



"O Ganga, Yamuna, Sarasvati, Sutlej, Ravi, follow my praise. O Chenab, Jhelum, with Haro and Sohan, listen"

The above verse written over 5000 years ago comes from the Nadistuti Sukta portion of the Rigveda. In chronological order the Rigveda names the rivers which once formed the geography of the ancient Vedic civilisation. The British explorers however, when visiting the region between the Yamuna and the Sutlej, found only seasonal streams such as the Ghaggar and the Sarsuti. Although all the other rivers were exactly as described in the Rigveda, the mighty Sarasvati was absent.

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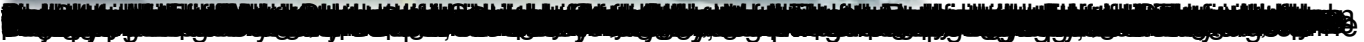
Written by James Robinson Cooper

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More than any other river, the Sarasvati is the embodiment of the ancient Vedic civilisation. She is known as Ambitame, the best of all mothers, Nadhitame, the best of all rivers and Devitame, the best of all Gods. She appears in the Ramayana as the sacred Ikshumati, the daughter of Brahma and flows through the plains of Kuruksetra, where Krsna spoke the Gita. On her banks Vyasadeva divided the one Veda into four, Parashuram bathed in her waters after ridding the world of tyranny and Kartikeya was anointed commander of the Devas. She is the only river the Rigveda dedicates whole verses to, she is responsible for the most scientific of languages and gave birth to the greatest civilisation this world has ever known. The question remained, however, where was she?

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