

# *Kronos and Chronos*



## Kronos and Chronos

From *The Secret Doctrine*, II pp. 268-69. [Frontispiece: Swirling Saturn by Maia, Third Grade Student, Bakersfield City School District]

**T**HE MUTILATION OF OURANOS by his son *Kronos*, who thus condemns him to impotency, has never been understood by the modern Mythographers. Yet, it is very plain; and having been universal,<sup>1</sup> it must have contained a great abstract and philosophical idea, now lost to our modern sages. This punishment in the allegory marks, indeed “a new period, a second phase in the development of creation,” as justly remarked by Decharme,<sup>2</sup> who, however, renounces the attempt to explain it. Ouranos has tried to oppose an impediment to that development, or natural evolution, by *destroying all his children as soon as born*. Ouranos, who personifies all the creative powers of, and in, *Chaos* (Space, or the unmanifested Deity) is thus made to pay the penalty; for it is those powers which cause the *Pitris* to evolve primordial *men* from themselves — as, later on, these men evolve *their* progeny — without any sense or desire for procreation. The work of generation, suspended during a moment, passes into the hands of *Kronos* [Chronos],<sup>3</sup> *time*, who unites himself with *Rhea* (the earth in esotericism — matter in general), and thus produces, after celestial — terrestrial Titans. The whole of this symbolism relates to the mysteries of Evolution.

This allegory is the exoteric version of the esoteric doctrine given in this part of our work. For in *Kronos* we see the same story repeated again. As Ouranos destroyed his children from *Gaia* (one, in the world of manifestation, with Aditi or the Great Cosmic

---

<sup>1</sup> Ouranos is a modified Varuna, “the Universal encompasser,” the all-embracer, and one of the oldest of the Vedic deities — SPACE, the maker of Heaven and Earth, since both are manifested out of his (or its) seed. It is only later that Varuna became the chief of the Ādityas and a kind of Neptune riding on the *Leviathan* — *Makara*, now the most sacred and mysterious of the signs of the Zodiac. Varuna, “without whom no creature can even wink,” was degraded like Ouranos, and, like him, *he fell into generation*, his functions, “the grandest cosmical functions,” as Muir calls them, having been lowered down from heaven to earth by exoteric anthropomorphism. As the same Orientalist says,

The attributes ascribed to Varuna [in the *Vedas*] impart to his character a moral elevation and sanctity far surpassing that attributed to any other Vedic Deity.

But to understand correctly the reason of his fall, like that of Ouranos, one has to see in every exoteric religion the imperfect and sinful work of man’s fancy, and also to study the mysteries which Varuna is said to have imparted to Vasishtha. Only

. . . his secrets and those of Mitra *are not to be revealed to the foolish*.

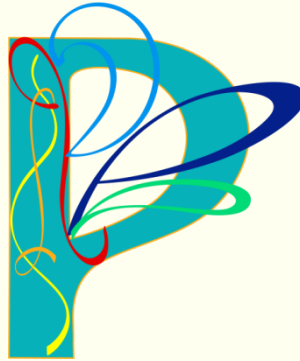
<sup>2</sup> *Mythologie de la Grèce Antique*, p. 7

<sup>3</sup> *Kronos* is not only Χρόνος [Chronos], *time*, but also, as M.J.A. Bréal showed in his *Hercule et Cacus* (p. 60), comes from the root *Kar*, “to make, to create.”<sup>13</sup> Whether Bréal and Decharme [*Mythologie*, etc., p. 7], who quotes him, are as right in saying that in the *Vedas*, *Krānan* is a creative god, we have our doubts. [Bréal refers to Benfey, *Orient and Occident*, I, 575, note] Bréal probably meant Karma, or rather Viśvakarman, the creative god, the “Omnificent” and the “great Architect of the world.”

