Hindu versus Chaldeo-Jewish Cosmogony

Explanation of two diagrams from “Isis Unveiled,” representing the chaotic and the formative periods before and after our universe began to be evolved.
Here give two diagrams of the Hindu and the Chaldeo-Jewish cosmo-
monies. The antiquity of the diagram of the former may be inferred from
the fact that many of the Brāhmanical pagodas are designed and built on
this figure, called the “Śri-Yantra.” And yet we find the highest honours paid to it by
the Jewish and mediaeval kabbalists, who call it “Solomon’s seal.” It will be quite an
easy matter to trace it to its origin, once we are reminded of the history of the king-
kabalist and his transaction with King Hiram and Ophir — the country of peacocks,
gold, and ivory — for which land we have to search in old India.

The esoteric Brahmanical, Buddhistic, and Chaldean standpoints
agree in every respect with the evolutionary theory of modern science.

**The Hindu Doctrine**

Contains the Ineffable Name. It is the
AUM — to be pronounced only mentally,
under penalty of death. The Unrevealed
Parabrahman, the Passive Principle; the
absolute and unconditioned “mukta,”
which cannot enter into the condition of
a Creator, as the latter, in order to think,
will, and plan, must be bound and condi-
tioned (baddha); hence, in one sense, be
a finite being. “This (Parabrahman) was
absorbed in the non-being, impercepti-
ble, without any distinct attribute, non-
existent for our senses. He was absorbed
in his (to us) eternal (to himself) peri-
dical, sleep,” for it was one of the “Nights of
Brahmā.” Therefore he is not the First
but the Eternal Cause. He is the Soul of
Souls, whom no being can comprehend
in this state. But “he who studies the se-
cret Mantras and comprehends the Vāch’
(the Spirit or hidden voice of the Man-
tras, the active manifestation of the la-
tent Force) will learn to understand him
in his “revealed” aspect.

Both “This” and Ain-Soph, in their first manifestation of Light, emerging from within
Darkness, may be summarized in the Svabhāva, the Eternal and the uncreated Self-
existing Substance which produces all; while everything which is of its essence pro-
duces itself out of its own nature.

**The Chaldean Doctrine**

Contains the Ineffable Name. It is Ain-
Soph, the Boundless, the Infinite, whose
name is known to no one but the initia-
ted, and could not be pronounced aloud
under the penalty of death.

No more than Parabrahman can Ain-
Soph create, for he is in the same condi-
tion of non-being as the former; he is [ain]
non-existent, so long as he lies in
his latent or passive state within Olam
(the boundless and termless time); as
such he is not the Creator of the visible
universe, neither is he the Or (Light). He
will become the latter when the period of
creation shall have compelled him to ex-
 pand the Force within himself, according
to the Law of which he is the embodiment
and essence.

“Whosoever acquaints himself with [ain],
the Merkābāḥ and la’hash (secret
speech or incantation), will learn the
secret of secrets.”
The Hindu Doctrine

The Space Around the Upper Triangle

When the “Night of Brahmā” was ended, and the time came for the Self-Existent to manifest Itself by revelation, it made its glory visible by sending forth from its Essence an active Power, which, female at first, subsequently becomes androgynous. It is Aditi, the “Infinite,” the Boundless, or rather the “Unbounded.” Aditi is the “mother” of all the gods, and Aditi is the Father and the Son. “Who will give us back to the great Aditi, that I may see father and mother?” It is in conjunction with the latter female Force, that the Divine but latent Thought produces the great “Deep” — water.

“Water is born from a transformation of light . . . and from a modification of the water is born the earth,” says Manu (Bk., 78). “Ye are born of Aditi from the water, you who are born of the earth, hear ye all my call.”

In this water (or primeval chaos) the “Infinite” androgyne, which, with the Eternal Cause, forms the first abstract Triad, rendered by AUM, deposited the germ of universal life. It is the Mundane Egg, in which took place the gestation of Purusha, or the manifested Brahmā. The germ which fecundated the Mother-Principle (the water) is called Nara, the Divine Spirit or Holy Ghost, and the waters themselves, are an emanation of the former, Nāri, while the Spirit which brooded over it is called Nārāyana.

