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CREATION OF THE WORLD AS A HANDICRAFT

ONE OF THE COMMONEST CREATION MYTHS AMONG BOTH SAVAGE AND CIVILISED PEOPLES IS THAT OF THE DIVINE CRAFTSMAN WHO FASHIONS THE WORLD WITH HIS TOOLS, JUST AS HIS HUMAN COUNTERPART PRODUCES WORKS OF ART

THE CREATOR AS MODELLER

THE ASSINABOINES OF NORTH AMERICA BELIEVE THAT ORIGINALLY THE CREATOR FORMED THE WORLD OUT OF A CONFUSED MASS

THE CREATOR AS SCULPTOR

THE CREATOR APPEARS AS SCULPTOR IN SEVERAL EASTERN MYTHS WHICH MAY BE CONNECTED, ESPECIALLY THAT OF THE CHINESE PAN-KU WHO CHISELLED THE UNIVERSE OUT OF CHAOS

COMPARE ALSO THE STORY OF THE KACHIN TRIBE OF BURMA, WHICH RELATES THAT THE GOD NGAWN WA MAGAM MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH, USING HIS HAMMER, HIS STEEL PINNERS, HIS PELLET-BOW AND HIS MUD PELLETS



PAN-KU CHISELLING THE UNIVERSE OUT OF CHAOS
After Watters, *F.A.S., Notices of Chinese Religions*, London, 1911. Photo after p. 275.



VISVAKARMA (TVASHTRI) THE DIVINE CARPENTER
After Watters, *F.A.S., The Gods of India*, London, 1911. Appendix p. 10.

THE CREATOR AS ARCHITECT AND BUILDER

A VERY EARLY EXPRESSION OF THE IDEA OF THE CREATOR AS ARCHITECT AND BUILDER IS FOUND IN THE VEDIC MYTHOLOGY OF INDIA, WHERE THE METAPHOR OF BUILDING IS OFTEN USED FOR THE FORMATION OF THE WORLD: INDRA, VISHNU, VARUNA, TVASHTRI THE DIVINE CARPENTER, AND OTHER GODS ARE ALL DESCRIBED AS CONSTRUCTING, OR HELPING TO CONSTRUCT, THE UNIVERSE

COMPARE ALSO MANY BIBLICAL EXPRESSIONS: E.G., THE LORD THAT HATH STRETCHED FORTH THE HEAVENS AND LAID THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE EARTH

ISAIAH, II, 13 AND SEE SECTION II, I.

THE CREATOR AS WEAVER

THE BABUA TRIBE OF CENTRAL AFRICA RELATE THAT THE GODDESS MBA WOVE THE WORLD ON A LOOM

THE CREATOR AS METAL WORKER

AMONG THE LUSHEI-KUKI CLANS OF BURMA, THE GOD CHHURA IS SAID TO HAVE SHAPED THE WORLD, BEATING IT FLAT WITH A Mallet

COMPARE ALSO THE EGYPTIAN MYTH IN WHICH PTAH, THE SCULPTOR AND ENGRAVER OF THE GODS IS SAID TO HAVE BUILT HEAVEN OUT OF A METAL PLATE

THE CREATOR AS POTTER

THE BEST-KNOWN EXAMPLE OF THIS TYPE OF MYTH IS THAT OF PTAH, THE EGYPTIAN ARTIFICER GOD, WHO SHAPES THE EGG OF THE WORLD ON A POTTER'S WHEEL, JUST AS CHNUM SHAPES HUMAN-BEINGS



PTAH FORMING THE EGG OF THE WORLD
Relief from the Temple of Ptolemy
After Rosellini, *U. d. Monumenti dell'Egitto*, Pisa, 1828. Vol. II, p. 300.