by the will or command of *Deus faber* as probed in various myths in this chapter. As contact with water procures the birth of any being suggested in ‘fecundity’ and ‘water’ chapters, ‘islands’ as well, sprout from the womb of the ‘Great Mother’ and maternal cosmic waters stretching over the essential primal matter lying beneath. It is the unfathomable, feminine characterized water that covers the solid, ‘hylo’- which *Eliade* suggests- element beneath that comprises the elixir of life.

The myth analyzations in ‘island’ chapter gives us an inference of cycle of events that follow each other in the same pattern. This patten shows a genealogical or evolutionist model of creation which begins with darkness in a void and vast body of waters stretching abroad depicting a chaotic secene. The supreme being appears, in a form of an egg or the first flower of ‘cosmic lotus’, in form of an animal either as a serpent, a raven, a bird or a boar or directly himself over the waters which initiates the first step of creation initiation. Either typified as emergence, nothingness, animistic or cosmic-diving creation types gives rise to islands by the aid of a subsidiary animal as a bird or amphibious one in order to complete the cosmic diving process successfully in bringing a patch of soil, earth, slime, mud or sand over the face of waters. By using this first and essential material the *deus*

⁷⁶ See section 5.4.4: Creation of Islands out of Stone

⁷⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Admiralty_Islands

faber initiates creation of solid land masses which functions as a dwelling place for next generations to multiply and live on.

Scrutinized in various cultures spattering around world, this work has come up to the inference that island myths are present in almost all traditional primitive cultures that have contacted with waters ‘in the beginning.’ The cosmological creation of the land masses and islands supply a rhetorical and imaginative portrayals of a rationale providing a belief system of creation in those cultures. The myths and narrations in those cultures attempt to explain the original emergence or creation manifestation in cosmogonic times. In this study alone, a broad selection of islands emerging from cosmic waters is evident and they can today also be spotted on world map as seen in the figures due their geographical zones ranging from: Polynesia, Melanesia, Indonesia, Micronesia, Australia, Finno-Ugria, Central Asia, North and Central America, Japan, Near East, Greece and India. The list of islands in narrative texts and myths sprouting out of cosmic waters and sacred texts manifesting of a land mass sprouting out of cosmic waters that transforms into ‘Earth’ is as follows:

- The creation of islands in Japan by the demiurge god and goddess: Izanagi and Izanami; 8 great islands of Japan sprout out of cosmic waters according to Japanese sacred texts of *Kojiki and Nihongi*.
- Iroquois creation myth of Muskogees: The territory today known as ‘North America’ rises as ‘Turtle Island’ in Iroquois creation myth.
- Muskogee creation myth: The Hill Nunne Chaha, the first land form sprouting out of waters.
- North America: Alaskan creation myth of Kodiak Island.
- North America: Northern Californian Yuki Indians’ creation myth; earth rises out of cosmic waters in manifestation of an island.
- The Huron creation myth of the North Americans: ‘Turtle Island’ sprouts out of waters, today known as ‘North America’.

- Mayan Creation myth of Popol Vuh: the first land appears out of cosmic waters.
- The Indian prose text of *Satapatha Brahmana*: Earth manifests out of cosmic waters as a land form.
- Central Asia and Siberia: The Shaman creates a mass of land out of waters which transforms into earth later on.
- Central Asia and Siberia: Altaic myth tells the earth's creation out of cosmic waters.
- Central Asia and Siberia: out of cosmic waters the island of Num sprouts and transforms into earth.
- Polynesian myths: The earth rises out of waters in manifestation of an island. (Io)
- Polynesian Islands creation in mythic narratives: Samoa, Hawaii, Tonga Islands.
- Micronesian Islands creation in mythic narrations: Marshall group, Railik Chain group, Bikini Island, Kili Island, Namorik Island, Ailinglaplap Island.
- Melanesian Islands creation in mythic narrations: Admiralty Island group, Fiji Island, Manu Island.
- The Finnish epic *Kalevala*: the earth is created out of cosmic waters in an egg motif.
- Ancient Near-Eastern myth of Babylonian creation: *Enuma Elish*. The earth rises out of dismemberment of a divine being associated with water.
- Greek creation myth of Euronyme: the earth is created out of waters in an egg motif.

In sum, the myth analyses through the study and the existence of land forms today show that there is a close interrelatedness between 'water', 'island' and 'fecundity'

contexts in which water plays the leading role of the maternal, fecund element giving rise to an amount of mud or soil which transforms into land forms or islands sprouting out of water as land masses or earth rising out of cosmic fertile waters in manifestation of an island.

