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ANGELS AND DEVILS LOST AND REGAINED: A REVISION OF THE GREAT CHAIN OF BEING

ABSTRACT

The Great Chain of Being is a cognitive, Western folk model of the world of a global character. Over time the model has been reduced from, for example, 67 levels in the Middle Ages to 5 levels in Modern Times, dispensing on the way with angels, devils, etc. and leaving only God at the top. This is at odds with life and language in which deities from Christian, Greek and Roman mythologies are often present. To make the model more compatible with life and language, the paper argues for reinstatement of those deities by replacing the GOD level with the level of DEITIES – supernatural beings.[1]

KEYWORDS: Great Chain of Being, deification (supernaturalization), Christian, Greek and Roman mythological deities

STRESZCZENIE

Wielki Łańcuch Bytu jest ludowym kognitywnym modelem świata o charakterze globalnym. W ciągu wieków został zredukowany z 67 poziomów w wiekach średnich do 5 poziomów, pozbywając się po drodze np. aniołów i diabłów, pozostawiając na najwyższym poziomie tylko Boga. Jest to rażąco niezgodne z życiem i językiem, w których bóstwa mitologii chrześcijańskiej, greckiej i rzymskiej są często obecne. Niniejszy artykuł proponuje przywrócić te bóstwa, zastępując poziom BOGA poziomem BÓSTW – istot nadprzyrodzonych, co uczyniłoby Wielki Łańcuch Bytu bardziej zgodnym z życiem i językiem.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: Wielki Łańcuch Bytu, deifikacja (supernaturalizacja), mitologiczne bóstwa chrześcijańskie, greckie i rzymskie

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[1] Instead of the compound 'supernatural being', I will more often use the shorter form 'deity' in its broad definition proposed by the Oxford Dictionary of English as "a god or goddess (in a polytheistic religion), or anything revered as divine", and by Littleton (2005) as "a being with powers greater than those of ordinary humans, but who interacts with humans, positively or negatively" (Littleton 2005: 378).

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INTRODUCTION

The contemporary extended version of the Great Chain of Being consists of five levels: God, humans, animals, plants and inorganic things. While the four lower levels are complete, the highest level is characterized by a conspicuous absence of other deities than God, despite their presence in life and language. The aim of the present paper is to restore compatibility of the Great Chain of Being and language, that is, to reinstate deities like angels, devils, etc. in this folk model of the world. This disparity was noticed by Krzeszowski (1997: 68–69), and I suggested a possible amendment to it (Szwedek 2014: 349). Among other shortcomings of this simplified folk model, Krzeszowski mentioned a possibility of adding "a level intermediate between humans and God." (Krzeszowski 1997: 68–69). To remedy this situation, rather than postulating a separate level, I proposed to include all supernatural beings alongside God (Szwedek 2014: 349). The reason behind my proposal was twofold: i) all those missing deities share the property of supernatural character, and ii) those beings have been part of our lives and language, and their absence creates a conspicuous discrepancy between the Great Chain of Being model and our conceptual system and language.

A study like the present paper also raises a question of ontology of deities. In his analysis of the Trinity metaphors, Barcelona (2003) made a rather unusual confession that his essay "is not only a modest contribution to cognitive semantics but **even more a manifestation of faith**" (emphasis mine). Despite his denial that the "essay is then a semantic study, not a theological essay" (2003: 3), he states, for example, that figuratively-based "statements about God […] have in principle the potentiality to provide true insights about God's nature…" (Barcelona 2003: 22). I will abstain from such speculations in a linguistic paper, though I must admit that the modification that I propose, bears on some basic dogmatic issues.

Since *humanization*[2] of God is quite frequent, not only in the Bible, the present paper concentrates on deities as source domains in the process of *deification*,[3] in agreement with the proposal to include other deities in the level of God, which makes the Great Chain of Being more compatible with thought and language.

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[2] Humanization is to be distinguished from personification (Krzeszowski 1997) in that humanization uses common nouns, while personification uses proper names. eg. *The LORD is my shepherd* (Psalm 23: 1) vs *I feel a regular Machiavelli!* (OED).

[3] I have decided to keep the term 'deification' for what, in 2014, I called supernaturlization. This will be in perfect consonance with my decision to expand the highest level to all deities, as I explained in footnote 1.

COGNITIVE MODELS

Though the human mind has organized all kinds of its experiences in coherent, schematic structures since humans became sapient, it was only at the beginning of the 20th century that scientists formulated the *gestalt* theory on the basis of the observation that people tend to organize visual elements into groups or *unified wholes* and form meaningful perceptions in a seemingly chaotic world.

