

a horn. This animal is at once the Antelope-fish of the Hindoos, the Capricorn of our zodiac, the Deucalion of the Greeks, and the Noah (Coxcox) of the Azteks.* Thus we find the general results of comparative hydrography in the astrological monuments, the divisions of time, and the religious traditions of nations the most remote from each other in their situation and in their degree of intellectual advancement.

As the equatorial rains take place in the flat country when the sun passes through the zenith of the place, that is, when its declination becomes homonymous with the zone comprised between the equator and one of the tropics, the waters of the Amazon sink, while those of the Orinoco rise perceptibly. In a very judicious discussion on the origin of the Rio Congo,† the attention of philosophers has been already called to the modifications which the periods of the risings must undergo in the course of a river, the sources and the mouth of which are not on the same side of the equinoctial line.‡ The hydraulic systems of the Orinoco and the Amazon furnish a combination of circumstances still more extraordinary. They are united by the Rio Negro and the Cassiquiare, a branch of the Orinoco; it is a navigable

* Coxcox bears also the denomination of *Teo-Cipactli*, in which the root *god* or *divine* is added to the name of the sign *Cipactli*. It is the man of the Fourth Age; who, at the fourth destruction of the world (the last renovation of nature), saved himself with his wife, and reached the mountain of Colhuacan. According to the commentator Germanicus, Deucalion was placed in Aquarius; but the three signs of the Fishes, Aquarius, and Capricorn (the Antelope-fish), were heretofore intimately linked together. The animal, which, after having long inhabited the waters, takes the form of an antelope, and climbs the mountains, reminds people, whose restless imagination seizes the most remote similitudes, of the ancient traditions of Menou, of Noah, and of those Deucalions celebrated among the Scythians and the Thessalians. As the Tartarian and Mexican zodiacs contain the signs of the *Monkey* and the *Tiger*, they, no doubt, originated in the torrid zone. With the Muyscas, inhabitants of New Grenada, the first sign, as in eastern Asia, was that of *water*, figured by a *Frog*. It is also remarkable, that the astrological worship of the Muyscas came to the table-land of Bogotá from the eastern side, from the plains of San Juan, which extend toward the Guaviare and the Orinoco.

† Voyage to the Zaire, p. xvii.

‡ Among the rivers of America this is the case with the Rio Negro the Rio Branco, and the Jupura.