

NEW GLOBAL CALENDAR



A SUMERIC CALENDAR

The calendar with which most of the world is familiar is the Gregorian (a Christocentric) one which places us in the year 2018 AD (Anno Domini) based upon the originally supposed date of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, later described as Christ (from Greek *khristos* – anointed).

The other main calendars in the world give the current year as follows:

Jewish – 5779 AM (Anno Mundi – Year of the World) being the time since the world began according to the Old Testament;

Hindu – 5119 being the date since Krishna left the earth and the beginning of Kali Yuga (Last Stage of the World);

Chinese – 4714 being the time since the supposed beginning of the reign of the Yellow Emperor;

Buddhist – 2562 being the time since the birth of Siddhartha Gautama (the *Buddha* – Sanskrit for enlightened);

Islamic – 1440 being the time since Mohammad's migration from Mecca to Medina.

Homo sapiens is now thought to have emerged about 300,000 years ago, although nobody has suggested a calendar based on that! An alternative secular annual dating system is the Holocene calendar proposed by the Italian-American scientist Cesare Emiliani in 1993. This is based upon the estimated end of the last Ice Age around 10,000 years ago. That would entail making the current year 12,018. The systematic development of agriculture followed shortly after, c. 9,500 years ago. Next came the construction of proto-cities and civilization about 8000 years ago.

Creating a new secular calendar should involve two criteria, namely not be unwieldy and maintain similarity or familiarity, as far as possible. A suggestion for achieving this in annual terms would be alternatively to proceed from the approximate point at which human writing, and thus the consolidation of civilization, came into being. That is about 5000 years ago in Sumeria.

The consequence would be that the current year could be stated, as now, in four digits, viz. 5018. Moreover, historical dates with which we are familiar would be largely still recognisable under this system. For example, the 30 years' War (1618-48) would be listed as 4618 to 4648, the Battle of Waterloo (1815) at 4815 and the Second World War (1939-45) as 4939 to 4945. In addition, the somewhat confusing BC (Before Christ) dates would disappear. Compare Caesar's Gallic Wars 58 BC to 50 BC as opposed to 2942 to 2950. Thus, one would not have one set of dates proceeding forward and another proceeding backwards. Of course, during a transitional period, the old yearly dates could still be given in parentheses. Moreover, more ancient events would still be enumerated as now in

'Before Present' terms, i.e. homo sapiens thus beginning at 300,000 BP and agriculture becoming manifest about 9,500 BP (in other words, one does not speak of the former as 297,982 BC!).

In choosing a Sumerian base, one should not therefore offend against occidental versus oriental sensitivity. Indeed, the latter is semantically more represented in the modern usage of 'Middle East'. Moreover, one is not selecting one civilization as opposed to another; it is just a simple fact that, historically and globally, human writing began in Sumeria around 5000 years ago.

Of course, the Sumerians had their own calendar; thus, one might call the innovation described here as the Sumeric Calendar to make the distinction.

That still leaves the question of designating days, dates, and months. In the Gregorian calendar, these are not Christocentric but mainly pagan, yet also occidental. A way of getting around this is for the days to be called simply Day-one, Day-two, etc; for the specific dates to be First, Second, Third etc, as now; for the months to be called First, Second, and so on, but given in Esperanto to avoid repetition. For example, Tuesday 4th December 2018 would then become Day-two 4th Dekdua 5018 (also cf. the current simplified approach 4/12/18 which would therefore remain the same). However, once the year-numbering system has ceased to be Christocentric, the day-date-month appellations could be debated, while still adhering to the basic principles involved. If it is to be made clear that one is using a Sumeric Calendar, years could be written as '5018 SC', and so on (also, for example, Caesar's Gallic Wars 2942 SC-2950 SC).

24/11/18 - Daltún Ó Ceallaigh