“In that egg, the great Power sat inactive a whole year of the Creator, at the close of which, by his thought alone he caused the egg to divide itself.”

The Chaldean Doctrine

When the active period had arrived, Ain-Soph sent forth from within his own eternal essence, Sephirāh, the active Power, called the Primordial Point, and the Crown, Kether. It is only through her that the “Un-bounded Wisdom” could give a concrete form to his abstract Thought. Two sides of the upper triangle, the right side and the base, are composed of unbroken lines, the third, the left side, is dotted. It is through the latter that emerges Sephirāh. Spreading in every direction, she finally encompasses the whole triangle. In this emanation of the female active principle from the left side of the mystic triangle, is foreshadowed the creation of Eve from Adam’s left rib. Adam is the Microcosm of the Macrocosm and is created in the image of the Elōhīm. In the Tree of Life, Etz Haiyim, the triple triad is disposed in such a manner that the three male Sephīrōth are on the right, the three female on the left, and the four uniting principles in the centre. From the Invisible Dew falling from the Higher “Head” Sephirāh creates primeval water, or chaos taking shape. It is the first step toward the solidification of Spirit, which through various modifications will produce earth.

“It requires earth and water to make a living soul,” says Moses.

When Sephirāh emerges like an active power from within the latent Deity, she is female; when she assumes the office of a creator, she becomes a male; hence, she is androgyne. She is the “Father and Mother Aditi,” of the Hindu Cosmogony. After brooding over the “Deep,” the “Spirit of God” produces its own image in the
The upper half became heaven, the lower, the earth (both yet in their ideal, not their manifested form). Thus, this second triad, only another name for the first one (never pronounced aloud), and which is the real pre-Vedic primordial secret Trimūrti, consisted of

Nara, Father-Heaven,
Nārī, Mother-Earth,
Virāj, the Son — or Universe.

The Trimūrti, comprising Brahmā, the Creator, Vishnu, the Preserver, and Śiva, the Destroyer and Regenerator, belongs to a later period. It is an anthropomorphic afterthought, invented for the more popular comprehension of the uninitiated masses. The Dikshita, the initiate, knew better. Thus, also, the profound allegory under the colours of a ridiculous fable, given in the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa, which resulted in the representations in some temples of Brahmā-Nara, assuming the form of a bull, and his daughter, Aditi-Nārī, that of a heifer, contains the same metaphysical idea as the “fall of man,” or that of the Spirit into generation — matter. The All-pervading Divine Spirit embodied under the symbols of Heaven, the Sun, and Heat (fire) — the correlation of cosmic forces — fecundates Matter or Nature, the daughter of Spirit. And Brahmā himself has to submit to and bear the penance of the curses of the other gods (Elōhīm) for such an incest. (See corresponding column.) According to the immutable, and, therefore, fatal law, both Nara and Nārī are mutually Father and Mother, as well as Father and Daughter. Matter, through infinite transformation, is the gradual product of Spirit. The unification of one Eternal Supreme Cause required such a correlation; and if nature be the product or effect of that Cause, in its turn it has water, the Universal Womb, symbolized in Manu by the Golden Egg. In the Kabbalistic Cosmogony, Heaven and Earth are personified by Adam-Kadmon and the second Adam. The first Ineffable Triad, contained in the abstract idea of the “Three Heads,” was a “mystery name.” It was composed of Ain-Soph, Sephīrāh, and Adam-Kadmon, the Prōtogenos, the latter being identical with the former when bisexual. In every triad there is a male, a female, and an androgyne. Adam Sephīrāh is the Crown (Kether). It sets itself to the work of creation, by first producing Hokhmāh, Male Wisdom, a masculine active potency, represented by יוהו [Yāh], or the Wheels of Creation שפירות [Ophanim], from which proceeds Binah, Intelligence, female and passive potency, which is יוה, Yah-Veh, whom we find in the Bible figuring as the Supreme. But this Yah-Veh is not the Kabbalistic Yōd-Havāh. The binary is the fundamental cornerstone of Gnosis. As the binary is the Unity multiplying itself and self-creating, the kabbalists show the “Unknown” passive Ain-Soph, as emanating from himself Sephīrāh, which, becoming visible light, is said to produce Adam-Kadmon. But, in the hidden sense, Sephīrāh and Adam are one and the same light, only latent and active, invisible and visible. The second Adam, as the human tetragram, produces in his turn Eve out of his side. It is this second triad, with which the kabbalists have hitherto dealt, hardly hinting at the Supreme and Ineffable One, and never committing anything to writing. All knowledge concerning the latter was imparted orally. It is the second Adam, then, who is the unity represented by Yōd, emblem of the Kabbalistic male principle, and, at the same time, he is Hokhmāh, Wisdom, while Binah or Yehovah is Eve; the first, Hokhmāh issuing from Kether, or the
to be fecundated by the same divine Ray which produced nature itself. The most absurd cosmogonical allegories, if analysed without prejudice, will be found built on strict and logical necessarianism. “Being was born from not being,” says a verse in the Rīg-Veda.\(^{13}\) The first being had to become androgyne and finite, by the very fact of its creation as a being. And thus even the sacred Trimūrti, containing Brahmā, Vishnu, and Śiva, will have an end when the “night” of Parabrahman succeeds the present “day,” or period of universal activity.

