

*An abyss separates the teachings
of Eliphas Levi with those
of Eastern Occultism*



*Abstract and train of thoughts*¹

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The learned Abbé had a decided tendency to anthropomorphize creation.

He ignores the first stage of evolution and imagines a secondary chaos. 8

But in the face of the task the French Magus had set before himself — that of reconciling Jewish Magic with Roman Ecclesiasticism — he could say nothing else. 9

Not only are his explanations unsatisfactory and misleading (in his published works they are much worse) but his Hebrew transliteration is entirely wrong. 10

The philosophy which Eliphas Levi gives out as Kabbalistic is simply mystical Roman Catholicism adapted to the Christian Kabbalah. 10

Clearly, Levi's Kabbalah is mystic Christianity, not Occultism.

At the very dawn of intellectual humanity, the Rig-Veda laid the foundation-stones of all the faiths and creeds, of every fane and church built from first to last; and they are still there. 11

Eastern Cosmogony in a nutshell.

Osiris is a Black God because Noumenon is "Darkness" to the perception of the common man. 11

The material Universe was built by Water, say the Kabbalists, who know the difference between the "two waters" — the Waters of Life and those of "Salvation" — so confused together in dogmatic religions. 12

¹ Title page illustration by Josie Morway.

BLAVATSKY SPEAKS SERIES
LEVI'S TEACHINGS ARE AT VARIANCE WITH EASTERN OCCULTISM
ABSTRACT AND TRAIN OF THOUGHTS

Moses and Thales said that only earth and water can bring forth a living soul, water being on this plane the Principle of all things. 12

In Egypt Osiris was Fire, and Isis was the Earth or, its synonym, Water, the two ever opposing elements (because of their opposite properties) being necessary to each other for a common object — that of procreation. The earth needs solar heat and rain to make her throw out her germs. But these procreative properties of Fire and Water, or Spirit and Matter, are symbols only of physical generation. 13

The Rope of the Angels expressed numerically.

The Hebrew usage of play upon the numbers must have come to the Jews from India. 15



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From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (EASTERN AND WESTERN OCCULTISM) XIV, pp. 232-45.

In *The Theosophist* for March 1886,¹ in an answer to the “Solar Sphinx,” a member of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society wrote as follows:

. . . we hold and believe that the revival of occult knowledge now in progress will someday demonstrate, that the Western system represents ranges of perception, which the Eastern — at least as expounded in the pages of *The Theosophist* — has yet to attain.² [233]

The writer is not the only person labouring under this erroneous impression. Greater Kabbalists than he had said the same in the United States. This only proves that the knowledge possessed by Western Occultists of the true Philosophy, and the “ranges of perceptions” and thought of the Eastern doctrines, is very superficial. This assertion will be easily demonstrated by giving a few instances, instituting comparisons between the two interpretations of one and the same doctrine — the Hermetic Universal Doctrine. It is the more needed since, were we to neglect bringing forward such comparisons, our work would be left incomplete.

We may take the late Éliphas Lévi, rightly referred to by another Western Mystic, Mr. Kenneth MacKenzie, as “one of the greatest representatives of modern Occult Philosophy,”³ as presumably the best and most learned expounder of the Chaldaean *Kabbalah*, and compare his teaching with that of Eastern Occultists. In his unpublished manuscripts and letters, lent to us by a Theosophist, who was for fifteen years his pupil, we had hoped to find that which he was unwilling to publish. What we do find, however, disappoints us greatly. We will take these teachings, then, as containing the essence of Western or Kabbalistic Occultism, analysing and comparing them with the Eastern interpretation as we go on.

Éliphas Lévi teaches correctly, though in language rather too rhapsodically rhetorical to be sufficiently clear to the beginner, that:

Eternal life is Motion equilibrated by the alternate manifestations of force.

But why does he not add that this perpetual motion is independent of the manifested Forces at work? He says:

¹ Vol. VII, p. 411

² Whenever Occult doctrines were expounded in the pages of *The Theosophist*, care was taken each time to declare a subject incomplete when the whole could not be given in its fullness, and no writer has ever tried to mislead the reader. As to the Western “ranges of perception” concerning doctrines really Occult, the Eastern Occultists have been made acquainted with them for some time past. Thus they are enabled to assert with confidence that the West may be in possession of Hermetic philosophy as a speculative system of dialectics, the latter being used in the West admirably well, but it lacks entirely the knowledge of Occultism. The genuine Eastern Occultist keeps silent and [elects to remain] unknown, never publishes what he knows, and rarely even speaks of it, as he knows too well the penalty of indiscretion.

