

HYMN TO CREATION

Then there was neither being nor non-being.
The atmosphere was not, nor sky above it.
What covered all? And where? By what protected?
Was there the fathomless abyss of waters?

Then neither death nor deathlessness existed;
Of day and night there yet was no distinction.
Alone That One breathed calmly, self-supported,
Other than It was none, nor aught above it.

Darkness there was at first in darkness hidden;
This universe was undistinguished water.
That which in void and emptiness lay hidden
Alone by power of fervor was developed.

Then for the first time arose desire,
Which was the primal germ of mind, within It.
And sages, searching in their heart, discovered
In nothing the connecting bond of Being.

Transversely was their severing line extended:
What was above it then, and what below it?
There were begetters, there were mighty forces,
Free action here and energy up yonder.

Who verily knows and who can declare it,
Whence it was born and whence came this creation?
The Gods are later than this world's production.
Who knows then whence it first came into being?

He, the first origin of this creation,
Whether he formed it all or did not form it,
Whose eye controls this world in highest heaven,
He verily knows it, or perhaps he knows not.

Rig Veda X.129 – Translated from original Sanskrit by Ralph T. H. Griffith in 1889

*Ashok Chawla shared this inspiration at the Board Meeting of the Inter-Religious Council on
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