The second, or rather the first, triad — as the highest one is a pure abstraction — is the intellectual world. The Vāch which surrounds it is a more definite transformation of Aditi. Besides its occult significance in the secret Mantra, Vāch is personified as the active power of Brahmā proceeding from him. In the Vedas she is made to speak of herself as the supreme and universal soul.

“I bore the Father on the head of this [universal mind]; and my origin is in the midst of the ocean; and therefore do I pervade all beings . . . Originating all beings, I pass like the breeze [Holy Ghost]. I am above this heaven, beyond this earth; and what is the Great One, that am I.”\(^{14}\)

Literally, Vāch is speech, the power of awakening, through the metrical arrangement contained in the number and syllables of the Mantras,\(^{15}\) corresponding powers in the invisible world. In the sacrificial Mysteries, Vāch stirs up the Brahmā (Brahmā ānvatī), or the power lying latent at the bottom of every magical operation. It existed from eternity as the Yajña (its latent form), lying dormant in Brahmā from “no-beginning,” and proceeded from him.\(^{16}\) Shekinah is the Hindu Vāch, and praised in the same terms as the latter. Though shown in the Kabbalistic Tree of Life as proceeding from the ninth Sephīrōth, yet Shekinah is the “veil” of Ain-Soph, and the “garment” of Jehovah. The “veil,” for it succeeded for long ages in concealing the real supreme God, the universal Spirit, and masking Jehovah, the exoteric deity, made the Christians accept him as the “father” of the initiated Jesus. Yet the
ceeded forth from him as Vāch (the active power). It is the key to the Traividyā, the thrice sacred science which teaches the Yajus (the sacrificial Mysteries).\(^{16}\)

**[The Double Triangle]**

Having done with the unrevealed triad, and the first triad of the Sephīrōth, called the “intellectual world,” little remains to be said. In the great geometrical figure which has the double triangle in it, the central circle represents the world within the universe. The double triangle belongs to one of the most important, if it is not in itself the most important, of the mystic figures in India. It is the emblem of the Trimūrti three in one. The triangle with its apex upward indicates the male principle, downward the female; the two typifying, at the same time, spirit and matter. This world within the infinite universe is the microcosm within the macrocosm, as in the Jewish Kabbalah. It is the symbol of the womb of the universe, whose archetype is the golden mundane egg. It is from within this spiritual bosom of mother nature that proceed all the great saviours of the universe — the avatāras of the invisible Deity.

