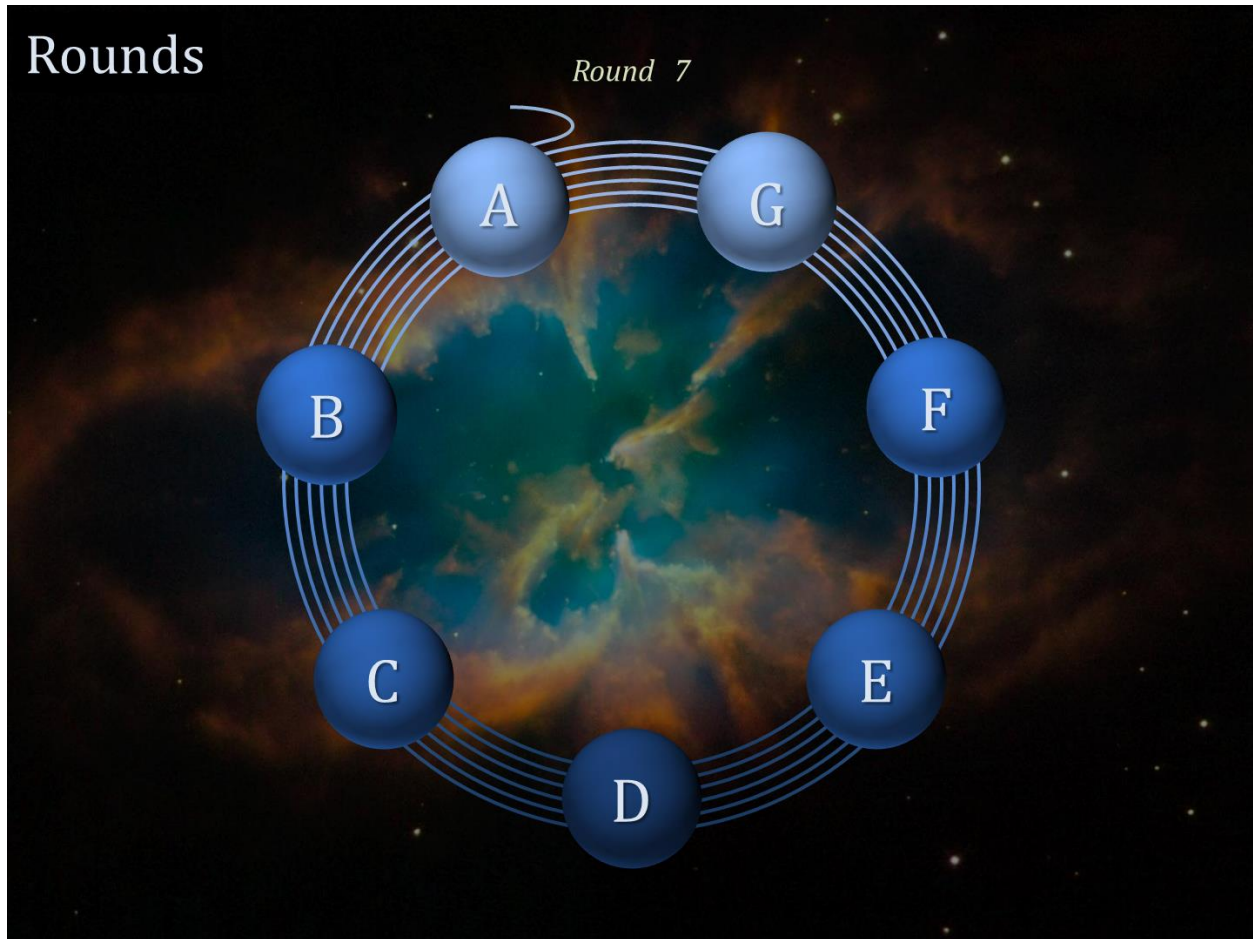


Cosmic Evolution: Chapter 1, Chains and Rounds, Part 4

Rounds (continued)



Some of What Happens During the Rounds

Our Earth, as the visible representative of its invisible superior fellow globes, its “lords” or “principles”, has to live, as have the others, through seven Rounds. During the first three, it forms and consolidates; during the fourth it settles and hardens; during the last three it gradually returns to its first ethereal form: it is spiritualized, so to say. (SD1, 159)

Animals Evolve into Higher Forms

At each Round there are less and less animals — the latter themselves evolving into higher forms. During the first Round it is they that were the "kings of creation." During the seventh men will have become Gods and animals — intelligent beings. Draw your inferences. Beginning with the second Round, already evolution proceeds on quite a different plan. Everything is evolved and has but to proceed on its cyclic journey and get perfected. It is only [on] the first Round that man becomes from a human being on Globe B, a mineral, a plant, an animal on Planet C. The method changes entirely from the second Round. (ML 332)

Occult Elements

The succession of primary aspects of Nature with which the succession of Rounds is concerned, has to do, as already indicated, with the development of the "Elements" (in the Occult sense)—Fire, Air, Water, Earth. We are only in the fourth Round, and our catalogue so far stops short.

