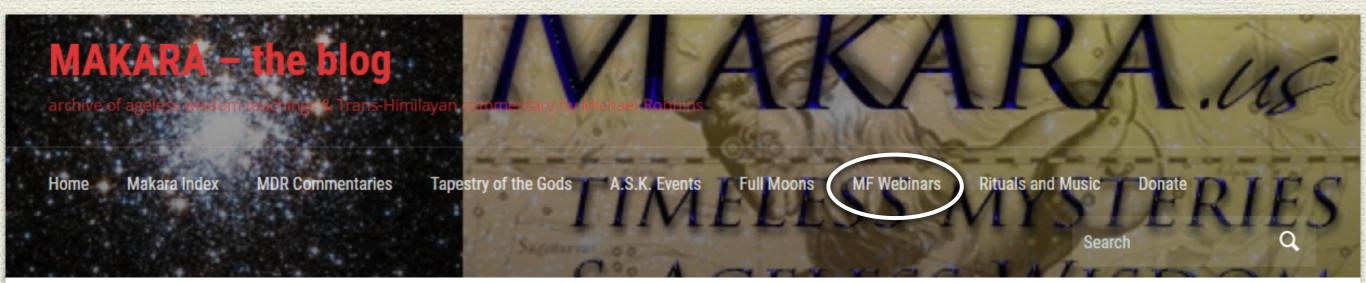


The Light of the Soul by Olga Fröbe Kapteyn



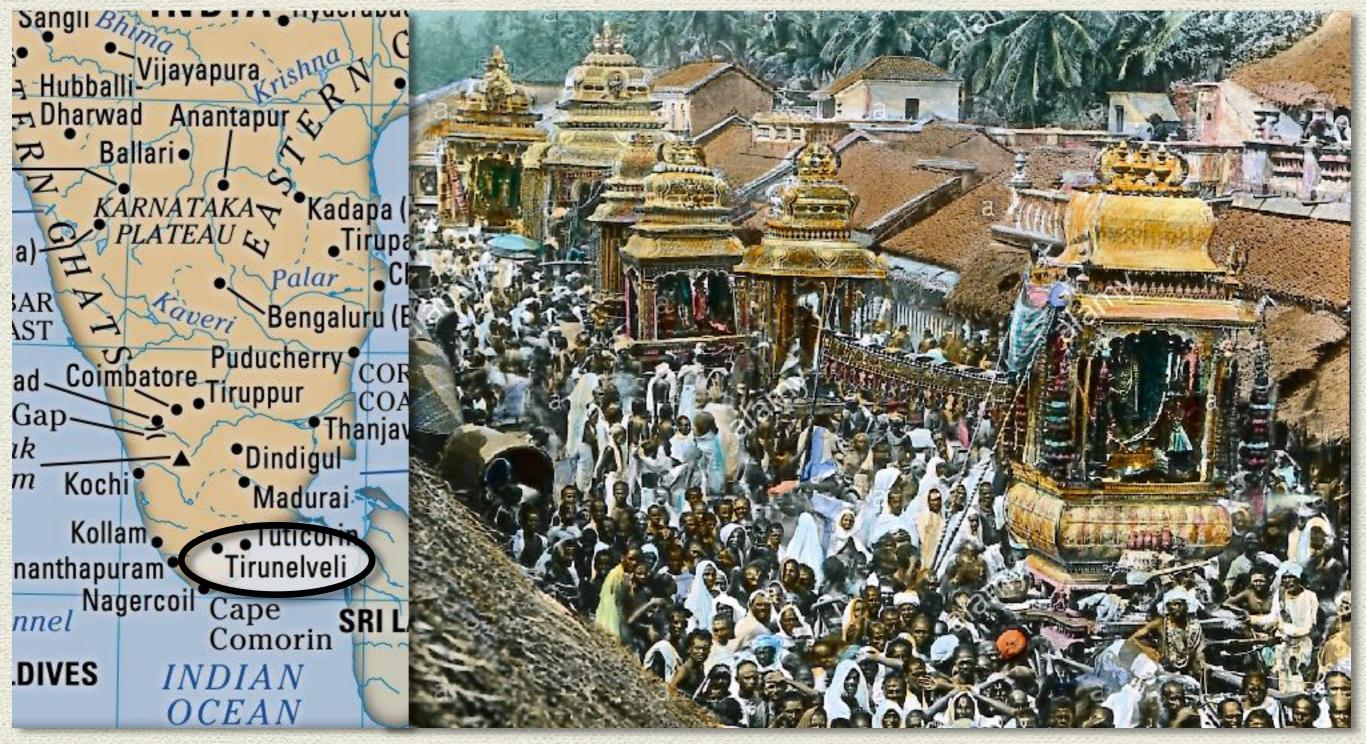
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At the Tirunelveli station there was a crowd; 2,000 people at least sweltered together in and about the building to get a glimpse of us. There were all the town notables in gala costume, and the huge elephants from the Temple, with their mighty brows painted with caste marks, which were made to raise their trunks and salute us with a roar. And priests with broad and high foreheads holding before us in benediction polished platters of brass, holding betel leaves, red powder, and burning lumps of camphor. And the presentation of notabilities, of whom each gave us two limes, with courtly salutations. And the clangor of huge horns, and long slim trumpets, or shawms, blown lustily amid the din of a dozen tom-toms. Then came a great procession, headed by the elephants trumpeting, the nobility and officials, on foot, escorting our palanquins, and my "Bob" in front of us carrying a brass jar of water on his head, a tuft of betel leaves emerging from the narrow mouth of the jar. And the banners and flags, large and small, each bearing some quaint device, waved all up and down the line, the 2,000 following and shouting joyfully.



The omens, too, they said, were propitious: a frightened pullet flew over my head in the right direction: a nilakanta, or vividly blue bird, was seen in an adjacent field on our right; a lizard chirped over our house porch the proper number of times. So everybody was happy in the glowing sunshine, and the town had on its holiday look. They took us to our quarters, an upstair house with an upper and a lower verandah, whose portico and whole facade were decked out with flags and greenery. The street was packed with people for hours. We held a sort of durbar, or reception, at which there were speeches, replies, written addresses, betel, more garlands, limes, etc. In the evening I initiated fourteen new candidates and organized the Branch in due form. Then something to eat, and bed, and, for me, dreamless sleep until morning.

My throat was so sore that I looked forward with some apprehension to the work I should have for it that day and the next. However, I soon had something to divert my thoughts from my physical disability, for the morning post brought me a letter from the Principal of the local Hindu College which let me into the wiles of the gentle missionary. My correspondent said that, although he called himself a Christian, he did not approve of some of the measures adopted in the interest of missionary propaganda, and enclosed for my information a copy of a pamphlet which had been circulated through the town the day before, to prejudice the community against us; the copies being distributed by hand by the servants of the missionaries, with the verbal message that they were sent "with the compliments of the Secretary of the Tirunelveli Theosophical Society".



In violation of the law which requires that the names of the printer and publisher shall appear on every printed work, this pamphlet revealed neither. Its contents were reprints of two meanly slanderous articles against us, from a London and a New York paper. The occasion to expose the dishonorable tactics of the enemy was so inviting that before beginning my lecture that afternoon at the Hindu College, I called attention to the pamphlet and denounced its authors in suitable terms. The blow recoiled upon the heads of our would-be assassins and our popularity was doubled. This is the sort of warfare that we have had to encounter throughout the whole period of our Indian work; and almost invariably the offenders have been Protestant missionaries. ODL, v.2:310-12

STANZA III

The last vibration of the seventh eternity thrills through infinitude. The mother swells, expanding from within without, like the bud of the lotus.
The vibration sweeps along, touching with its swift wing the whole universe and the germ that dwelleth in darkness: the darkness that breathes over the slumbering waters of life.

3. Darkness radiates light, and light drops one solitary ray into the mother-deep. The ray shoots through the virgin egg the ray causes the eternal egg to thrill, and drop the non-eternal germ, which condenses into the world-egg.

4. Then the three fall into the four. The radiant essence becomes seven inside, seven outside. The luminous egg, which in itself is three, curdles and spreads in milk-white curds throughout the depths of mother, the root that grows in the depths of the ocean of life.

5. The root remains, the light remains, the curds remain, and still Oeaohoo is one.

6. The root of life was in every drop of the ocean of immortality, and the ocean was radiant light, which was fire, and heat, and motion. Darkness vanished and was no more; it disappeared in its own essence, the body of fire and water, or father and mother.