“Of him who is and yet is not, from the not-being, Eternal Cause, is born the being Purusha,” says Manu, the legislator. Purusha is the “divine male,” the second god, and the avatāra, or the Logos of Parabrahman and his divine son, who in his turn produced Virāj, the son, or the ideal type of the universe.

“Virāj begins the work of creation by producing the ten Prajāpatis, ‘the lords of all beings.’”\(^{19}\)

kabbalists, as well as the Hindu Dīkṣīṭa, know the power of the Shekinah or Vāch, and call it the “secret wisdom,” [hokhmāh nistharah].

The triangle played a prominent part in the religious symbolism of every great nation; for everywhere it represented the three great principles — spirit, force, and matter; or the active (male), passive (female), and the dual or correlative principle which partakes of both and binds the two together. It was the Arba-il or mystic “four,”\(^{20}\) the mystery-gods, the Kabeiroi, summarized in the unity of one supreme Deity. It is found in the Egyptian pyramids, whose equal sides tower up until lost in one crowning point. In the Kabbalistic diagram the central circle of the Brahmical figure is replaced by the cross; the celestial perpendicular and the terrestrial horizontal base line.\(^{21}\) But the idea is the same: Adam-Kadmon is the type of humanity as a collective totality within the unity of the creative God and the universal spirit.

“Of him who is formless, the non-existent (also the eternal, but not First Cause), is born the heavenly man.”

But after he created the form of the heavenly man, אֲדֹם לָא-אֲדֹ [Adām Ilā-ād], he “used it as a vehicle wherein to descend,” says the Kabbalah. Thus Adam-Kadmon is the avatāra of the concealed power. After that, the heavenly Adam creates or engenders, by the combined power of the Sephirōth, the earthly Adam. The work of creation is also begun by Sephirāh in the creation of the ten Sephirōth (who are the Prajāpatis of the Kabbalah, for they are likewise the Lords of all beings).
According to the doctrine of Manu, the universe is subjected to a periodical and never-ending succession of creations and dissolutions, which periods of creation are named Manvantaras.

“It is the germ [which the Divine Spirit produced from its own substance] which never perishes in the being, for it becomes the soul of Being, and at the period of pralaya [dissolution] it returns to absorb itself again into the Divine Spirit, which itself rests from all eternity within Svayambhū, the ‘Self-Existent.’”

As we have shown, neither the Svābhāvikas, Buddhist philosophers — nor the Brahmins believe in a creation of the universe ex nihilo, but both believe in the Prakṛti, the indestructibility of matter. The evolution of species, and the successive appearance of various new types is very distinctly shown in Manu.

“This from earth, heat, and water, are born all creatures, whether animate or inanimate, produced by the germ which the Divine Spirit drew from its own substance. Thus has Brahmā established the series of transformations from the plant up to man, and from man up to the primordial essence . . . Among them each succeeding being (or element) acquires the quality of the preceding; and in as many degrees as each of them is advanced, with so many properties is it said to be endowed.”

This, we believe, is the veritable theory of the modern evolutionists.

The Zohar asserts the same. According to the Kabbalistic doctrine there were old worlds (Zohar, III, p. 292b). Everything will return some day to that from which it first proceeded.

“All things of which this world consists, spirit as well as body, will return to their principal, and the roots from which they proceeded” (Zohar, II, p. 218b).

The kabbalists also maintain the indestructibility of matter, albeit their doctrine is shrouded still more carefully than that of the Hindus. The creation is eternal, and the universe is the “garment,” or “the veil of God” — Shekinah; and the latter is immortal and eternal as Him within whom it has ever existed. Every world is made after the pattern of its predecessor, and each more gross and material than the preceding one. In the Kabbalah all were called sparks (Zohar, III, p. 292b). Finally, our present grossly materialistic world was formed.