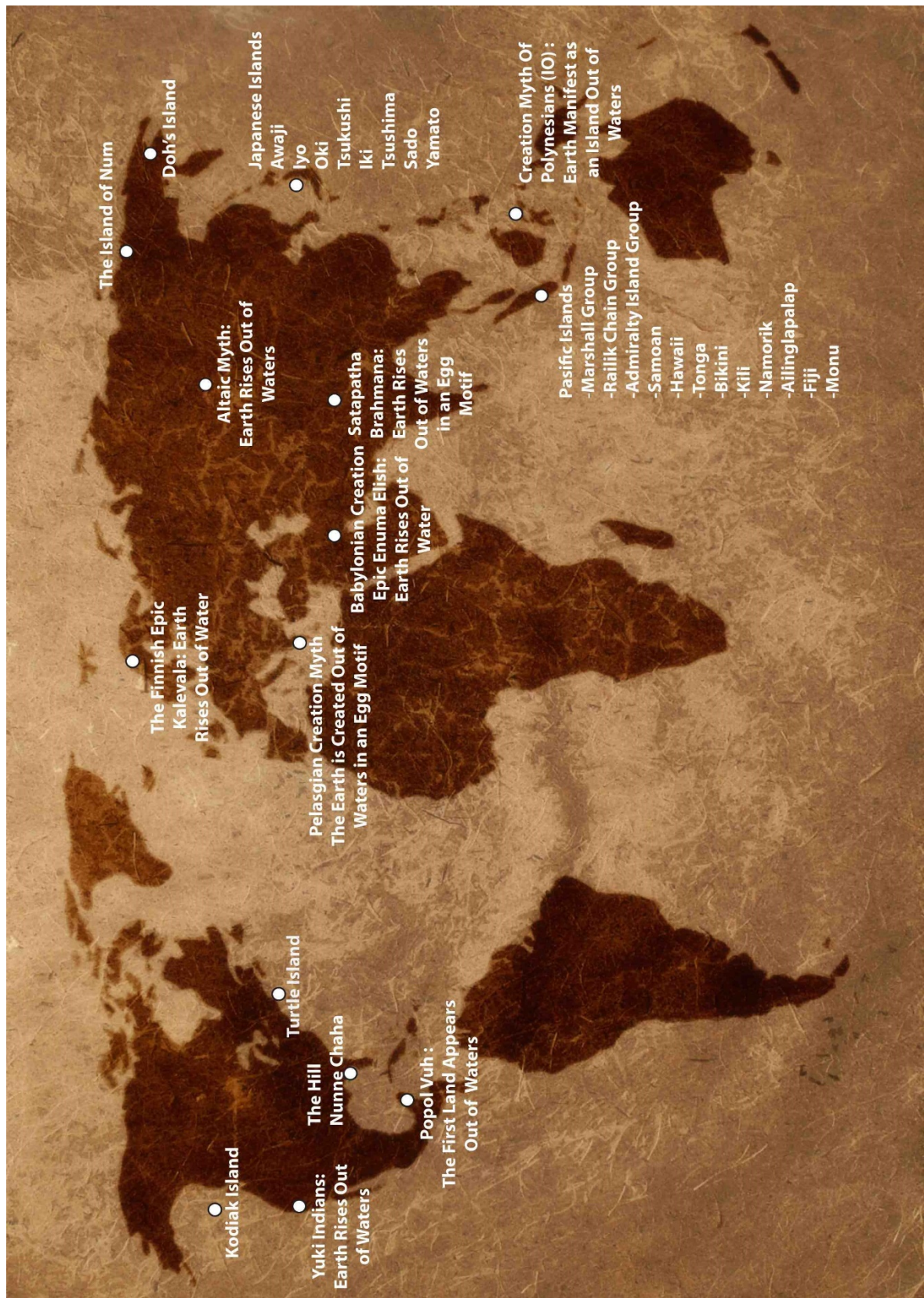


Figure 5.6 The Distribution of Islands and Land Masses Manifesting as 'Earth' in Mythic Narrations

6. CONCLUSION

This unique work comes up with the problem of creation on water-earth and fecundity level and produces results with subtle evidence and mythologic cases in speech and thought of comparative authorities of the discipline “comparative mythology”. At the very beginning of this study ‘the correlation between water, island and fecundity’ was to unearthen, probing comparative data analysed through via world mythology specifically due myth zones designated by mythographers. In presenting essential evidence, comparative mythology was operative in supplying the groundwork for the beginning of events, namely ‘cosmogony’. Comparative mythology is the discipline establishing the ground for the first verbal narrations, written texts and scriptures focusing on the sacred beliefs of creation of different cultures on earth. For an assertion of creation which is following the same pattern, the primordial divine texts worldwide should be examined to make a concurrent conception and this takes us to comparative mythology field.

