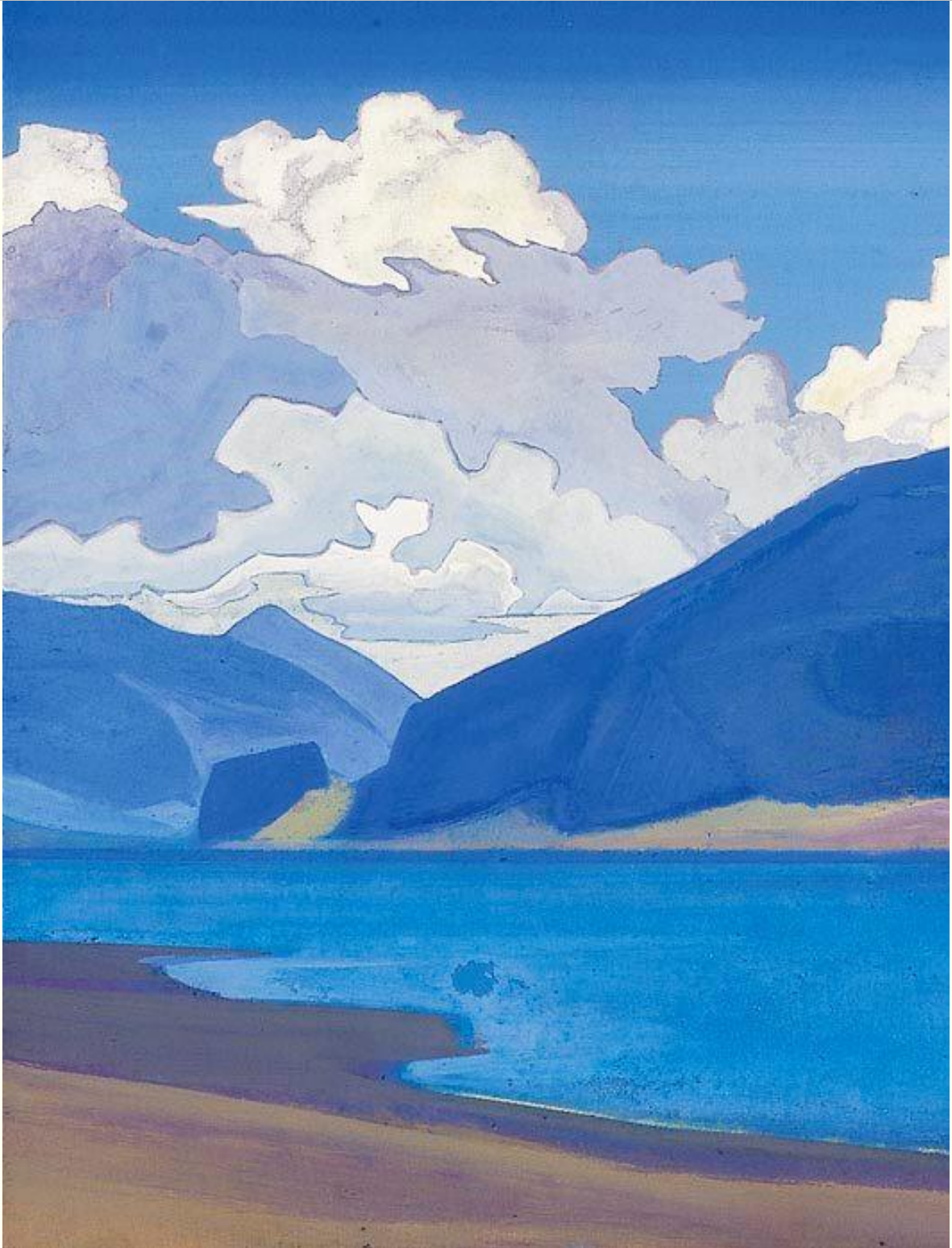


*Sona, the Indian red river,
keeps wandering off its bed*



Abstract and train of thoughts¹

From the “Spirit of God” brooding in, not over, the chaotic waters emerged Ocean, the Father of gods.	3
With the Greeks, “River Gods” were the Sons of the primeval Ocean.	3
In the Mosaic Books water and earth stand for primordial matter, the creative feminine principle on our plane.	3
The seven rays of the Sun are parallel to the seven worlds of every planetary chain, and to the seven rivers of heaven and earth.	4
Varuna, the chief of the Dhyani-Chohans, and prototype of the Ouranos of the Greeks, regulates all natural phenomena. The seven rivers of the sky (the descending creative gods) and the seven rivers of the earth (the seven primitive mankinds) are under his aegis and control.	4
Since the palmy days of the Mahabharata, Sona river has changed its course several times; and, more recently, since Gautama’s time, twice — it first turned away and flowed back eastward, and later flowed westward, as in the present time.	5
Endnote by Boris de Zirkoff.	6
Suggested reading for students.	
From our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series.	7



¹ Title page illustration: Brahmaputra River by Nikolai Roerich.

From the “Spirit of God” brooding in, not over, the chaotic waters emerged Ocean, the Father of gods.

From *The Secret Doctrine*, I p. 345 & fn.

. . . primordial substance is said to contain within itself the essence of all that goes to make up man; it has not only all the elements of his physical being, but even the “breath of life” itself in a latent state, ready to be awakened. This it derives from the “incubation” of the “Spirit of God” upon the face of the waters — CHAOS: in fact, this substance is chaos itself. From this it was that Paracelsus claimed to be able to make his “homunculi”; and this is why Thales, the great natural philosopher, maintained that water was the principle of all things in nature. . . .

With the Greeks, “River Gods” were the Sons of the primeval Ocean.

With the Greeks, the “River-gods,” all of them the Sons of the primeval ocean (Chaos in its masculine aspect), were the respective ancestors of the Hellenic races. For them the OCEAN was the father of the Gods and thus they had anticipated in this connection the theories of Thales, as rightly observed by Aristotle.¹