In the Chaldean account of the period which preceded the Genesis of our world, Berosus speaks of a time when there existed nothing but darkness, and an abyss of waters, filled with hideous monsters,

“produced of a two-fold principle . . . These were creatures in which were combined the limbs of every species of animals. In addition to these, fishes, reptiles, serpents, with other monstrous animals, which assumed each other’s shape and countenance.”

Hindu vs. Chaldeo-Jewish Cosmogony v. 12.11, www.philaletheians.co.uk, 16 August 2017
Hence the Āryan and the Semitic Theo-anthropographies are two leaves on the same stem; their respective personifications and symbolic personages standing in relation to each other in this way:

1 The Unknowable, referred to in various ways in *Rig-Vedic* verse, such as “Nought Was,” called, later on “Parabrahman”; the ān (Ain, nothing, or the “Ain-Soph” of the Kabbalists), and again, the “Spirit” (of God) that moves upon the face of the waters, in *Genesis*. All these are identical. Moreover, in *Genesis* i, verse 2, is placed as verse 1 in the secret Kabbalistic texts, where it is followed by the Elōhīm “creating the Heaven and the Earth.” This deliberate shifting of the order of the verses was necessary for monotheistic and Kabbalistic purposes. Jeremiah’s curse against those Elōhīm (gods) who have not created the Heavens and the Earth, ch. x, 11, shows that there were other Elōhīm who had.

2 The “Heavenly” Manu-Svāyambhuva, who sprang from Svayambhû-Nārāyana, the “Self-existent,” and Adam-Kadmon of the Kabbalists, and the androgyne MAN of *Genesis* ch. i are also identical.

3 Manu-Svāyambhuva is Brahmā, or the Logos; and he is Adam-Kadmon, who in *Genesis* iv, 5, separates himself into two halves, male and female, thus becoming Yāh-Havāh or Jehovah-Eve; as Manu Svāyambhuva or Brahmā separates himself to become “Brahmā-Virāj and Vāch-Virāj,” male and female; all the rest of the texts and versions being blinks.

4 Vāch is the daughter of Brahmā and is named Śata-Rūpa, “the hundred-formed,” and Sāvitrī, “generatrix,” the mother of the gods and of all living. She is identical with Eve, “the mother [of all the lords or gods or] of all living.” Besides this there are many other occult meanings.

What is written in *Isis Unveiled*, although scattered about and very cautiously expressed at the time, is correct.

**Hindu versus Chaldeo-Jewish Cosmogony Diagrams**

The original diagrams from *Isis Unveiled* have been redrawn by Philaletheians and placed side by side overleaf. High resolution versions can be found in the same series.
Endnotes


2. [Initial letters of *hokhmāh nisṭharah*, secret wisdom.]

3. *Laḥash* is nearly identical in meaning with *Vāch*, the hidden power of the Mantra.

4. In the *Rigveda Samhitā*, the meaning is given by Max Müller as the Absolute, “for it is derived from ‘ḍīti,’ bond, and the negative particle a."

5. “Hymns to the Maruts,” I, 89, 10

6. *ibid.*, I, 24, 4

7. *ibid.*, X, 63, 2

8. Thus is it that we find in all the philosophical theogonies, the Holy Ghost female. The numerous sects of the Gnostics had Sophia; the Jewish Kabbalists and Talmudists, Shekhinah (the garment of the Highest), which descended between the two Cherubim upon the Mercy Seat, and we find even Jesus made to say, in an old text “My Mother, the Holy Ghost, took me."

9. “The waters are called *nārā, because they were the production of Nara, the Spirit of God*” [*Institutes of Manu*, I, 10; ed. Jones]. [See “Proposition 1 - Narayana First or Third Logos?” in the same series.]

10. Nārāyana, or that which moves on [or rather in] the waters.


12. See Haug’s tr., III, iii, 35

13. The same transformations are found in the cosmogony of every important nation. Thus, we see in the Egyptian mythology, Isis and Osiris, sister and brother, man and wife; and Horus, the Son of both, becoming the husband of his mother, Isis, and producing a son, Meloul. [Champollion-Figeac, *Egypte ancienne*, p. 245]

14. Mandala I, sūkta, 166; Max Müller


16. As in the Pythagorean numerical system every number on earth, or the world of the effects, corresponds to its invisible prototype in the world of causes.