Since then, the ability of the human mind to organize the seemingly chaotic world has been described by many scholars in various ways. Miller (1956) proposed that large, well-integrated CHUNKS of knowledge are more efficient in text processing than single, unrelated elements. Minsky (1975) introduced the notion of 'frame' in Artificial Intelligence. Further contributions were made by Fillmore's 'frame semantics' (1977), Lakoff and Johnson's 'conceptual metaphor' and 'metonymy' (1980), Fauconnier's 'mental spaces' (1985), and Langacker's 'cognitive grammar' (1987).

The idea was adopted in cognitive linguistics for all modalities, first, it seems, by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) who wrote that "…multimodal structures characterize *experiential gestalts*, which are ways of organizing experiences into *structured wholes*." (1980: 81). In a similar vein, Lakoff (1987) wrote that "… we organize our knowledge by means of structures called *idealized cognitive models*, or ICMs, and that category structures and prototype effects are by-products of that organization." (1987: 68).

The concept of a model has mostly been used rather informally for various knowledge structures, for example, 'simple-relations' model of spatial prepositions (Herskovits 1986), the Great Chain of Being metaphor as a "large-scale model" of the universe (Lakoff and Turner 1989), or Reddy's (1979) Conduit Metaphor as "a model of communication" (Krzeszowski 1997), just to mention a few. Evans (2006) summed up this situation in a statement that "Cognitive models relate to coherent bodies of knowledge of any kind", from specific entities like cars and whatever pertains to that concept, to "'procedural' bodies of knowledge, such as 'cultural scripts' for how to interact in restaurants", as well as "to more abstract entities such as containment, love and physics." (Evans 2006: 512–513).

In his interesting paper, Evans (2006) views lexical concepts as access points to cognitive models. Primary cognitive models are accessed directly by a lexical concept, while secondary cognitive models are subsets of primary cognitive models. For example, the lexical concept [BOOK] has at least two primary cognitive models: BOOK as a physical object and READING, both extending to numerous secondary models such as binding, hard- or paper-cover, as well as contents, duration of reading, etc. (Evans 2006: 519ff).

Just for the record, it should be added that I proposed a somewhat similar approach to represent text cohesion (Szwedek 1980). Discussing Lakoff's (1972)

example *Nixon was elected, but the blacks won't revolt*, I showed that, for example, [NIXON] extends to such concepts as AMERICAN, FORMER GOVERNOR, REPUBLICAN as, using Evans's terminology, primary models, and MEMBER OF THE GOP and REPUBLICAN PROGRAM as secondary model and [REVOLT] extends to FIGHT AGAINST AUTHORITY, INJUSTICE, etc. as primary models, and PRESIDENT as a subset of AUTHORITY. (Szwedek 1980: 99).

A comparable solution was suggested by Beaugrande and Dressler (1980) in the context of text processing. They diagrammatically presented the structure (model) of the rocket launching situation (1980: 84–112), in which the lexical concept 'rocket' is a 'control center', which can branch out into a multitude of concepts, like the rocket's features, launching site, observers, scientists, etc., each opening access to relevant models, forming a highly complex network of relations.

An important issue addressed by scholars has been how cognitive models are acquired. Lakoff and Turner (1989) wrote that cognitive models are acquired "in at least two ways: by our own direct experience and through our culture", and that in the latter case, the models "are often at variance with our scientific knowledge." (1989: 66). As Lakoff (1987) observed, "Ordinary people without any technical expertise have theories, either implicit or explicit, about every important aspect of their lives. Cognitive anthropologists refer to such theories as *folk theories* or *folk models*." (Lakoff 1987: 118).

An interesting problem that has not been discussed very often is how the evolutionarily limited brain structures cope with the complexity of the mind. Beaugrande and Dressler (1980) addressed this problem indirectly, considering two extreme options in terms of economy. The first one envisages each item of knowledge "stored in a system only once, no matter how many configurations would contain that item", in which case any configuration would have to be assembled every time need arose." (1980: 90). Such an option would offer great economy on STORAGE, but, at the same time, would mean heavy expenditure on SEARCH. The other option contemplates a situation in which items are **redundantly** stored in each of the configurations which include them. "This system would work very rapidly on search, but would be horrendously wasteful on storage." (1980: 90). Each of these solutions raises a question of the capacity of the brain needed to deal with either option. Beaugrande and Dressler proposed to accept Kintsch's (1997) suggestion that this conflict "is probably resolved by a compromise. Frequently used configurations would be stored as wholes, in spite of the redundancy involved; unusual, seldom required configurations would be assembled via searching out component items only when occasion arises." (Beaugrande and Dressler 1980: 90). However, it is clear that whichever options might be true, each requires extremely powerful brain structures, still beyond our comprehension.