7. Behold, oh *Lanoo*! The radiant child of the two, the unparalleled refulgent glory: Bright Space Son of Dark Space, which emerges from the depths of the great dark waters. It is *Oeaohoo* the younger, the * * * He shines forth as the son; he is the blazing Divine Dragon of Wisdom; the One is Four, and Four takes to itself Three,† and the Union produces the *Sapta*, in whom are the seven which become the *Tridasa* (or the hosts and the multitudes). Behold him lifting the veil and unfurling it from east to west. He shuts out the above, and leaves the below to be seen as the great illusion. He marks the places for the shining ones, and turns the upper into a shoreless sea of fire, and the one manifested into the great waters.

8. Where was the germ and where was now darkness? Where is the spirit of the flame that burns in thy lamp, oh *Lanoo*? The germ is that, and that is light, the white brilliant son of the dark hidden father.

9. Light is cold flame, and flame is fire, and fire produces heat, which yields water: the water of life in the great mother.

10. Father-Mother spin a web whose upper end is fastened to spirit—the light of the one darkness—and the lower one to its shadowy end, matter; and this web is the universe spun out of the two substances made in one, which is *Svâbhâvat*.

11. It expands when the breath of fire is upon it; it contracts when the breath of the mother touches it. Then the sons dissociate and scatter, to return into their mother's bosom at the end of the great day, and re-become one with her; when it is cooling it becomes radiant, and the sons expand and contract through their own selves and hearts; they embrace infinitude.

12. Then *Svâbhâvat* sends *Fohat* to harden the atoms. Each is a part of the web. Reflecting the "Self-Existent Lord" like a mirror, each becomes in turn a world.

† In the English translation from the Sanskrit the numbers are given in that language, *Eka*, *Chatur*, etc., etc. It was thought best to give them in English. SD1:28-30

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The Astral Light is that which mirrors the three higher planes of consciousness, and is above the lower, or terrestrial plane; therefore it does not extend beyond the fourth plane, where, one may say, the Akasa begins... There is one great difference between the Astral Light and the Akasa which must be remembered. The latter is eternal, the former is periodic. The Astral Light changes not only with the Mahamanvantaras but also with every sub-period and planetary cycle or Round. OTG

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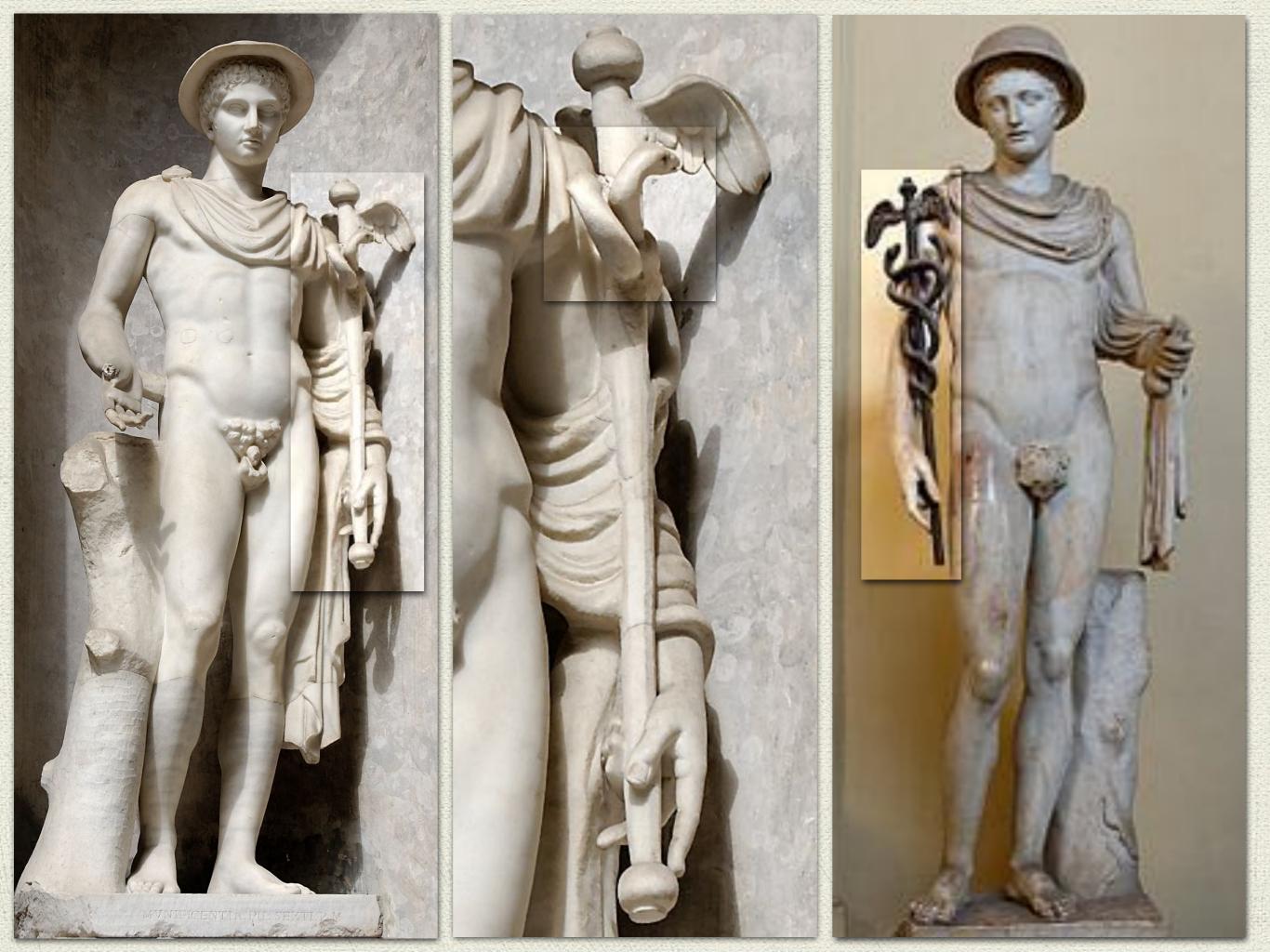
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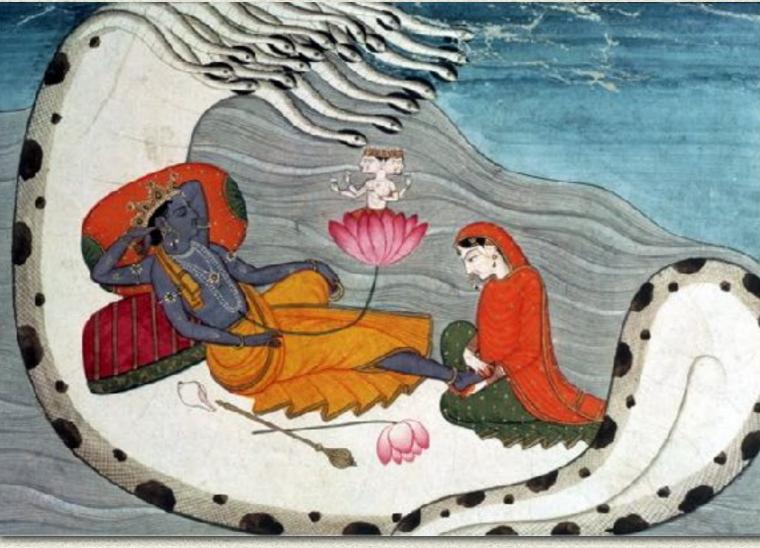
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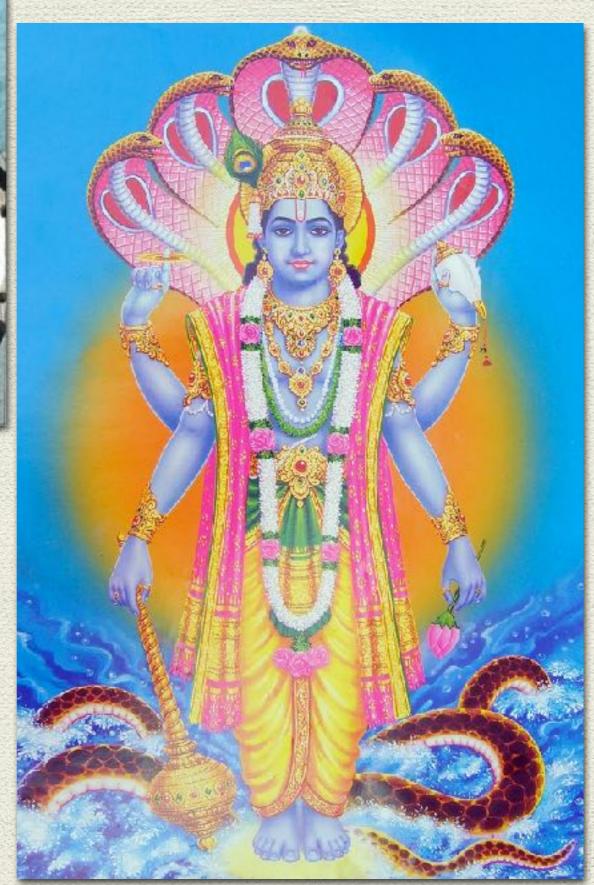
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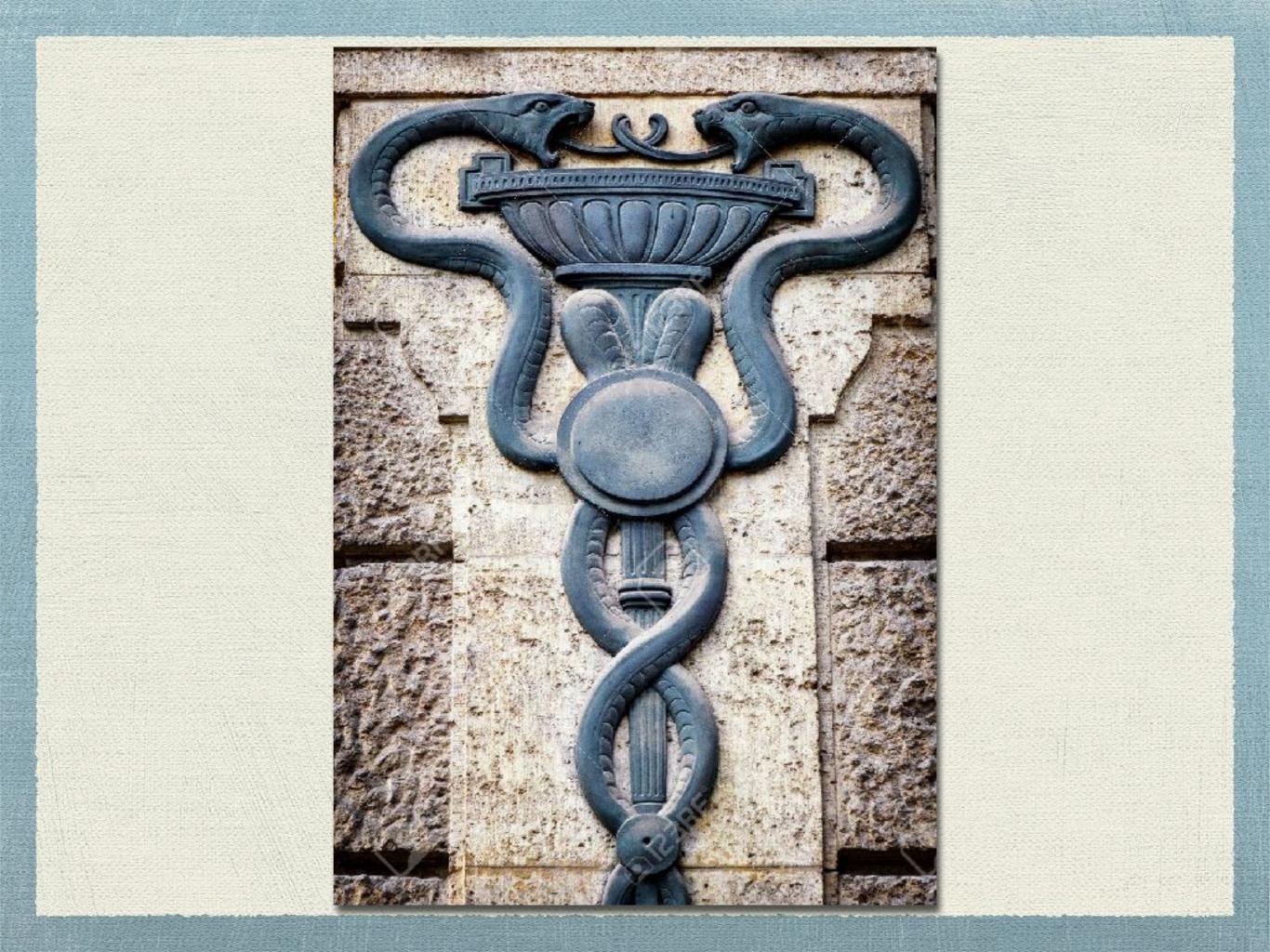