17. See initial chapter, Vol. I, p. xliii, word *Yājñā*.

18. George Smith gives the first verses of the Akkadian *Genesis* as found in the Cuneiform Texts on the “Latteres Coctiles.” There, also, we find *Anu*, the passive deity or Ain-Soph, *Bel*, the Creator, the Spirit of God (Sephirah) moving on the face of the waters, hence water itself, and *Hea* the Universal Soul or wisdom of the three combined. The first eight verses read thus:

1. When above, were not raised the heavens;
2. And below on the earth a plant had not grown up.
3. The abyss had not broken its boundaries.
4. The chaos [or water] Tiamåt [the sea] was the producing mother of the whole of them.
   [This is the Cosmical Aditi and Sephirah.]
5. Those waters at the beginning were ordained; but
6. A tree had not grown, a flower had not unfolded.
7. When the gods had not sprung up, any one of them;
8. A plant had not grown, and order did not exist;

This was the chaotic or ante-genesis period. [*The Chaldean Account of Genesis*, 1876, pp. 62-63]

19. When a female power, she is Sephirah; when male, he is Adam-Kadmon; for, as the former contains in herself the other nine Sephiroth, so, in their totality, the latter, including Sephirah, is embodied in the Archetypal Kadmon, the *πρωτογονος*.

20. Eve is the trinity of nature, and Adam the unity of spirit; the former, the created material principle, the latter, the ideal organ of the creative principle, or, in other words, this androgyne is both the principle and the Logos, for *x* is the male, and *y* the female; and, as Lévi expresses it, this first letter of the holy language, Aleph, represents a man pointing with one hand toward the sky, and with the other toward the ground. It is the macrocosm and the microcosm at the same time, and explains the double triangle of the Masons and the five-pointed star. While the male is active, the female principle is passive, for it is SPIRIT and MATTER, the latter word meaning *mother* in nearly every language. The columns of Solomon’s temple, Jachin and Boaz, are the emblems of the androgyne, they are also respectively male and female, white and black, square and round; the male a unity, the female a binary. In the later Kabbalistic treatises, the active principle is pictured by the sword, *ככ*
The vertical line being the male principle, and the horizontal the female, out of the union of the two at the intersection point is formed the CROSS; the oldest symbol in the Egyptian history of gods. It is the key of Heaven in the rosy fingers of Neith, the celestial virgin, who opens the gate at dawn for the exit of her first-begotten, the radiant sun. It is the Stauros of the Gnostics, and the philosophical cross of the high-grade Masons. We find this symbol ornamenting the tee of the umbrella-shaped oldest pagodas in Tibet, China, and India, as we find it in the hand of Isis, in the shape of the “handled cross.” In one of the Chaitya caves, at Ajanta, it surmounts the three umbrellas in stone, and forms the centre of the vault. [See “Cross + Fire” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series.]

Manu, Bk. I

“When this world had emerged from obscurity, the subtile elementary principles produced the vegetable germ which at first animated the plants; from the plants, life passed through the fantastic organisms which were born in the ilus (boue) of the waters; then through a series of forms and different animals, it at length reached man” (Manu, Bk. I; and Bhāgavata-Purāṇa).

Manu is a convertible type, which can by no means be explained as a personage. Manu means sometimes humanity, sometimes man. The Manu who emanated from the uncreated Svayambhū is, without doubt, the type of Adam-Kadmon. The Manu who is progenitor of the other six Manus is evidently identical with the Rishis, or seven primeval sages who are the forefathers of the post-diluvian races. He is — as we shall show in Chapter VIII — Noah, and his six sons, or subsequent generations are the originals of the post-diluvian and mythical patriarchs of the Bible.

Cory, Ancient Fragments, pp. 23-24’ [full text in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series.]