Deep) by confining them in the bosom of the Earth, *Titæa*, so *Kronos* at this second stage of creation destroyed his children from *Rhea* — by devouring them. This is an allusion to the fruitless efforts of Earth or Nature alone to create real *human* men.<sup>1</sup> Time swallows its own fruitless work.<sup>2</sup>

## Endnote by Boris de Zirkoff

We must bear in mind that *Kronos*, equated with Saturn(us), father of Jupiter (= Zeus), is totally distinct from *Chronos* (Time), but certain Greeks and Romans, notorious as they are for false etymology, confused the two. Chronos = *Χρόνος* = Khronos was raised by some to a personified or quasi-personified rank as deity, like *Αἰών* = Aiōn = Time.<sup>3</sup> However, [Greek letter] X (ch or kh) is distinct from K, and the *h* in *ch* or *kh* was important, but dialects vary sometimes in that particular. Macrobius in his *Saturnalia*, I, 8.9, confuses *Saturnus* with *tempus*.<sup>4</sup>



---

<sup>1</sup> See Stanzas III-X, *et seq.*, and also Berosus' account of primeval creation.

<sup>2</sup> *Secret Doctrine*, II pp. 268-69.

<sup>3</sup> [Look up "Aion, Eternity, Duration," in the same series. — ED. PHIL.]

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, II p. 802, note 13 by Boris de Zirkoff to p. 269 *fn.*

## Suggested reading for students.



### More commonly confusing words.

- ADULTERY, LUST, MALICE
- ADYTUM AND ASYLUM
- AETHER AND ETHER
- AGNOSTICISM, ATHEISM, MONISM
- AION, ETERNITY, DURATION
- APPREHENSION AND COMPREHENSION
- ASTRAL LIGHT IS A TERM VERY LITTLE UNDERSTOOD
- AURA AND MAGNETISM
- BUDDHA AND PRINCE SIDDHARTHA BUDDHA
- BUDHISM IS INNER WISDOM
- CELIBACY, CONTINENCE, MONASTICISM
- CHEMIST AND ALCHEMIST
- CHILIASTS, MILLENNIUMISTS, MILLENARIANS
- DARKNESS IS INNER LIGHT
- DEVOTION, WORSHIP, LOYALTY
- EMANATION AND RADIATION
- EMBLEM AND SYMBOL
- GRAIKOS, HELLENE, HELLAS
- HIGHER SELF AND HIGHER EGO
- IMAGINATION AND IMITATION
- JIVA AND JIVATMAN
- JNANA AND YAJNA
- KAMIC VERSUS MANASIC ACTION
- KARMA AND KRIYA
- KARMA, NEMESIS, ADRASTEIA, THEMIS
- KOSMOS AND COSMOS

**CONFUSING WORDS SERIES**  
**KRONOS AND CHRONOS**

- LAUGHTER, SMILES, TEARS
- LIGHT AND HEAT
- LUST, JEALOUSY, PHYSICAL LOVE
- MAGNETISM, MESMERISM, HYPNOTISM
- MATERIALISM, SPIRITUALISM, MONISM
- MUZIRIS, MNIZURIN, MNOUZIRIS
- NIRVANA AND PARINIRVANA
- PANTACLE AND PENTACLE
- RAJA AND RISHI
- REMEMBRANCE, RECOLLECTION, REMINISCENCE
- SKANDHA, SHLOKA, STANZA, SUTRA
- SPIRIT, SPIRITS, SPIRITUALISM
- SPIRITUALISM IS A PHILOSOPHY OF YESTERDAY
- SVABHAVA AND SVAYAMBHU
- TELETE, MYESIS, EPOPTeia
- THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL OCCULTISM
- THEOSOPHIST AND THEOSOPHER
- TRANSMIGRATION, REINCARNATION, GILGULIM
- TRIRATNA AND TRISHARANA
- TRUE AND FALSE PERSONALITY
- UNITY AND DUALITY
- VACH IS NOT MERE SPEECH
- VEDANTA, BUDDHISM, THEOSOPHY
- VRIL AND BOVRIL
- WILL AND DESIRE
- YOGIS AND MAHATMAS