In the Mosaic Books water and earth stand for primordial matter, the creative feminine principle on our plane.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (EASTERN AND WESTERN OCCULTISM) XIV pp. 242-43.

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.]

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.



¹ *Metaphysics*, Bk. I, iii, 5-6

The seven rays of the Sun are parallel to the seven worlds of every planetary chain, and to the seven rivers of heaven and earth.

From *The Secret Doctrine*, II pp. 606, 607.

. . . though entirely allegorical, the Rig-Vedic hymns are none the less suggestive. The seven rays of Sūrya (the Sun) are made therein parallel to the Seven Worlds (of every planetary chain), to the seven rivers of heaven and earth, the former being the seven creative Hosts, and the latter the Seven men, or primitive human groups. The Seven ancient Rishis — the progenitors of all that lives and breathes on earth — are the seven friends of Agni, his seven “horses,” or seven “HEADS.” The human race has sprung from fire and water, it is allegorically stated; fashioned by the FATHERS, or the ancestor-sacrificers, from Agni; for Agni, the Aswins, the Ādityas,¹ are all synonymous with that “sacrificer,” or the fathers, variously called *Pitaras* (*Pitris*, fathers), *Angirasas*,² the *Sādhyas*, “divine sacrificers,” the most occult of all. . . .

Varuna, the chief of the Dhyani-Chohans, and prototype of the Ouranos of the Greeks, regulates all natural phenomena. The seven rivers of the sky (the descending creative gods) and the seven rivers of the earth (the seven primitive mankind) are under his aegis and control.

In these Hymns the “Heavenly Man” is called *purusha*, “the Man,”³ from whom Virāj was born;⁴ and from Virāj, the (mortal) man. It is Varuna (now drawn from his sublime position to be the chief of the Lords-Dhyānis or Devas) who regulates all natural phenomena, who “makes a path for the Sun, for him to follow.” The seven rivers of the sky (the descending creative gods) and the seven rivers of the earth (the seven primitive mankind) are under his control, as will be seen. For he who breaks Varuna’s laws (*Vratāni*, “courses of natural action,” active laws) is punished by Indra,⁵ the Vedic powerful god, whose *Vrata* (law or power) is greater than the *Vratāni* of any other god.