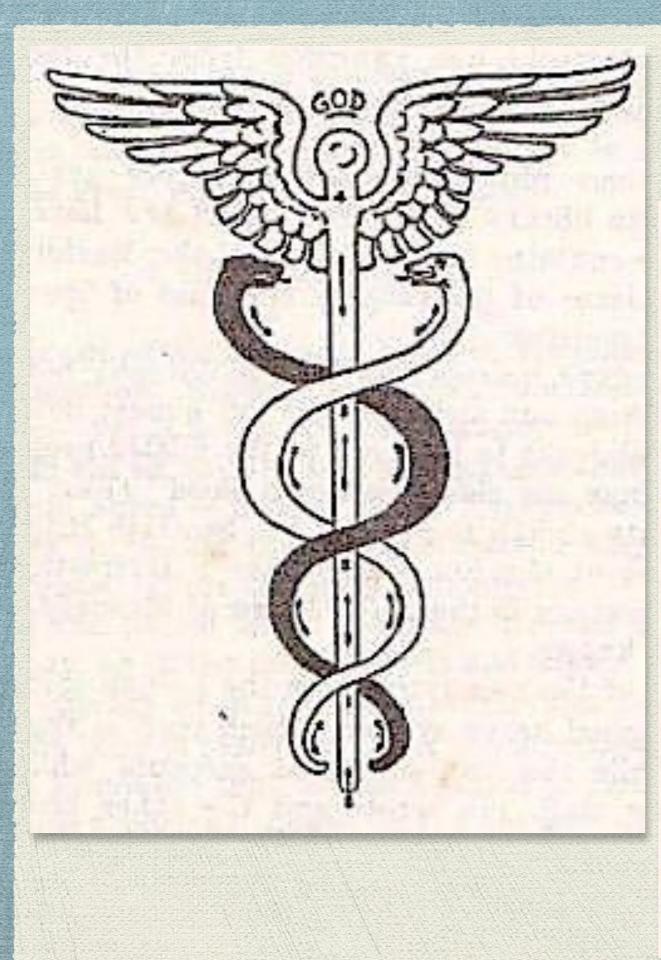


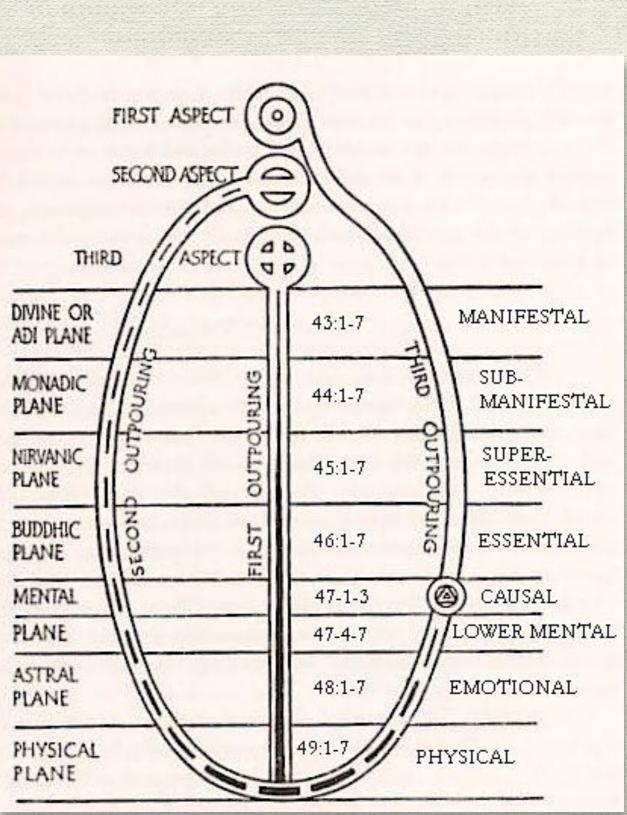






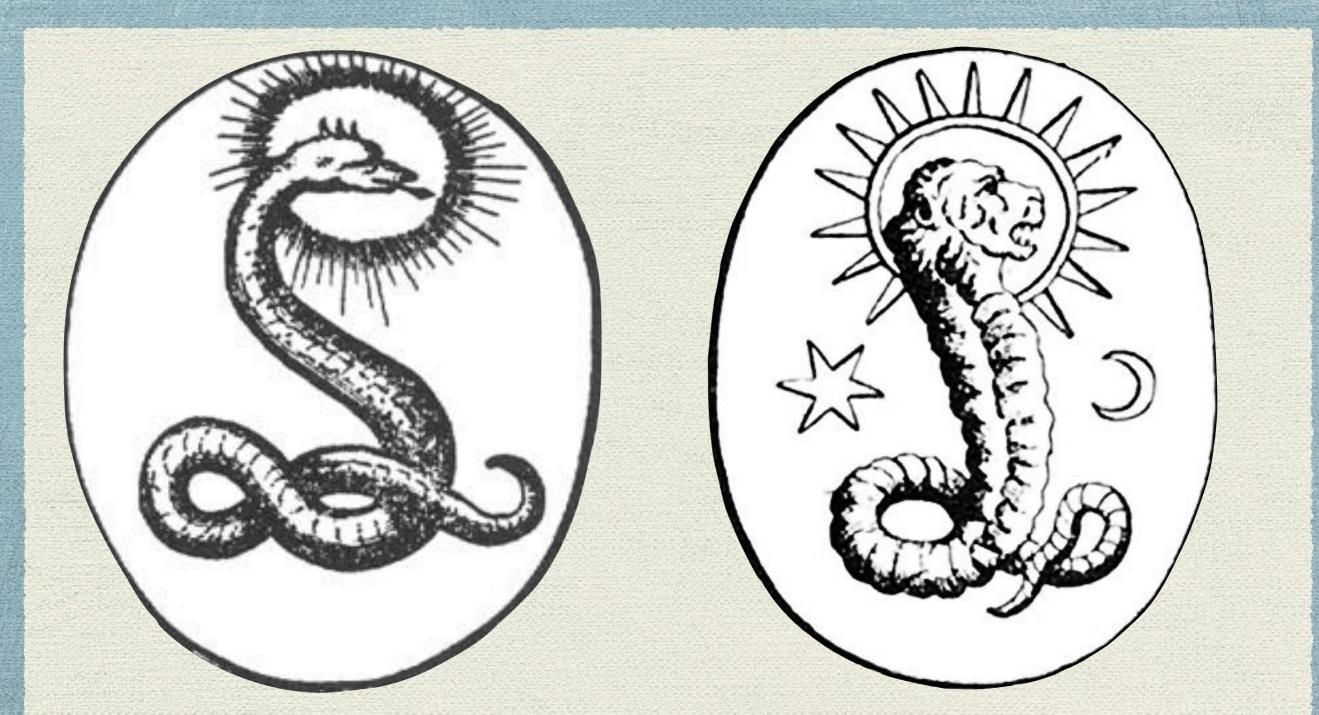




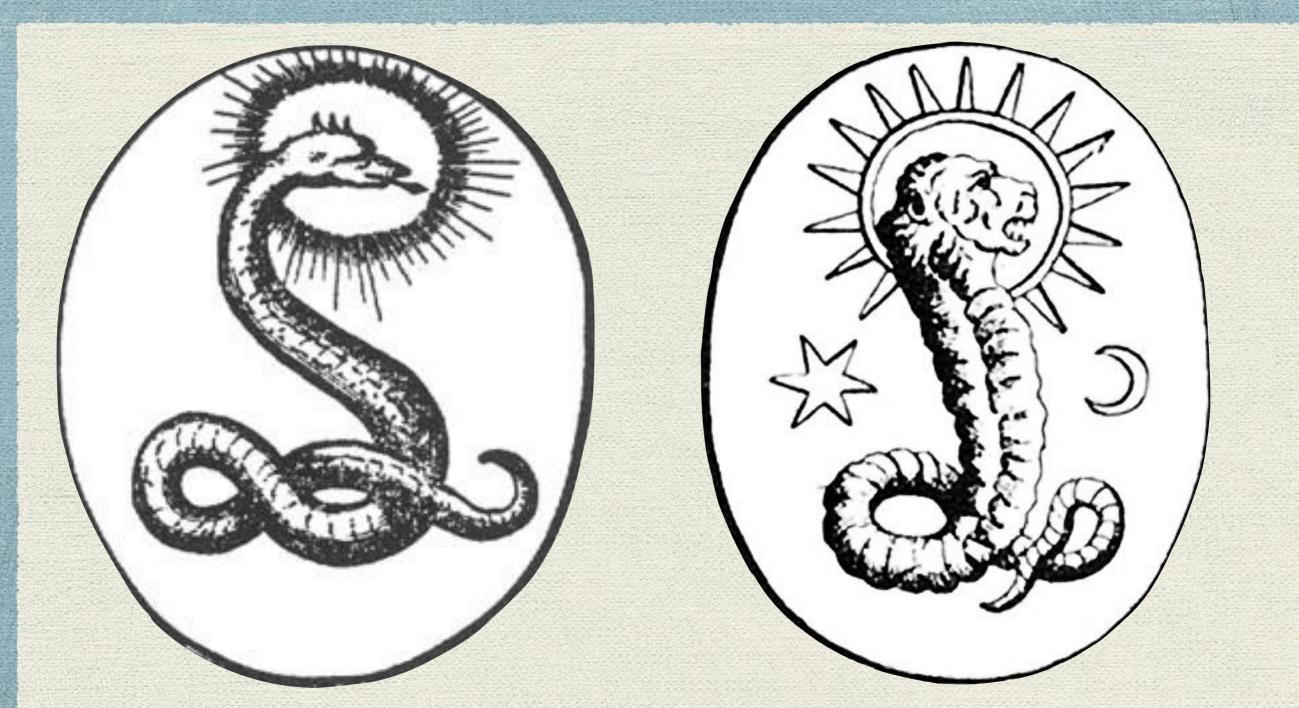


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*Like the *logoi* and the Hierarchies of Powers, however, the "Serpents" have to be distinguished one from the other. Sesha or Ananta, "the couch of Vishnu," is an allegorical abstraction, symbolizing infinite Time in Space, which contains the germ and throws off periodically the efflorescence of this germ, the *manifested* Universe; whereas, the gnostic *Ophis* contained the same triple symbolism in its seven vowels as the One, Three and Seven-syllabled *Oeaohoo* of the Archaic doctrine; i.e., the One Unmanifested Logos, the Second manifested, the triangle concreting into the Quaternary or Tetragrammaton, and the rays of the latter on the material plane. SD1:73



Ophis (Greek) Serpent; used by the Gnostic Ophites for Chnouphis, the Agathodaimon (good serpent), emblem of wisdom and of the unending cycles of time and constituting, with Ennoia, the Logos. Its opposite pole is Ophiomorphos [serpent-form from *ophis* serpent + *morphe* form]. The two are represented in the zodiac by Virgo-Scorpio. The serpent before his fall was Ophis-Christos, and after his fall was Ophiomorphos-Chrestos. The Roman Catholic Church identified Ophiomorphos with Michael, and the Gnostics identified him with Jehovah. OTG