As the core subject of the study is ‘creation’, the pursue of this case leads us to myths which tell sacred narratives of the primitive people in shaping the reality of creation, interpreting nature events, natural cycles, objects, and animals. Myths setting up a substructure for those elements feed the core study of this work because the genealogical ‘birth’ of island takes place in ‘sacred time’ which also takes us to cosmogonic periods comprised in myths. The cosmogonic rites and myths of ancient primal cultures supplied a subbase data in demonstrating the evidence that water, island and fecundity was nested within each other in giving rise to patches of land.

The research hypothesis suggesting ‘the role that water plays as the fecund element giving rise to an amount of mud or earth, later expanding into an island or ‘earth’ manifesting as an island out of fecund water has been studied regarding sacred texts, religious narratives, creation epics, ritualistic narrations, creation myths and monotheistic sacred books. The objective of the work was to discover the correspondance between the elements affecting creation in the beginning: ‘water, island and fecundity.’ By discussing and analyzing various myths, epics, sacred writings and narrations around the world, the interrelatedness among those aspects is examined. In relation to all birth symbols of fecundity and water forming a basis for the rise of patches of dry lands, a pattern of

common deduction, ‘the fecund characteristics of water giving rise to islands or earth an island’, is reached. Thus the hypothesis: “The role that water plays as the fecund element in giving rise to an amount of mud, earth, or slime later expanding into an ‘island’” is proven.

Based on three sections all of which enlarge the main titles of the work, the study proved the interrelation between ‘water, island and fecundity’ in giving rise to islands in cosmogonic times. The outcomes of each section are as follows:

This first section, ‘fecundity’, interrogates the fecund aspects of specific natural forms as mountains, mounds, plants, and animals, and feminine manifestation in symbols.

- The earth, seen as the primordial womb of life likened to that of a uterus which is correspondant of water and mother in mythic lore.
- Women perceived as procreator in these myths, were attributed with bearing life-power and birth transforming into the ‘Great Mother’.
- The earth’s creation in fecundity myths was explained with maternal principles attributed to feminine powers in the culture of these primeval people.
- In most of the myth analyzations in this chapter it is the ‘feminine figure’ who acts in the supreme roles of cultivator, and life bearing force of mother.
- The feminine figure is always pronounced with the very existent ‘cosmic waters’ which supplies a natural vessel likened to a womb of a mother.
- There is a clear interrelatedness between water and mother in the myth samples that explain earth’s creation by maternal principles. Thus anything in relevance with fecundity goes under the eclipse of fecundity and water.
- Along with a deity’s existence in the creation phase, water is the next essential element, subsiding the state of creation that it is essential and indispensable for the power of life procuring fertility.
- The feminine divine figure’s representation as the Goddess signifies a form of sacred epiphany as the parts of her body are perceived as sources supplying life to beings contained in forms of seeds.

In all the myth samples of fecudation narrations the evidence probing the interrelatedness in between water, island and fecundity; she was always pronounced had in

hand with pre-existent 'cosmic waters' which supplied a natural vessel likened to womb of a mother. Defined as the 'Great Mother' she was the source of groundwater whose belly-womb procured the birth of seeds that let earthly beings come into form, breed and multiply on earth levels. The role of mystic women as the fecund creatrix manifests itself in cultivation, water, mounds, mountains, darkness, night and moon myths. From this, we can see the notion that women's bond with today's life begins in 'Sacred Times'.

The second section of this work discusses the fecund characteristics of 'water' functioning as a life-bearer, types of water, animals and plants acting as subsidiary beings in relevance with creative characteristics of water. Closely interrelated with fecundity and aforementioned in fecundation myths overall, water emerges as the utmost creation element in cosmogony. Pre-existent in ancient cosmogonies of various cultures scrutinized due geographical zones mentioned, water portrayed the image of the primeval state of formlessness bearing potentiality within. It was in this work that initially water was classified in three categories as: still, bustling and churning water due its movements that are studied in cosmogonic period. It is observed that almost all creation myths open life up on earth in water, which is associated with maternal aspects. The analyzation of fecund elements of water in ancient myth samples yielded the results of:

- Water is the vital element of creation in cosmogony.
- Water symbolizes the principle of potentiality and procurement of all kinds of cosmic manifestation initiations; it symbolizes the elixir of life which is the universal symbol of fertility and fecundity.
- Representing various features, the common trait of creation myths is water.
- The symbols of fecundity manifest themselves in the cosmic water where germination of a new life begins in it as an embryo germinates in a womb. Such denotations are all evident in water cosmogonies bearing life to patches of lands and/or islands.
- As contact with water procures the birth of any being suggested in 'fecundity' and 'water' chapters, 'islands' as well, sprout from the womb of the 'Great Mother' and maternal cosmic waters stretching over the essential primal matter lying beneath.