THE GREAT CHAIN OF BEING

As was mentioned above, Lakoff and Turner (1989) identified at least two ways in which cognitive models are acquired "by our own direct experience and through our culture" (1989: 66). One of the most popular, well-known and global cultural models is the Great Chain of Being. As Lakoff and Turner (1989) put it, though its basic version "is extremely widespread" and occurs "throughout a wide range of the world's cultures" (1989: 167), its extended version "is central to the Western tradition" (1989: 167). Since it is only a folk model, its structure is not quite consistent, which was cogently pointed out by Krzeszowski (1997) in the following comments.

1. The model "is a product of human everyday experience and reflects our persistent, though not universally accepted, view of the way things are in this world. As such it is a very grossly oversimplified model of reality…"
2. It "obviously obscures the fact that the boundaries between particular levels […] are not clear-cut but fuzzy."
3. "[T]he model ignores prototypical effects, demonstrable at each level."
4. "[T]he model indicates only the focal levels of the hierarchy. […] It conceals possible sublevels."
5. "[T]here may exist a level intermediate between humans and God." (Krzeszowski, 1997: 68–69).

True as those observations are, I do not think that we can expect more of a folk model, as every modification would be questionable. For example, an addition of sublevels would immediately raise questions about criteria of subdivision and how detailed and precise such a folk taxonomy could be within each level. Certainly, criteria for each level would be different and would vary in details. Likewise, the prototypical effects would not be easy to define. For example, the prototypical effects would not apply to God. While it would be fairly easy to define a prototypical human being, because of the relative homogeneity of the species, the richness of animal and plant species would make it virtually impossible to identify a prototype, which in some cases and to some degree, would be culture specific and, thus, of little universal significance.

In such a construed model, one level differs significantly from the others. It is the level of God. One difference is that while items in the other levels can be used both literally and figuratively, God can only be referred to metaphorically. As Barcelona observed "human access to transcendental notions is, in a deep sense, inevitably metaphorical" (Barcelona 2003: Abstract). In all mythologies, deities adopt some physical form – human (in Christianity all males, in other mythologies men and women), animal (e.g. dove, bull, goat), things (burning bush) or mixed forms (e.g. angels – human bodies with wings). Another difference, of much greater significance, is that spelled out in Krzeszowski's point 5 "[T]here may exist a level

intermediate between humans and God." (1997: 69). Indeed, there may exist, but there is none, and this fact creates a conflict not only between the model and language, but even more critically, between the model and the Christian doctrine, since in both everyday language, used by believers and non-believers alike, and the Christian doctrine, we have angels, devils and other mythological beings which are conspicuously absent from the model.

Naturally, a question arises as to the ontological status of all those deities. In his study on axiological semantics, Krzeszowski (1997) found no need "to discuss the ontological status of God […] and various fictitious entities", because "[w]hat is semantically relevant is the fact that 'absolute being(s)' have mental existence, like trolls and pink elephants" (Krzeszowski 1997: 67). However, for believers, those deities[4] have a real, objective status despite their unclear nature. For example, referring to angels, John Paul II said that "[t]he angels *are not* therefore creatures *of the first order*, in the reality of Revelation, *though they fully belong to it*, so much so that sometimes we see them carrying out fundamental tasks in the name of God himself." (https://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/JP2ANGEL.HTM, DOA: April 22, 2017). Apart from the expression *they are not of the first order though they fully belong to it*, which is logically odd, though typical for religious discourse, John Paul II did not specify how we can "see them carrying out fundamental tasks".

With time, religious doctrines change under the pressure of scientific evidence. For example, in the absence of evidence that there is a place like hell, "the lake of fire" with devils and the damned[5], now the Roman Catholic Church defines hell as "a state of definitive self-exclusion from communion with God and the blessed. Additionally, recent Catholic theological speculations tend to stress the hope, though not certainty, that infants who die unbaptized may attain heaven instead of the supposed state of Limbo." (The Hope of Salvation for Infants Who Die without Being Baptised, ITC, DOA: April 22, 2017). Consequently, hell and limbo as places have been abandoned, but did not disappear from the language.