³ See *The Royal Masonic Cyclopædia*, article: “Yetzērah, Sēpher”

Chaos is the Tohu-vah-bohu of perpetual motion and the sum total of primordial matter;

and he fails to add that Matter is “primordial” only at the beginning of every new reconstruction of the Universe: matter *in abscondito*,¹ as it is called by the Alchemists, is eternal, [234] indestructible, without beginning or end. It is regarded by Eastern Occultists as the eternal Root of all, the Mūlaprakriti of the Vedāntin, and the Svabhāva of the Buddhist; the Divine Essence, in short, or Substance; the radiations from This are periodically aggregated into graduated forms, from pure Spirit to gross Matter; the Root, or Space, is in its abstract presence the Deity Itself, the Ineffable and Unknown One Cause.

Ain Soph with him also is the Boundless, the infinite and One Unity, secondless and causeless as Parabrahman. Ain-Soph is the indivisible point, and therefore, as “being everywhere and nowhere,” is the absolute All. It is also “Darkness” because it is absolute Light, and the Root of the seven fundamental Cosmic Principles. Yet Éliphas Lévi, by simply stating that “Darkness was upon the face of the Earth,” fails to show:

- That “Darkness” in this sense is Deity Itself, and he is therefore withholding the only philosophical solution of this problem for the human mind;
- And he allows the unwary student to believe that by “Earth” our own little globe — an atom in the Universe — is meant. In short, this teaching does not embrace the Occult Cosmogony, but deals simply with Occult Geology and the formation of our cosmic speck.

This is further shown by his making a *résumé* of the Sephīrōthal Tree in this wise:

God is harmony, the astronomy of Powers and Unity outside of the World.

This seems to suggest:

- That he teaches the existence of an extra-cosmic God, thus limiting and conditioning both the Kosmos and the divine Infinity and Omnipresence, which cannot be extraneous to, or outside of, one single atom; and
- That by skipping the whole of the pre-cosmic period — the manifested Kosmos here being meant² — the very root of Occult teaching, he explains only the Kabbalistic meaning of the dead letter of the Bible and *Genesis*, leaving its spirit and essence untouched.

Surely the “ranges of perception” of the Western mind will not be greatly enlarged by such a limited teaching.

Having said a few words on Tohu-vah-bohu — the meaning of which Wordsworth rendered graphically as “higgledy-piggledy” — and having explained that this term denoted Cosmos, he teaches that:

Above the dark abyss [Chaos] were the Waters; . . . the earth [*la terre!*] [235] was Tohu-vah-bohu, *i.e.*, in confusion, and darkness covered the face of the Deep, and vehement Breath moved on the Waters when the Spirit exclaimed [?], “Let

¹ [concealed]

² [Look up “Kosmos and Cosmos,” in our Confusing Words Series. — ED. PHIL.]

there be light,” and there was light. Thus the earth [our globe, of course] was in a state of cataclysm; *thick* vapours veiled the immensity of the sky, the earth was covered with waters and a violent wind was agitating this dark ocean, when at a given moment the equilibrium revealed itself and light re-appeared; the letters that compose the Hebrew word “Berēshith” [the first word of *Genesis*] are “Beth,” the binary, the verb manifested by the act, a *feminine* letter; then “Resch,” the Verbum and Life, number 20, the disc multiplied by 2; and “Aleph,” the spiritual principle, the Unit, a masculine letter.

Place these letters in a triangle and you have the absolute Unity, that without being included into numbers creates the number, the first manifestation, which is 2, and these two united by harmony resulting from the analogy of contraries [opposites], make 1, only. This is why God is called Elōhīm [plural].

By stating that “Above the dark abyss were the Waters,” Eliphas Levi leads the student away from the right track.

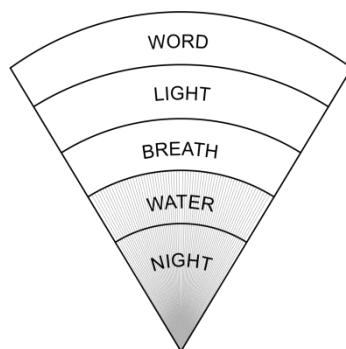
For it changes entirely the core characteristics of Cosmogony, and brings it down to a level with exoteric Genesis — perhaps it was so stated with an eye to this result.