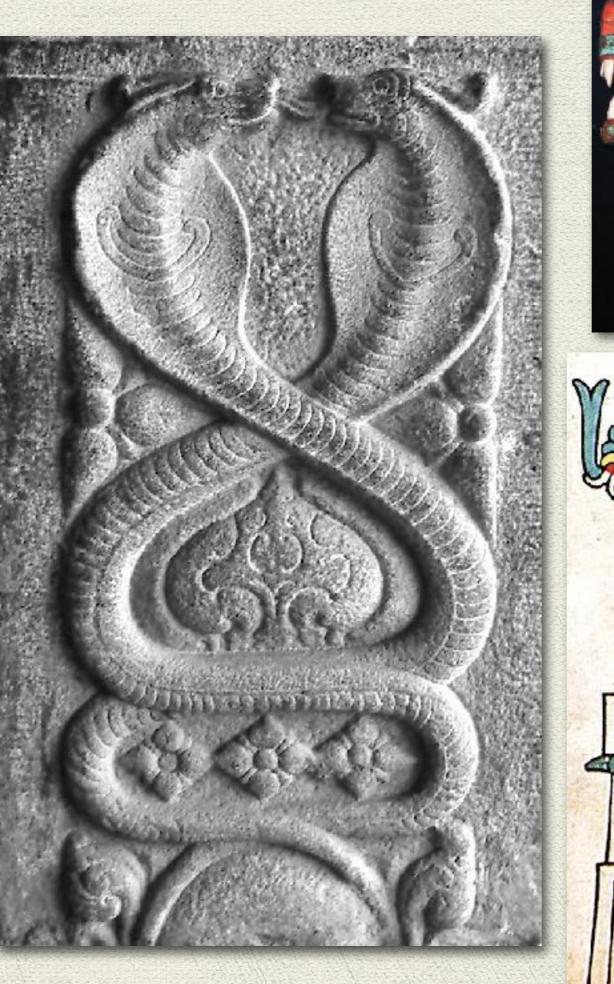


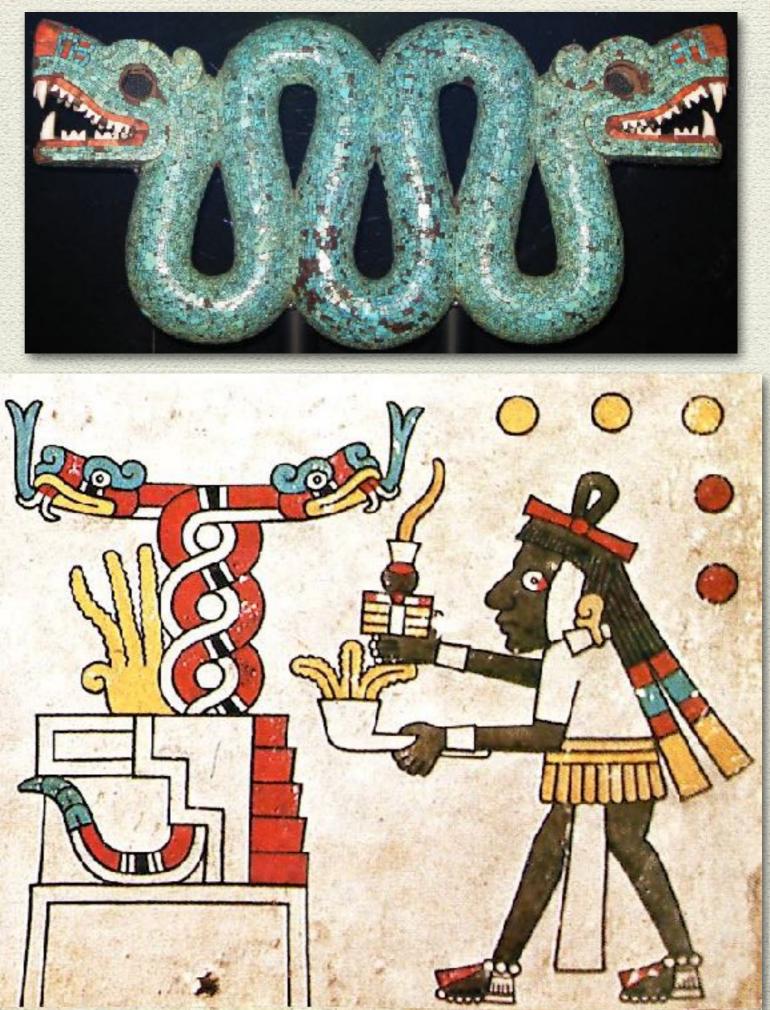
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(b cont.) Yet they all made a difference between the good and the bad Serpent (the Astral Light of the Kabalists) between the former, the embodiment of divine Wisdom in the region of the Spiritual, and the latter, Evil, on the plane of matter.* Jesus accepted the serpent as a synonym of Wisdom, and this formed part of his teaching: "Be ye wise as serpents," he says. "In the beginning, before Mother became Father-Mother, the fiery Dragon moved in the infinitudes alone" (Book of Sarparâjni.) The Aitareya Brâhmana calls the Earth Sarparâjni, "the Serpent Queen," and "the Mother of all that moves." Before our globe became egg-shaped (and the Universe also) "a long trail of Cosmic dust (or fire mist) moved and writhed like a serpent in Space." The "Spirit of God moving on Chaos" was symbolized by every nation in the shape of a fiery serpent breathing fire and light upon the primordial waters, until it had incubated cosmic matter and made it assume the annular shape of a serpent with its tail in its mouth—which symbolises not only Eternity and Infinitude, but also the globular shape of all the bodies formed within the Universe from that fiery mist. The Universe, as well as the Earth and Man, cast off periodically, serpent-like, their old skins, to assume new ones after a time of rest. The serpent is, surely, a not less graceful or a more unpoetical image than the caterpillar and chrysalis from which springs the butterfly, the Greek emblem of Psyche, the human soul. The "Dragon" was also the symbol of the Logos with the Egyptians, as with the Gnostics. In the "Book of Hermes," Pymander, the oldest and the most spiritual of the Logoi of the Western Continent, appears to Hermes in the shape of a Fiery Dragon of "Light, Fire, and Flame." Pymander, the "Thought Divine" personified, says: The Light is me, I am the Nous (the mind or Manu), I am thy God, and I am far older than the human principle which escapes from the shadow ("Darkness," or the concealed Deity). I am the germ of thought, the resplendent Word, the Son of God. All that thus sees and hears in thee is the Verbum of the Master, it is the Thought (Mahat) which is God, the Father.

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STANZA III

1. ... The last vibration of the seventh eternity thrills through infinitude. The mother swells, expanding from within without, like the bud of the lotus.

2. The vibration sweeps along, touching with its swift wing the whole universe and the germ that dwelleth in darkness: the darkness that breathes over the slumbering waters of life. . .

3. Darkness radiates light, and light drops one solitary ray into the mother-deep. The ray shoots through the virgin egg the ray causes the eternal egg to thrill, and drop the non-eternal germ, which condenses into the world-egg.

4. Then the three fall into the four. The radiant essence becomes seven inside, seven outside. The luminous egg, which in itself is three, curdles and spreads in milk-white curds throughout the depths of mother, the root that grows in the depths of the ocean of life.

5. The root remains, the light remains, the curds remain, and still Oeaohoo is one.

6. The root of life was in every drop of the ocean of immortality, and the ocean was radiant light, which was fire, and heat, and motion. Darkness vanished and was no more; it disappeared in its own essence, the body of fire and water, or father and mother.

7. Behold, oh *Lanoo*! The radiant child of the two, the unparalleled refulgent glory: Bright Space Son of Dark Space, which emerges from the depths of the great dark waters. It is *Oeaohoo* the younger, the * * * He shines forth as the son; he is the blazing Divine Dragon of Wisdom; the One is Four, and Four takes to itself Three,† and the Union produces the *Sapta*, in whom are the seven which become the *Tridasa* (or the hosts and the multitudes). Behold him lifting the veil and unfurling it from east to west. He shuts out the above, and leaves the below to be seen as the great illusion. He marks the places for the shining ones, and turns the upper into a shoreless sea of fire, and the one manifested into the great waters.

8. Where was the germ and where was now darkness? Where is the spirit of the flame that burns in thy lamp, oh *Lanoo*? The germ is that, and that is light, the white brilliant son of the dark hidden father.

9. Light is cold flame, and flame is fire, and fire produces heat, which yields water: the water of life in the great mother.

10. Father-Mother spin a web whose upper end is fastened to spirit—the light of the one darkness—and the lower one to its shadowy end, matter; and this web is the universe spun out of the two substances made in one, which is *Svâbhâvat*.

11. It expands when the breath of fire is upon it; it contracts when the breath of the mother touches it. Then the sons dissociate and scatter, to return into their mother's bosom at the end of the great day, and re-become one with her; when it is cooling it becomes radiant, and the sons expand and contract through their own selves and hearts; they embrace infinitude.

12. Then *Svâbhâvat* sends *Fohat* to harden the atoms. Each is a part of the web. Reflecting the "Self-Existent Lord" like a mirror, each becomes in turn a world.

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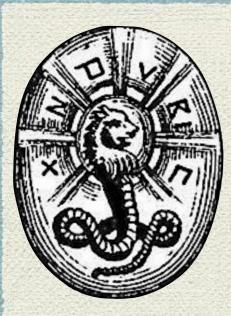
Serpent: One of the most fundamental and prolific symbols of the mystery-language. Its most basic meaning is of the eternal, alternating, cyclic motion during cosmic manifestation. For motion, which to the physicist and the philosopher alike seems an abstraction, is for the ancient wisdom a primordial principle or axiom, of the same order as space and time, existing per se. Never does motion cease utterly even during kosmic pralaya. This circular motion, compounding itself into spirals, helixes, and vortices, is the builder of worlds, bringing together the scattered elements of chaos; motion per se is essential cosmic intelligence. This circular motion, returning upon itself like a serpent swallowing its tail, represents the cycles of time.