- Water pre-existed in forms of: still, bustling or churning types. Macrocosmic events initiate with and within waters in Hinduistic, Polynesian, Finno-Ugric, Mesopotamian, Japanese, Siberian and Central&North American ancient literatures constituting of oldest layers of scriptures and as well as monotheistic sacred writings.
- On the grounds of all the mythic narrations studied in this work, water can be regarded as the source of procurement to all patches of lands and living beings, which symbolizes the universal potentialities which maintain procurement of all life forms and creations of lands.

The notion of life-bestowing water enabling the beginning is virtually universal as leaning on the evidence of myth analyses found in: Polynesia, Melanesia, Siberia, North and Central America, Japan, Finno-Ugric Mythologies, Ancient-Near Eastern Mythologies and Central&Southern Asia. Symbolizing the elixir of life, water is the only substance familiar with the ancient people of cosmology. As all the mythic narrations and sacred texts and scriptures present; it is regarded as the source the whole existence of beings rising on patches of land.

The last chapter questioning the steps of creation, symbols and the function of 'island' as a primordial mound that is made up of a handful of slime, mud or sand which is to be found in the fecund water. The context of 'island' was taken into consideration by authorities of history of religion, anthropology, structuralism, and mythology. The works supply the reader with various creation myths of islands and their interpretations as well as presenting an insight into primal societies and their creation stories. There are also myriad of publications and journals focusing on island legends; but this work should be counted as a preliminary compilation in unearthing the correlation between 'water, fecundity and island' and 'fecund characteristics of cosmic water giving birth to islands' in comparative mythology.

- As the primeval waters, whose fate is mysteriously tied to fecundity and divine powers, islands also follow the same pattern in all the creation myths analyzed; islands, land patches and earth owe their existence to primordial fecund waters.
- The primordial waters harboring mystic and maternal forces give rise to manifestation of islands in Polynesian, Australian, Finno-Ugric, Central Asian,

North and Central American, Japanese, Ancient Near-Eastern, Greek and Indian myths.

- The myth analyzations in 'island' chapter gives us an inference of cycle of events that follow each other in the same pattern. This patten shows a genealogical or evolutionist model of creation which begins with darkness in a void and vast body of waters stretching abroad depicting a chaotic secene. The supreme being appears, in a form of an egg or the first flower of 'cosmic lotus', in form of an animal either as a serpent, a raven, a bird or a boar or directly himself over the waters which initiates the first step of creation initiation.
- Either typified as emergence, nothingness, animistic or cosmic-diving creation types gives rise to islands by the aid of a subsidiary animal as a bird or amphibious one in order to complete the cosmic diving process successfully in bringing a patch of soil, earth, slime, mud or sand over the face of waters. By using this first and essential material the deus faber initiates creation of solid land masses which functions as a dwelling place for next generations to multiply and live on.
- The cosmological creation of the land masses and islands supply a rhetorical and imaginative portrayals of a rationale providing a belief system of creation in those cultures. The myths and narrations in those cultures attempt to explain the original emergence or creation manifestation in cosmogonic times.

It is the fecund aspects of water that initiate the procurement stages of any being suggested in 'fecundity' and 'water' chapters, islands analyzed in myth samples also rises from the womb of the 'Great Mother'. All in all, considering all the detailed work done in analyzing the mythic data; the assertion of 'the interrelatedness between water, island and fecundity' is proven leaning on the results of emergence of islands and manifestation of earth as an island out of cosmic, fecund waters in sacred narrations, myths, scriptures, texts and holy books.

Scrutinized in various cultures spattering around world, this work has come up to the inference that island myths are present in almost all traditional primitive cultures that have contacted with waters 'in the beginning.' The myths and narrations in those cultures attempt to explain the original emergence or creation manifestation in cosmogonic times.

The outcome of this study stands as a bridge between cosmogonic times and today as the existence of islands is evident on different spots, sharing the same characteristic elements of creation. This work presents a broad selection of islands emerging from cosmic waters on comparative mythology level and they can also be spotted today on world map as seen in the figures due their geographical zones ranging from: Polynesia, Melanesia, Indonesia, Micronesia, Australia, Finno-Ugria, Central Asia, North and Central America, Japan, Near East, Greece and India.

Initially, in this work, major creation myths which assert that the primordial mound/mountain or that of a land had risen out of the primordial waters are assembled and the research hypothesis focusing on “the role that water plays as the fecund element in giving rise to an amount of mud, earth, or slime later expanding into an ‘island’ is reached.

In this study, islands sprouting out from fecund waters were studied generally, which can be counted as a preliminary work into the field of ‘island creation from cosmic waters’. I suggest that more prospective proceeding works to be covered in specific smaller geographical zones; and field works to be carried out where necessary.

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