All this is very ingenious, but is very puzzling, besides being incorrect. For owing to the first sentence, “Above the dark abyss were the Waters,” the French Kabbalist leads the student away from the right track. This an Eastern Chela will see at a glance, and even one of the profane may see it. For if the Tohu-vah-bohu is “under” and the Waters are “above,” then these two are quite distinct from each other, and this is not the case. This statement is a very important one, inasmuch as it entirely changes the spirit and nature of Cosmogony, and brings it down to a level with exoteric *Genesis* — perhaps it was so stated with an eye to this result. The Tohu-vah-bohu is the “Great Deep,” and is identical with “the Waters of Chaos,” or the primordial Darkness. By stating the fact otherwise it makes both “the Great Deep” and the “Waters” — which cannot be separated except in the phenomenal world — limited as to space and conditioned as to their nature. Thus Éliphas in his desire to conceal the last word of Esoteric Philosophy, fails — whether intentionally or otherwise does not matter — to point out the fundamental principle of the one true Occult Philosophy, namely, the unity and absolute homogeneity of the One Eternal Divine Element, and he makes of the Deity a male God. Then he says:

Above the Waters was the powerful Breath of the Elōhīm [the creative Dhyāni-Chohans]. Above the Breath appeared the Light, and above the Light the Word . . . that created it.

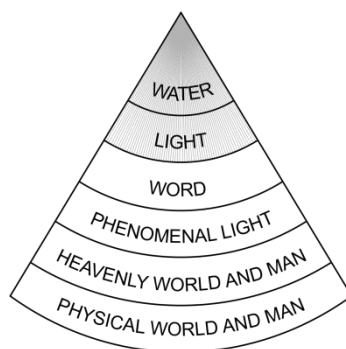
To clarify the meaning of “Above the Breath appeared the Light,” Levi gives a figure that any Eastern Occultist would not hesitate to pronounce it a Left-hand Magic figure.

Now the fact is quite the reverse of this: it is the Primeval ^[236] Light that creates the Word or Logos, who in his turn creates physical light. To prove and illustrate what he says he gives the following figure:



Now any Eastern Occultist upon seeing this would not hesitate to pronounce it a “left hand” magic figure. It is entirely reversed, and it represents the third stage of religious thought, that current in Dvāpara-Yuga, when the one principle is already separated into male and female, and humanity is approaching the fall into materiality which brings the Kali-Yuga. A student of Eastern Occultism would draw it thus:

Eliphas Levi's Black Magic figure is herein reversed.



At the dawn of a new Manvantara, perpetual Motion becomes Breath; from Breath comes forth primordial Light bringing out the Thought concealed in Darkness, and this becomes the Word, from which this Universe sprang into being.

For the Secret Doctrine teaches us that the reconstruction of the Universe takes place in this wise:

At the periods of new generation, perpetual Motion becomes Breath; from the Breath [237] comes forth primordial Light, through whose radiance manifests the Eternal Thought concealed in darkness, and this becomes the Word (Mantra).¹ It is *That* (the Mantra or Word) from which all This (the Universe) sprang into being.

¹ In the exoteric sense, the Mantra (or that psychic faculty or power that conveys perception or thought) is the older portion of the Vedas, the second part of which is composed of the *Brāhmanas*. In Esoteric phraseology Mantra is the Word made flesh, or rendered objective, through divine magic.

Further on Éliphas Lévi says:

This [the concealed Deity] radiated a ray into the Eternal Essence [Waters of Space] and, fructifying thereby the primordial germ, the Essence expanded,¹ giving birth to the Heavenly Man from whose mind were born all forms.

The learned Abbé had a decided tendency to anthropomorphize creation.

The *Kabbalah* states very nearly the same. To learn what it really teaches one has to reverse the order in which Éliphas Lévi gives it, replacing the word “above” by that of “in,” as there cannot surely be any “above” or “under” in the Absolute. This is what he says:

Above the waters the powerful breath of the Elōhīm; above the Breath the Light; above Light the Word, or the Speech that created it. We see here the spheres of evolution: the souls [?] driven from the dark centre (Darkness) toward the luminous circumference. At the bottom of the lowest circle is the Tohu-vah-bohu, or the chaos which precedes all manifestation [*Naissances*, generation]; then the region of Water; then Breath; then Light; and, lastly, the Word.

The construction of the above sentences shows that the learned Abbé had a decided tendency to anthropomorphize creation, even though the latter has to be shaped out of pre-existing material, as the *Zohar* shows plainly enough.

He ignores the first stage of evolution and imagines a secondary chaos.

This is how the “great” Western Kabbalist gets out of the difficulty: he keeps silent on the first stage of evolution and imagines a second Chaos. Thus he says:

The Tohu-vah-bohu is the Latin Limbus, or twilight of the morning [238] and evening of life.² It is in perpetual motion,³ it decomposes continually,⁴ and the work of putrefaction accelerates, because the world is advancing towards regeneration.⁵ The Tohu-vah-bohu of the Hebrews is not exactly the confusion of things called Chaos by the Greeks, and which is found described in the commencement of the Metamorphosis of Ovid; it is something greater and more profound; it is the foundation of religion, it is the philosophical affirmation of the immateriality of God.

¹ The secret meaning of the word “Brahmā” is “expansion,” “increase,” or “growth.”

² Why not give at once its theological meaning, as we find it in Webster? With the Roman Catholics it means simply “purgatory,” the borderland between heaven and hell (*Limbus patrum* and *Limbus infantum*), the one for all men, whether good, bad or indifferent; the other for the souls of unbaptized children! With the ancients it meant simply that which in *Esoteric Buddhism* is called the Kāma-Loka, between Devachan and Avīchi.

³ As Chaos, the eternal Element, not as the Kāma-Loka surely?

⁴ A proof that, by this word, Éliphas Lévi means the lowest region of the terrestrial Ākāśa.

⁵ Evidently, he is concerned only with our periodical world, or the terrestrial globe.

But in the face of the task the French Magus had set before himself — that of reconciling Jewish Magic with Roman Ecclesiasticism — he could say nothing else.

Rather an affirmation of the materiality of a personal God. If a man has to seek his Deity in the Hadēs of the ancients — for the Tohu-vah-bohu, or the Limbus of the Greeks, is the Hall of Hadēs — then one can wonder no longer at the accusations brought forward by the Church against the “witches” and sorcerers versed in Western Kaballism, that they adored the goat Mendes, or the devil personified by certain spooks and Elementals. But in face of the task Éliphas Lévi had set before himself — that of reconciling Jewish Magic with Roman ecclesiasticism — he could say nothing else.

Then he explains the first sentence in *Genesis*:

Let us put on one side the vulgar translation of the sacred texts and see what is hidden in the first chapter of *Genesis*.

He then gives the Hebrew text quite correctly, but transliterates it:

Berēshīth Barā Elōīm uth aschamam ouatti aares ouares ayete Tohuvah-bohu . . . Ouimas Elōīm rai avur ouiai aour.

And he then explains:

The first word, “Berēshīth,” signifies “genesis,” a word equivalent to “nature.”
[239]

“The act of generation or production,” we maintain; not “nature.” He [Lévi] then continues:

The phrase, then, is incorrectly translated in the Bible. It is not “in the beginning,” for it should be at the stage of the generating force,¹ which would thus exclude every idea of the *ex-nihilo* . . . as nothing cannot produce something. The word “Elōīm” or “Elōhīm” signifies the generating Powers, and such is the Occult sense of the first verse. . . . “Berēshīth” (“Nature” or “genesis”), “Barā” (“created”), “Elōīm” (“the forces”), “Athat-ashamaim” (“heavens”), “ouath” and “oaris,” (“the earth”); that is to say,

“The generative potencies created indefinitely (eternally)² those forces that are the equilibrated opposites that we call heaven and earth, meaning the space and the bodies, the volatile and the fixed, the movement and the weight.”

¹ In the “re-awakening” of the Forces would be more correct.

² An action which is incessant in eternity cannot be called “creation”; it is evolution, and the eternally or ever-becoming of the Greek Philosopher and the Hindu Vedāntin; it is the Sat and the one Beingness of Parmenides, or the Being identical with Thought. Now how can the Potencies be said to “create movement,” once it is seen movement never had any beginning, but existed in the Eternity? Why not say that the re-awakened Potencies transferred motion from the eternal to the temporal plane of being? Surely this is not Creation.

Not only are his explanations unsatisfactory and misleading (in his published works they are much worse) but his Hebrew transliteration is entirely wrong.

Now this, if it be correct, is too vague to be understood by any one ignorant of the Kabbalistic teaching. Not only are his explanations unsatisfactory and misleading — in his published works they are still worse — but his Hebrew transliteration is entirely wrong; it precludes the student, who would compare it for himself with the equivalent symbols and numerals of the words and letters of the Hebrew alphabet, from finding anything of that he might have found were the words correctly spelt in the French transliteration.

The philosophy which Eliphas Levi gives out as Kabbalistic is simply mystical Roman Catholicism adapted to the Christian Kabbalah.

Compared even with exoteric Hindu Cosmogony, the philosophy which Éliphas Lévi gives out as Kabbalistic is simply mystical Roman Catholicism adapted to the Christian *Kabbalah*. His *Histoire de la Magie* shows it plainly, and reveals also his object, which he does not even care to conceal. For, while stating with his Church, that:

The Christian religion has imposed silence on the lying oracles of the Gentiles and put an end to the prestige of the false gods,¹ [240]

he promises to prove in his work that the real *Sanctum Regnum*, the great Magic Art, is in that Star of Bethlehem which led the three Magi to adore the Saviour of this World. He says:

We will prove that the study of the sacred Pentagram had to lead all the Magi to know the new name which should be raised above all names and before which every being capable of worship has to bend his knee.²

Clearly, Levi's Kabbalah is mystic Christianity, not Occultism.

This shows that Lévi's *Kabbalah* is mystic Christianity, and not Occultism; for Occultism is universal and knows no difference between the "Saviours" (or great Avatāras) of the several old nations. Éliphas Lévi was not an exception in preaching Christianity under a disguise of Kaballism. He was undeniably "the greatest representative of modern Occult Philosophy," as it is studied in Roman Catholic countries generally, where it is fitted to the preconceptions of Christian students. But he never taught the real universal *Kabbalah*, and least of all did he teach Eastern Occultism. Let the student compare the Eastern and Western teaching, and see whether the philosophy of the *Upanishads* "has yet to attain the ranges of perception" of this Western system. Everyone has the right to defend the system he prefers, but in doing this, there is no need to throw slurs upon the system of one's brother.

¹ *Histoire de la Magie*, Introduction, Part 1 [Paris: Germer Baillière, 1860]

² *ibid.*, p. 2

In view of the great resemblance between many of the fundamental “truths” of Christianity and the “myths” of Brāhmanism, there have been serious attempts made lately to prove that the *Bhagavad-Gītā* and most of the *Brāhmanas* and the *Purānas* are of a far later date than the Mosaic Books and even than the *Gospels*. But were it possible that an enforced success should be obtained in this direction, such argument cannot achieve its object, since the *Rig-Veda* remains. Brought down to the most modern limits of the age assigned to it, its date cannot be made to overlap that of the *Pentateuch*, which is admittedly later.

At the very dawn of intellectual humanity, the Rig-Veda laid the foundation-stones of all the faiths and creeds, of every fane and church built from first to last; and they are still there.

The Orientalists know well that they cannot make away with the landmarks, followed by all subsequent religions, set up in that “Bible of Humanity” called the *Rig-Veda*. It is there that at the very dawn of intellectual humanity were laid the [241] foundation-stones of all the faiths and creeds, of every fane and church built from first to last; and they are still there. Universal “myths,” personifications of Powers divine and cosmic, primary and secondary, and historical personages of all the now-existing as well as of extinct religions are to be found in the seven chief Deities and their 330,000,000 correlations of the *Rig-Veda*, and those Seven, with the odd millions, are the Rays of the one boundless Unity.

But to THIS can never be offered profane worship. It can only be the “object of the most abstract meditation, which Hindus practice in order to obtain absorption in it.” At the beginning of every “dawn” of “Creation,” eternal Light — which is darkness — assumes the aspect of so-called Chaos: chaos to the human intellect; the eternal Root to the superhuman or spiritual sense.

Eastern Cosmogony in a nutshell.

Osiris is a Black God because Noumenon is “Darkness” to the perception of the common man.

“Osiris is a black God.” These were the words pronounced at “low breath” at Initiation in Egypt, because Osiris Noumenon is darkness to the mortal. In this Chaos are formed the “Waters,” Mother Isis, Aditi, *etc.* They are the “Waters of Life,” in which primordial germs are created — or rather reawakened — by the primordial Light. It is Purushōttama, or the Divine Spirit, which in its capacity of Nārāyana, the Mover on the Waters of Space, fructifies and infuses the Breath of life into that germ which becomes the “Golden Mundane Egg,” in which the male Brahmā is created;¹ and from this the first Prajāpati, the Lord of Beings, emerges, and becomes the progenitor of mankind. And though it is not he, but the Absolute, that is said to contain the Universe in Itself, yet it is the duty of the male Brahmā to manifest it in a visible form.

¹ The Vaishnavas, who regard Vishnu as the Supreme God and the fashioner of the Universe, claim that Brahmā sprang from the navel of Vishnu, the “imperishable,” or rather from the lotus that grew from it. But the word “navel” here means the Central Point, the mathematical symbol of infinitude, or Parabrahman, the One and the Secondless.

Hence he has to be connected with the procreation of species, and assumes, like Jehovah and other male Gods in subsequent anthropomorphism, a phallic symbol. At best every such male God, the “Father” of all, becomes the “Archetypal Man.” Between him and the Infinite Deity stretches an abyss. In the [242] theistic religions of personal Gods the latter are degraded from abstract Forces into physical potencies. The Water of Life — the “Deep” of Mother Nature — is viewed in its terrestrial aspect in anthropomorphic religions.

Behold, how holy it [the Water of Life] has become by theological magic! It is held sacred and is deified now as of old in almost every religion. But if Christians use it as a means of spiritual purification in baptism and prayer; if Hindus pay reverence to their sacred streams, tanks and rivers; if Parsī, Mohammedan and Christian alike believe in its efficacy, surely that element must have some great and Occult significance.

The material Universe was built by Water, say the Kabbalists, who know the difference between the “two waters” — the Waters of Life and those of “Salvation” — so confused together in dogmatic religions.

In Occultism it stands for the Fifth Principle of Kosmos, in the lower septenary: for the whole visible Universe was built by Water, say the Kabbalists who know the difference between the two waters — the “Waters of Life” and those of Salvation — so confused together in dogmatic religions. The “King-Preacher” says of himself:

I, the Preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem, and I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all *things* that are done under heaven.¹

Speaking of the great work and glory of the Elōhīm² — unified into the “Lord God” in the English Bible, whose garment, he tells us, is light and heaven the curtain — he refers to the builder,

Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters,³

that is, the divine Host of the Sēphirōth, who have constructed the Universe out of the Deep, the Waters of Chaos.

Moses and Thales said that only earth and water can bring forth a living soul, water being on this plane the Principle of all things.

Moses and Thales were right in saying that only earth and water can bring forth a living Soul, water being on this plane the principle of all things. Moses was an Initiate, Thales a Philosopher — *i.e.*, a Scientist, for the words were synonymous in his day. [243]

¹ *Ecclesiastes* i, 12, 13

² It is probably needless to say here what everyone knows. The translation of the Protestant Bible is not a word for word rendering of the earlier Greek and Latin Bibles: the sense is very often disfigured, and “God” is put where “Yahve” and “Elōhīm” stand.

³ *Psalms* civ, 3

In Egypt Osiris was Fire, and Isis was the Earth or, its synonym, Water, the two ever opposing elements (because of their opposite properties) being necessary to each other for a common object — that of procreation. The earth needs solar heat and rain to make her throw out her germs. But these procreative properties of Fire and Water, or Spirit and Matter, are symbols only of physical generation.

The secret meaning of this is that water and earth stand in the Mosaic Books for the *prima materia* and the creative (feminine) Principle on our plane. In Egypt Osiris was Fire, and Isis was the Earth or its synonym Water; the two opposing elements — just because of their opposite properties — being necessary to each other for a common object; that of procreation. The earth needs solar heat and rain to make her throw out her germs. But these procreative properties of Fire and Water, or Spirit and Matter, are symbols but of physical generation. While the Jewish Kabbalists symbolized these elements only in their application to manifested things, and revered them as the emblems for the production of terrestrial life, the Eastern Philosophy noticed them only as an illusive emanation from their spiritual prototypes, and no unclean or unholy thought marred its Esoteric religious symbology.

Chaos is Theos, which becomes Kosmos: it is Space, the container of everything in the Universe.¹

Chaos, as shown elsewhere, is Theos, which becomes Kosmos: it is Space, the container of everything in the Universe. As Occult Teachings assert, it is called by the Chaldaëans, Egyptians, and every other nation Tohu-vah-bohu, or Chaos, Confusion, because Space is the great storehouse of Creation, whence proceed, not forms alone, but also ideas, which could receive their expression only through the Logos, the Word, Verbum, or Sound.

The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 are the successive emanations from Mother [Space] as she forms running downward her garment, spreading it upon the seven steps of Creation.² The roller returns upon itself, as one end joins the other in infinitude, and the numbers 4, 3, and 2 are displayed, as it is the only side [244] of the veil that we can perceive, the first number being lost in its inaccessible solitude.

. . . Father, which is Boundless Time, generates Mother, which is infinite Space, in Eternity; and Mother generates Father in Manvantaras, which are divisions of durations, that Day when that world becomes one ocean. Then the Mother becomes Nārā [Waters, the Great Deep] for Nara [the Supreme Spirit] to rest — or move — upon, when, it is said, that 1, 2, 3, 4 descend and abide in the world of

¹ [For an in-depth analysis of this statement, consult “Chaos to sense, latent deity to reason,” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]











² To avoid misunderstanding of the word “creation” so often used by us, the remarks of the author [Mabel Collins] of *Through the Gates of Gold* may be quoted owing to their clearness and simplicity.

The words “to create” are often understood by the ordinary mind to convey the idea of evolving something out of nothing. This is clearly not its meaning. We are mentally obliged to provide our Creator with chaos from which to produce the worlds. The tiller of the soil, who is the typical producer of social life, must have his material, his earth, his sky, rain, and sun, and the seeds to place within the earth; out of nothing he can produce nothing. Out of a void, nature cannot arise; there is that material beyond, behind, or within, from which she is shaped by our desire for a universe. [pp. 71-72, Adyar ed.; p. 47, Theosophical University Press ed.]

*the unseen, while the 4, 3, 2, become the limits in the visible world to deal with the manifestations of Father [Time].*¹

This relates to the Mahāyugas which in figures become 432, and with the addition of noughts, 4,320,000.²

The Rope of the Angels expressed numerically.³

Universal Matrix	1	3	5	1	4
					
Pistis-Sophia Commentary ⁵	First Line. (Horizontal) ⁴	Ideal Triad. Potentiality of Spirit. (Pythagorean Monad)	Pentad (2 + 3 in 1) Pentacle, Pentagon, Pentagram, Pentalpha.	Second Line. (Vertical)	Tetrad, Square, Cube. Potentiality of the One Element, Matter-Spirit.
	Potency of Matter.	Bythus, the Deep, ⁶ plus the First Emanated Du- ad, Nous (Mind), and its syzygy Aletheia (Truth).	The Manasaputras, ⁷ Sons of Wisdom who, together with their syz- ygies, make 10, the Decad. ⁸	Potency of Spirit.	Dual Duad, Tetractys, Quaternary. <i>i.e.</i> , two males, two females. (See constitution of the Higher Tetrad)
Ring Pass-Not (π)	3	1	4	1	5
					

Constitution of the Higher Tetrad

Two males II, Logos (Word) and Anthrōpos (Man), plus two females =, their syzygies, Zoe (Life) and Ecclesia⁹ (Church or Assembly¹⁰ of “celestial gods and excellent mortals”),¹ Seven in all.

¹ Commentary on Stanza IX, on Cycles.

² [Consult “The Rope of the Angels,” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

³ [Table excerpted from “The Rope of the Angels,” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

⁴ Cf. “Our most eminent chemists and physicists are earnestly pursuing the not hopeless attempt of finally tracing to its hiding-place the *protyle*, or the basic line of the Pythagorean triangle. The latter is, as said, the grandest conception imaginable, as it symbolizes both the ideal and the visible universes. [Cf. Plato’s infinite and finite, v.s., *fn.* 2] . . . In the world of Form, having found its expression in the Pyramids, Symbolism has in them both a triangle and a square, with their four co-equal triangles or surfaces, the four basic points, and the fifth — the *apex*.” *Secret Doctrine*, I p. 617 & *fn.*]

⁵ Cf. *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, XIII p. 16

⁶ A female emanation answering to a superior region of the Plērōma. Cf. *Isis Unveiled*, II p. 293

⁷ Fifth order of Celestial Beings or Anthrōpos — “Heavenly Man” — the Microcosm, still within the Hexagon Star or Macrocosm. (Cf. *Secret Doctrine*, I p. 224) Fifth, not because man is a five-limbed animal, but rather because *Manas* is the *fifth* principle, the *thinking, conscious* MAN. (Cf. *ibid.*, II p. 576 & *fn.*) Also cf. “Sons of the Fire-Mist” and related studies in our Secret Doctrine’s Third Proposition Series.

⁸ *i.e.*, Pythagorean sum total of human knowledge.

⁹ [Less general than *σύλλογος*, *Liddell & Scott*]

¹⁰ Cf. “Now the word *synaxis* was also called by the Greeks *agyrmos*, ἀγυρμός (a collection of men, assembly). It referred to initiation into the Mysteries. Both words — *synaxis* and *agyrmos* — became obsolete with the Christians, and the word *missa*, or mass, prevailed and remained.

The Hebrew usage of play upon the numbers must have come to the Jews from India.

Now it is surpassingly strange, if it be a mere coincidence, that the numerical value of Tohu-vah-bohu, or “Chaos” in the Bible — which Chaos, of course, is the “Mother” Deep, or the Waters of Space — should yield the same figures. For this is what is found in a Kabbalist manuscript:

It is said of the Heavens and the Earth in the second verse of *Genesis* that they were “Chaos and Confusion” — that is, they were “Tohu-vah-bohu,” “and *darkness* was upon the face of the deep,” *i.e.*, “the perfect material out of which construction was to be made lacked organization.” The order of the digits of these words as they stand — *i.e.*,² the letters rendered by their numerical value — is 6,526,654 and 2,386. By art speech these are key-working numbers loosely shuffled together, the germs and keys of construction, but to be recognized, one by one, as used and required. They follow symmetrically in the work as immediately following the first sentence of grand enunciation: “In Rāsh developed itself Gods, the heavens and the earth.”

Multiply the numbers of the letters of “Tohu-vah-bohu” together continuously from right to left, placing the consecutive single products as we go, and we will have the following series of values, *viz.*,

- 30, 60, 360, 2,160,10,800, 43,200, or as by the characterizing digits; 3,6, 36,216, 108, and 432;
- 20, 120, 720, 1,440, 7,200, or 2, 12, 72, 144, 72, 432, the series closing in 432, one of the most famous numbers of antiquity, and which, though obscured, crops out in the chronology up to the Flood.³ . . . [245]

This shows that the Hebrew usage of play upon the numbers⁴ must have come to the Jews from India. As we have seen, the final series yields, besides many another combination, the figures 108 and 1008 — the number of the names of Vishnu, whence the 108 grains of the Yogī’s rosary — and close with 432, the truly “famous” number in Indian and Chaldæan antiquity, appearing in the cycle of 4,320,000 years in the former, and in the 432,000 years, the duration of the Chaldæan divine dynasties.



Hesychius gives the name (agyrmos) to the first day of the initiation into the mysteries of Ceres, goddess of harvest, and refers to it also under that of *Synaxis*. The early Christians called their mass, before this term was adopted, and the celebration of their mysteries — *Synaxis*, a word compounded from *sun* ‘with,’ and *ago* ‘I lead,’ whence, the Greek *synaxis* or an *assembly*.” *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE ROOTS OF RITUALISM – XII) XI pp. 98-99 & *fn.* [explaining the assemblies of the “Builders of the Upper Temple,” and the terms “mass,” “lodge,” and “synaxes” of the Brethren and early Christians, after Ragon.]

“Even in the time of Plato, Hermes was already identified with the Thoth of the Egyptians. But this word *thoth* does not only mean ‘Intelligence’; it also means ‘assembly’ or *school*. In reality Thoth-Hermes is simply the personification of the voice (or sacred teaching) of the sacerdotal caste of Egypt; the voice of the Great Hierophants.” *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (ALCHEMY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY) XI p. 534

¹ Cf. *Secret Doctrine*, II p. 610

² Or, read from right to left, the letters and their corresponding numerals stand thus: “tome,” 4; “h,” 5; “v,” 6; “v,” 6; “bh,” 2; “h,” 5; “v” or “w,” 6; which yields “thuvbhu,” 4566256, or “Tohu-vah-bohu.”

³ Mr. J. Ralston Skinner’s MS. [See *Secret Doctrine*’s Index Volume, p. 445, compiled by Boris de Zirkoff; Adyar, 1979]

⁴ [Gematria]

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