This conscious energy in spirals whirls through all the planes of cosmos as fohat and his innumerable sons — the cosmic energies and forces, fundamentally intelligent, operating in every scale or grade of matter. The caduceus of Hermes, twin serpents wound about a staff, represents cosmically the mighty drama of evolution, in its twin aspects, the staff or tree standing for the structural aspect, the serpent for the fohatic forces that animate the structure.

The serpent is characteristically a dual symbol. In the beginnings of creation two poles were emanated, spirit and matter; and forthwith began interaction between the downward forces of the one and the upward forces of the other. Hermes, Mercury, intelligence, may represent a sage or a thief; the serpentine wisdom may work in every plane of materiality. The perverse will of man may turn natural forces to evil purposes, and thus we speak of the good serpent and the bad, of *Agathodaemon* and *Kakodaemon*, of *Ophis* and *Ophiomorphos*. A serpent can be a sage or a sorcerer.

The seven sacred planets, or again the seven human principles, form a serpent, often juxtaposed with with the sun and moon as making a triad. One form of this spiraling conscious energy, when manifesting in man, is *kundalini-sakti*, the serpentine power, which in the ordinary person today lies relatively sleeping and performing merely automatic vital functions; but when aroused can either waft to sublime heights of vision and power or blast like a lightning-stroke.

The power which a serpent has of casting its old skin is analogous to what the earth does at the commencement of each round, and to the clothing of the human jiva with a new body when it enters the womb. Again, the astral light is called a serpent; its lowest strata are dangerous and deceptive, while it extends through all planes up to the highest akasa, the vehicle of divine wisdom.



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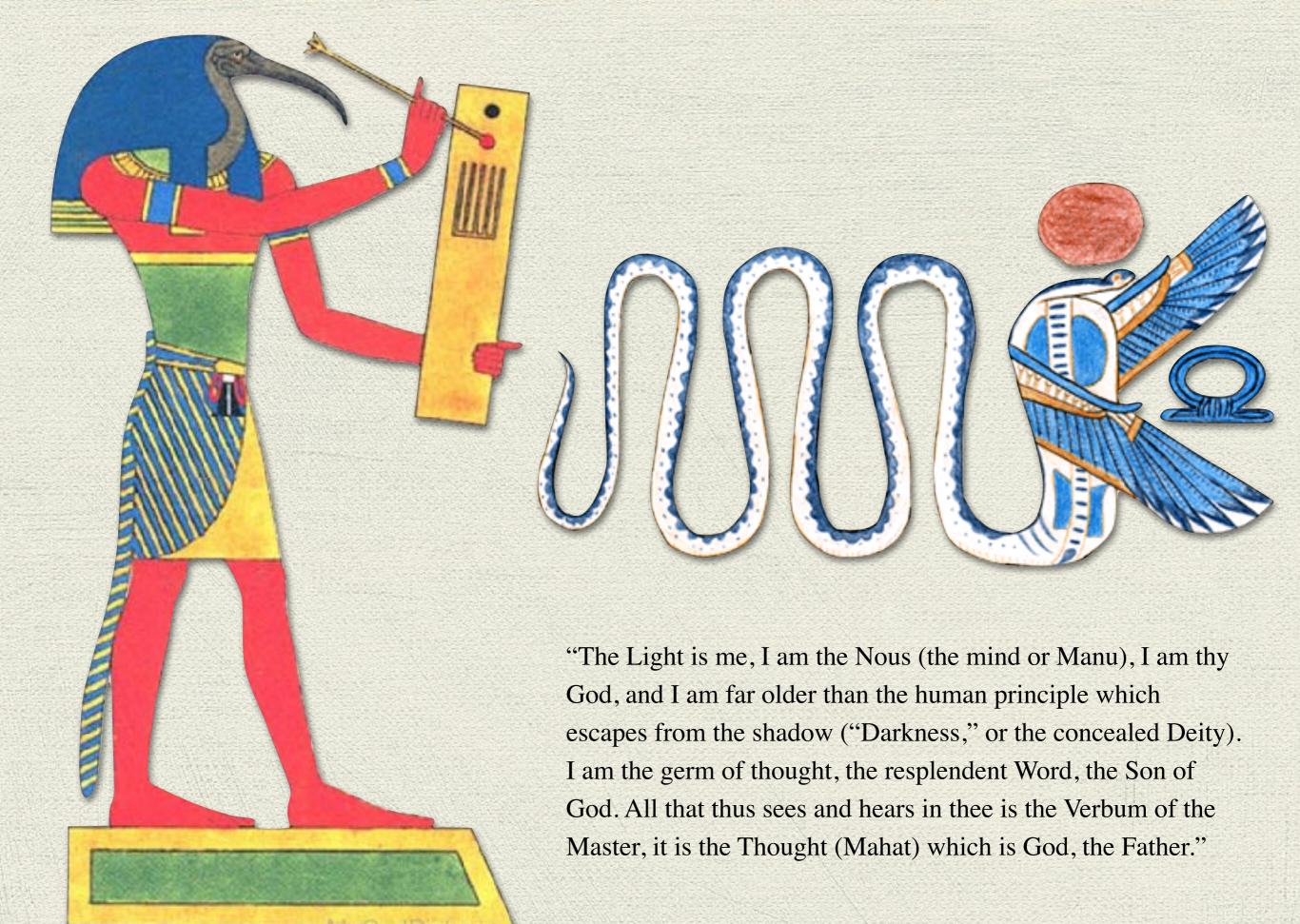


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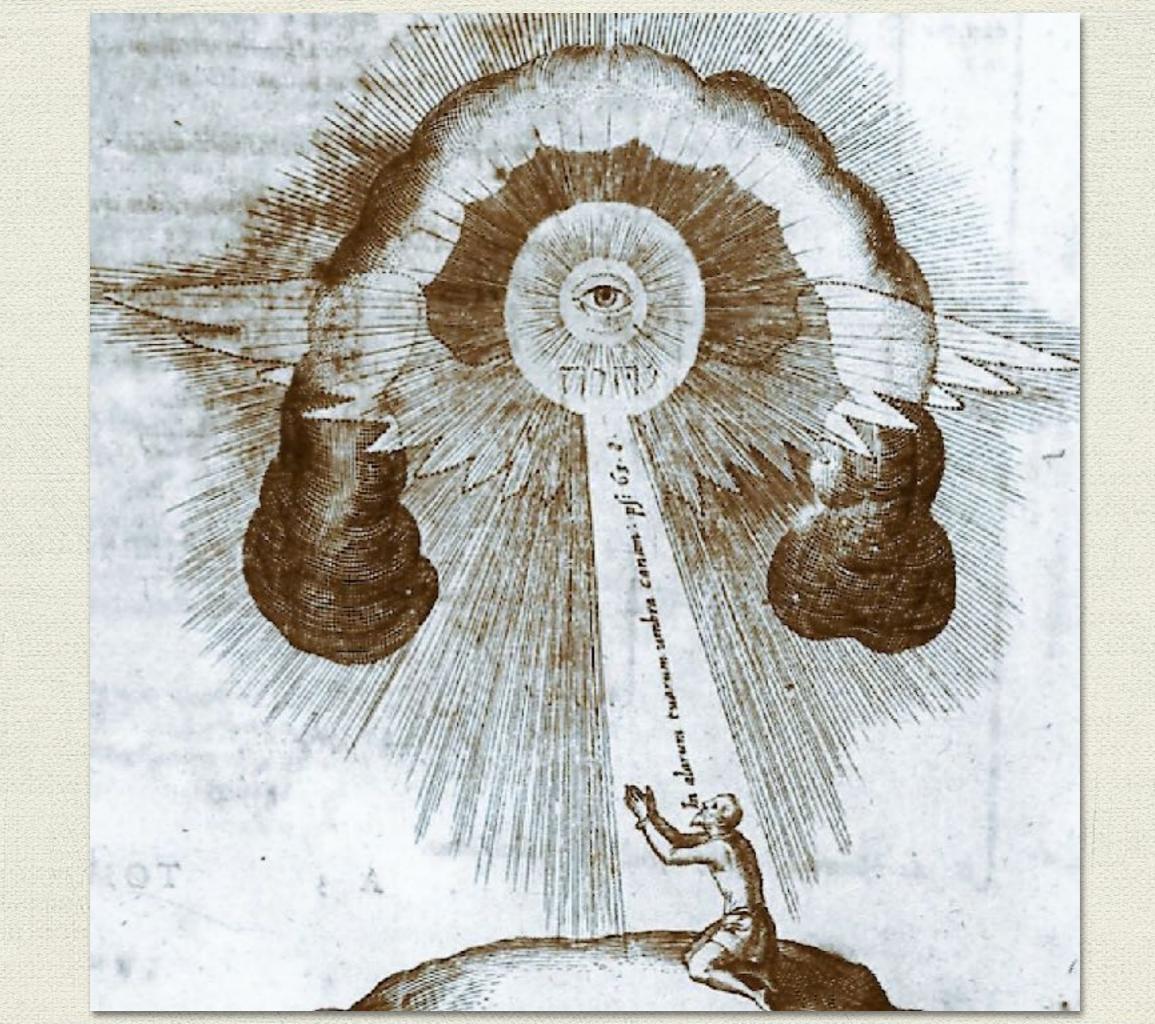
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[†] By "God, the Father," the seventh principle in Man and Kosmos are here unmistakably meant, this principle being inseparable in its Essence and Nature from the seventh Cosmic principle. In one sense it is the Logos of the Greeks and the Avalôkitêswara of the esoteric Buddhists.SD1:73-4