Thus, the Rig-Veda, the oldest of *all the known* ancient records, may be shown to corroborate the occult teachings in almost every respect.



¹ *Rig-Veda*, III, 54, 16; II, 29, 3, 4

² *ibid.*, 1, 42, 17, 139, *et seq.* Prof. Roth (in *St. Petersburg Dictionary*) defines the Angirasas as an intermediate race of higher beings between gods and men; while Prof. Weber, according to his invariable custom of modernising and anthropomorphising the divine, sees in them the original priests of the religion which was common to the Aryan Hindus and Persians. Roth is right, “Angirasas” was one of the names of the Dhyānis, or Deva-instructors (Guru-Devas), of the late Third, the Fourth, and even of the Fifth Race Initiates.

³ *ibid.*, X, 90. 1

⁴ *ibid.*, X, 90. 5

⁵ *ibid.*, X, 113-5

Since the palmy days of the Mahabharata, Sona river has changed its course several times; and, more recently, since Gautama's time, twice — it first turned away and flowed back eastward, and later flowed westward, as in the present time.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (PALIBOTHRA OF MEGASTHENES) XIII pp. 342-44.

[Fragment in H.P. Blavatsky's handwriting in the Adyar Archives. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

It would require more space than the subject is worth, to show how every classical writer who mentions the “Palibothra”¹ of Megasthenes differs in some detail from another classic; and how all connect with the place the town far or near the confluence of the Ganges and Erranoboas, though the latter is a non-existing river — if one has to judge by the name. And while Pliny places “Palibothra” 425 Roman miles *below* the junction of the Ganges and the Jumna, Strabo, following Eratosthenes, gives its distance from the mouth of the Ganges at 6,000 stadia. Arrian moreover calls the “other” river near Ganges Erranoboas. And though both Arrian and Pliny make a clear distinction between the Sona² and the mythical Erranoboas, yet Prof. Max Müller followed by Mr. Cunningham do not hesitate to identify both as Sona, the same river “where the ancient Palibothra stood.” As an unanswerable corroboration of the statement, and explanation given to an objection raised by D. Wilson, he holds that:

“ . . . though at present Patna is not situated near the confluence of the Ganges and the Sona . . . this, however, has been explained by a change in the bed of the river Sona . . . established on the best geographical evidence.”³

The “evidence” of the geographers is no doubt unimpeachable; but this evidence does not establish either the year or even the approximate period when the Sona [343] deserted its bed. Our texts invalidate, however, the testimony of the Greeks if by Erranoboas the Sona is meant. Leaving the Oxford Philologist and Gen. Cunningham who accepts and insists upon the identification to settle their differences, with the evidences to the contrary brought forward by opponents who show most weighty and evident reasons why the Sona cannot be the Erranoboas,⁴ the attention of the learned Surveyors may be drawn to the following: A more minute examination will show that the *Sona has changed its course since the days of the Mahābhārata where it is mentioned several times and since Buddha's time — twice*. And that neither of the periods of the two deviations could possibly furnish a corroborative evidence in favour of the statement of classical writers, is shown in our texts. We are not concerned with the epoch of the last deviation of that restless river, which may or may

¹ [Cf. Pātaliputra, पटलिपुत्र, adjacent to modern-day Patna, was a city in ancient India, originally built by Magadha ruler Udayin in 490 BCE as a small fort (Pātaligrāma) near the Ganges river. It became the capital of major powers in ancient India, such as the Shishunaga Empire (c. 413–345 BCE), the Nanda Empire (c. 460 or 420–325 BCE), the Maurya Empire (c. 320–180 BCE), the Gupta Empire (c. 320–550 CE), and the Pala Empire (c. 750–1200 CE). During the Maurya period, Pātaliputra was one of the largest cities in the world. As per the Greek diplomat, traveller, and historian Megasthenes, during the Mauryan Empire (c. 320–180 BCE) it was among the first cities in the world to have a highly efficient system of local self-government. Afterwards, Sher Shah Suri (1538–1545) revived Pātaliputra, which had been in decline since the 7th century CE, and renamed it Patna.]