The problems are much deeper than just the discrepancy between language and the adopted model of the world, though. If we accept the absence of all spiritual beings from the Great Chain except God, then we must reject some foundations of the Christian doctrine such as, for example, the origin of evil and the fall of angels. If we accept their presence, and if we want the model to be more universal, we not only have to find a place for them in the model, but also, more importantly, put mythical beings of all mythologies in the same category.[6]

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[4] By deities (supernatural beings) I mean creatures with supernatural powers, which would exclude pink elephants and unicorns, but not, for example, trolls from the Nordic mythology.

[5] According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, as late as 1910 a majority of Catholic theologians included *poena sensus* (physical suffering) in infernal punishments, and interpreted infernal fire literally.

[6] Note, please, that the Templeton's Prize laureate, the rev. prof. Michał Heller asserted that the Bible is a Christian mythology, and *Genesis* is a literary composition, a beautiful poem (Baczyński's interview with prof. Heller: "Cząstka Pana Boga"; http://www.polityka.pl/niezbednikinteligenta/1531535,1, DOA:

To make the Great Chain more universal and compatible with various belief systems, I suggested a relatively simple solution to replace the level of God with the level of SUPERNATURAL BEINGS, and consequently to replace *deification* with *supernaturalization* (Szwedek 2014). I would like to suggest now that the term *deification* can and should be preserved on the grounds that it has the same root and etymology as 'deities', particularly in view of the broad definition of 'deity' adopted in the present paper. Inclusion of all deities in that level is the only option for a linguist, that is, to accept the linguistic reality in all its entirety without embarking on any theological dispute.

As I indicated above, people have always tried to understand the organization of the world. Over time, the model went through various stages of complexity. The history of The Great Chain model has been extensively treated in literature[7], but as a digression, let me return to the 16th century 67 levels (http://jackytappet. tripod.com/chain.html, DOA: May 8, 2017), which were ordered in some surprising ways, though no doubt reflected the culture of those times. For example, ladies in waiting were placed before priests/monks, beggars before actors, actors before thieves/pirates, and the latter before Gypsies who were followed by animals, birds, worms, plants and rocks. Thomas Nash's (1593) comment on such an elaborate structure is profound and of timeless relevance: "The Courtier disdaineth the citizen; The citizen the countryman; the shoemaker the cobbler. But unfortunate is the man who does not have anyone he can look down upon." (Thomas Nash 1593).

The table below presents the modified version of the Great Chain of Being, with the supernatural level of deities. Deities stand out in this model in that, in opposition to entities of the other levels, they have no material substance, and are endowed with some mysterious magical, supernatural properties.

A modified version of the Great Chain of Being

Property \\ Level	Material substance	Life	Instincts	Reason	Supernatural properties
Deities	–	–	–	–	+
Humans	+	+	+	+	–
Animals	+	+	+	–	–
Plants	+	+	–	–	–
Inorganic things	+	–	–	–	–

October 19, 2016) and archbishop Józef Życiński forcefully pronounced "the Holy Writ to be a great metaphor" (see Gutowski 2013).

[7] An exhaustive history of the Great Chain of Being was presented by Arthur Lovejoy (1936 [2005]) so I decided to mention only one, interesting stage in that history.

LANGUAGE EXAMPLES

The remainder of the paper is devoted to brief analyses of examples of deification (supernaturalization) in which the source domain will include some major deities and places in the Christian, Greek and Roman mythologies as representative of the western world. Two general remarks seem to be in order before discussion of individual examples. Christian deities are all males and the doctrine is predominantly androcentric. This strikes a little discordant note in confrontation with language, as we can say *She is an angel/devil*. We have to conclude then, that gender is ignored in metaphorization which applies to other properties like character or looks. In contrast, the Greek and Roman mythologies have numerous goddesses and the gender conflict does not arise.

Secondly, strictly speaking, locations do not belong to the Great Chain of Being, yet there are a few examples of places, which belong to the supernatural realm and are also present in language, thus, at least worth mentioning.