(b cont.) "The celestial Ocean, the Æther. . . is the *Breath* of the Father, the life-giving principle, the *Mother*, the Holy Spirit. . . for these are not separated, and their union is life."

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"Removing the darkness, the Self-existent Lord' (Vishnu, Narayana, etc.) becoming manifest, and 'wishing to produce beings from his Essence, created, in the beginning, water alone. In that he cast seed . . . that became a Golden Egg."

-from The Book of Manu, SD1:333

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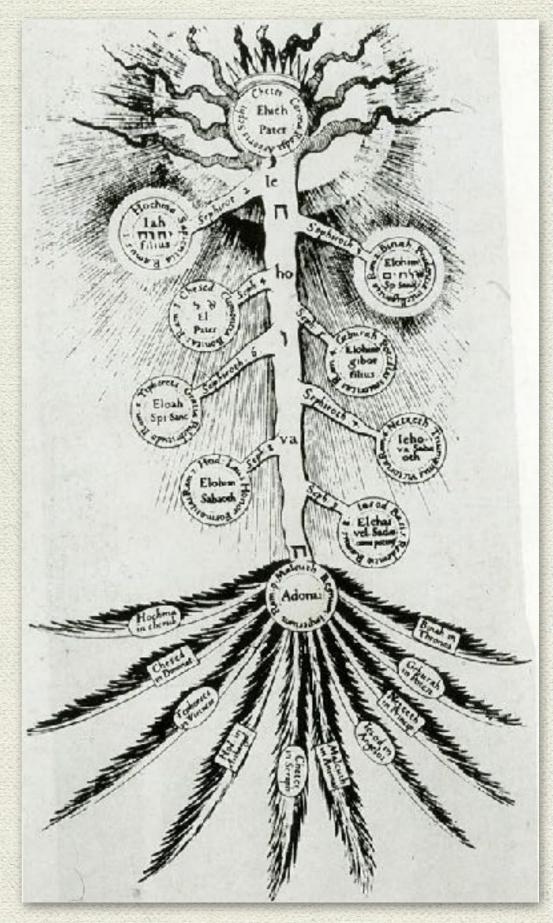
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Mahat (Sanskrit) *Mahat* [from the verbal root *mah* to be great] The great; cosmic mind or intelligence, the basis and fundamental cause of the intelligent operations in and of nature considered as an organism. Blavatsky called it the first product of *pradhana*, the first-born of the Logos, universal mind limited by manvantaric duration, the cosmic noumenon of matter, the one impersonal architect of the universe, the great manvantaric principle of intelligence, the Third Logos, and the divine mind in active operation.

Eternal in its essence and periodical in its manifestations, mahat combines the ideal plans and prototypes of all beings and things in the manifested objective and subjective world. In another sense it is the entire aggregate of the *dhyani-chohanic* host, and therefore the source of the active organic cosmic intelligence controlling and directing the operations of fohat; it is likewise the direct source of the *manasaputras*, a class of the *dhyani-chohanic* host.

In Brahmanical philosophy, mahat is the father-mother of manas. In Sankhya philosophy, it corresponds to kosmic buddhi or *mahabuddhi* and is called the first of the seven *prakritis* or productive creation, the other six being *ahamkara* and the five *tanmatras*.

When a ray from mahat expresses itself as the human manas (or even as the manasic attribute of the finite gods), it then, because of surrounding maya, involves the quality of egoity or aham-ship. Thus it is said that the great Tree of Life has *parabrahman* as its seed, mahat as its trunk, and *ahamkara* as its spreading branches. OTG



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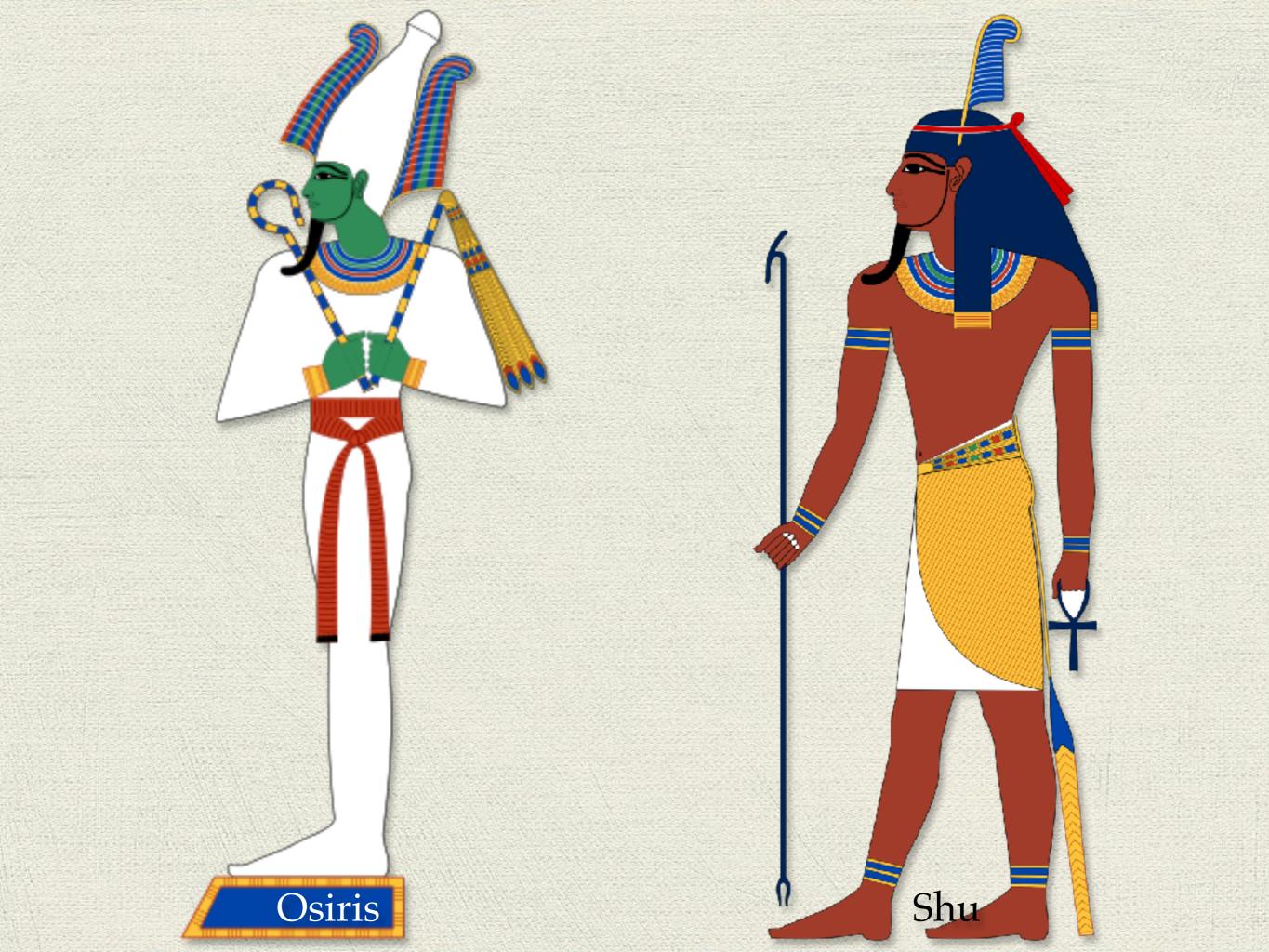
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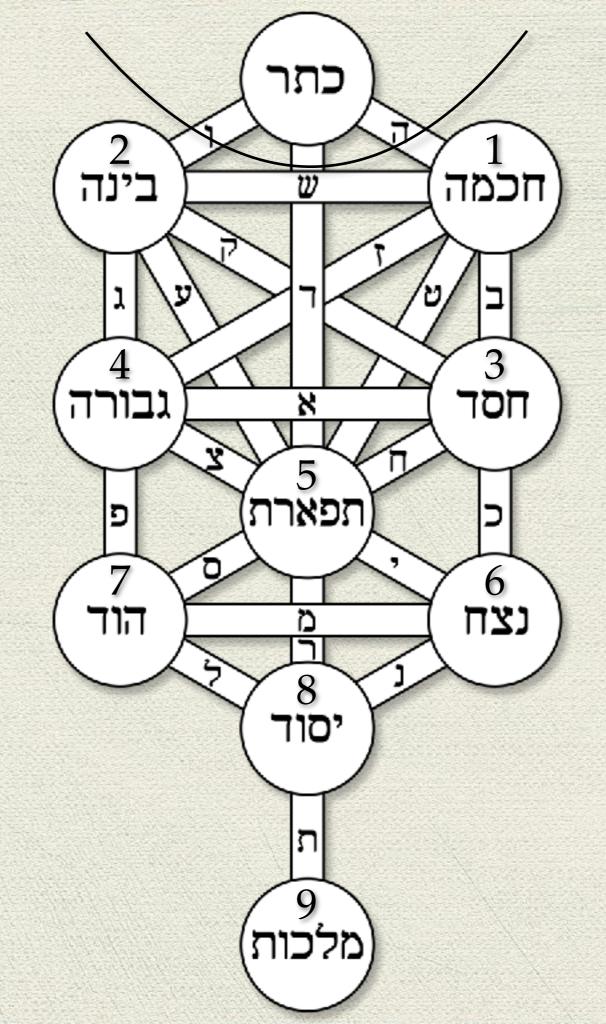
Fohat (Tibetan-Mongolian) [from Mon *pho*, *fo* buddha, buddhi] Cosmic life or vitality; **bipolar cosmic vital electricity**, equivalent to the light of the Logos, *daiviprakriti*, eros, the fiery whirlwind, etc. As the bridge between spirit and matter, fohat is the collectivity of intelligent forces through which cosmic ideation impresses itself upon substance, thus forming the various worlds of manifestation. In the manifested universe, it "is that Occult, electric, vital power, which, under the Will of the Creative Logos, unites and brings together all forms, giving them the first impulse which becomes in time law. . . Fohat becomes the propelling force, the active Power which causes the One to become Two and Three . . . then Fohat is transformed into that force which brings together the elemental atoms and makes them aggregate and combine" (SD 1:109). Fohat is ever-present and active from the primordial beginnings of a manvantara to its last end, nor does it then actually pass out of existence, but becomes quiescent or latent as it were, sleeping or dormant during the cosmic pralaya. (OG 51)