² [Or Son River, सोन नदी, located in central India. It originates near Amarkantak Hill in the Annupur district of Madhya Pradesh, and finally merges with the Ganges river near Patna in Bihar. Sona river is the southern and second-largest tributary of the Ganges' after Yamuna River.]

³ [See p. 250 of Śāstrī's ed. of Max Müller's *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*.]

⁴ See *Archæological Survey*, Vol. VIII.

not have happened as stated in the *Survey* shortly “before the Muhammedan invasion”; but with that time which would reconcile the Greek statements with the actual direction of the flow of the Sona. And to our knowledge neither period will serve the purpose. For, if the geographical evidence and the topographical inferences drawn from various allusions to this religio-historical stream in the *Mahābhārata*, and the *Rāmāyana*, and the travels of Hiouen-Tsang and Fa-hian, justify the conclusion that the Sona has once more wandered off its bed somewhere between the two centuries that preceded the Muhammedan invasion of India, our texts connect its first deviation positively with Buddha’s death. Thus whether the Sona changed its bed in the 6th century “B.C.” or the 8th “A.D.,” it was not at the time of Megasthenes (4th century before the Christian era) — “where Palibothra stood.” Among the many legends connected with the Lord Buddha’s *Nirvana*, Mahanada Sona (the great red river) is mentioned among the seven rivers which ran off in various directions

“ . . . to avoid witnessing the sorrow of the host of Arhats and Bikkhus (settled on the shores of various rivers) at the death of their Lord.”

Though a far more natural phenomenon than the parallel one alleged to have happened 500 years later, [344] when

“ . . . the veil of the temple was rent in twain . . . and the graves were opened; and many of the saints which slept arose and went into the holy city . . . ”

— it is not even attempted to connect the deviation of the streams with the Sage’s death in any miraculous direct way. But unless the actual fact of coincidence is accepted, then the compiler of legendary lore would have to be credited with prophetic prevision; for he says distinctly that the “Mahanada Sona turned away and flowed back *Eastward*”; — a fact corroborating the repetition of the same phenomenon later, since the Sona flows nowadays *Westward*.

[End of the MS.]



Endnote by Boris de Zirkoff.¹

[The sheet of this MS. is 20 inches long — three smaller sheets glued together. On the back of it there are four lines in H.P. Blavatsky’s handwriting:

. . . was sunk in the 3rd century together with the ship that carried it from Magadha toward “Ghangs-chhen-dzonga,” the *fifth* arriving at the nick of time reached its destination. So did the sixth and the seventh — all the three of which are now . . .

This text might have been used by Madame Blavatsky in some other article.]



¹ Compiler of *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*.

Suggested reading for students.¹



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- DIAGRAM 4 - THE WHEEL OF EZEKIEL
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- PROPOSITION 1 - BESTRIDE THE BIRD OF LIFE
- PROPOSITION 1 - CENTRE + CIRCLE

¹ Students should be fully conversant with the metaphysical concepts and learning aids set out in our Secret Doctrine's Propositions Series 2 and 3. — ED. PHIL.

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- PROPOSITION 1 - DIAGRAM NOTES¹
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- PROPOSITION 1 - NOAH IS LOGOS
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- PROPOSITION 1 - SUN IS THE MIRROR OF FIRE
- PROPOSITION 1 - THE INEFFABLE NAME
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- THEOSOPHICAL JEWELS - COSMOGENESIS FOR BABIES
- THEOSOPHICAL JEWELS - COSMOGENESIS FOR GROWN-UPS

¹ Published under the title "How the Heavenly Snails clothed themselves in the Fabric of Darkness."

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