The deities described in the present paper come from the three major Western mythologies – Christian, Greek and Roman, though, as I noted above, they also appear in Judaism and Islam. I will first discuss supernatural locations (with an etymological note), followed by a selection of deities that are present in life and language. For ease of reference, they are all arranged alphabetically within the particular mythologies. Each entry will be followed by a brief description of its nature, its figurative sense(s), and relevant examples, all taken from OED, unless marked otherwise.[8]

THE CHRISTIAN SUPERNATURAL WORLD

LOCATIONS

The Christian doctrine has a number of expressions referring to the locations that souls go to, such as gehenna, heaven, hell, limbo, and purgatory, which have made their way into everyday language and are used figuratively.[9]

GEHENNA FOR A PLACE or STATE OF MISERY
The Oxford English Dictionary gives the following etymology of the word: "[…] hell, place of fiery torment for the dead […], a figurative use of the place-name […] 'the valley of the son of Hinnom', denoting a place near Jerusalem where, according to Jer. xix. 5, etc., children were burnt in sacrifice to Baal or

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[8] Some of the items under discussion appear as interjections and imprecation (e.g. *Good heavens! Hell!*) and will not be discussed in the present paper.

[9] I will not mark examples as metonymies or metaphors, as the distinction will be clear from the form of the label: X for Y = metonymy, X is Y = metaphor.

Molech." Gehenna is interchangeable with hell (OED: "The place of torment; hell"; fig. "a place of torture; a prison"). It is metonymically extended from the name of the place to a state of misery:

> (1)   …the depression that has enshrouded her since the death of her husband is a *Gehenna* from which she may never be released. (Merriam Webster Dictionary)

HEAVEN FOR A PLACE or STATE OF HAPPINESS

Originally, the word referred to "the expanse in which the sun, moon, and stars, are seen, which has the appearance of a vast vault or canopy overarching the earth…" (OED). While Germanic cognates are common, OED states that "further etymology is uncertain and disputed; perhaps ultimately < the same Indo-European base as *hame* n.1, with an underlying sense 'to cover'." As Online Etymological Dictionary (OEtD) notes, the figurative sense is recorded in the "late 14c as a heavenly place; a state of bliss."

> (2)   They were queer, the Shelties, came from nothing… England was heaven to them. 1967 H. W. Sutherland *Magnie* vii. 94.[10]

> (3)   Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, But to be young was very heaven! 1809 Wordsworth in *Friend* 26 Oct. 163.

Additionally, the expanse of the 'place' is associated with magnitude. Thus, as the examples show, we have three figurative senses for HEAVEN: place or state of happiness and magnitude rendering a metonym.

HEAVEN FOR MAGNITUDE

> (4)   There must always remain a whole heaven of difference between the position of those who know nothing of nature…and that of those who recognise light and guidance… 1885 J. L. Davies *Soc*. *Quest*. 372.

> (5)   They had come out only for the day, yet they were piled to the heavens with enormous backpacks. 2004 *Times* (Nexis) 18 Sept. (Travel) 6.

HELL FOR A PLACE, STATE, or SITUATION OF MISERY

The Old English meaning – "nether world, abode of the dead, infernal regions, place of torment for the wicked after death", from the Proto-Germanic "the underworld" – comes from "concealed place" (Old Norse *hellir* "cave, cavern", from Proto-Indo-European **kel-* "to cover, conceal". (OEtD). According to OED, hell refers to "the infernal regions regarded in various religions as a place of suffering and evil; the dwelling place of devils and condemned spirits; the place or state of punishment of the wicked after death." One of the OED metonymic

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[10] For the sake of clarity, unlike in OED, I have placed examples before references to them.

senses is "The powers, inhabitants, or wicked spirits of hell". Another figurative sense denotes "a place, state, or situation of wickedness, suffering, or misery".

(6) I knew that all of hell couldn't stop us if we got out in front. 2000 *Evening Post (Nottingham)* (Nexis) 25 Sept. 48.

(7) All hell seems busy to blacken me! 1792 T. Holcroft *Anna St.Ives* VI. cxii. 183.

(8) Two elderly spinsters were put through hell for two hours. 1977 *Belfast Tel*. 28 Feb. 1/1.

(9) After a night of dancing their high heels are giving them hell on the walk home. 2006 *Irish Times* (Nexis) 19 Aug. 16.

As in the case of HEAVEN, HELL may also stand for magnitude, as the following example shows.

(10) If America's vital interests are challenged, there should be hell to pay. 1997 *Internat. Security* 21 6.

Interestingly, not so long ago (27.07.2017), US Senator Lindsay Graham clustered the divine with the evil in an interesting oxymoron for greater effect. In his CNN comment he said: "If Sessions is fired, there will be *holy hell* to pay."

LIMBO FOR OBLIVION or A PLACE OF CONFINEMENT

According to OEtD, the word derives from Latin *limbo*, ablative singular of *limbus* "edge, border" and used to refer to a "region supposed to exist on the border of Hell, reserved for pre-Christian saints (*Limbus patrum*) and unbaptized infants (*Limbus infantum*)." The figurative sense of "condition of neglect or oblivion, place of confinement" is from 1640s.

(11) The piece…ran for eleven nights before descending into the limbo of oblivion. 1894 J. Knight *D. Garrick* ix. 164.

PURGATORY FOR A PLACE OF TEMPORARY SUFFERING

OEtD explains that 'purgatory' is a borrowing from Medieval Latin *purgatorium* (St. Bernard, early 12c.) "means of cleansing". OED writes that figuratively the word denotes "a place or state having the characteristics ascribed to purgatory; a place of temporary suffering or expiation."

(12) The paradise of other women was her purgatory. 1880 'Ouida' *Moths* II. 199.

(13) I immediately sought any way possible to avoid the personal purgatory of staying in the city centre. 1989 *Intercity* Feb. 35/3.

SUPERNATURAL BEINGS

The following section will be devoted to God himself and other virtuous and evil Christian supernatural beings as source domains, mostly humans.

VIRTUOUS SUPERNATURAL BEINGS

Naturally, God must have the priority in the discussion as the supreme being whose name is used as a label for the highest level. It is interesting to note that although in the Christian doctrine God is three consubstantial persons (God, the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ), the Oxford English Dictionary notes no examples of metaphorical expressions with Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit as source domains.[11] It has to be added also that in OED examples the word is spelled either 'God' or 'god', however, without semantic consequences.

GOD

OED provides examples of God as a source domain in two cases either for "[a]n adored, admired, or supremely powerful person", or to "[a]n adored or worshipped object; something exercising great or supreme influence." The following examples illustrate these uses.

(14) He [*sc*. Ed Sullivan] was the God of Sunday Night. 1997 *Vanity Fair* July 120/1.

(15) I wanted to meet Garth. He was the god of the business, the guy you wanted to be. 2005 *N.Y.Times Mag*. 2 Oct. 118/2.

(16) Style was his god. His suede Pumas and sharkskin pants were the joint. 1994 P. Baker *Blood Posse* v. 61.

(17) I think the great god of quantification and standardization is really problematical. 2005 *Alcalde* Nov. 45/2.

ANGELS

Angelology distinguishes nine choirs of angelic beings: seraphim, cherubim, thrones, dominions, virtues, powers, archangels, principalities and angels. The only three orders that have made it to the everyday language, at least as documented in OED, are cherubim, archangels and angels.[12] It is interesting to note that the cherubim come from the top and archangels and angels from the bottom of the hierarchy in which angels – the lowest level – have acquired a generic sense.

According to OED, an angel is "[a] ministering spirit or divine messenger; one of an order of spiritual beings superior to man in power and intelligence, who, according to the Jewish, Christian, Islamic, and other theologies, are the attendants

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[11] Thought their various forms are used as exclamations, e.g. *Holy Smoke!*, *Holy cow*, *Crikey!*

[12] Seraphim are also commonly known, but OED has no examples that would refer metaphorically to human beings.

and messengers of the Deity." As defined by OED, 'angel' can figuratively refer to "[a] person who resembles an angel either in attributes or actions".

(18) Not quite such an angel as he looks. 1884 *N.E.D.* at *Angel Mod*.

ARCHANGEL

OED describes an archangel as "[a]n angel of the highest rank. Also *fig*."[13]

(19) Fanatical archangel that she [*sc*. Hypatia] is. 1853 C. Kingsley *Hypatia* I. vi. 129.

CHERUBIM

A cherubim is "[o]ne of the second order of angels of the Dionysian hierarchy, reputed to especially excel in knowledge (as the seraphim in love)" (OED); figuratively, it refers to a beautiful and innocent child (in the form *cherub*, pl. *cherubs*).

(20) The youngest…a rosy-cheeked cherub, with golden curls. 1883 M. E. Braddon *Ishmael* iv.

EVIL SUPERNATURAL BEINGS

DEMON

OED provides a number of senses in which 'demon' is used:

"a) Any evil spirit or malevolent supernatural being; a devil" which is mapped onto "A cruel, wicked, or destructive person or animal. Also in weakened use: a mischievous or unmanageable person, esp. a child."

(21) Petrarch… declares in his prose works woman to be a true demon. 1913 *Methodist Rev*. Mar. 188.

"b) A source or cause of evil or great harm; something pernicious or corrupting; *esp*. a destructive emotion or activity."

(22) The demon of speculation may undoubtedly be seen as the demon of capitalism itself. 1993 S. Elkins & E. L. McKitrick *Age of Federalism* (1995) vii. 281.

(23) Lust is a demon. And it ain't no small demon. 2003 D. E. Talbert *Baggage Claim* (2005) 115.

"c) An exceptionally fast, strong, energetic, or skilful person or animal, *esp*. one that is extremely skilful *at* a particular activity. Also: a fanatic or enthusiast *for* an activity, habit, etc."

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[13] There seems to be some confusion as to the rank, since Gen. 3: 24 informs us that *Cherubim* are "of the highest order or class, created with indescribable powers and beauty; and Ezek 28: 14, 16 considers Cherubim as constituting "another order of angels, evidently of high rank since Satan was a cherub". https://bible.org/article/angelology-doctrine-angels (DOA: Nov. 10, 2016), while archangels are the last but one category, before 'ordinary' angels.

(24) The Little Falcon…a little black demon of incredible speed. 1948 J. Fairfax *Run o' Waters* 58.

(25) Hitler and his Nazi demons enslaved a not-unwilling Germany. 2004 F. W. Thackeray *Events that changed Germany* p. ix.

DEVIL and SATAN are used in the same figurative sense referring to wicked or cruel human beings.

(26) He walked out straight into Carcer. The devil stabbed him in the neck and ran for it. 2002 T. Pratchett *Night Watch* 13.

(27) I called her a little Satan. 1753 S. Richardson Hist. *Sir Charles Grandison* III. i. 9.

GREEK MYTHOLOGY

The Greek mythology is extremely complicated and its description is outside the scope of the present paper. Therefore, I will consider only those deities (plus the location – TARTARUS) who are mentioned in OED, again with short descriptions, the figurative sense(s) and examples.

LOCATIONS

TARTARUS FOR PLACE OF OPPRESSION

"The infernal regions of ancient Greek and Roman mythology, or the lowest part of them; hence sometimes used for hell. A place likened to Tartarus, in situation or character."

(28) This Tartarus was called simply The Question Chamber. 1887–8 tr. *Hugo's Notre- -Dame* viii. ii.

THE GREEK DEITIES

ADONIS

"A beautiful or handsome young man. With allusion to the beautiful Adonis of classical myth, lover of Venus (Aphrodite)."

(29) Clicking home in his stilettoes, he is suddenly surrounded by a group of blonde Adonises. 1998 *Gay Times* Aug. 81/3.

ATLAS

"The name of one of the older family of gods, who was supposed to hold up the pillars of the universe, and also of the mountain in Libya that was regarded as supporting the heavens. Hence the various fig. uses."

"a) One who supports or sustains a great burden; a chief supporter, a mainstay."

(30) We brokers are the Atlases that bear the world upon our shoulders. 1883 M. Howland in *Harper's Mag*. Mar. 598/1.

"b) A collection of maps in a volume. This [metonymic] use of the word is said to be derived from a representation of Atlas supporting the heavens placed as a frontispiece to early works of this kind, and to have been first used by Mercator in the 16th cent."

(31) Celestial Atlases also, or maps of the Heavens. 1812 R. Woodhouse *Elem. Treat. Astron.* ix. 63.

"c) [metonymically] A similar volume containing illustrative plates, large engravings, etc., or the conspectus of any subject arranged in tabular form; *e.g.* 'an atlas of anatomical plates,' 'an ethnographical atlas'."

(32) The details of all these methods are illustrated on the 3rd table of his atlas of plates. 1875 C. D. E. Fortnum *Maiolica* vi. 53.

HEBE

"The goddess of youth and spring, represented as having been originally the cup-bearer of Olympus; hence applied *fig*. to: A woman in her early youth."

(33) Shortly after, the same Hebe brought up a plate of beef collops. 1815 Scott *Guy Mannering* III. v. 93.

HECATE

"In ancient Greek mythology, a goddess, said to be of Thracian origin, daughter of Perses and Asteria; in later times more or less identified with several others, esp. with Artemis."

"Applied vituperatively to a woman: = Hag, witch."

(34) An old Tartarian Hecate my seruant. 1634 T. Herbert *Relation Some Yeares Trauaile* 169.

MORPHEUS

"The god of dreams (popularly often taken as the god of sleep), used *allusively* with reference to his ability to induce dreams or sleep. Hence also [metonymically]: sleep; a soporific substance, etc."

(35) He must…go back to that basic concept that had come to him in the night. But what was it? It had seemed so clear, yet when he slept again, Morpheus had snatched it from him. 1991 A. Myers *Murder at Masque* 158.

(36) If I don't sleep at once, chloral, the modern Morpheus! … I must be careful not to let it grow into a habit. 1897 B. Stoker *Dracula* viii. 103.

PROMETHEUS

"Prometheus is the name of a demigod, son of the Titan Iapetus, who is said to have made man out of clay, and to have stolen fire from Olympus and taught men how to use it, for which he was punished by Zeus by being chained to a rock in the Caucasus where an eagle fed each day upon his liver."

(37) A Prometheus bound to the rock of the Hutton inquiry, his liver being pecked out each day by the flocking journalists. 2003 *Sunday Times* (Nexis) 31 Aug. 16.

THEMIS

"Name of the ancient Greek goddess of law and justice; hence, Law or Justice personified."

(38) She found a rival, not in Themis, but in Isabel Thurlow. 1880 J. Payn *Confidential Agent* iv.

ZEUS

"Name of the supreme deity of the ancient Greeks; hence *allusively*." supreme god of the ancient Greeks and master of the others, 1706, from Greek, from PIE *dewos- "god" (source also of Latin deus "god," Old Persian daiva- "demon, evil god,"

(39) The Zeus of Weimar [*sc*. Goethe] was the last person we should have imagined comparable with our Swan of Avon! 1920 *Times Lit*. *Suppl*. 1 Apr. 207/4.

ROMAN MYTHOLOGY

Roman mythology was substantially influenced by Greek religion. The Romans often identified their own gods with those of the Greeks, and "reinterpreted stories about Greek deities under the names of their Roman counterparts" (Wikipedia on Roman mythology). The following descriptions and examples are taken from the OED.

BELLONA

"The Roman goddess of war; *transf*. a spirited woman of commanding presence."

(40) He had recognized his superb Bellona in the lady by the garden window. 1859 G. Meredith *Ordeal Richard Feverel* III. v. 138.

JUNO

"A woman resembling the goddess Juno in qualities ascribed to her; a woman of stately beauty; a jealous wife, etc."

(41) These Junones, severe in youthful beauty. 1859 C. Reade *Love me Little* II. i. 40.

MARS

"The god of war, ranking in importance next to Jupiter, and identified from an early period with the Greek god Ares. Also *fig*.: warfare, warlike prowess, fortune in war (now *arch*.).
allusively. A great warrior. *Obs*."

(42) Our changed King So dealt with war, that Spain saluted him The Mars of Arragon. 1830 T. Wade *Jew of Arragon* i. i. 6.

MINERVA

"A Roman goddess, regarded as the patron of handicrafts and the arts, and later also of wisdom and prowess in war, identified from an early period with the Greek Athene. Any of various personal qualities attributed to, or regarded as springing from, Minerva, such as wisdom, inspiration, etc.; these qualities collectively."

(43) Every one then ought to labour to know his Destiny, and to try his Minerva. 1685 tr. B. Gracián y Morales *Courtiers Oracle* 178.

VENUS

"The ancient Roman goddess of beauty and love (esp. sensual love), corresponding to the Greek goddess Aphrodite. A beautiful or attractive woman."

(44) The dreams they had indulged in of the sable Venuses which they were to find on the banks of the Congo. 1816 J. K. Tuckey *Narr. Exped. River Zaire* (1818) i. 18.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Great Chain of Being is a Christian Western folk model of the world. In its extended version, it is supposed to represent the earthly and the spiritual worlds, and consists of five levels: God, humans, animals, plants and inorganic things. Surprisingly, the highest level has only one being, God, though there are

other supernatural beings who are conspicuously absent from the model, despite their presence in life and language. This disparity was noticed by Krzeszowski (1997), but his FAMA axiological matrix made him send "angels and devils to hell". He suggested that perhaps an additional level would be needed. However, the problem goes beyond a mere addition of a supernatural level, which might be relatively easy to implement. In reality, the extended version of the Great Chain transcends the Christian Western culture. In such a case, supernatural beings of other mythologies would also have to be included (cf. OED description of angels as the attendants and messengers of the Deity in the context of Jewish, Christian, Islamic, and other theologies). The present paper has provided enough examples from the Christian, Greek and Roman mythologies to support my postulate (Szwedek 2014) to replace the level of God with the level of supernatural beings (deities), making the Great Chain of Being model compatible with other cultures and linguistic reality.

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