



World History

The Origins of Man

Name: _____
Section: _____
Score: ____/5

Directions: Read the following excerpts from different sacred texts and summarize their explanations for the origins of man. When finished answer the questions at the bottom.

Excerpt from the Qu’ran (Islamic Holy Book) (71:13-17)

Written between 609-632 C.E.

"What is the matter with you, that you are not conscious of Allah's majesty, seeing that it is He Who has created you in diverse stages? See you not how Allah has created the seven heavens one above another, and made the moon a light in their midst, and made the sun as a glorious lamp? And Allah has produced you from the earth, growing gradually"

Summary:

Excerpt from the Torah/Bible (Jewish Holy Book/Christian Holy Book) (Genesis 1:26-31)

Written c.5th-6th Century B.C.E.

"Then God said, "And now we will make human beings; they will be like us and resemble us. They will have power over the fish, the birds, and all animals, domestic and wild, large and small." ²⁷ So God created human beings, making them to be like himself. He created them male and female, ²⁸ blessed them, and said, "Have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control. I am putting you in charge of the fish, the birds, and all the wild animals. ²⁹ I have provided all kinds of grain and all kinds of fruit for you to eat; ³⁰ but for all the wild animals and for all the birds I have provided grass and leafy plants for food" — and it was done. ³¹ God looked at everything he had made, and he was very pleased. Evening passed and morning came—that was the sixth day."

Summary:

Excerpt from Popul Vuh (Mayan Creationist Myth) (Part I, Chapter II)

Written c.1554-1558 C.E.

"Then they talked and spoke the truth: "Your figures of wood shall come out well; they shall speak and talk on earth."

"So may it be," they answered when they spoke.

And instantly the figures were made of wood. They looked like men, talked like men, and populated the surface of the earth.

They existed and multiplied; they had daughters, they had sons, these wooden figures; but they did not have souls, nor minds, they did not remember their Creator, their Maker; they walked on all fours, aimlessly.

They no longer remembered the Heart of Heaven and therefore they fell out of favor. It was merely a trial, an attempt at man. At first they spoke, but their face was without expression; their feet and hands had no strength; they had no blood, nor substance, nor moisture, nor flesh; their cheeks were dry, their feet and hands were dry, and their flesh was yellow.

Therefore, they no longer thought of their Creator nor their Maker, nor of those who made them and cared for them.

These were the first men who existed in great numbers on the face of the earth."

Summary:

Excerpt from the Rig Veda (Hindi Sacred Text) (Book X, Chapter 90, verses 1-3)

Written between 1700-1100 B.C.E.

"The Primal Man (Purusha) had a thousand heads, eyes and feet.

He filled the earth completely.

Indeed his body was larger than this world.

The Primal Man fills this universe and represents the past, the present and the future.

He is eternal and outgrows the universe by consuming sacrificial food.

The visible world is only a quarter of his greatness.

The remaining three quarters is hidden in the immortal Heaven.

From the complete explosive self-sacrifice of Purusha came forth all the sacred sounds of creation.

From it also arose all things and lives and minds that are born into the world, including horses and other creatures with teeth in either jaw, like cattle, sheep and goats.

When the Primal Man split up, into how many parts was He divided? What represented his mouth, arms, thighs and feet?

The *Brahmin* (priest) was his mouth, the *Kshatriya* (warrior/king) his arms, the *Vaishya* (merchant) his thighs and the *Shudra* (peasants) were born from his feet."

Summary:

The Descent of Man by Charles Darwin (Summarized)

published 1871 C.E.

In his book *The Descent of Man*, Darwin set about trying to explain the issue of human evolution and the idea of race. The main theory Darwin arrives at is that all humans are a single species who descended from the same ape-like ancestor. He built his argument around the evidence of biological similarities between apes, embryological development, and vestigial organs (parts of animal which still develop but seemingly have no purpose). With this three pronged attack Darwin provided evidence of man's common ancestry with apes, and that all humans (regardless of race) were the same species.

Summary:

Accompanying Questions:

1. Arrange the 5 different documents into categories of similarities. (Could be 2-3 categories) group the documents together and explain why you grouped them together (What things made them similar to one another?)

2. Which document was the hardest to group with the others and why?