However, we need to keep in mind that "none of the so-called elements were, in the three preceding Rounds, as they are now". (SD1, 253)

A New Element is developed in each Round

Every new Round develops one of the Compound Elements. . . . If Nature is the "Ever-becoming" on the manifested plane, then those Elements are to be regarded in the same light: they have to evolve, progress, and increase to the Manvantaric end. (SD1, 250)

First Round

Secret Doctrine

Thus, in the first Round, the globe, having been built by the primitive fire-lives, *i.e.*, formed into a sphere—had no solidity, nor qualifications, save a cold brightness, nor form nor colour; it is only towards the end of the First Round that it developed one Element which from its inorganic, so to say, or simple Essence became now in our Round the fire we know throughout the system. The Earth was in her first rūpa, the essence of which is the Ākâśic principle, that which is now known as, and very erroneously termed, Astral Light. (SD1, 259)

Mahatma Letters

Regarding the human evolution during the Rounds, the Mahatma wrote:

1st Round. — An ethereal being — *non-intelligent*, but super-spiritual. In each of the subsequent races and sub-races and minor races of evolution he grows more and more into an encased or incarnate being, but still preponderatingly ethereal. And like the animal and vegetable he develops monstrous bodies correspondential with his coarse surroundings. (ML 179)

Second Round

Secret Doctrine

The Second Round brings into manifestation the second element—AIR, that element, the purity of which would ensure continuous life to him who would use it . . . “From the second Round, Earth—hitherto a foetus in the matrix of Space—began its real existence: it had developed individual sentient life, its second principle. The second corresponds to the sixth (principle); the second is life continuous, the other, temporary.” (SDI, 260)

Mahatma Letters

Regarding the human evolution during the Rounds, Mahatma K.H. wrote:

2nd Round. — He is still gigantic and ethereal, but growing firmer and more condensed in body — a more physical man, yet still less intelligent than spiritual; for mind is a slower and more difficult evolution than the physical frame and the mind would not develop as rapidly as the body. (ML 179)

When he reaches our earth in the second round he has become responsible in a degree. (ML 185)

Third Round

Secret Doctrine

The *Third* Round developed the *third* Principle — WATER; (SDI, 260)

Mahatma Letters

Regarding the human evolution during the Rounds, Mahatma K.H. wrote:

3rd Round. — He has now a perfectly concrete or compacted body; at first the form of a giant ape, and more intelligent (or rather cunning) than spiritual. For in the downward arc he has now reached the point where his primordial spirituality is eclipsed or over-shadowed by nascent mentality. In the last half of this third round his gigantic stature decreases, his body improves in texture (perhaps the microscope might help to demonstrate this) and he becomes a more rational being — though still more an ape than a Deva man. (ML 179)

The Mahatma wrote that in the third Round man becomes entirely responsible. (ML 185)

Fourth Round

Secret Doctrine

The Fourth [Round] transformed the gaseous fluids and plastic form of our globe into the hard, crusted, grossly material sphere we are living on. "Bhumi" [the Earth] has reached her fourth principle . . . Earth will reach her true ultimate form—(inversely in this to man)—her body shell—only toward the end of the manvantara after the Seventh Round. . . . Our globe is, so far, in its Kamarupic state—the astral body of desires of *Ahām̄kara*¹, dark Egotism, the progeny of Mahat, on the lower plane. . . (SDI, 260)

In the middle of the Fourth revolution, which is our present "Round": "Evolution has reached its acme of physical development, crowned its work with the perfect physical man, and, from this point, begins its work spirit-ward." (SD1 232)

Mahatma Letters

Mahatma K.H. wrote: Then it is but at his fourth round, when arrived at the full possession of his Kama-energy and completely matured, that man becomes fully responsible. (ML 122)

4th Round. — Intellect has an enormous development in this round. The dumb races² will acquire *our* human speech, on our globe, on which from the 4th race language is perfected and knowledge in physical things increases. At this half-way point of the fourth round, Humanity passes the *axial point*³ of the *minor manwantaric circle*.

(Moreover, at the middle point of every major or *root race* evolution of each round, man passes the equator of his course on that planet, the same rule applying to the whole evolution or the seven rounds of the minor Manwantara — 7 rounds divided by 2 = 3 1/2 rounds).

At this point then the world teems with the results of intellectual activity and *spiritual decrease*. In the first half of the fourth race, sciences, arts, literature and philosophy were born, eclipsed in one nation, reborn in another, civilization and intellectual development whirling in septenary cycles as the rest; while it is but in the latter half that the spiritual Ego will begin its real struggle with body and mind to manifest its transcendental powers. Who will help in the forthcoming gigantic struggle? Who? Happy the man who helps a helping hand. (ML 179-180)

¹ *Ahām̄kara* - egotism, the conception of 'I am I'; produces the notion of the "I" as being different from the universal One-Self.

² The latest scientific theory is that of the German and American professors who say through Fiske: "we see man living on the earth for perhaps half a million years to all intents and purposes dumb."

He is ... