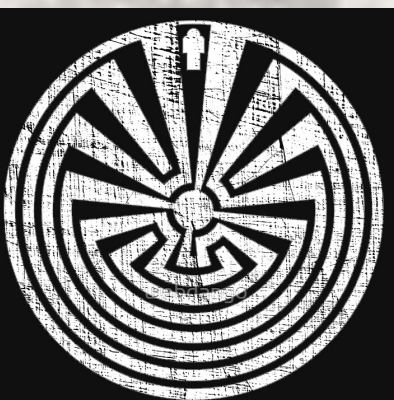




# Wandering Mazes Lost

Exploring the History of the Problem of Existence

Dean Rickles

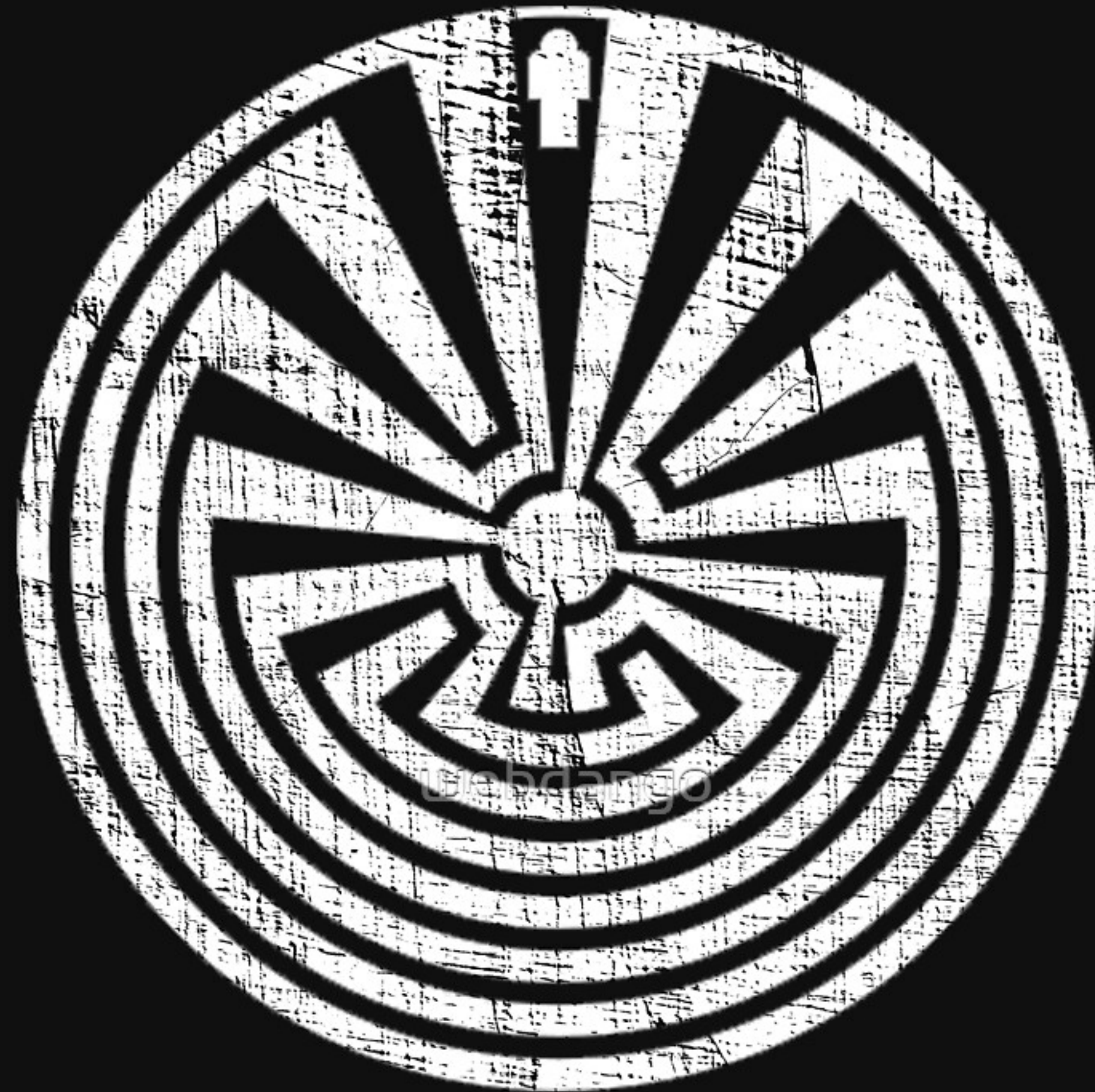


The University of Sydney



JOHN  
TEMPLETON  
FOUNDATION





“The unprepared person when faced with the question of why existence “will realize that [they] have been living in a world for many years whose very existence is inexplicable to [them].”

Arthur Witherall



“There is no route out of the maze. The maze shifts as you move through it, because it is alive.”

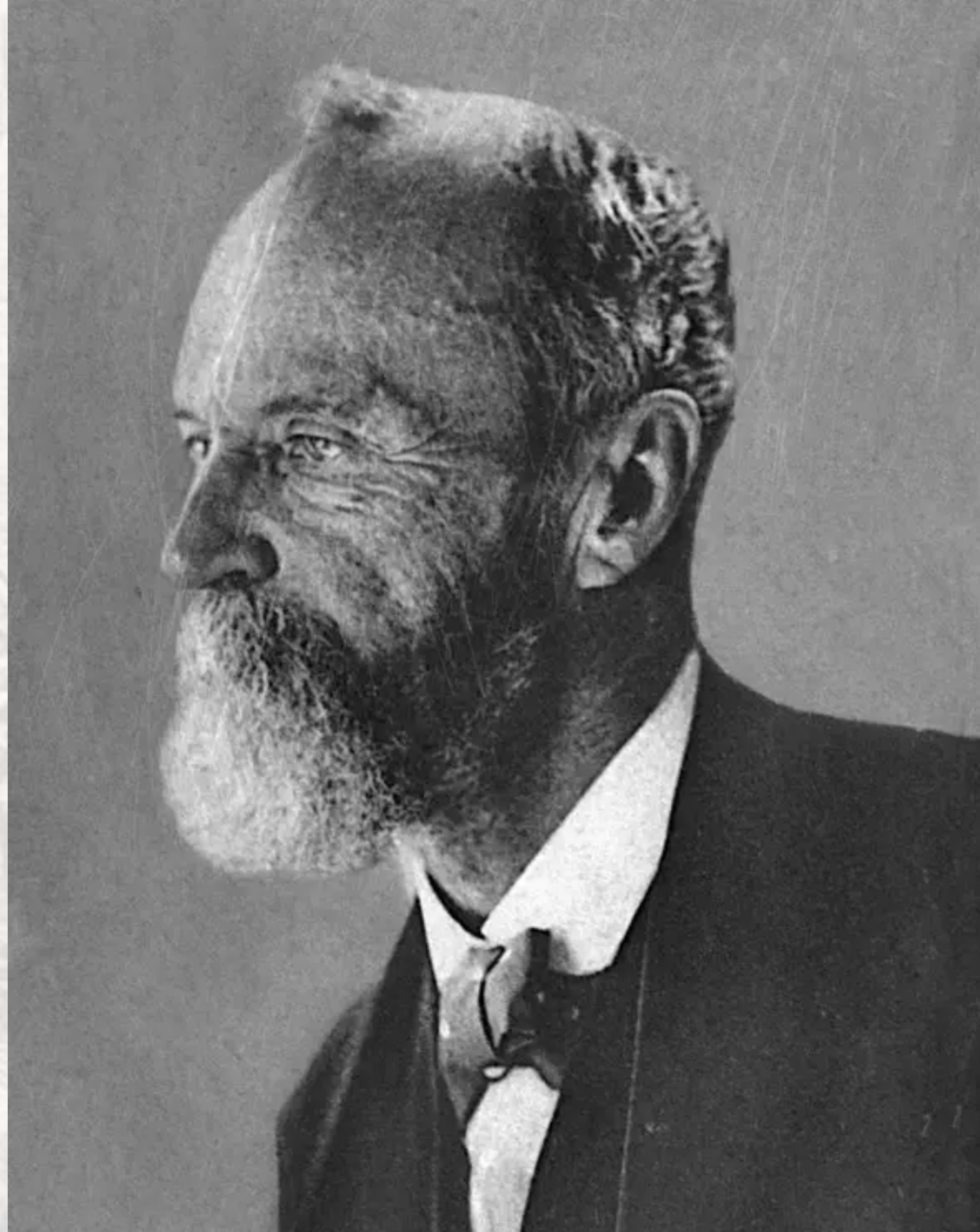
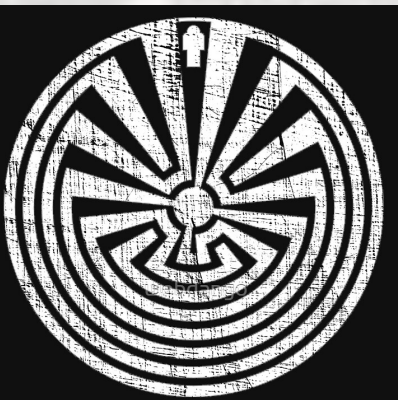
— Philip K. Dick



# **How comes there to be a world at all?**

**William James**

**And might it as well not have been?**



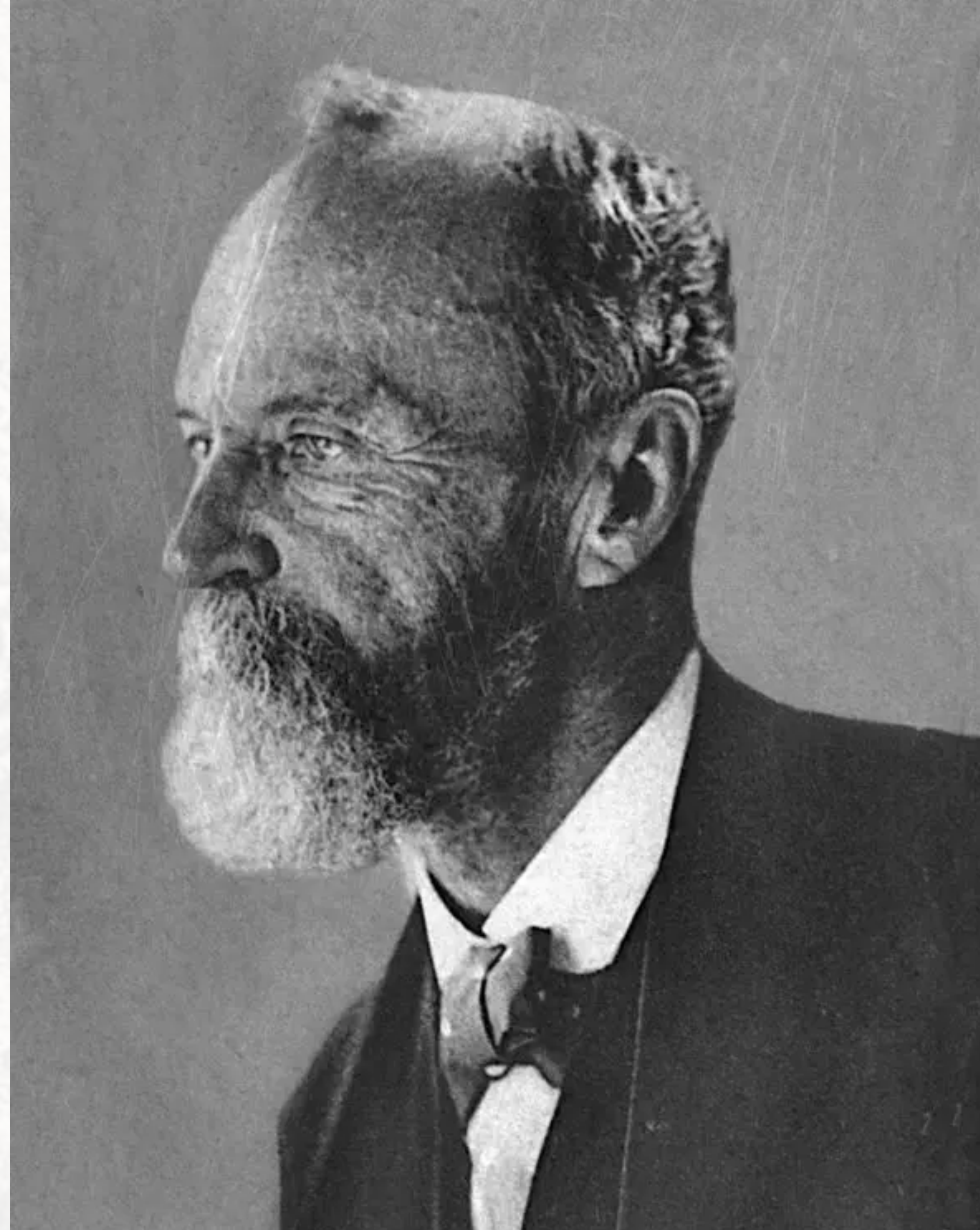


Our mind is so wedded to the process of seeing **an other** beside every item of its experience, that when the notion of an absolute datum is presented to it, it goes through its usual procedure and remains pointing at the void beyond, as if in that lay further matter for contemplation.

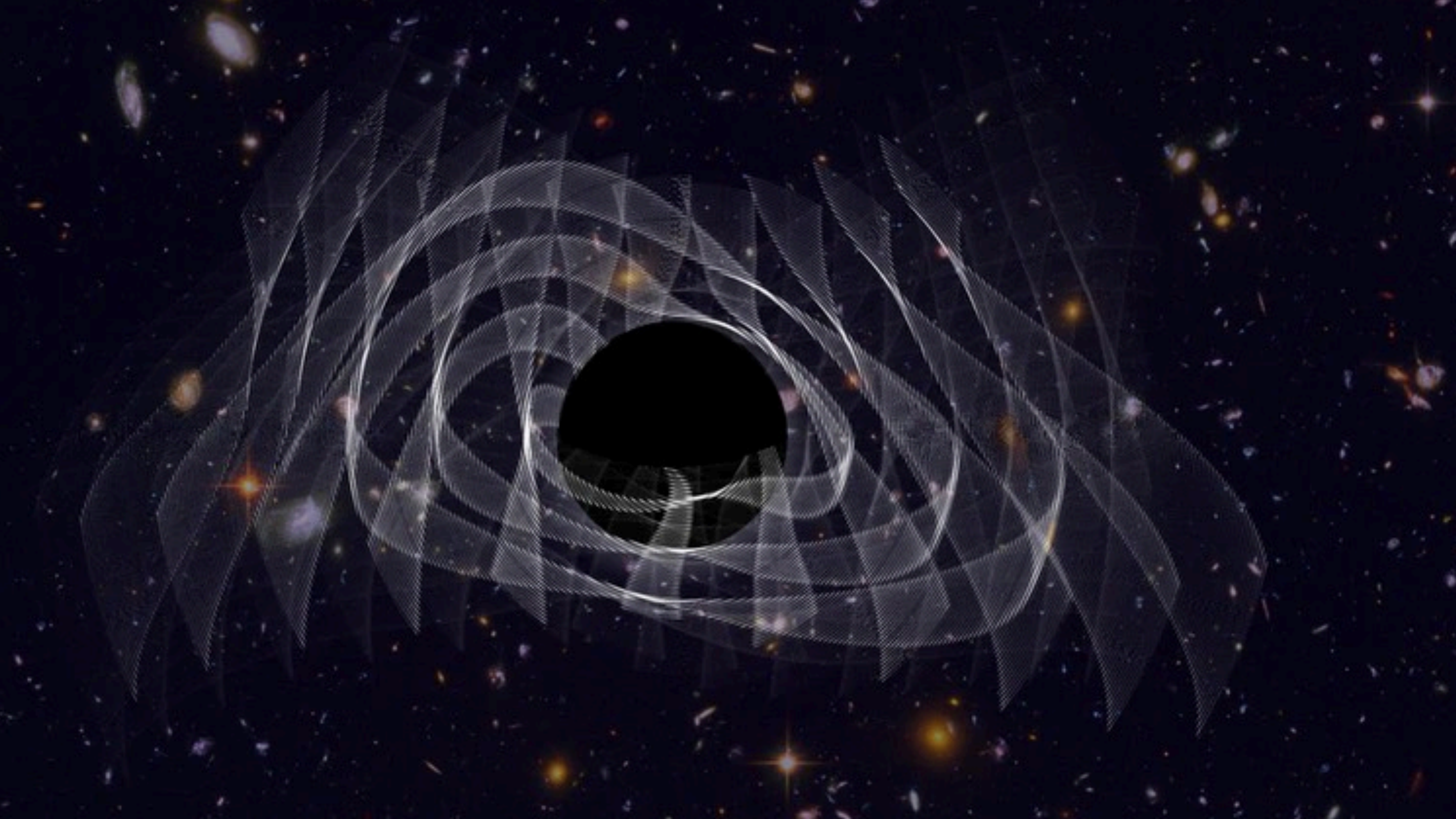
In short, it spins for itself the further positive consideration of a nonentity enveloping the being of its datum; and as that leads nowhere, back recoils the thought toward its datum again. But there is no natural bridge between nonentity and this particular datum, and the thought stands oscillating to and fro, wondering "Why was there anything but nonentity; why just this universal datum and not another?" and finds no end, in wandering mazes lost. Indeed, [a certain Professor] Bain's words [affirming the end of mystery in the complete vision of science when all has been encompassed within the most general of scientific laws] are so untrue that in reflecting men **it is just when the attempt to fuse the manifold into a single totality has been most successful, when the conception of the universe as a unique fact is nearest its perfection, that the craving for further explanation, the ontological wonder-sickness, arises in its extremest form.**

As Schopenhauer says, "The uneasiness which keeps the never-resting clock of metaphysics in motion, is the consciousness that the non-existence of this world is just as possible as its existence."

William James, *Problems of Philosophy* (pp. 71-72)









Beyond the world, i.e. beyond the collection of finite things, there is some one being who rules, not only as the soul is the ruler in me (or, to put it better, as the self is the ruler in my body), but also in a much higher way. For the one being who rules the universe doesn't just govern the world but also builds or makes it. He is above the world and *outside* it, so to speak, and therefore he is the ultimate reason for things.

nothing **in the world** could be the ultimate reason for things

We can't find in any individual thing, or even in the entire collection and series of things, a sufficient reason why they exist.

why there is any world at all, and why the world is as it is?

you are welcome to imagine that the world has always existed. But you are assuming only a succession of states, and no reason for the world can be found in any one of them

so obviously the reason for the world must be found elsewhere **out of the world** - , i.e. out of the totality of finite things, and so in **something infinite and eternal**

**The reasons for the world, therefore, lie hidden in something outside the world**



**G. W. Leibniz, The Ultimate Origin of Things**





Because something rather than nothing exists, there is a certain **urge** for existence—a claim to existence, so to speak—in possible things or in possibility or essence itself. In short, essence in and of itself **strains towards existence**.

existence is to prevail over nonexistence,  
i.e. something is to exist rather than nothing,  
i.e. something is to pass from possibility to actuality

Existence appears to me like a conquest over nought...  
Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*



Maximize variety: in building on a particular plot of ground (the 'cost'), construct the most pleasing building you can, with the rooms as numerous as the site can take and as elegant as possible. Applying this to our present context: given the temporal and spatial extent of the world—in short, its *capacity* or *receptivity*—fit into that as great a variety of kinds of thing as possible.

From this we can now understand in a wonderful way how the very origination of things involves a certain divine mathematics or metaphysical mechanism

[P]ossibles strain *pari jure* for existence in proportion to how much reality they contain





the fundamental reason for the reality of both essences and existences lies in one thing, which must:  
be greater than the world,  
be higher than the world, and have existed before the world did;  
since it is what brings it about not only that the things that make up the world have existence, but also that possibilities have their own reality.

·It is because of this thing that •there are *humans*, and •there is *humanity*, with this considered as an essence, a possibility, a possible-way-of-being. Moreover, it has to be a *single* source, because of how all these things and possibilities are interconnected. It is obvious also that things *continuously* flow from this source: they have been *and still are being* produced by it. Why? Because if we attend only to the world as a going concern, it is not clear why one state of the world should lead to *this* subsequent state rather than to *that* one, and so for a full explanation we have to look outside the world.

[T]he world is physically (or, if you prefer, metaphysically) most perfect, i.e. the series of things that has been produced is the one that brings the greatest amount of reality into existence.



Still the best of all possible worlds:

“Someone who hasn’t tasted bitter things doesn’t deserve sweet things, and indeed won’t appreciate them! This is a *law of delight*: Pleasure doesn’t come from uniformity, which creates disgust and makes us numb rather than happy.”

CANDIDE,  
OU  
L’OPTIMISME,  
TRADUIT DE L’ALLEMAND  
DE  
MR. LE DOCTEUR RALPH.



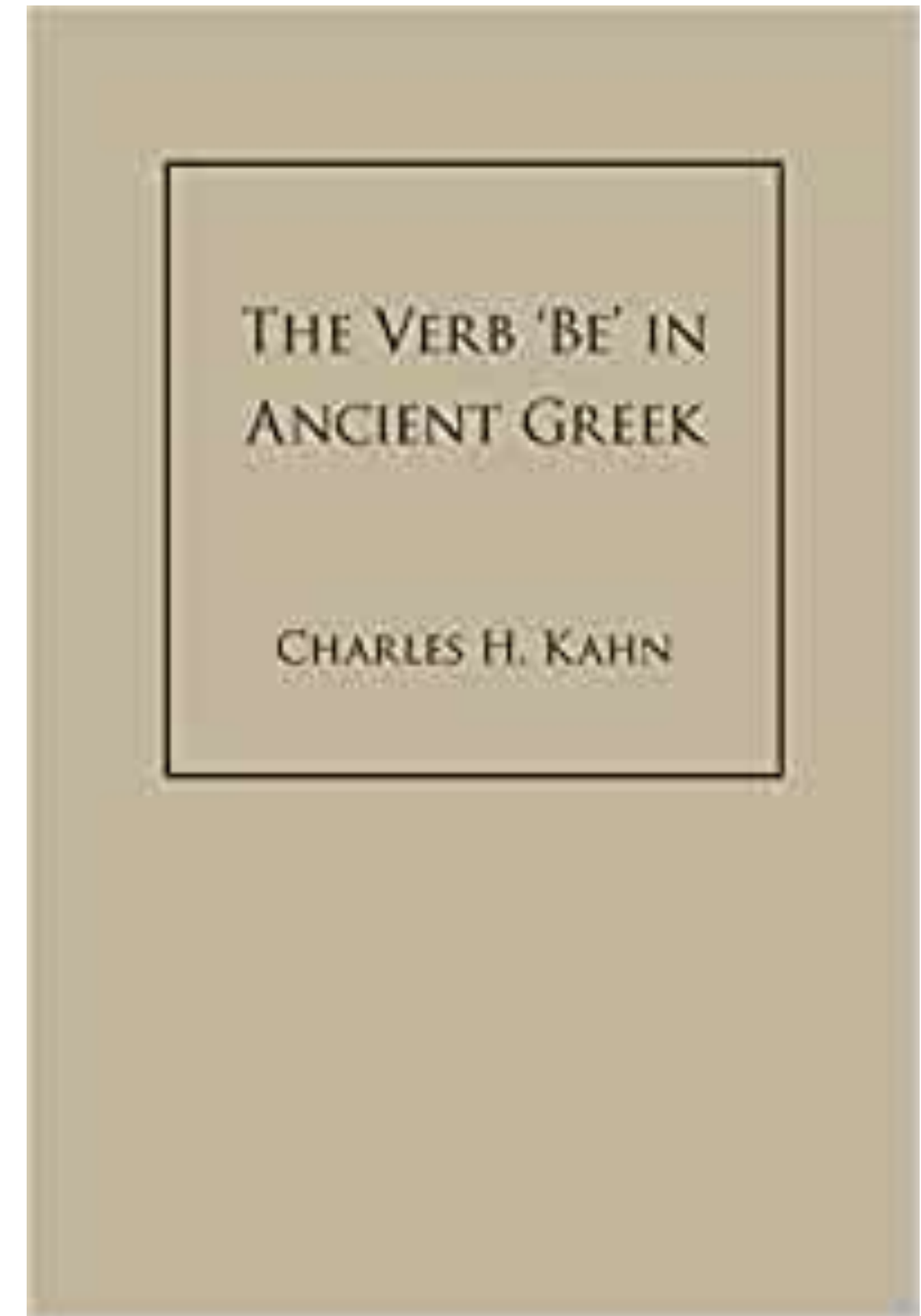
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MDCCCLIX.



The notion of Being, as formulated by Parmenides, seems to come from nowhere, like a philosophical meteor with no historical antecedents but profound historical consequences. It would be difficult to overstate the influence of this new conception. On the one hand, Plato's doctrine of the eternal being of the Forms as well as his struggle with Not-Being both clearly derive from Parmenides' account of *to on*. On the other hand, not only Aristotle's doctrine of categories as "the many ways that things are said *to be*" but also his definition of metaphysics as the study of "being qua being" provide deliberate alternatives to Parmenides' monolithic conception of *what is*.

Charles H. Kahn, *The Verb "To Be" in Ancient Greek*





You can say that existence is a property if you want to. No harm in it. If existence is a property, it is the property something has if and only if it exists, if and only if there is such a thing as it... If you want to talk in that way, however, you should keep it firmly in mind that existence, so conceived, is a wholly uninteresting property.

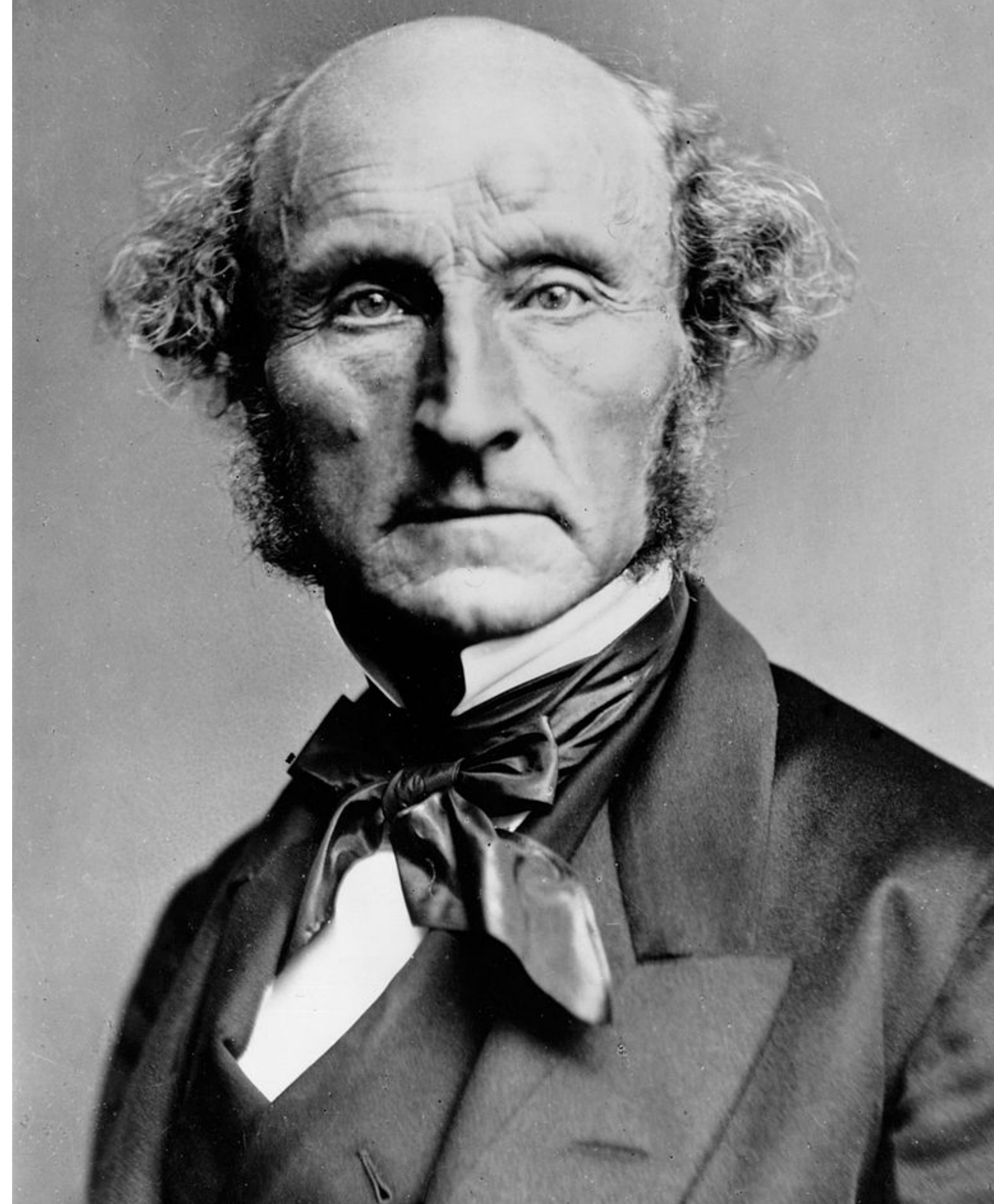
Peter van Inwagen

# BE

Qua Exists vs Qua Copula?

To Exist vs To Be

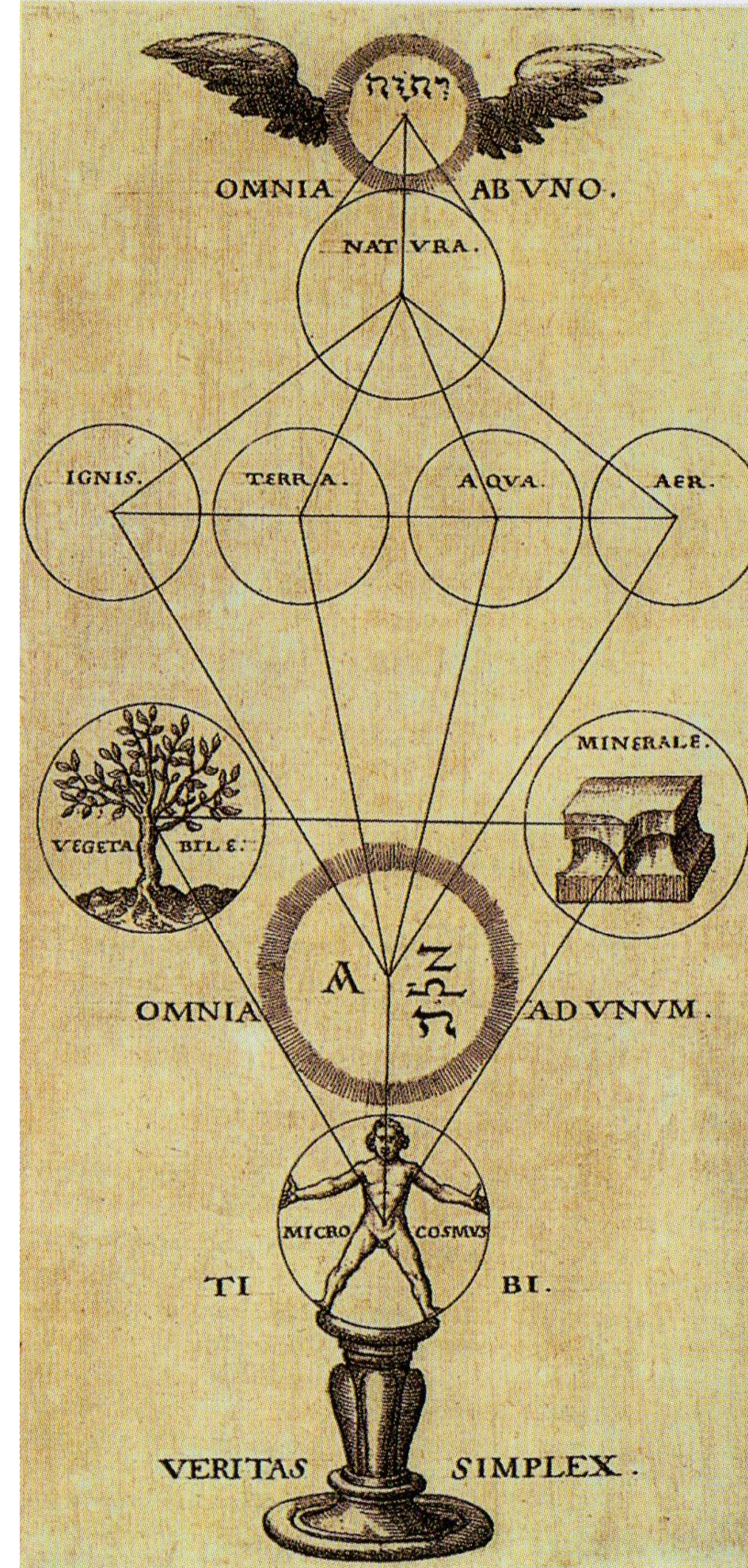
That the employment of [the word "is"] as a copula does not necessarily include the affirmation of existence, appears from such a proposition as this: *A centaur is a fiction of the poets*; where it cannot be possibly implied that a centaur exists, since the proposition itself expressly asserts that the thing has no real existence." (*System of Logic* I.iv.1)





Strictly speaking, the Infinite Unmanifest is a "Nothing" rather than a "Thing"; and yet not such a "Nothing" as implies "not-ness" or "naught," but rather such a "Nothing" as implies "The Possibility of Everything, yet without the limitations of Thingness."

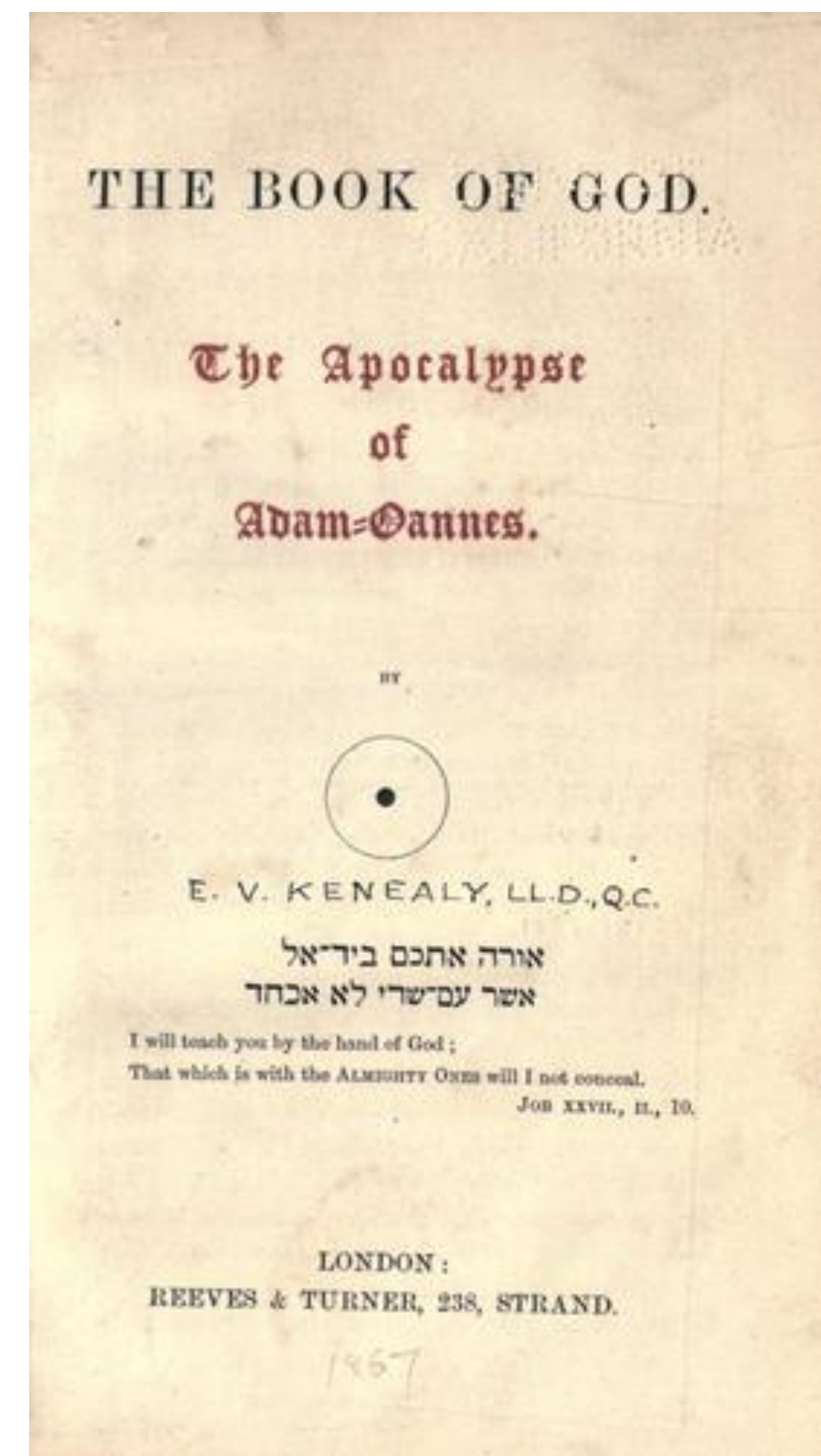
Magus Incognito, *The Secret Doctrine of the Rosicrucians.*





[T]he state of Being of the Infinite and Absolute Reality—the Eternal Parent—during this state of the Infinite Unmanifest cannot be expressed in words, for it is beyond words. It can be thought of only **symbolically**—by means of Its only possible symbol, i.e., that of Infinite Space. Even symbolized, it can be thought of only in terms of negation; for being in the state of Absolute Being (which as Hegel says is practically identical with Non-Being, when the term "Being" is used in the sense of finite, conditioned, and qualified Being), it cannot be thought of as possessing any of the qualities, attributes, or properties of Thingness. Therefore, its state of Being can be suggested only by using the terms implying the negation of all those qualities, properties, and attributes which men ascribe to Things—even to those Things which they feel rather than conceive, and which represent even the remotest limits of their mentative efforts.

Edward Vaughan Kenealy, The Book of God. An Introduction to The Apocalypse





Nothingness cannot Be.  
Nor, however can nothingness be Many.  
Many must be something.

# THE MECHANICS OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN MAGICAL PRACTICE

*by*

ROBERT KRIECH RITNER



STUDIES IN ANCIENT ORIENTAL CIVILIZATION • NUMBER 54  
THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
CHICAGO • ILLINOIS





The Nothing *Noths*



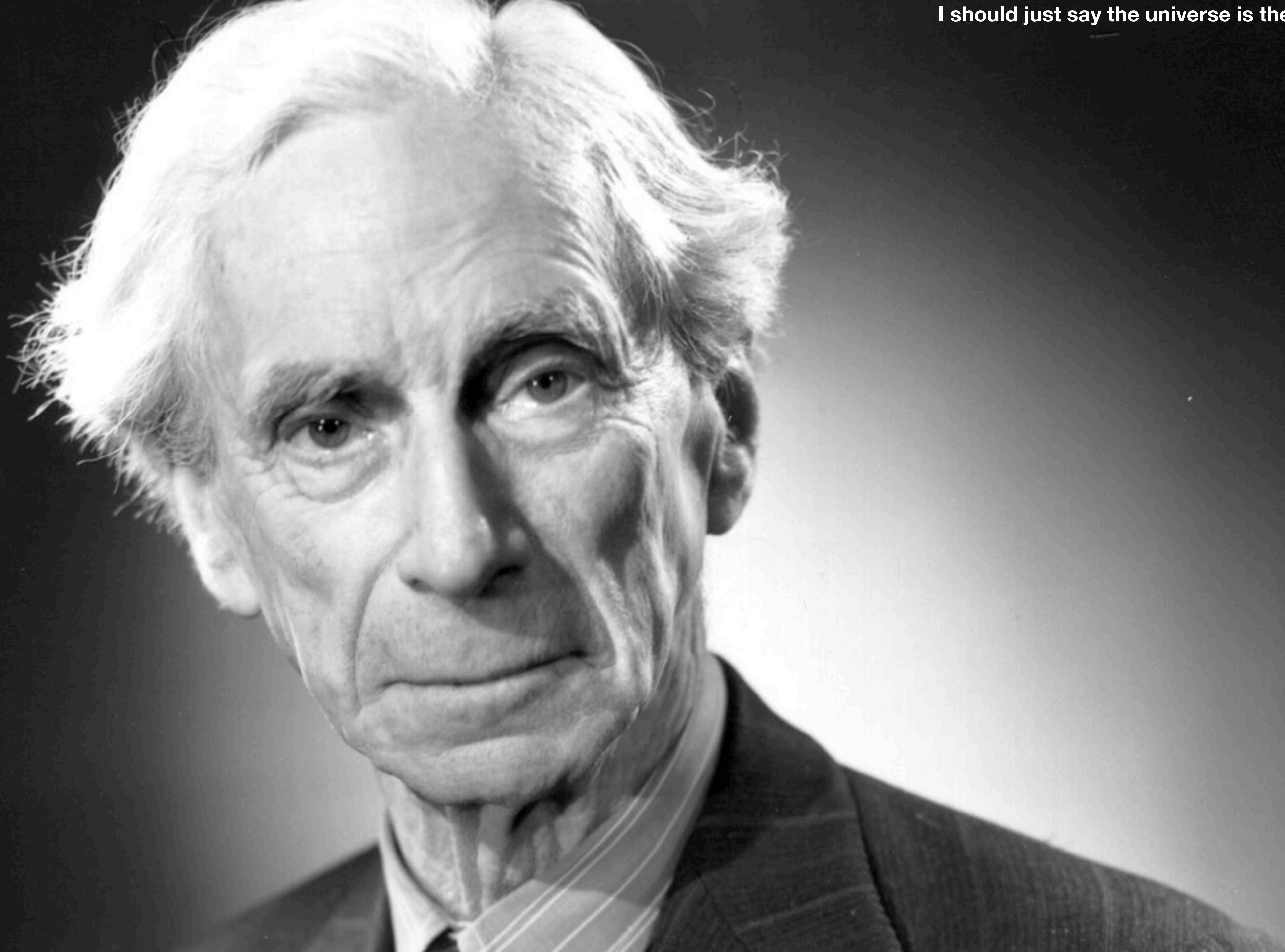
Chuang Tzu [Zhuangzi]  
Absolute unconditionality = wu wu = non-non-existence

無





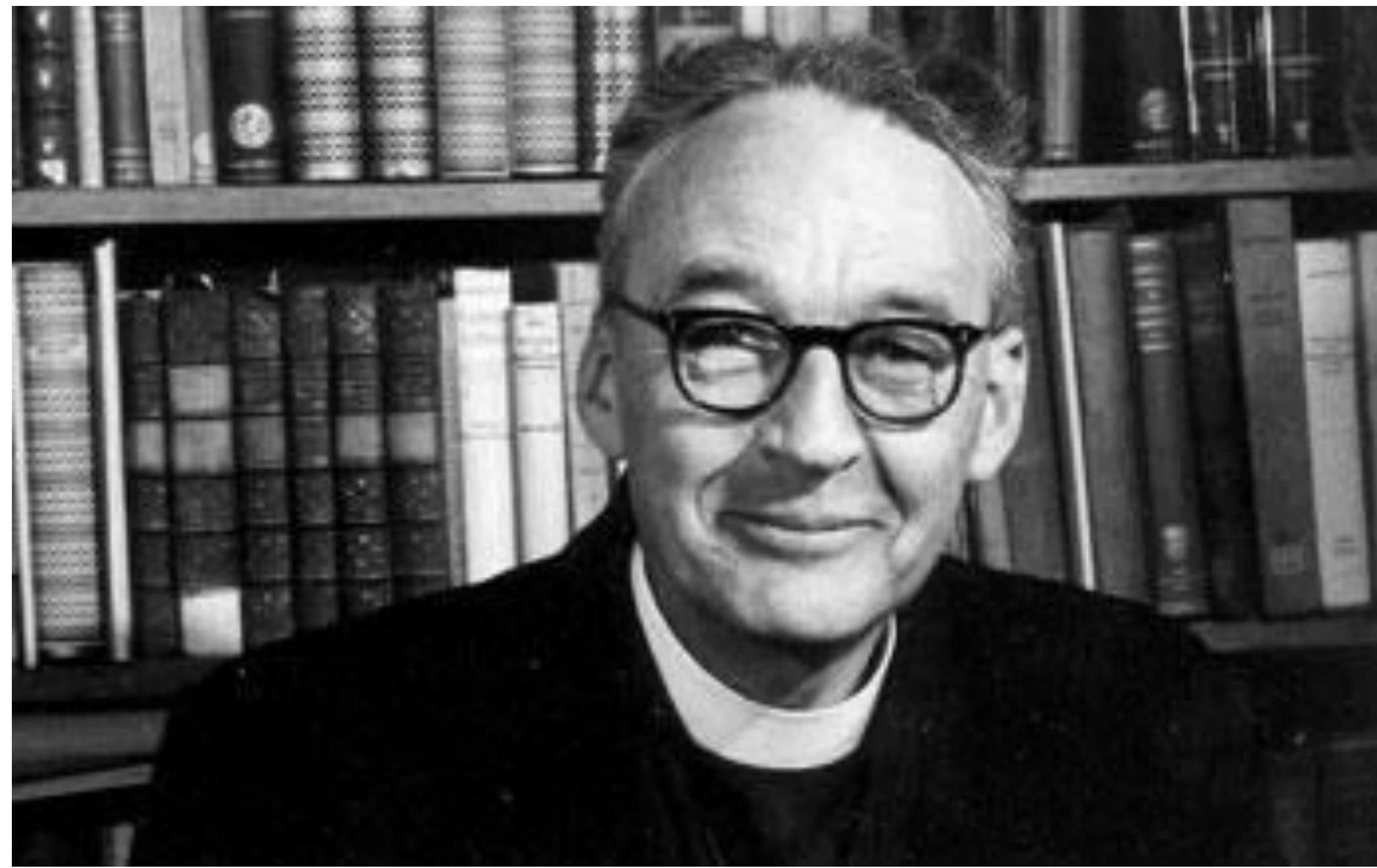
I should just say the universe is there, and that's all...





In the manner typical of deep philosophical issues, it resists burial and keeps springing back to life.  
Nicholas Rescher





We find in nature things that are possible to be and not possible to be, since they are found to be generated and corrupted. But it is impossible for these always to exist, for that which can not-be at some time is not. Therefore, if everything can not-be, then at one time there was nothing in existence, because that which does not exist begins to exist only through something already existing. Therefore if at one time nothing was in existence, it would have been impossible for anything to have begun to exist; and thus now nothing would be in existence—which is absurd. Therefore, not all beings are merely possible, but there must exist something the existence of which is necessary. But every necessary thing has its necessity caused by another, or not. Now it is impossible to go on to infinity in necessary things which have their necessity caused by another, as has already been proved in regard to efficient causes. Therefore, we cannot but admit the existence of some being having of itself its own necessity, and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity. This all men speak of as God.

F. C. Copleston





“Every being which begins has a cause for its beginning; now the world is a being which begins; therefore, it possesses a cause for its beginning.”

- (1) Everything that begins to exist has a cause
- (2) The universe began to exist
- (3) Therefore, the universe has a cause



# ἀρχή

## Archeology



The aim of knowledge is to divest the objective world that stands opposed to us of its strangeness, and, as the phrase is, to find ourselves at **home** in it: which means no more than to trace the objective world back to the notion,-to our innermost self.

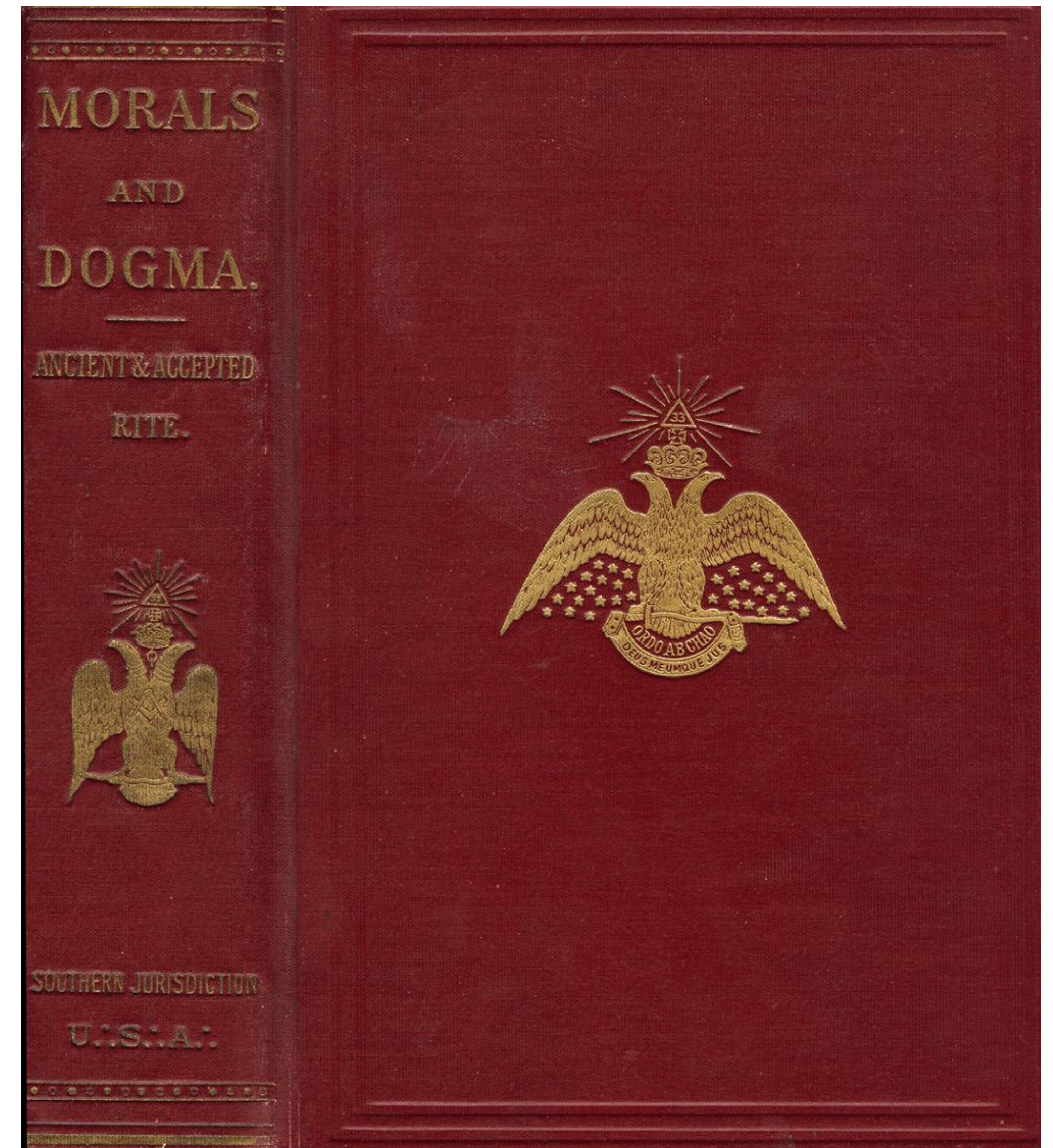
G. Hegel, *The Science of Logic* (trans. William Wallace, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1874, p. 289)





“Does it satisfy our mighty  
hungering and thirst for  
immortality, our anxious longing  
to come nearer to, and to know  
more of, the Eternal Cause of all  
things?”

Albert Pike, *Morals and  
Dogmas*.

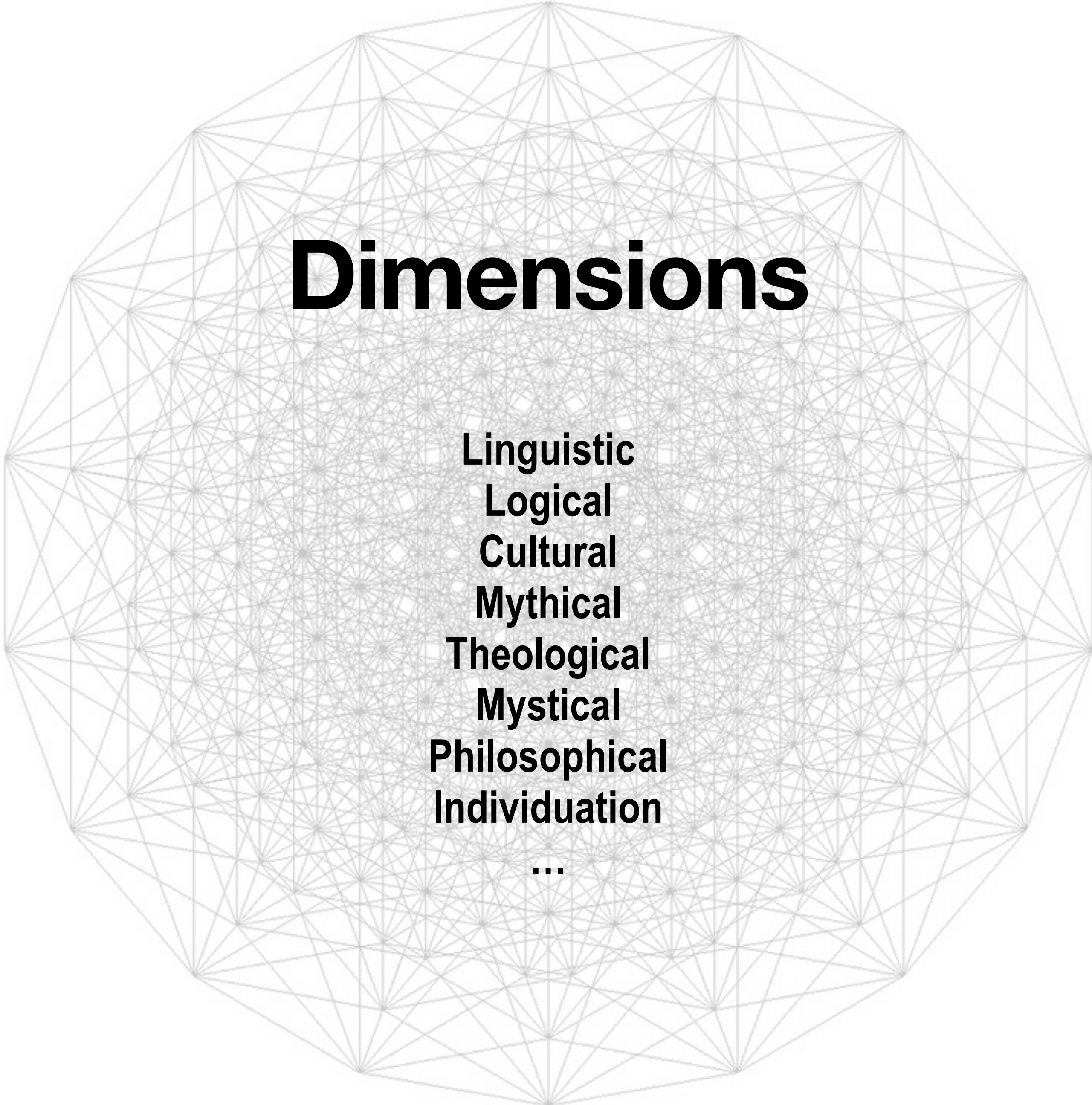




**“We shall probably never know the name  
of any man, city, or nation before 5000  
B.C.”**

**John Haldane [“Is History a Fraud?” Harper's Magazine 161, no. 9 (1930): 470--78, on 471]**






# Dimensions

Linguistic  
Logical  
Cultural  
Mythical  
Theological  
Mystical  
Philosophical  
Individuation

...





# **Taxonomic Categories**

**Ex nihilo vs Eternal**

**Infinite vs Finite**

**Immanent vs Transcendental**

**Eschatology vs Open**

**Providential vs Arbitrary**

**Personal vs Impersonal**

**Unique creation vs Multiple creations**

**Anthropic vs non-anthropoc**

**Monotheist vs Polytheist vs Pantheist**

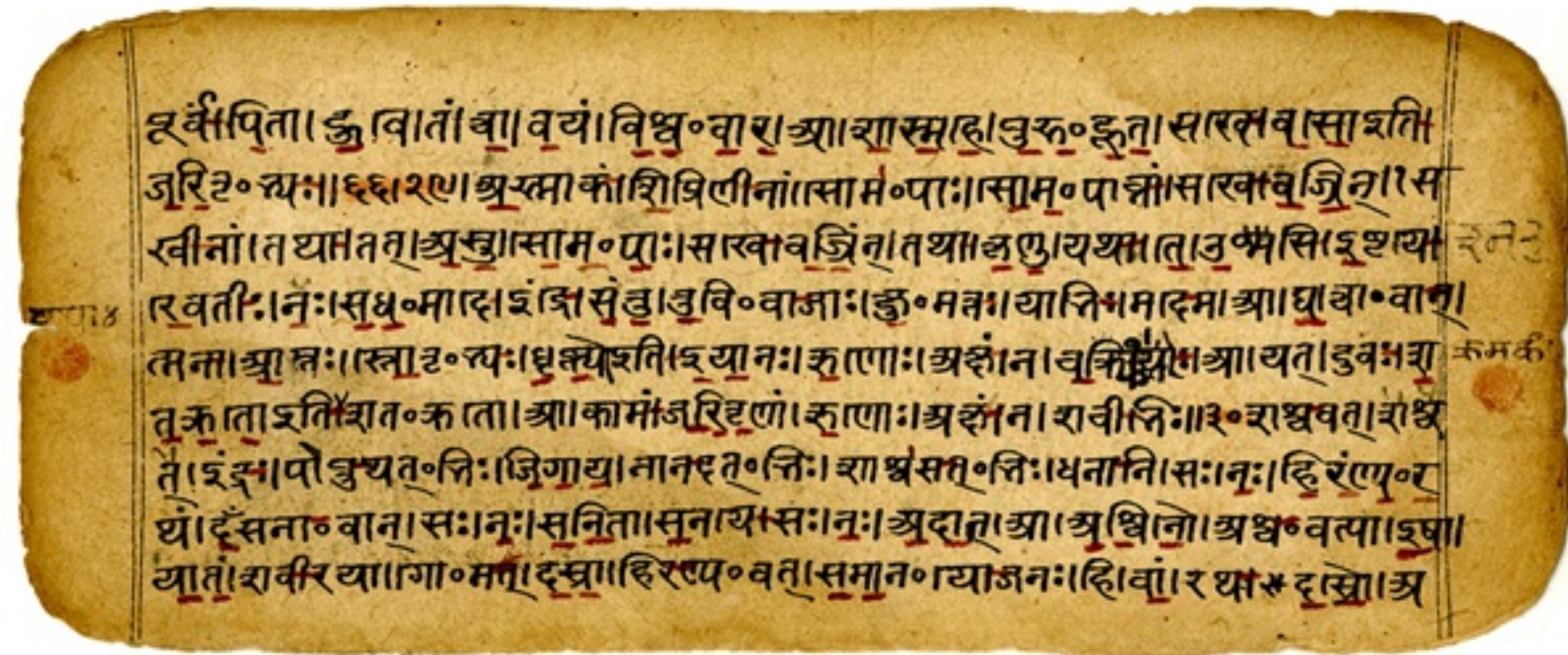
**Monist vs Dualist vs Pluralist**

**Macrocosm and Microcosm vs Unitary World**

**Fate vs Free will [participation]**

**...**





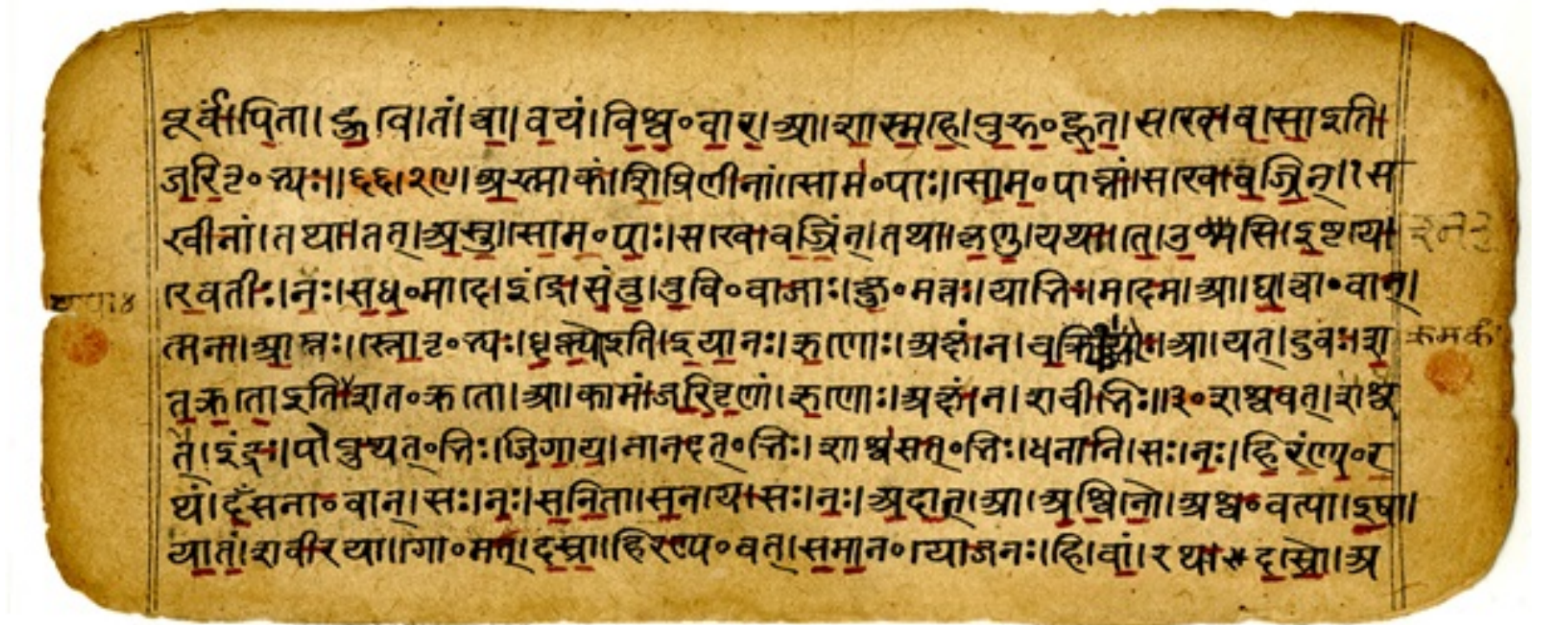
Who knows the secret? Who proclaimed it here?  
 Whence, whence this manifold creation sprang?  
 The Gods themselves came later into being—  
 Who knows from whence this great creation sprang?  
 That, whence all this great creation came,  
 Whether its will created or was mute,  
 The Most High Seer that is in highest heaven.  
 He knows it—or perchance even he knows not.

Rg Veda (H. T. Colebrooke, 1805)



There was **neither non-existence** nor existence then;  
Neither the realm of space, nor the sky which is beyond;  
What stirred? Where? In whose protection?  
There was neither death nor immortality then;  
No distinguishing sign of night nor of day;  
That One breathed, windless, by its own impulse;  
Other than that there was nothing beyond.  
Darkness there was at first, by darkness hidden;  
Without distinctive marks, this all was water;  
That which, becoming, by the void was covered;  
That One by force of heat came into being.

—*Rigveda, Nasadiya Sukta 10.129* (Abridged, Tr: Krame)







## The Sumerian *Praise of the Pickax*

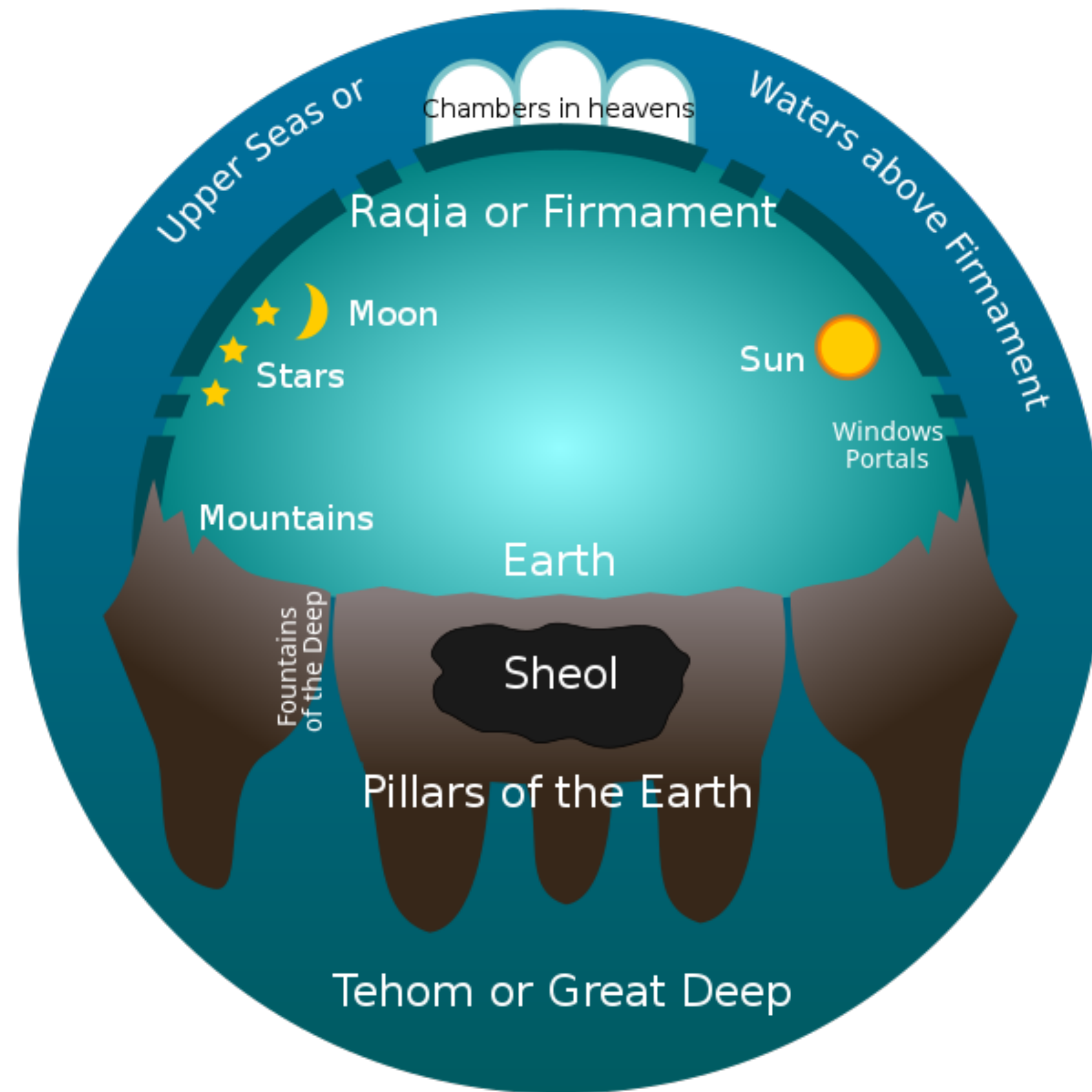
*Creation from preexisting matter and through  
a separation of heaven from the earth =*

The lord brought into being the beginnings  
splendidly, The lord, whose decisions cannot  
be changed, Enlil, to make the seed of the  
kalam (=Sumer) sprout from the earth/the  
netherworld, To separate heaven from earth he  
hastened, To separate earth from heaven he  
hastened. ... He bound the pillar (of Heaven  
and Earth) in Duranki. He worked with the  
pickax: the light of the sun came out. He axed  
(its) task: the work of hoeing. He axed the  
pickax and the basket (to be carried) in the  
arms

*The Sumerians*, Noah Kramer

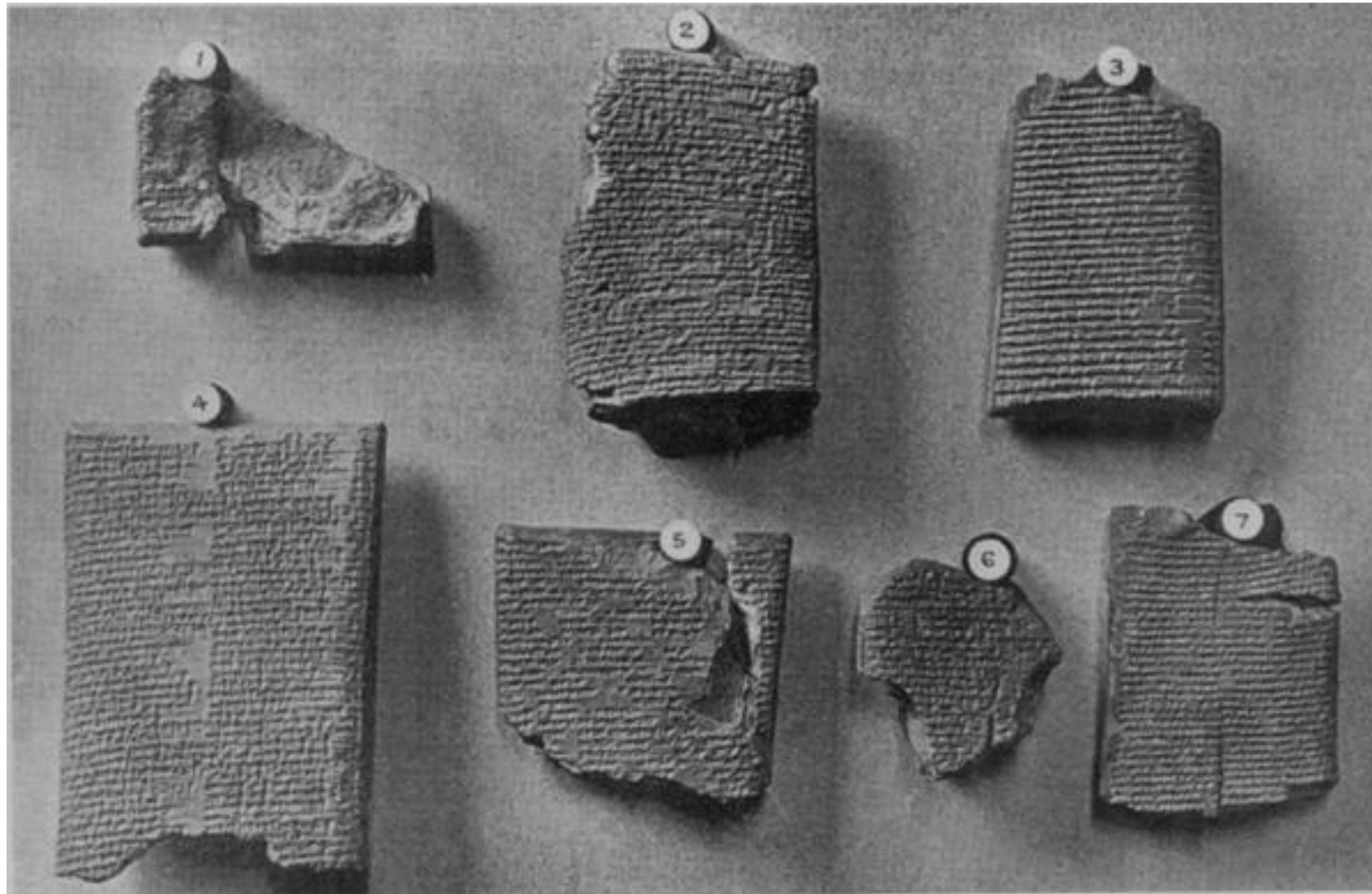






Tiamat = Tehom?





Tablets of Creation





Primaeval waters are ground of creation  
Disc + Vault + Mixing [with En-Ki]

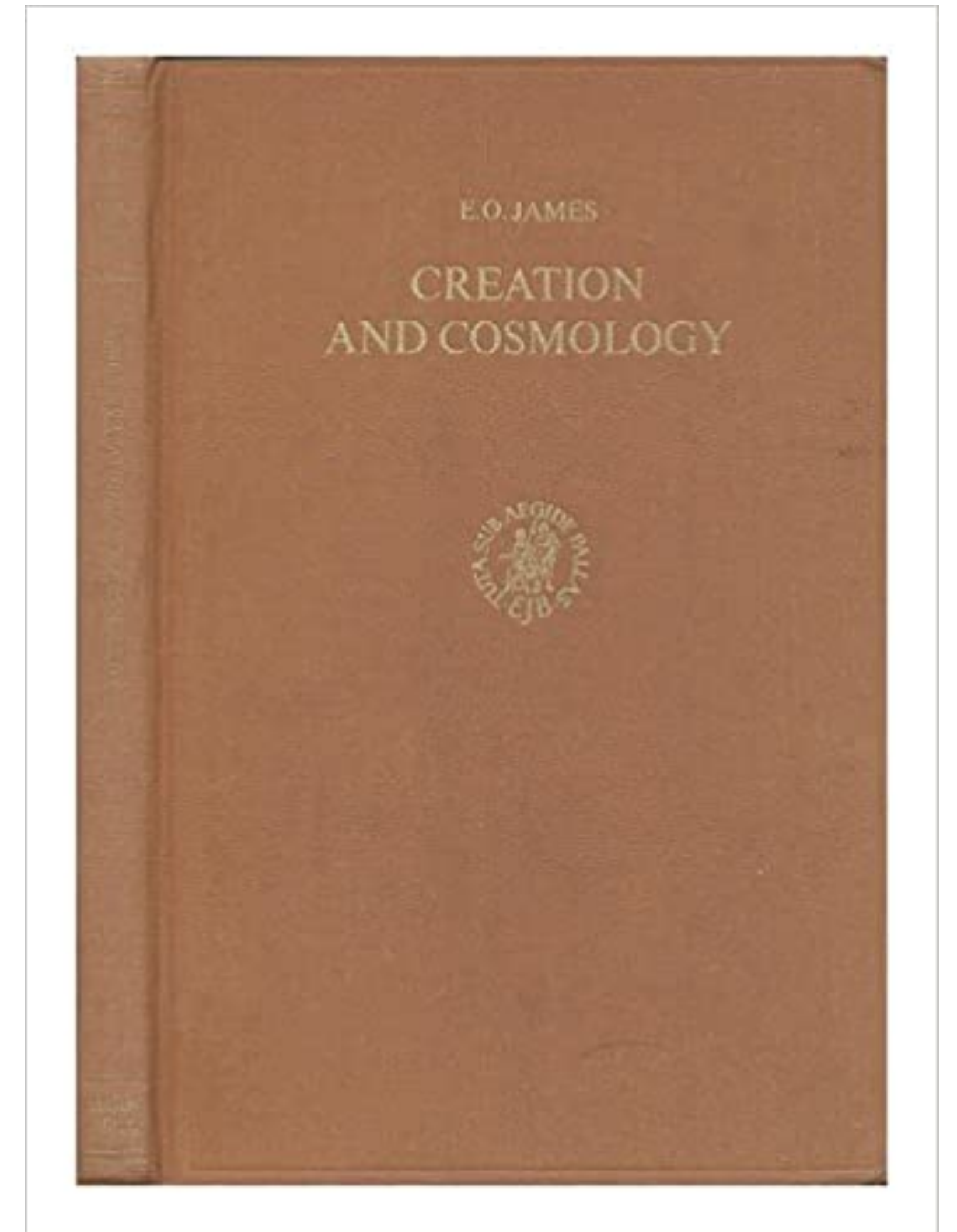






As the problem of ultimate origins and the idea of creation *ex nihilo* lie outside the range of the primitive mind, it is usually assumed that all things have come into being out of existing materials, such as the primeval waters of a mysterious abyss from which the earth was 'fished up' or fashioned in some way or another, and made habitable, sometimes described as idealized conditions of a terrestrial paradise.

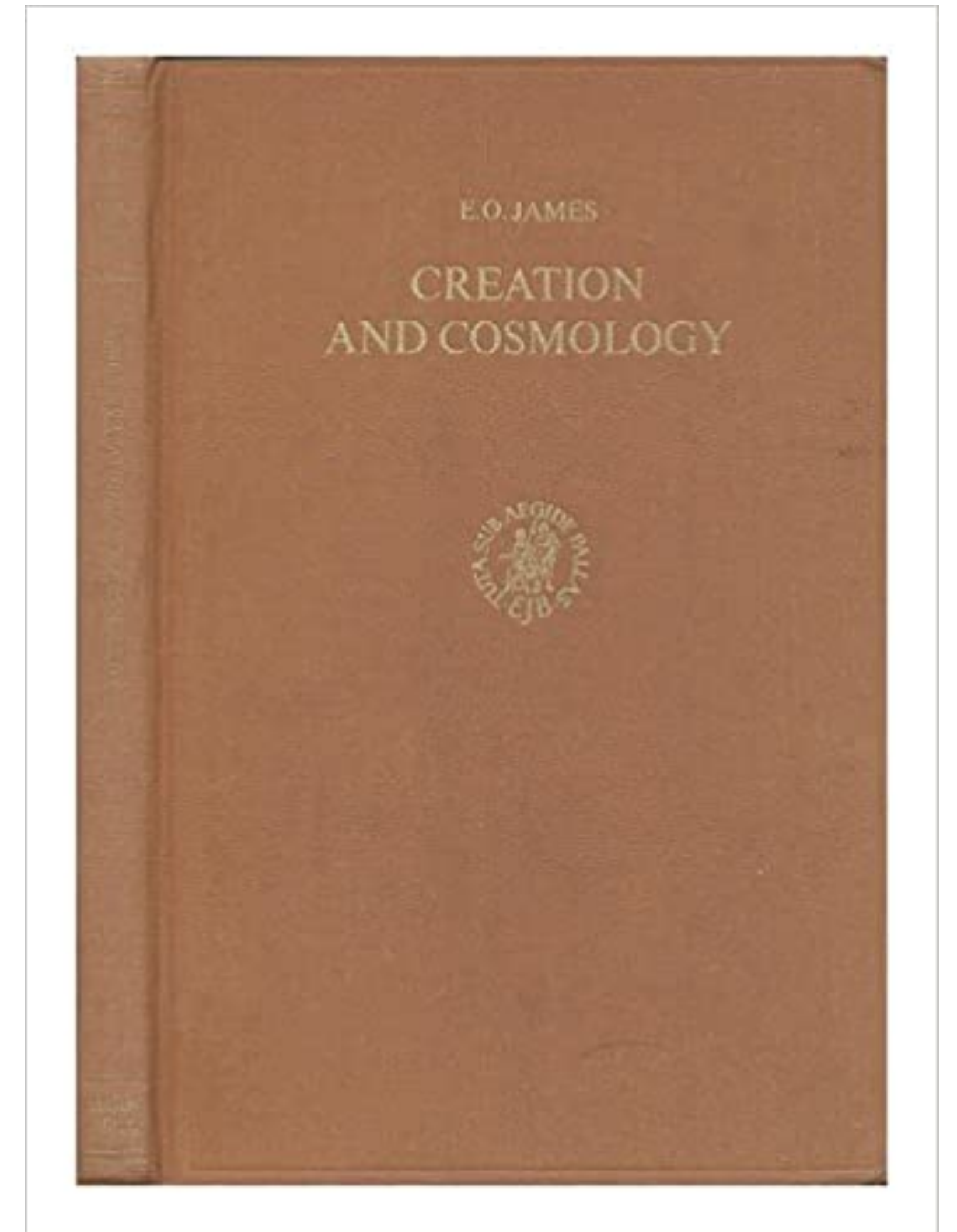
E. O. James, *Creation and Cosmology*, Brill: p. 5





By grounding the established order in a supernatural reality and its sanctions stability is given to the social structure and its institutions and organization making them proof against the disintegrating forces of change and decay.

E. O. James, *Creation and Cosmology*, Brill: p. 4



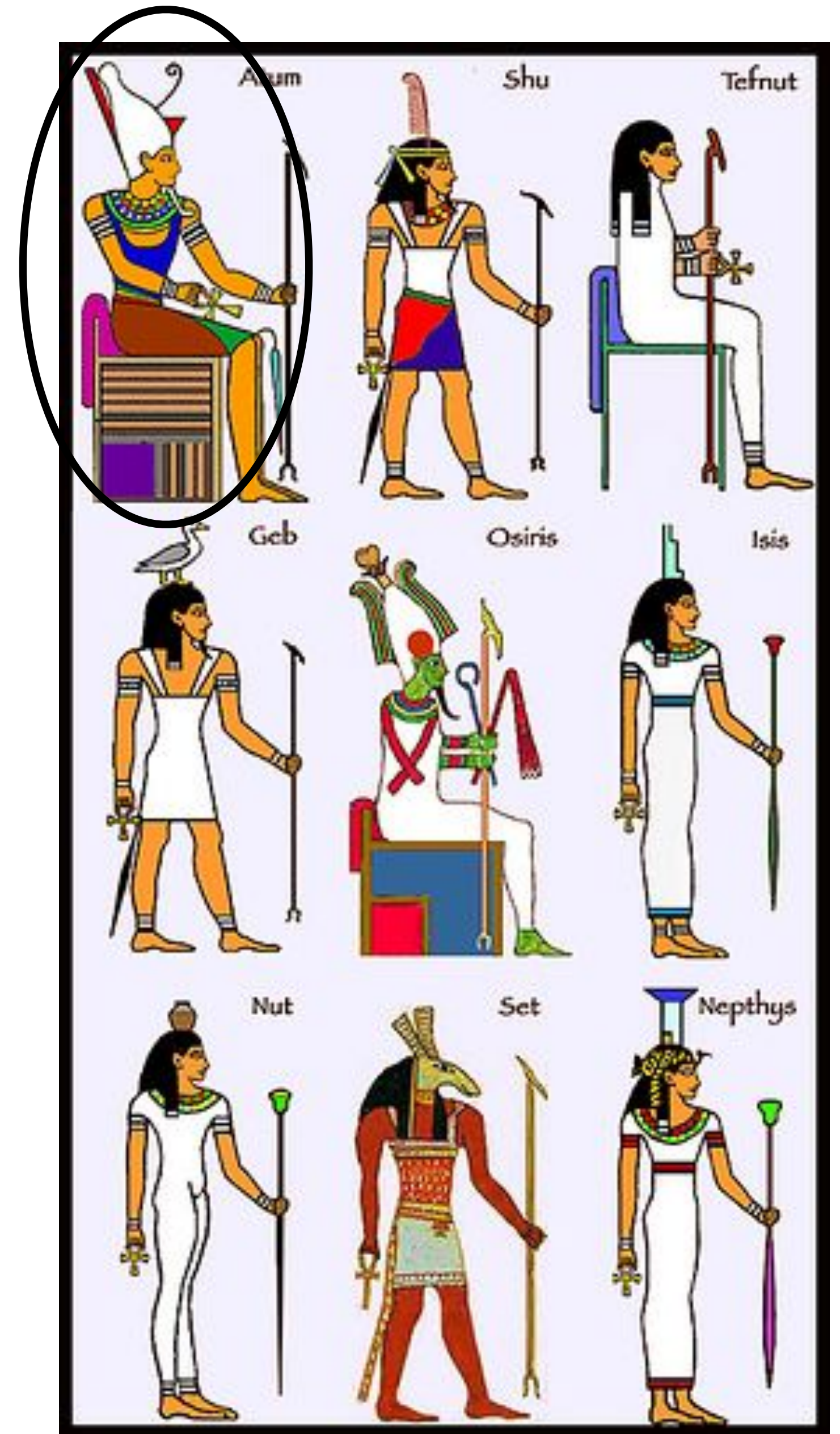


## Heliopolitan Creation

Atum is the head of this ennead  
He is said to have existed alone in Nun, or the primordial ocean. Appeared as a phoenix on top of a sandhill.

Self-created, supreme being

All things ultimately from the primeval waters





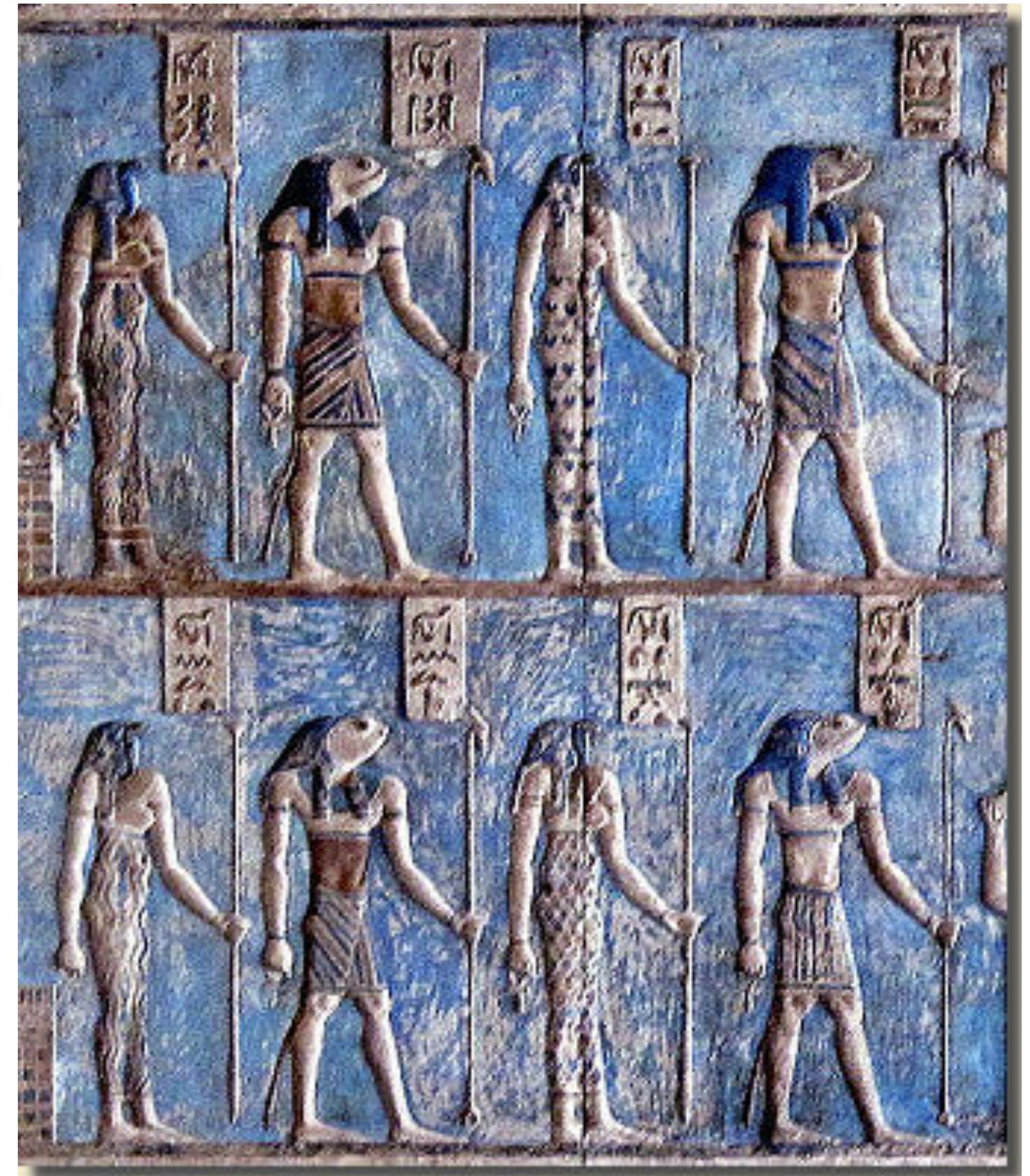
### Hermopolitan Creation

Cosmic egg laid on the primeval hill by a goose, from  
which emerged Re [bird of light]

Air preceded cosmic egg, laid on waters by an Ibis....

Re from a lotus flower

**But ALL from the primeval waters**



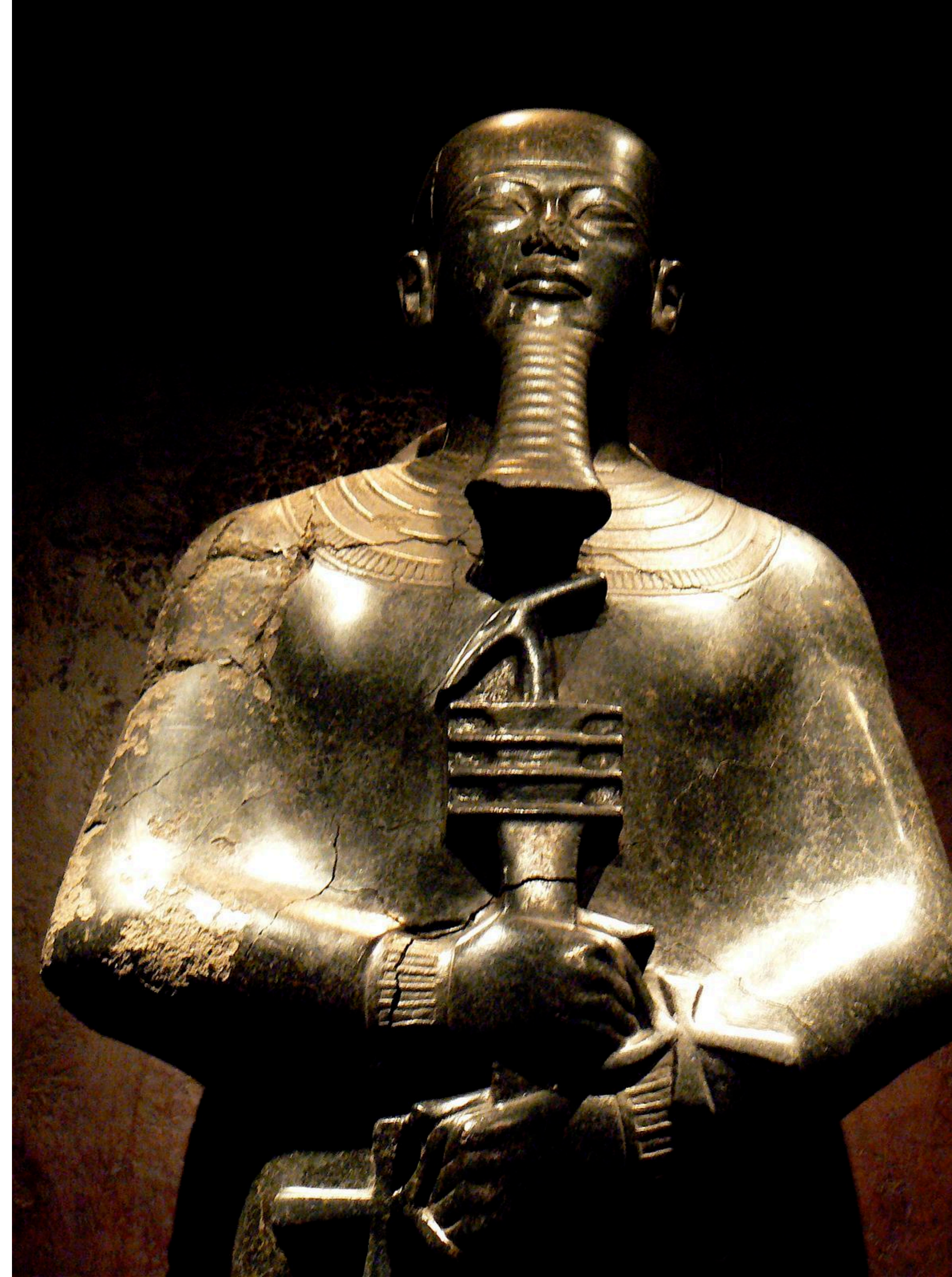


## Memphisian Creation

Ptah created the universe before Atum-Re.

Heart [thought] and tongue [speech] brought  
the world into existence from chaos.

Order from chaos *ex nihilo*





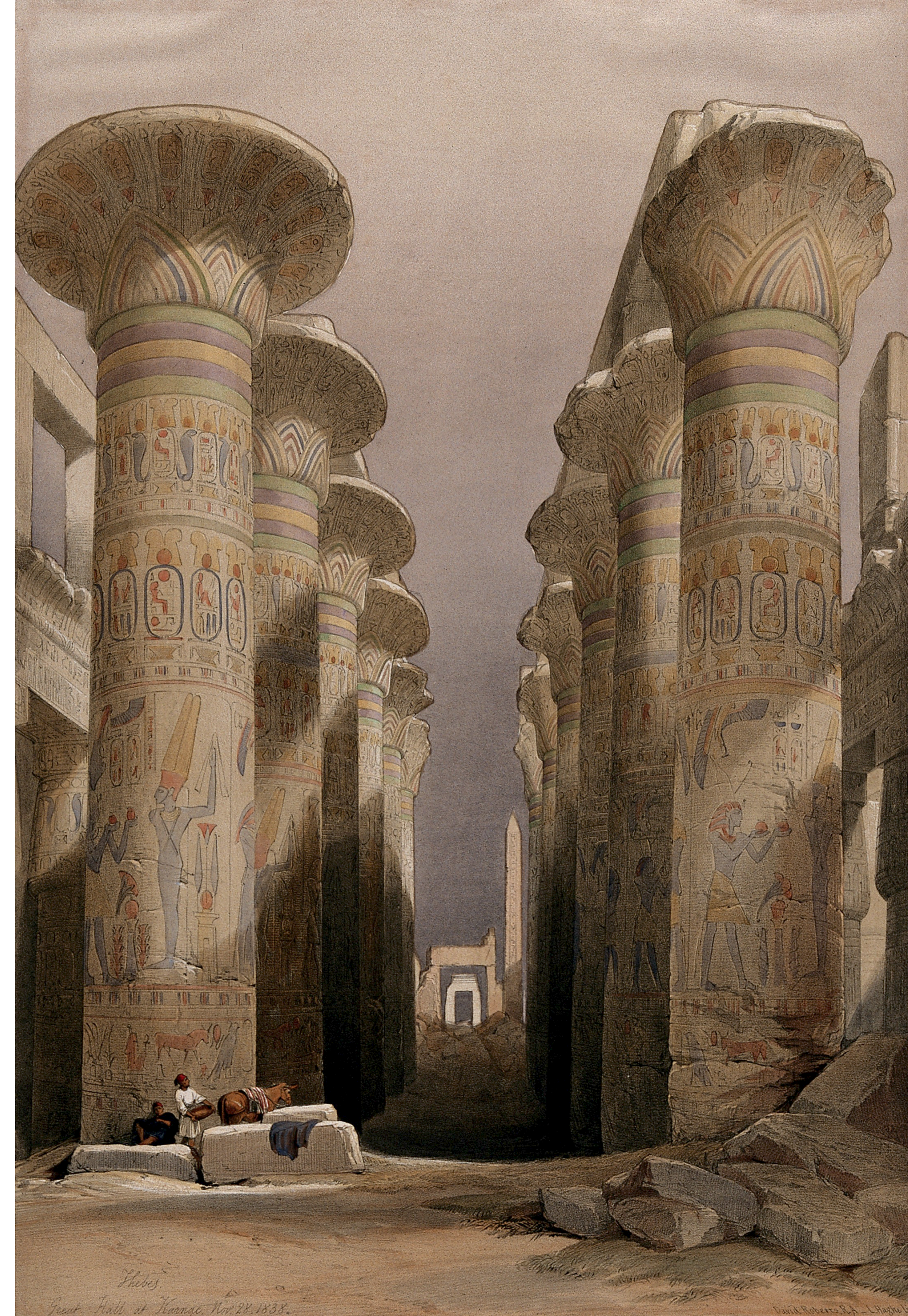
## Thebesian Creation

Amun the ultimate creative force

*Transcendental* being

Outside the Ogdoad: rather, their creator

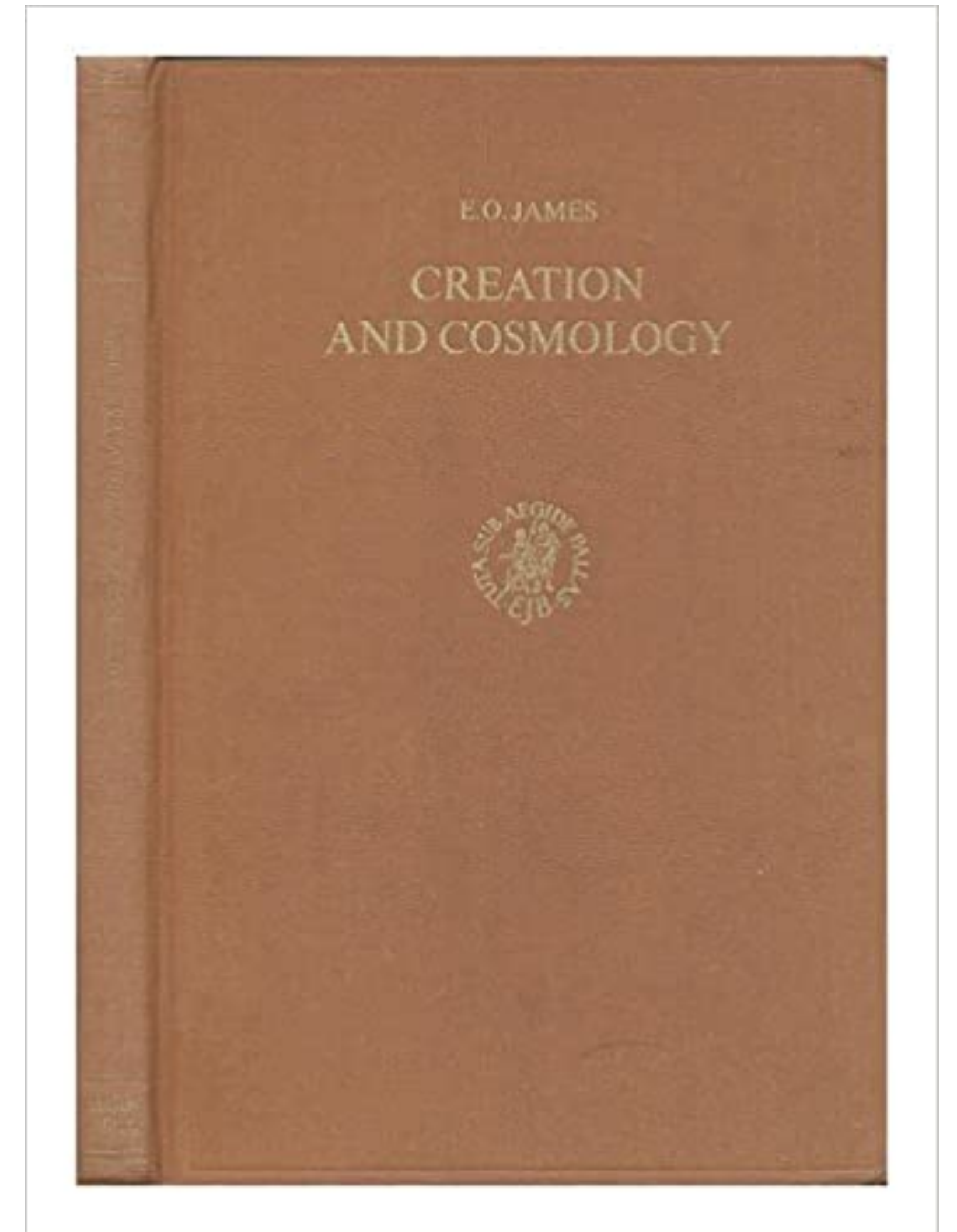
Still, those primeval waters [a feminine principle]





As the High God, or All-Father, tends to become remote, little concerned with the government and sustenance of the world, he usually figures less prominently in this type of traditional cosmic lore than the more intimate subordinates to whom he delegates his creative functions.

E. O. James, *Creation and Cosmology*, Brill: p. 4







I brought forth my spell myself. Magic [ḥk3w] is my name.





O noble ones who are before the Lord of the universe ("the All"),<sup>69</sup> behold, I have come before you. Respect me in accordance with what you know. I am he whom the Unique Lord made before two things ("duality") had yet come into being in this land by his sending forth his unique eye when he was alone, by the going forth from his mouth ... when he put Hu ("Logos") upon his mouth.

I am indeed the son of Him who gave birth to the universe ("the All"), who was born before his mother yet existed. I am the protection of that which the Unique Lord has ordained. I am he who caused the Ennead to live ... I have seated myself, O bulls of heaven, in this my great dignity as Lord of *kas*, heir of Re-Atum.

I have come that I might take my seat and that I might receive my dignity, for to me belonged the universe before you gods had yet come into being. Descend, you who have come in the end. I am Heka.<sup>70</sup>





It is true that evil may gain wealth but the strength of truth is that it lasts





# CREATION OF MAN AS A HANDICRAFT

EVEN MORE COMMON THAN THE MYTH OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WORLD AS A HANDICRAFT IS THAT OF THE CREATION OF MAN AND OF OTHER LIVING BEINGS FROM THE VARIOUS MATERIALS READY TO HAND IN A WORLD WHICH HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE



PROMETHEUS FORMING MEN OUT OF CLAY  
RELIEF OF THE ROMAN PERIOD IN THE LOUVRE  
After Daremberg-Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités*, fig. 1024

ACCORDING TO ONE GREEK MYTH, THE DEMI-GOD PROMETHEUS MADE MEN OUT OF CLAY. ON THE RELIEF PROMETHEUS IS SEEN ON THE RIGHT WORKING AT A HUMAN FIGURE, WHILE COMPLETED FIGURES ARE STANDING IN THE FOREGROUND. ON THE LEFT IS THE GODDESS ATHENE, HOLDING A BIRD, THAT IS, THE EMBODIMENT OF THE LIFE OR SOUL WHICH SHE IS GIVING TO A FIGURE MADE BY PROMETHEUS

## THE CREATION OF MAN FROM WOOD

WOOD IS THE SECOND COMMONEST MATERIAL FROM WHICH MAN IS THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN FORMED. GENERALLY IT IS THE LIVING WOOD OF SPECIFIC TREES FROM WHICH THE CREATOR IS BELIEVED TO HAVE CARVED OR OTHERWISE FORMED LIVING CREATURES, JUST AS, IN THE EVOLUTIONARY TYPE OF MYTH, HUMAN BEINGS ARE SOMETIMES SAID TO EMERGE FROM THE LIVING TREE. THIS TYPE OF MYTH IS WIDE-SPREAD AMONG PRIMITIVE PEOPLES BUT ALMOST UNKNOWN IN MORE ADVANCED CULTURES

SEE ALSO SECTION 4. (NORSE MYTH)

## THE CREATION OF MAN FROM METAL

THE ASHANTI OF WEST AFRICA BELIEVE THAT THE FIRST MEN AND ANIMALS WERE FORGED BY THE CREATOR OUT OF METAL

## THE CREATION OF MAN FROM EARTH OR CLAY

MYTHS OF THE CREATION OF MEN AND ANIMALS MOST FREQUENTLY DERIVE THEM FROM EARTH, CLAY OR MUD. SUCH STORIES ARE FOUND ALL OVER THE WORLD, IN AUSTRALASIA AND INDONESIA, IN AFRICA, SIBERIA, NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA, IN CHINA, AND AMONG THE ANCIENT HEBREWS, GREEKS AND EGYPTIANS. THE CREATOR IS GENERALLY THOUGHT TO BE A GOD OR DEMI-GOD

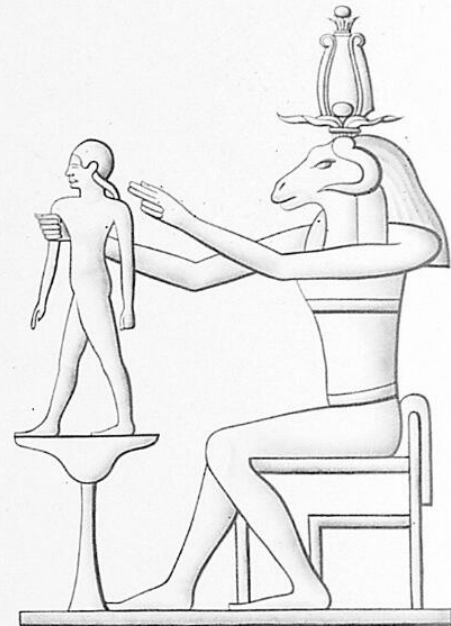
A COMMON COROLLARY TO THIS MYTH IS THE GIVING OF LIFE, THE SPIRIT OR SOUL, TO THE NEWLY MADE BODY. THIS LIFE IS SOMETIMES THOUGHT OF AS THE WIND, SOMETIMES AS AIR FROM HEAVEN, SOMETIMES AS THE BREATH OF THE CREATOR, AND SOMETIMES SYMBOLISED UNDER THE FORM OF A BIRD OR INSECT



GOD MAKING ADAM FROM THE DUST OF THE EARTH  
From Harpian MS. (xiv Century) 4381 folio B in the British Museum

MANY BIBLICAL STORIES SHOW A STRIKING SIMILARITY, AT LEAST EXTERNALLY, TO THE LEGENDS OF OTHER PEOPLES ONE OF THE TRADITIONAL ELEMENTS EMBODIED IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS IS THE STORY OF THE CREATION OF MAN FROM THE DUST OF THE EARTH. (SEE SECTION II,iii). HERE THE BODY OF ADAM IS SEEN EMERGING FROM A LUMP OF EARTH AT GOD'S COMMAND

IT MAY BE COMPARED WITH A VARIANT OF THE BABYLONIAN MYTH (SEE SECTION 2.iv.) IN WHICH MAN IS FORMED BY MIXING EARTH WITH THE BLOOD OF THE GODS



CHNUM FASHIONING A MAN ON THE POTTER'S WHEEL  
RELIEF FROM THE TEMPLE AT PHI-LAE  
After Russell, *1. 2. Monuments of the Egyptians*, vol. 3, figs. 1844, p. 22

MYTHS OF THE MAKING OF MAN FROM EARTH OR CLAY GENERALLY SUPPOSE THAT THE CREATOR FORMED THE FIGURE IN HIS HANDS LIKE A MODELLER. THE EGYPTIAN MYTH, HOWEVER, REPRESENTS THE CREATOR CHNUM AS A POTTER, SHAPING MAN ON A WHEEL. JUST AS PTAH FORMED THE EGG OF THE WORLD

## THE CREATION OF MAN FROM STONE

ONLY IN AUSTRALIA AND THE CELEBES DO THE MYTHS RELATE HOW A GOD MADE STONE FIGURES WHICH BECAME HUMAN BEINGS

COMPARE THE GREEK MYTH OF DEUCALION AND PYRRHA WHO RECREATED THE HUMAN RACE AFTER A FLOOD BY THROWING BEHIND THEM STONES WHICH TURNED INTO MEN AND WOMEN

## THE CREATION OF MAN FROM VEGETABLE MATTER

THE QUICHE OF CENTRAL AMERICA THOUGHT THAT THE GODS HAD MADE MANKIND OUT OF MAIZE AND ON MINDANAO IN THE PACIFIC IT IS SAID THAT THE GODS FORMED HUMAN BEINGS OUT OF GRASS

NOTE. IN THE ABOVE MYTHS MEN ARE ALMOST INVARIABLY DESCRIBED AS BEING MODELLED BY HAND OR CARVED LIKE A STATUE. THEY HAVE THEREFORE NOT BEEN CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO THE TYPE OF ACTIVITY INVOLVED (LIKE THE MYTHS OF THE CREATION OF THE WORLD) BUT ACCORDING TO THE MATERIAL USED. HERE, TOO THE LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE BUT REPRESENTATIVE.

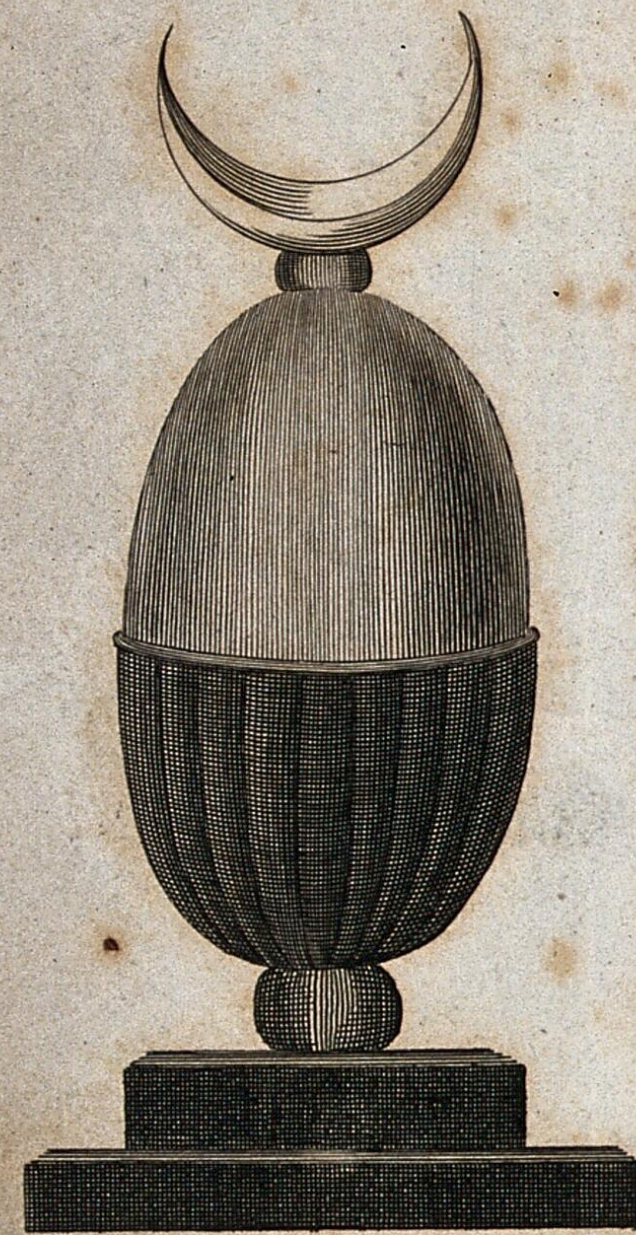


Cosmogony

Theogony

Anthropogeny

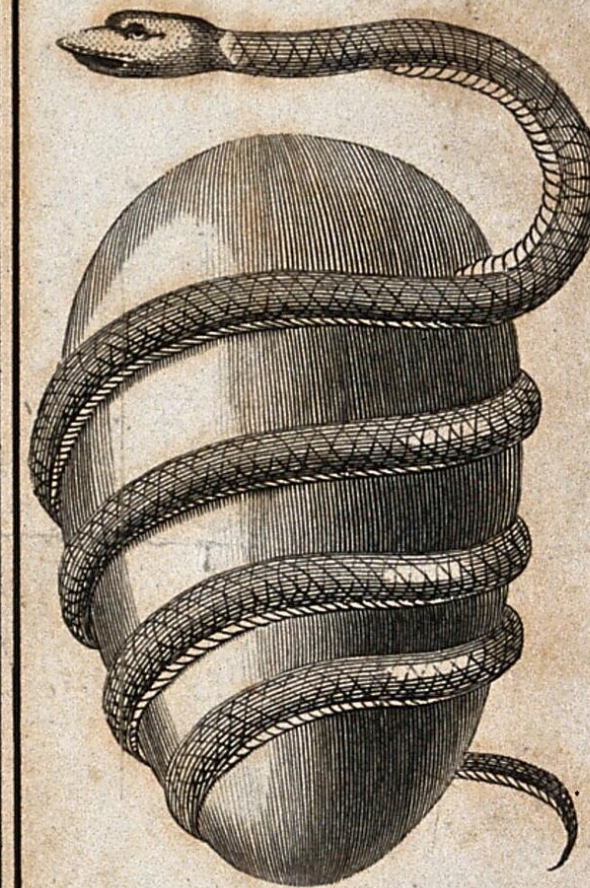
ASIATIC DEVICES ALLUSIVE TO THE COSMOGONY.



*The MUNDANE EGG of Heliopolis,  
adorned with the Lunar Crescent.*



*The great GOLDEN BULL, adored at MEACO, in JAPAN, in the  
attitude of butting with his horn against the EGG of CHAOS.*



*The Agathodaimon, or Good  
Genius symbolized by a Serpent,  
circling in its genial embrace  
the MUNDANE EGG.*

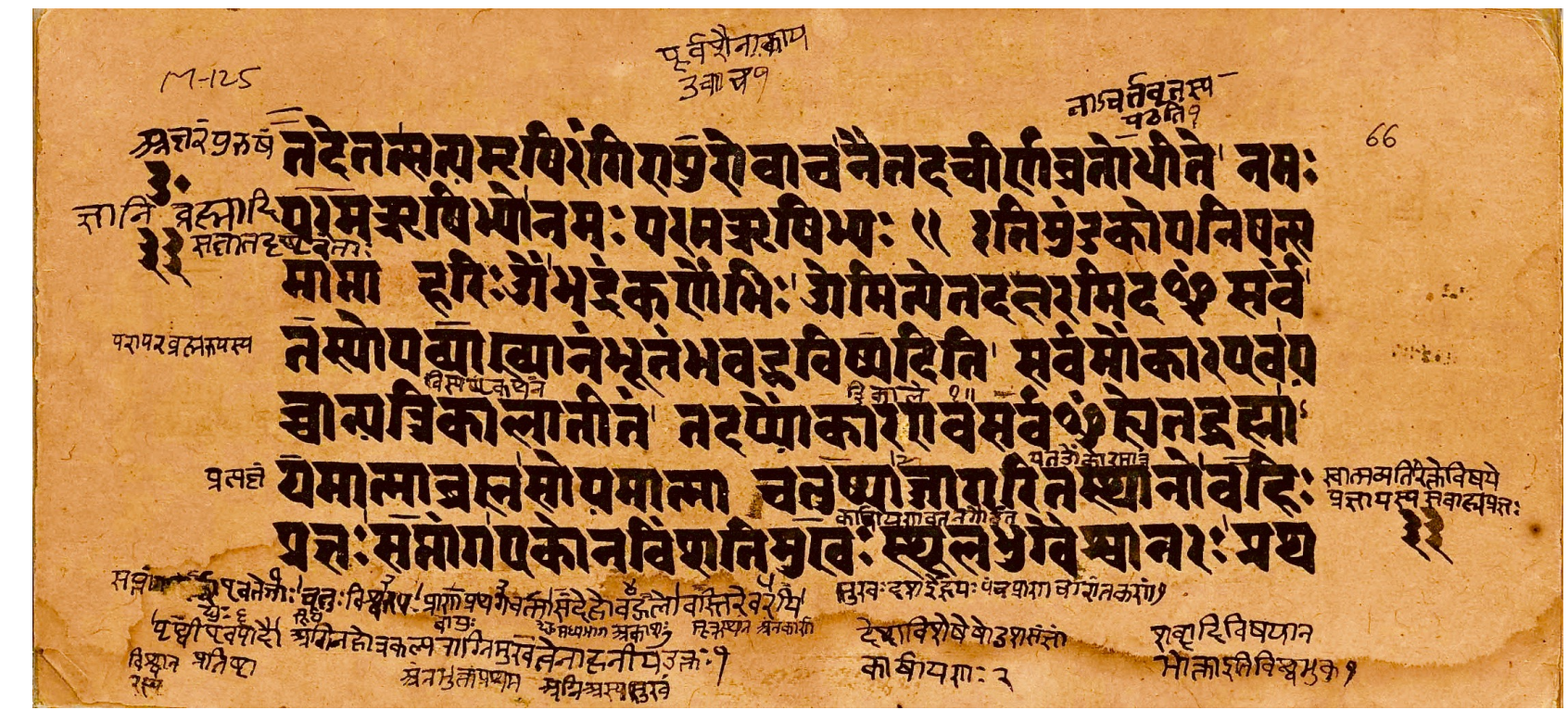
*To his Grace the Duke of Marlborough, as a consummate Judge of  
Oriental Mythology, this Plate is respectfully inscribed by T. M.*







# Mystical elements



- *Mandukya Upanishad* - “unthinkable and unspeakable” [शत् = Sat]
  - immutable, boundless principle
  - *unconditioned* being
  - beyond thought
  - without attributes
- Manifest reality is unreal
- No real difference between Brahman and Atman [self]

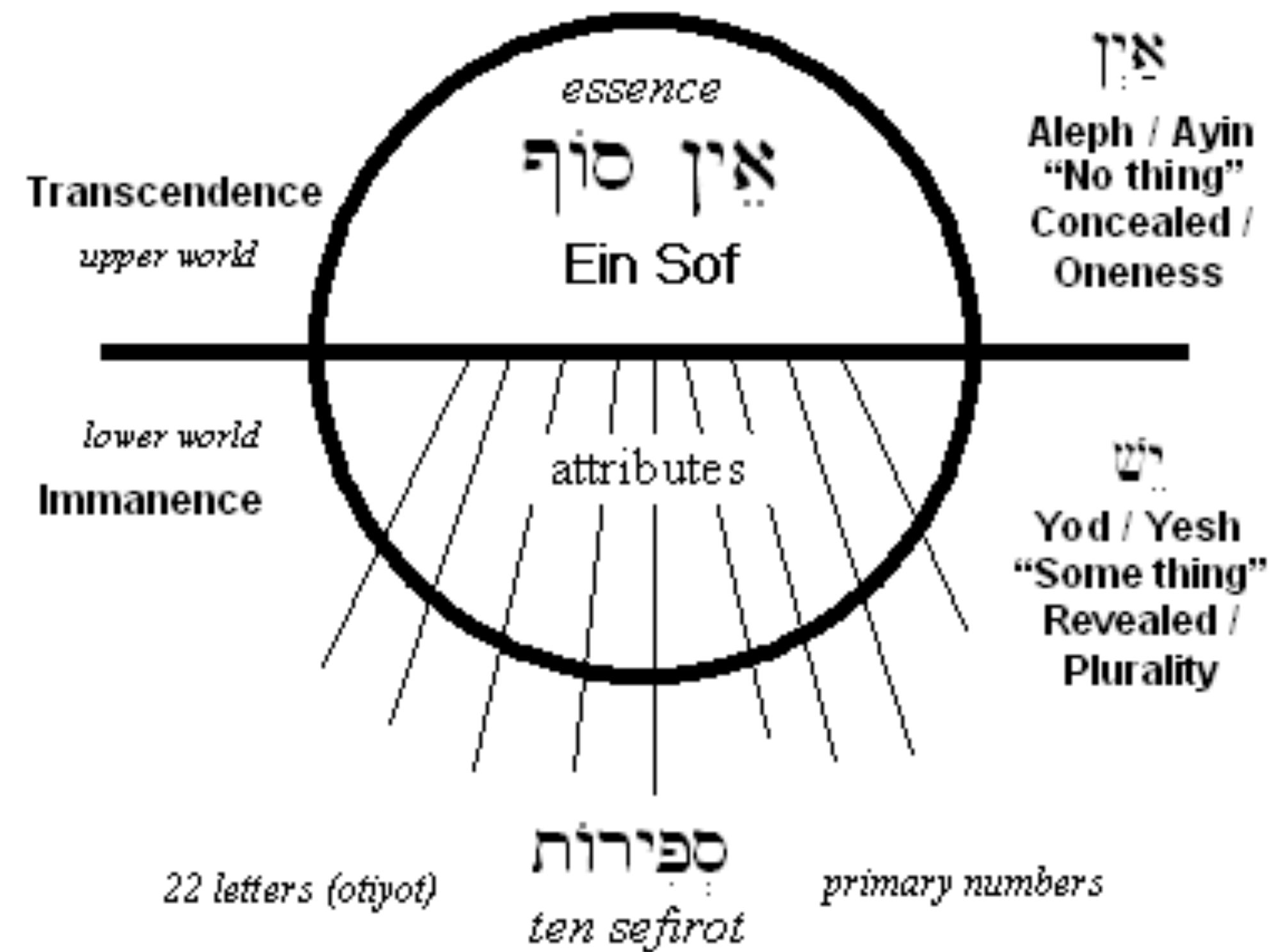


सत्यमेव जयते



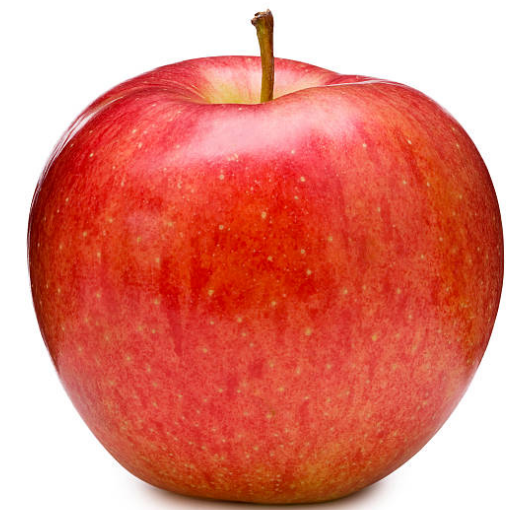
“the person who learns to think about himself as *Ayin* will ascend to a spiritual world, where everything is the same and everything is equal: "life and death, ocean and dry land”

Dov Ber (18th Century)

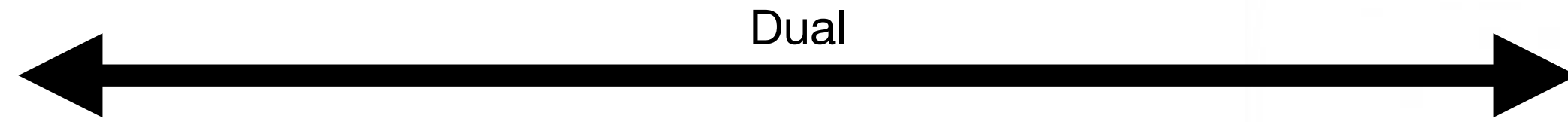


Yesh me-Ayin

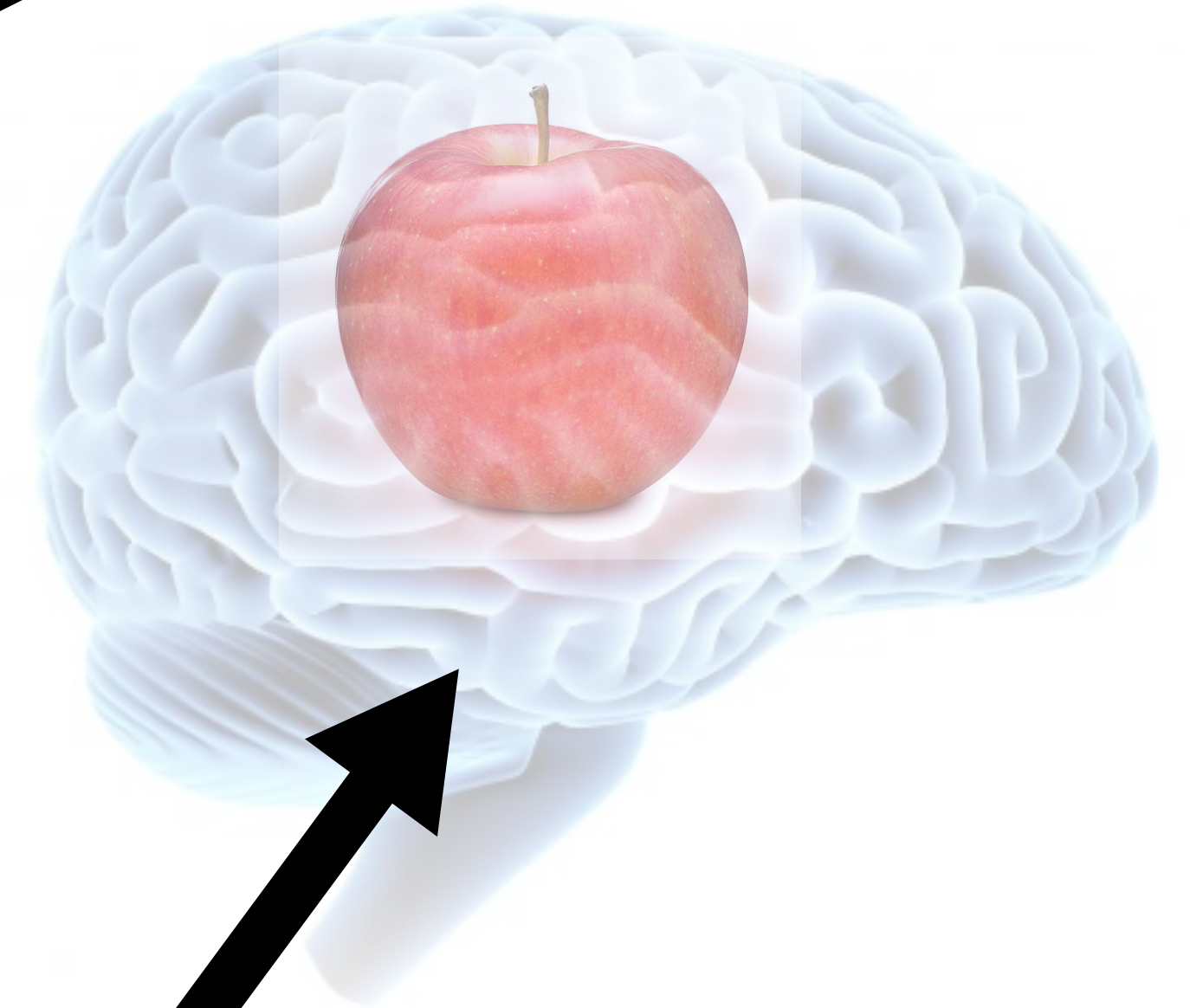




Objective Aspect



Dual

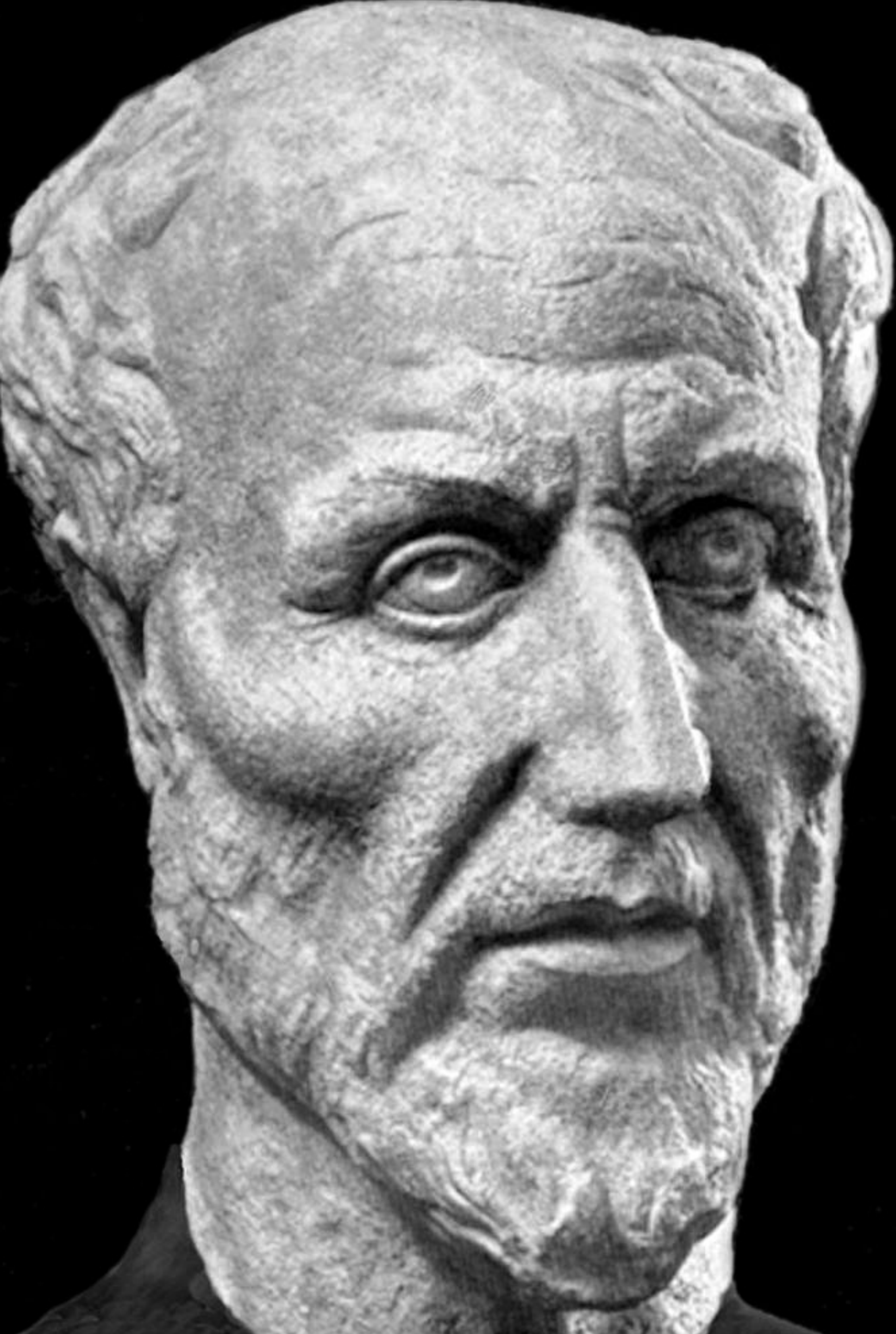


Subjective Aspect

Nondual

Absolute  
[Synthesis of opposites]

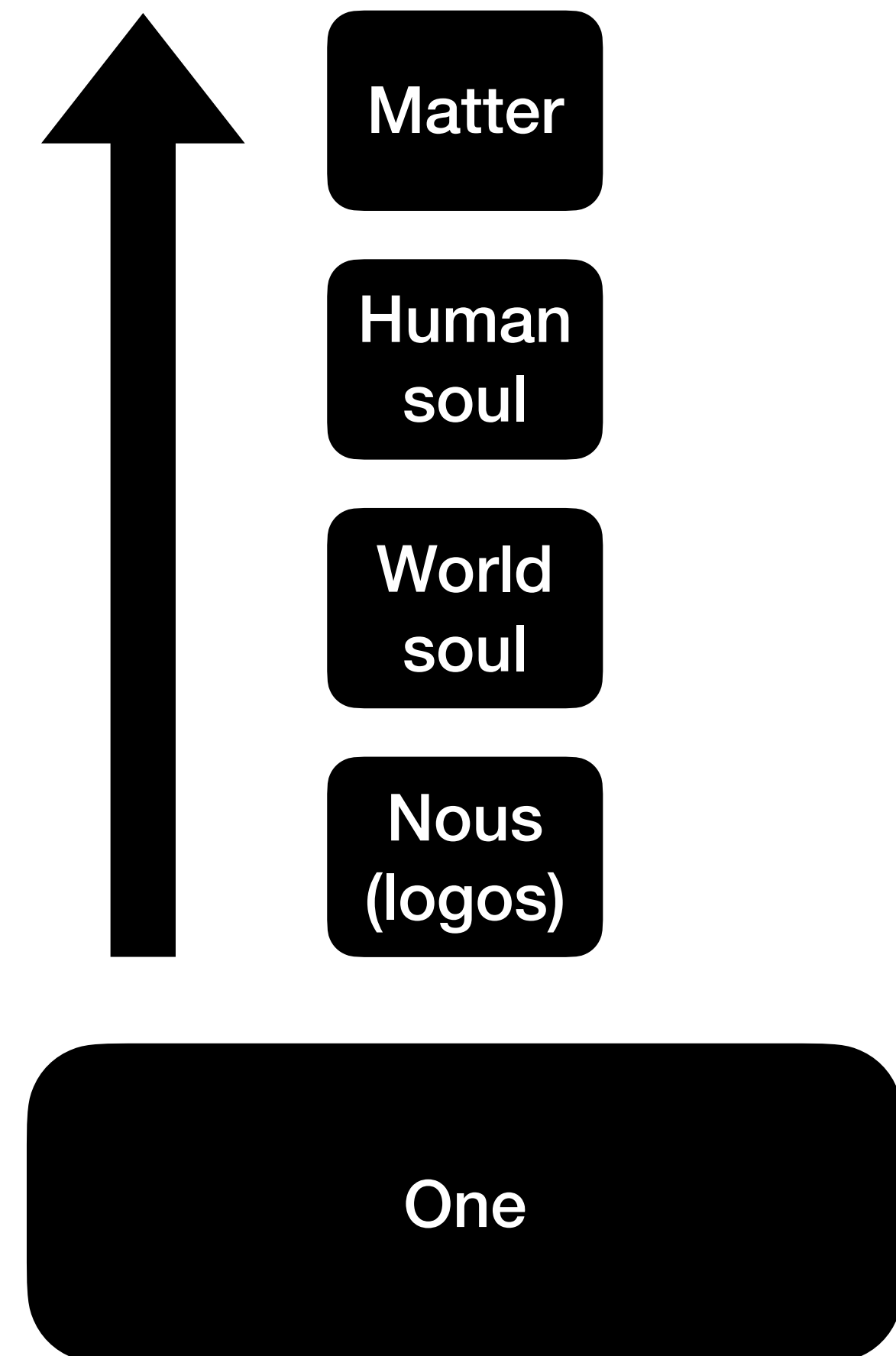




## Plotinus' theory of *emanation*

**One** represented as 'seed' from which everything becomes actual

Ground of being  
Explanatory basis





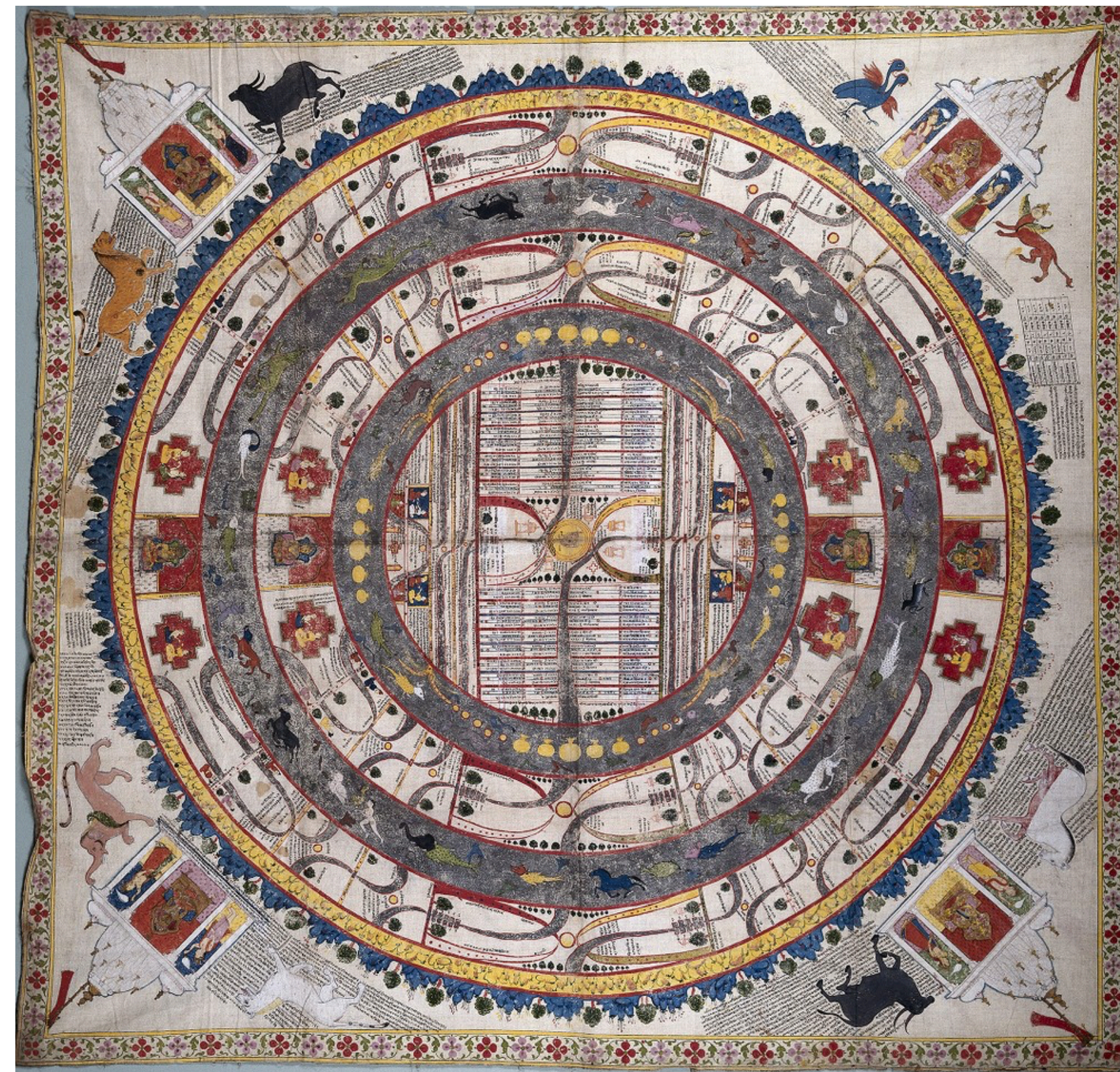
Chuang Tzu [Zhuangzi]

Absolute unconditionality = wu wu = non-non-existence

Now, I have something to say. I don't know if with this I am positing a category or not positing a category. But, since "positing a category" and "not positing a category" themselves involve creating a category, then there is nothing with which to distinguish them. Nonetheless, allow me to try to say it: "There was a beginning. There was not yet beginning to have something beginning. There was not yet beginning to have a not yet beginning to have something beginning. There was Something. There was Nothing. There was not yet beginning to have Nothing. There was not yet beginning to have a not yet beginning to have Nothing." Suddenly we have Something and Nothing, but I don't yet know, with this Something and Nothing, which is Something and which is Nothing. Now, as for me, I have already referred to something, but I don't yet know if I have said something or if I have said nothing. <sup>6</sup>



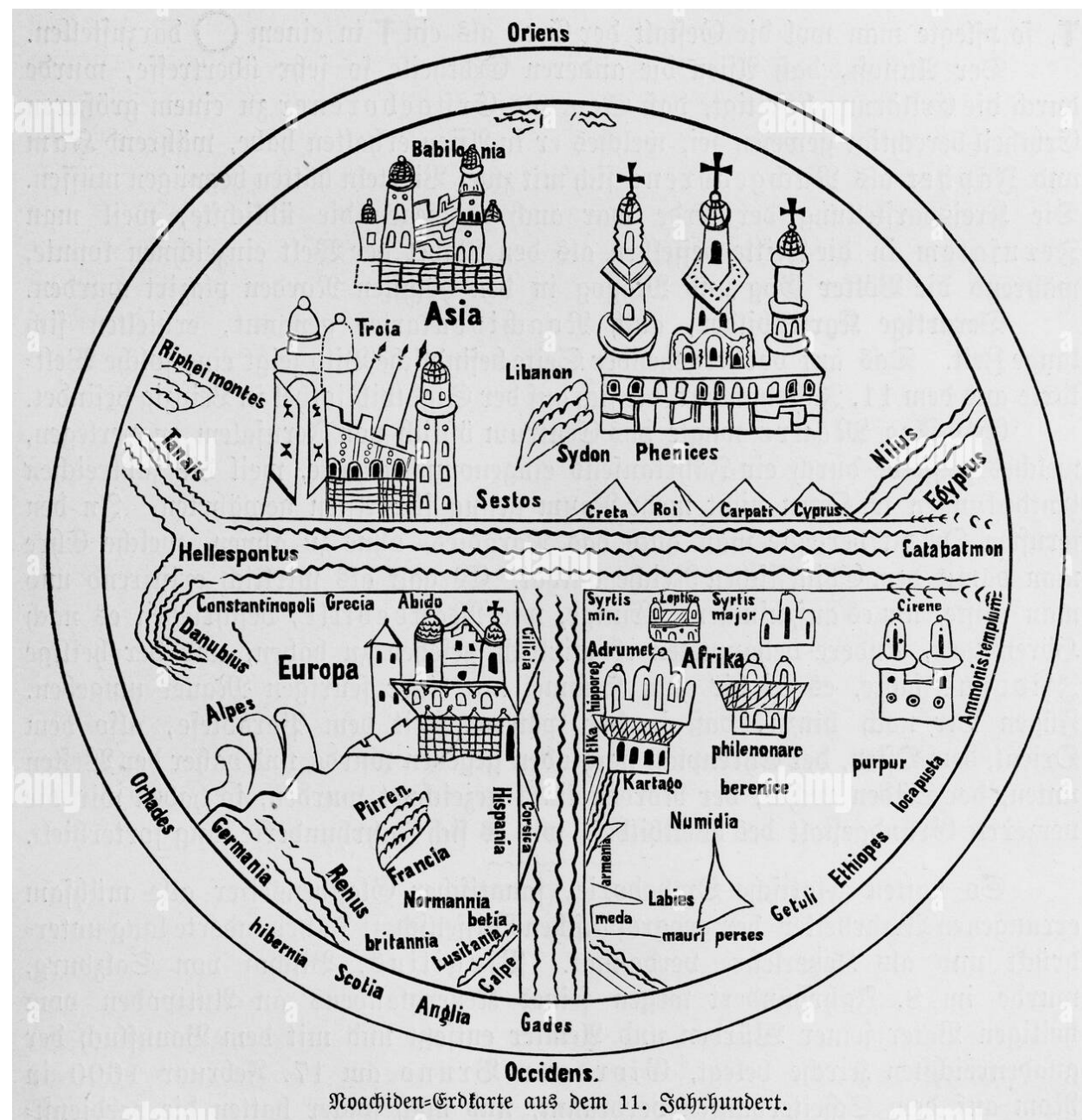




Some foolish men declare that a creator made the world. The doctrine that the world was created is ill advised and should be rejected. If God created the world, where was he before the creation? If you say he was transcendent then and needed no support, where is he now? How could God have made this world without any raw material? If you say that he made this first, and then the world, you are faced with an endless regression.

Mahāpurāṇa





Immanence [West] versus Transcendence [East]  
Substance-based [West] versus Absolute-based [East]





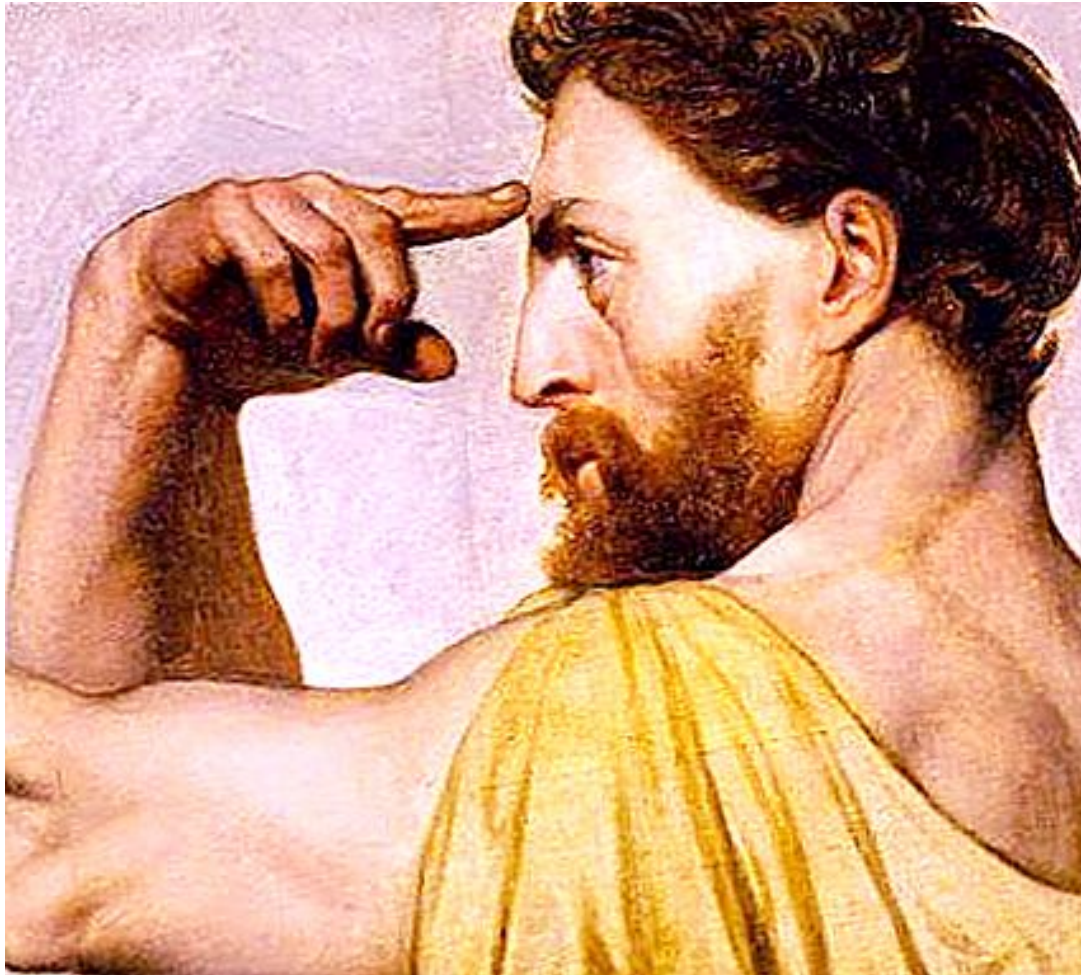


When *nous* began to move [things], there was separation off from the multitude that was being moved, and whatever *nous* moved, all this was dissociated; and as things were being moved and dissociated, the revolution made them dissociate much more. (B13)

Mind [*nous*] is unlimited and self-ruled and is mixed with no thing, but is alone and by itself (B12)







Whatever is, is (being) and whatever is not, is not (nonbeing). As a result, whatever constitutes the nature of reality must always “have been” since nothing can come into being from nothing. Furthermore, reality must always “be” since being (what is) cannot become nonbeing (what is not).

# The Parmenidean Challenge









Heraclitus

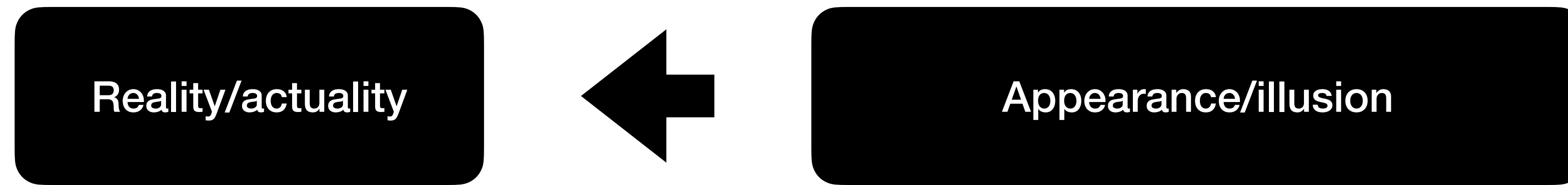
This world-order [*kosmos*], the same of all, no god nor man did create, but it ever was and is and will be: everliving fire, kindling in measures and being quenched in measures.



# 天 地 自 然 河 圖







## Creation in Uitoto

In the beginning, **the word gave origin to the Father**. A phantasm, nothing else existed in the beginning; the Father touched an illusion, he grasped something mysterious. Nothing existed. Through the agency of a dream our Father Naimuena [phantasm] kept the mirage to his body, and he pondered long and thought deeply.

**Nothing existed**, not even a stick to support the vision: our Father **attached the illusion to the thread of a dream and kept it by the aid of his breath**. He sounded to reach the bottom of the appearance, but there was nothing. Nothing existed indeed.

Then the Father again investigated the bottom of the mystery. He tied the empty illusion to the dream thread and **pressed the magical substance upon it**. Thus by the aid of his dream he held it like a wisp of raw cotton.

Then he seized the mirage bottom and stamped upon it repeatedly, sitting down at last on his dreamed earth.

The earth-phantasm was now his, and he spat out saliva repeatedly so that the forests might grow. Then he lay down upon his earth and covered it with the roof of heaven. As he was the owner of the earth he placed above it the blue and the white sky.

Thereupon, Rafuema, "the man who has the narratives," sitting at the base of the heavens, pondered, and he created this story **so that we might listen to it here upon earth**.



[T]he essential function of the universe ... is  
a machine for the making of gods.

Henri Bergson, *The Two Sources of  
Morality and Religion*

THE TWO SOURCES  
OF  
MORALITY AND RELIGION

BY  
HENRI BERGSON

TRANSLATED BY  
R. ASHLEY AUDRA AND  
CLOUDESLEY BRERETON

WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF  
W. HORSFALL CARTER

*Robert Ruckerswell*



*Stanford U.  
February 1937*

NEW YORK  
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY



“[t]he Gods are anxious that someone should inhabit the Earth”  
Leon-Portilla (1990)





There the cosmic meaning of consciousness became overwhelmingly clear to me. “What nature leaves imperfect, the art perfects,” say the alchemists. Man, I, in an invisible act of creation put the stamp of perfection on the world by giving it **objective** existence. This act we usually ascribe to the Creator alone, without considering that in so doing we view life as a machine calculated down to the last detail, which, along with the human psyche, runs on senselessly, obeying foreknown and predetermined rules. In such a cheerless clockwork fantasy there is no drama of man, world, and God; there is no “new day” leading to “new shores,” but only the dreariness of calculated processes.

My old Pueblo friend came to mind. He thought that the *raison d’être* of his pueblo had been to help their father, the sun, to cross the sky each day. I had envied him for the fullness of meaning in that belief, and had been looking about without hope for a myth of my own. Now I knew what it was, and knew even more: that man is indispensable for the completion of creation; that, in fact, he himself is the second creator of the world, who alone has given to the world its objective existence—without which, unheard, un- seen, silently eating, giving birth, dying, heads nodding through the millions of years, it would have gone on in the profoundest night of non-being down to its unknown end. Human consciousness created objective existence and meaning, and man found his indispensable place in the great process of being.

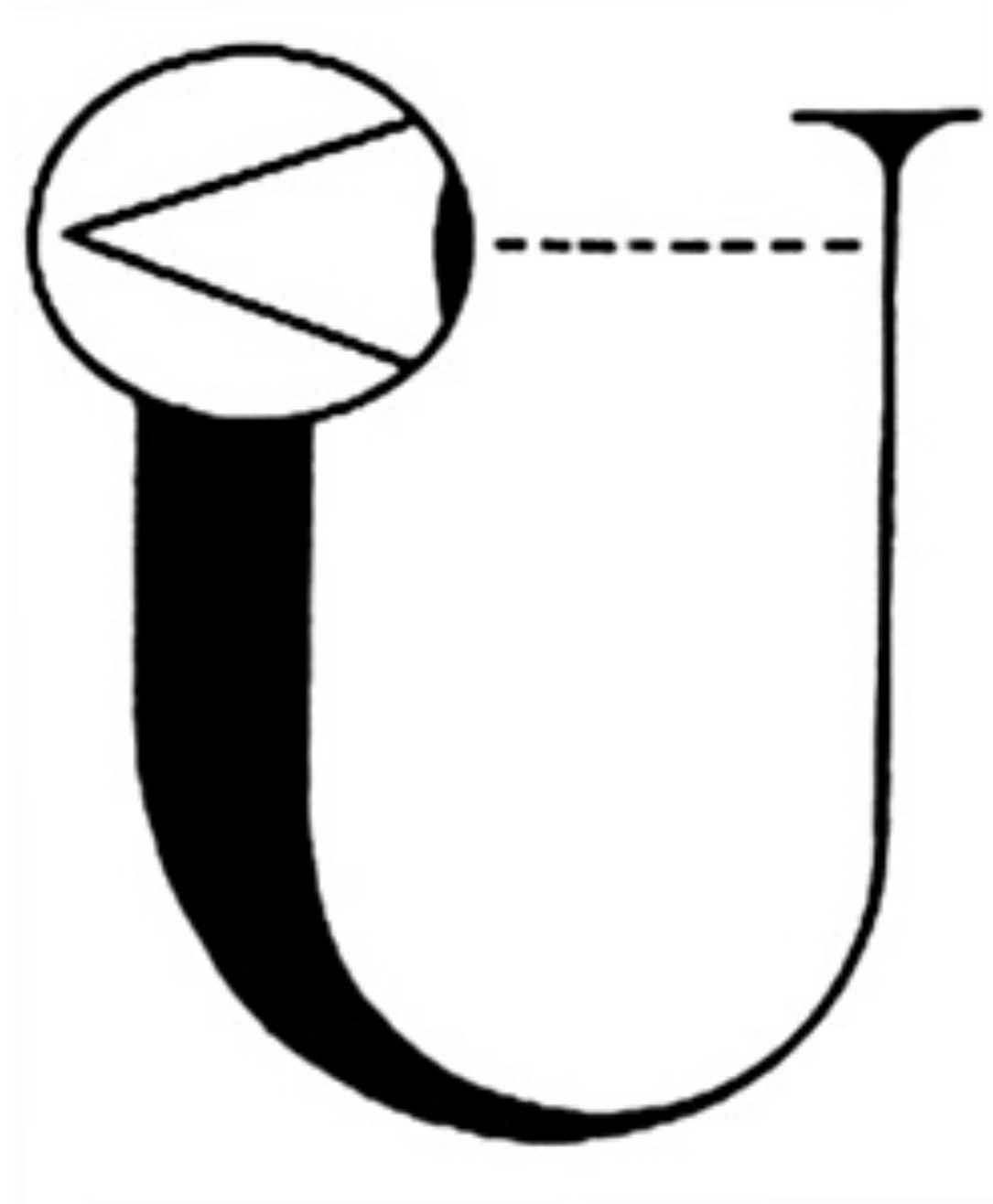
[Jung (1989), pp. 255-256]





[T]he observer-participator converts conceivability into actuality.

Wheeler 1980b, p. 5



Without the reflecting consciousness of man the world is a gigantic meaningless machine, for in our experience man is the only creature who is capable of ascertaining meaning at all.

Jung, letter to Neumann (10th March, 1959)

Participation mystique is a term derived from Lévy-Bruhl. It denotes a peculiar kind of psychological connection with objects, and consists in the fact that **the subject cannot clearly distinguish himself from the object but is bound to it by a direct relationship which amounts to partial identity** (q. v. ). This identity results from an *a priori* oneness of subject and object.

C. J. Jung [C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, in *The Collected Works*, Vol. 6 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971). ¶1781]



The image shows the front cover of the book 'Existential Psychotherapy' by Irvin D. Yalom. The title 'EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOTHERAPY' is written in a large, teal, sans-serif font, slanted upwards from left to right. Below it, the author's name 'IRVIN D. YALOM' is written in a smaller, orange, sans-serif font, also slanted upwards. The background of the cover features several thick, diagonal stripes in shades of red, orange, and teal. The book is shown at a slight angle, giving it a three-dimensional appearance.

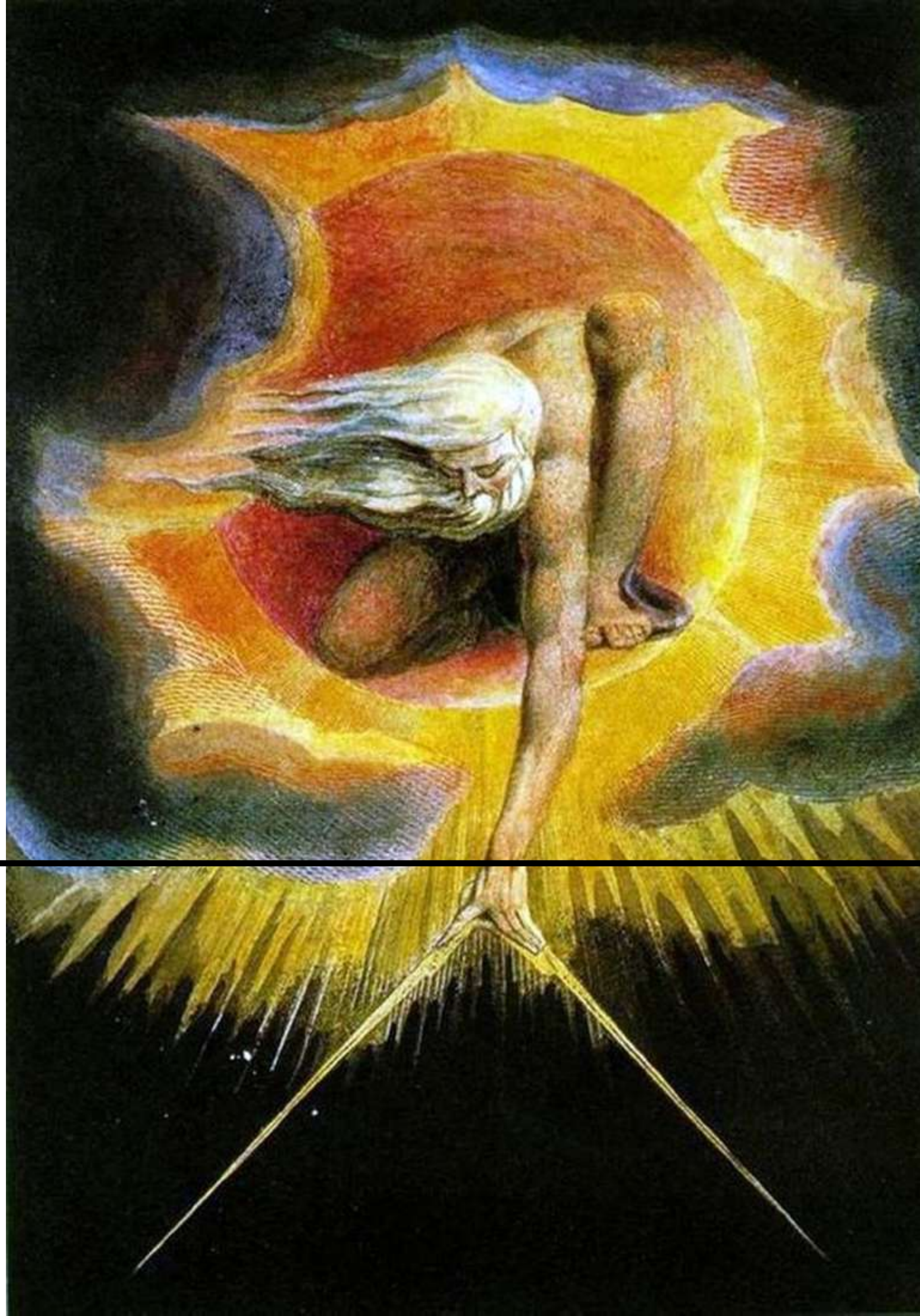
# EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOTHERAPY

IRVIN D. YALOM

The existentialist position challenges the traditional Cartesian view of a world full of objects and of subjects who perceive those objects. ... The existentialist position cuts below this subject-object cleavage and regards the person not as a subject who can, under the proper circumstances, perceive external reality but as a consciousness who **participates in the construction of reality.**

= Theurgy?





Possibility

Law





If there is only **Being**, from whence *Doxa* or Appearance or *Maya* or ...?



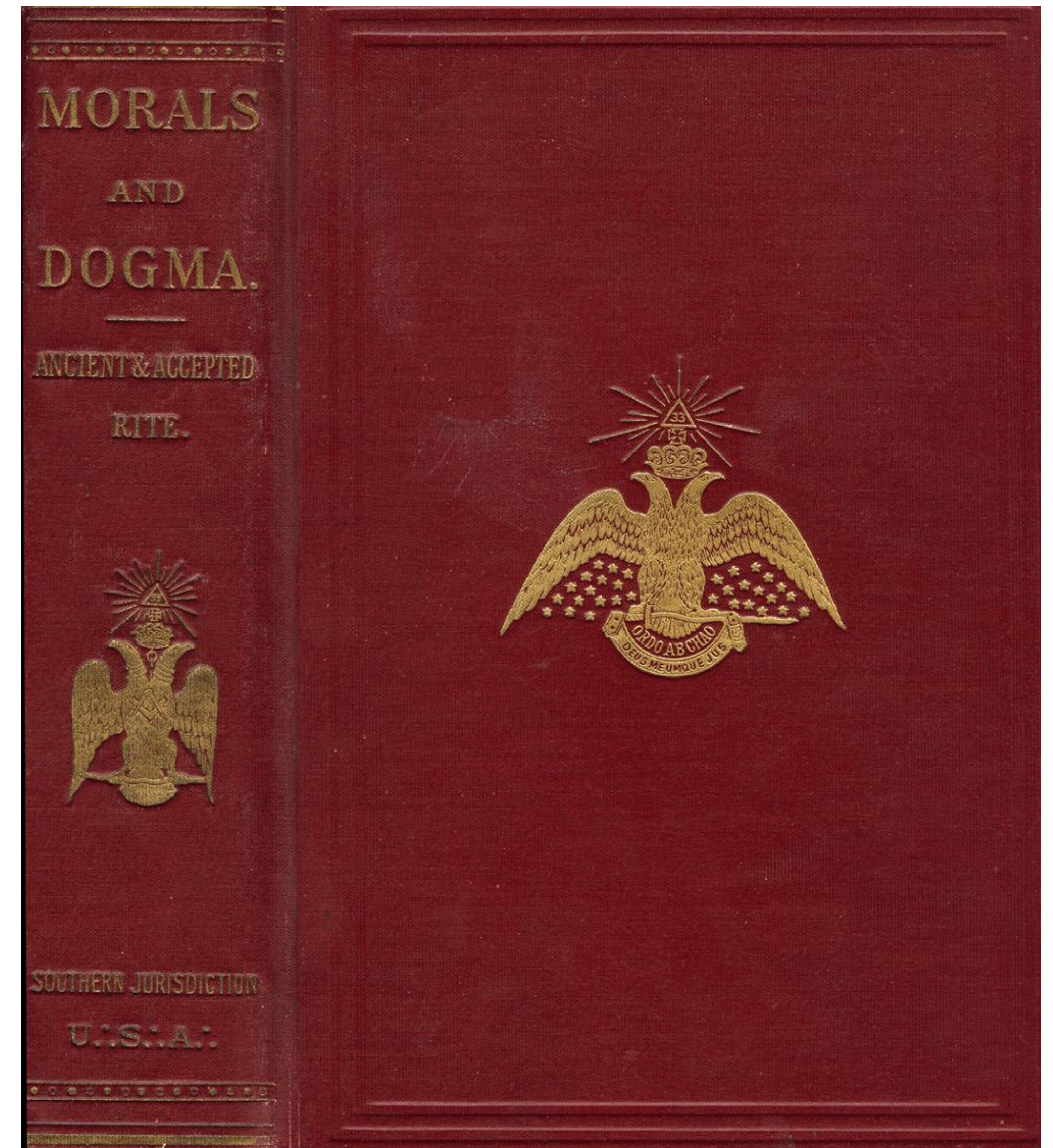
Why is there **Appearance** rather than Truth?



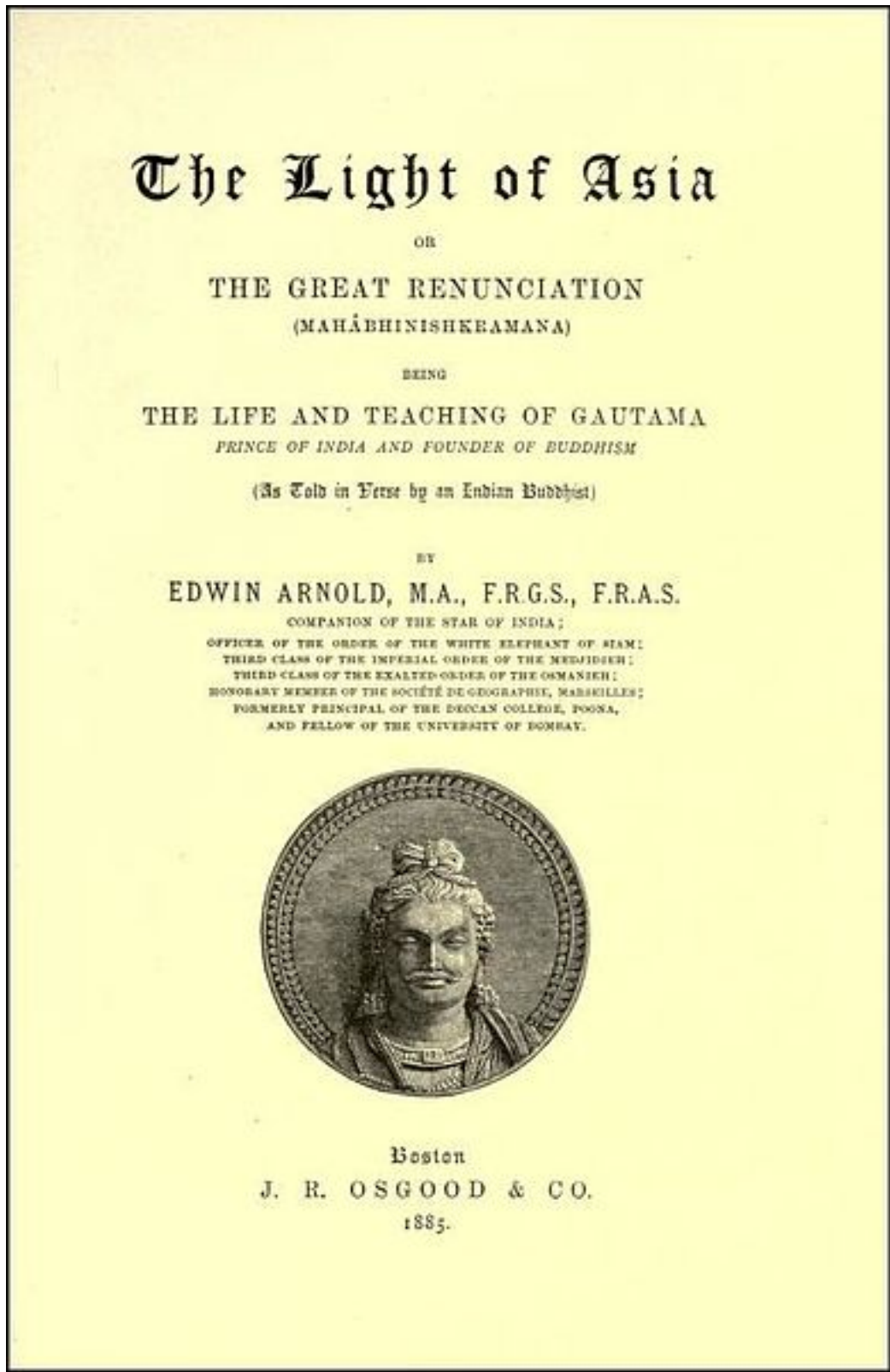


The Dyad is the origin of contrasts. It is the imperfect condition into which, according to the Pythagoreans, a being falls, when he detaches himself from the Monad, or God. Spiritual beings, emanating from God, are enveloped in the dyad, and therefore receive only illusory impressions.

Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogmas*







Om Amataya! Measure not with words the Immeasurable;  
Nor sink the string of thought into the Fathomless.  
Who asks does err; who answers, errs; say naught!  
Shall any gazer see with mortal eyes?  
Or any searcher know with mortal mind? Veil after veil will lift—but there must be Veil  
upon veil behind!

Edwin Arnold, *The Light of Asia*





Plus Ultra vs Nec Plus Ultra?

