

*Our existence is
fashioned out of chaos*



Question to the Editor of “The Theosophist”

First published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. III (No. 3), December 1881, pp. 79-80.

Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (IS CREATION POSSIBLE FOR MAN?) III pp. 377-80.

To the Editor of *The Theosophist*.

Madame,

Talking the other day to a friend, who, like me, without being a Theosophist, takes a very great interest in the movements of your Society, I incidentally happened to remark that the “Brothers of the first section” were credited with such large powers, that even *creation* was not at times impossible to them. In support of my assertion, I instanced their own cup and saucer phenomenon, as narrated by Mr. Sinnett in his *Occult World*, which phenomenon appeared to me to be something more than the mere *reproduction, transference* or *unearthing* from its hiding-place of an article *lost* or *stolen*, like the brooch. My friend, however, warmly objected to my statement — remarking that creation was not possible to man, whatever else he may be able to accomplish.

Believing, as I then did, in Christianity as the most perfect heaven-descended code of ethics on earth, there was a time in the history of my chequered life (chequered, I mean, as regards the vast sea of doubt and unbelief on which I have been tossing for over twenty years), when I would have myself as warmly, even indignantly, repelled the idea of creation as a possibility to man; but the regular reading of your journal, and a careful perusal of Mr. Sinnett’s book and of that marvel of learning and industry, your own *Isis Unveiled*, have effected quite a revolution (whether for good or bad has yet to be seen) in my thoughts, and it is now sometime since I have begun to believe in the possibility of phenomena beyond the range of my own narrow vision.

Will you kindly tell me which of us is right, my friend or I? Not having the honour of being personally known to you, I close this letter only with my initial.

H.

Reply by HP Blavatsky

The question to be dealt with is hardly whether our correspondent or his friend is right, for we understand him to take up the prudent attitude of a seeker after truth who shrinks from affirming dogmatically that creation *is* possible for man, even while unwilling to accept the dogmatic negative assertion of his friend that “it is impossible.” Before coming to the gist of the question raised, we have, therefore, to notice the illustrations which this letter affords of the ways in which such a question may be considered.

When our correspondent’s friend denies that creation is possible for man, we can hardly assume that he does so from any conviction that he has sounded all the mysteries of Nature, and knowing all about the universe — being able to account for all its phenomena — has ascertained that the process, whatever that may be, which he conceives of as creation does not go on anywhere in obedience to the will or influence of man, and has further ascertained that there is something in man which makes it impossible that such a process should be accomplished. And yet without having done all that, it is bold of him to say that creation is impossible. Assuming that he is not a student of occult science — and the tone of the letter before us conveys the impression that he is not — our friend’s friend, when he makes his dogmatic statement, seems to be proceeding on the method but too commonly adopted by people of merely ordinary culture and even by a few men of science — the method which takes a large group of preconceived ideas as a standard to which any new idea must be applied. If the new idea fits in with, and seems to support the old ones, well and good; they smile upon it. If it clashes with some of these they frown at it, and excommunicate it without further ceremony.

Now the attitude of mind exhibited by our correspondent, who finds many old beliefs shattered by new ideas, the force of which he is constrained by moral honesty to recognize, and who, therefore, feels that in the presence of the vast possibilities of Nature he must advance very cautiously and be ever on his guard against false lights held out by time-honoured prejudices and hasty conclusions — seems to us an attitude of mind which is very much better entitled to respect than that of his overconfident friend. And we are the more anxious to recognize its superiority in the most emphatic language, because when we approach the actual question to be discussed, the bearing of what we have to say will be rather in favour of the view which the “friend” takes of “creations,” if indeed we are all attaching the same significance to that somewhat over-driven word.

It is needless after what we have just said to point out that if we are now going to make some statements as to what is, and what is not the fact, as regards some of the conditions of the universe, we are not on that account infringing the rules of thought just laid down. We are simply giving an exposition of our little fragment of occult philosophy as taught by Masters who are in a position to make positive statements on the subject, and the credibility of which will never be in danger from any of these apparently inexplicable occurrences related in the books to which our correspondent refers, and likely enough, as he justly conceives, to disturb many of the orthodox beliefs which he has seen crumbling around him.

It would be a volume we should have to write and not a brief explanatory note, if we attempted to begin, by elucidating the conviction we entertain that the Masters of Occult Philosophy above referred to are entitled to say what is and what is not. Enough for the present to say what we believe would be said, in answer to the question before us, by *those who know*.

But we must have a clear understanding as to what is meant by creation. Probably the common idea on the subject is that when the world was “created,” the creator accorded himself or was somehow accorded a dispensation from the rule *ex nihilo nihil fit*¹ and actually made the world out of nothing — if that is the idea of creation to be dealt with now, the reply of the philosophers would be not merely that such creation is impossible to man but that it is impossible to gods, or God; in short absolutely impossible. But a step in the direction of a philosophical conception is accomplished when people say the world was “created” (we say fashioned) out of Chaos. Perhaps, they have no very clear idea of what they mean by CHAOS, but it is a better word to use in this case than “nothing.” For, suppose we endeavour to conceive chaos as the matter of the universe in an unmanifested state, it will be seen at once that though such matter is perfectly inappreciable to ordinary human senses, and to that extent equivalent to “nothing,” creation from such materials is not the production of something which did not exist before, but a change of state imposed upon a portion of universal matter which in its previous state was invisible, intangible and imponderable, but not on that account non-existent.² Theosophist-Occultists do not, however, use the word “creation,” at all, but replace it by that of EVOLUTION.

Here we approach a comprehension of what may have been the course of events as regards the production of the mysterious cup and saucer described in Mr. Sinnett’s book. It is in no way inconceivable that if the production of manifestation in matter is the act accomplished by what is ordinarily called creation, the power of the human will in some of its transcendent developments may be enabled to impose on unmanifested matter or chaos, the change which brings it within the cognisance of the ordinary human senses.

¹ [Out of nothing comes nothing.]

² It is one of the many reasons why Buddhist philosophy refuses to admit the existence and interference in the production of the universe of a direct creator or god. For once admit, for argument’s sake, that the world *was* created by such a being, who, to have done so, must have been omnipotent, there remains the old difficulty to be dealt with — who then created that pre-existing matter, that eternal, invisible, intangible and imponderable something or chaos? If we are told that, being “eternal” and imperishable, it had no need of being “created,” then our answer will be that in such a case there are TWO “Eternals” and two “Omnipotents”; or if our opponents argue that it is the omnipotent No. 1 or God who created it, then we return from where we first started — to the creation of *something* out of *nothing*, which is such an absolute absurdity before science and logic that it does not even require the final unanswerable query resorted to by some precocious children “and who created God?”

Appendix

The genealogy and gender of Logos and Its Light

From *The Secret Doctrine*, I pp. 430-32.

As Vāch is the daughter and the mother of the Logos, so Isis is the daughter and the mother of Osiris, who is Horus.

This ROOT of mental SELF is also the root of physical *Self*, for this light is the permutation, in our manifested world, of Mūlaprakriti, called *Aditi*¹ in the Vedas. In its third aspect it becomes *Vāch*,² the daughter and the mother of the Logos, as Isis is the daughter and the mother of Osiris, who is Horus; and *Mut*, the daughter, wife, and mother of Āmen, in the Egyptian Moon-glyph. In the Kabbalah, Sēphirāh is the same as Shekinah, and is, in another synthesis, the wife, daughter, and mother of the “Heavenly man,” Adam Kadmon, and is even identical with him, just as *Vāch* is identical with Brahmā, and is called the female Logos. In the *Rig-Veda*, *Vāch* is “mystic speech,” by whom Occult Knowledge and Wisdom are communicated to man, and thus *Vāch* is said to have “entered the Rishis.” She is “generated by the gods”; she is the *divine* *Vāch* — the “Queen of gods”; and she is associated — like Sēphirāh with the Sēphirōth — with the Prajāpatis in their work of creation. Moreover, she is called “the mother of the Vedas,” “since it is through her power [as mystic *speech*] that Brahmā revealed them, and also owing to her power that he produced the universe” — *i.e.*, through speech, and *words* (synthesized by the “WORD”) and numbers.³

But *Vāch* being also spoken of as the daughter of Daksha — “the god who lives in all the Kalpas” — her Māyāvic character is thereby shown: during the *pralaya* she disappears, absorbed in the one, all-devouring Ray.

As the noumenal and the phenomenal are poles apart, so are the metaphysical and the physical.

But there are two distinct aspects in universal Esotericism, Eastern and Western, in all those personations of the *female* Power in nature, or nature — the *noumenal* and the *phenomenal*. One is its purely metaphysical aspect, as described by the learned lecturer in his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gītā*;⁴ the other, terrestrial and physical, and at the same time *divine* from the standpoint of practical human conception and Occultism. They are all the symbols and personifications of *Chaos*, the “Great Deep” or the Primordial Waters of Space, the impenetrable VEIL between the INCOGNISABLE and the LOGOS of Creation.

Connecting himself through his mind with *Vāch*, Brahmā (the Logos) created the primordial waters.

¹ [Infinite and shoreless expanse]

² “In the course of cosmic manifestation, this *Daiṁīprakriti* [the Light of Logos], instead of being the mother of the Logos, should, strictly speaking, be called his daughter.” (T. Subba Row, “Notes on the Bhagavad-Gītā,” *The Theosophist*, Vol. VIII, February 1887, p. 305)

³ The wise men, like Stanley Jevons amongst the moderns, who invented the scheme which makes the incomprehensible assume a tangible form, could only do so by resorting to numbers and geometrical figures.

⁴ [Tallapragada Subba Row]

In the *Kāthaka-Upanishad* it is stated still more clearly:

Prajāpati was this Universe. *Vāch* was a second to him. He associated with her . . . she produced these creatures and again re-entered Prajāpati.¹

Patriarch Lot is guilty of physical incest with his daughters, whereas Prajapati² accomplished the same allegorically.

And here we may incidentally point out one of the many unjust slurs thrown by the pious and *good* missionaries in India on the religion of the land. This allegory — in the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* — namely, that Brahmā, as the father of men, performed the work of procreation by incestuous intercourse with his own daughter Vāch, also called Samdhyā (twilight), and *Śātarūpā* (the hundred formed), is incessantly thrown into the teeth of the Brahmans, as condemning their “detestable, *false* religion.” Besides the fact, conveniently forgotten by the Europeans, that the Patriarch Lot is shown guilty of the same crime under the *human form*, whereas Brahmā, or rather Prajāpati, accomplished the incest under the form of a buck with his daughter, who had that of a hind (*rohita*), the esoteric reading of *Genesis*³ shows the same. Moreover, there is certainly a *cosmic*, not a physiological meaning attached to the Indian allegory, since Vāch is a permutation of Aditi and Mūlaprakriti (Chaos), and Brahmā a permutation of Nārāyana, the Spirit of God entering into, and fructifying nature; therefore, there is nothing *phallic* in the conception at all.

Aditi-Vach, the feminine Logos, is the same as the Sephirah of the Kabbalah, the Great Sea.

As already stated, Aditi-Vāch is the female *Logos*, or the “word,” *Verbum*; and Sephirāh in the Kabbalah is the same. These feminine Logoi are all correlations, in their *noumenal* aspect, of Light, and Sound, and Aether, showing how well-informed were the ancients both in physical science (as now known to the moderns), and as to the birth of that science in the Spiritual and Astral spheres.



For an in-depth analysis of the subject matter, consult *Compassion: the Spirit of Truth*, Chapter 1, “Metaphysical Keys to Theosophy,” in our Major Works Series.

¹ This connects Vāch and Sephirāh with the goddess Kuan-Yin, the “merciful mother,” the *divine VOICE of the soul* even in Exoteric Buddhism; and with the female aspect of *Kuan-shih-yin*, the Logos, the *verbum* of Creation, and at the same time with the voice that speaks audibly to the Initiate, according to Esoteric Buddhism. Bāth-Kōl, the *Filia Vocis*, the daughter of the divine voice of the Hebrews, responding from the mercy seat within the veil of the temple is — a result.

² [Personification of the first procreating male, allegorically, and of the seven mind-born Sons of Brahmā, collectively, who are the Lords of Being of the Universe and their numberless hierarchical emanations and productions of things — seemingly immovable and movable.]

³ xix, 31-38