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"...fifty [is] the number of the perfected personality, for five is the number of man and ten is that of perfection." TWM:199

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gateways that lead to the concealed mysteries of being. It is the magical agent *par excellence*, and designates in Hermetic philosophy "Life infused into primordial matter," the essence that composes all things, and the spirit that determines their form. But there are two secret Hermetical operations, one spiritual, the other material correlative, and for ever united. "Thou shalt separate the earth from the fire, the subtile from the solid . . . that which ascends from earth to heaven and descends again from heaven to earth. It (the subtile light), is the strong force of every force, for it conquers every subtile thing and penetrates into every solid. Thus was the world formed" (*Hermes*).

We have generated a term we call the ether. Occultly speaking, this is the modern way of expressing "the waters of space", which are the waters of desire, in which we are immersed. It is in constant ebb and flux, and is the stream of life, constituted of forty-nine types of energy, which pours through the cosmic egoic lotus, and (radiating forth from it) feeds with its measure of sustenance the form—solar, planetary, or human—for which it is responsible. TWM:275

[These forty-nine types of energy] are the final differentiation of the forty-nine fires, prior to Their union with the fire of Eros. Thus is it expressed by H. P. B. TCF:533

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(c) The ancients represented it by a serpent, for "Fohat hisses as he glides hither and thither" (in zigzags). The Kabala figures it with the Hebrew letter Teth **C**, whose symbol is the serpent which played such a prominent part in the Mysteries. Its universal value is nine, for it is the ninth letter of the alphabet and the ninth door of the fifty portals or gateways that lead to the concealed mysteries of being. It is the magical agent *par excellence*, and designates in Hermetic philosophy "Life infused into primordial matter," the essence that composes all things, and the spirit that determines their form. But there are two secret Hermetical operations, one spiritual, the other material correlative, and forever united. "Thou shalt separate the earth from the fire, the subtile from the solid . . . that which ascends from earth to heaven and descends again from heaven to earth. It (the subtile light), is the strong force of every force, for it conquers every subtile thing and penetrates into every solid. Thus was the world formed" (*Hermes*).

(c cont.) It was not Zeno alone, the founder of the Stoics, who taught that the Universe evolves, when its primary substance is transformed from the state of fire into that of air, then into water, etc. Heraclitus of Ephesus maintained that the one principle that underlies all phenomena in Nature is fire. The intelligence that moves the Universe is fire, and fire is intelligence. And while Anaximenes said the same of air, and Thales of Miletus (600 years b.c.) of water, the Esoteric Doctrine reconciles all those philosophers by showing that though each was right the system of none was complete.

STANZA III

The last vibration of the seventh eternity thrills through infinitude. The mother swells, expanding from within without, like the bud of the lotus.
The vibration sweeps along, touching with its swift wing the whole universe and the germ that dwelleth in darkness: the darkness that breathes over the

slumbering waters of life. . .

3. Darkness radiates light, and light drops one solitary ray into the mother-deep. The ray shoots through the virgin egg the ray causes the eternal egg to thrill, and drop the non-eternal germ, which condenses into the world-egg.

4. Then the three fall into the four. The radiant essence becomes seven inside, seven outside. The luminous egg, which in itself is three, curdles and spreads in milk-white curds throughout the depths of mother, the root that grows in the depths of the ocean of life.

5. The root remains, the light remains, the curds remain, and still Oeaohoo is one.

6. The root of life was in every drop of the ocean of immortality, and the ocean was radiant light, which was fire, and heat, and motion. Darkness vanished and was no more; it disappeared in its own essence, the body of fire and water, or father and mother.

7. Behold, oh *Lanoo*! The radiant child of the two, the unparalleled refulgent glory: Bright Space Son of Dark Space, which emerges from the depths of the great dark waters. It is *Oeaohoo* the younger, the * * * He shines forth as the son; he is the blazing Divine Dragon of Wisdom; the One is Four, and Four takes to itself Three,† and the Union produces the *Sapta*, in whom are the seven which become the *Tridasa* (or the hosts and the multitudes). Behold him lifting the veil and unfurling it from east to west. He shuts out the above, and leaves the below to be seen as the great illusion. He marks the places for the shining ones, and turns the upper into a shoreless sea of fire, and the one manifested into the great waters.

8. Where was the germ and where was now darkness? Where is the spirit of the flame that burns in thy lamp, oh *Lanoo*? The germ is that, and that is light, the white brilliant son of the dark hidden father.

9. Light is cold flame, and flame is fire, and fire produces heat, which yields water: the water of life in the great mother.

10. Father-Mother spin a web whose upper end is fastened to spirit—the light of the one darkness—and the lower one to its shadowy end, matter; and this web is the universe spun out of the two substances made in one, which is *Svâbhâvat*.

11. It expands when the breath of fire is upon it; it contracts when the breath of the mother touches it. Then the sons dissociate and scatter, to return into their mother's bosom at the end of the great day, and re-become one with her; when it is cooling it becomes radiant, and the sons expand and contract through their own selves and hearts; they embrace infinitude.

12. Then *Svâbhâvat* sends *Fohat* to harden the atoms. Each is a part of the web. Reflecting the "Self-Existent Lord" like a mirror, each becomes in turn a world.

† In the English translation from the Sanskrit the numbers are given in that language, *Eka*, *Chatur*, etc., etc. It was thought best to give them in English. SD1:28-30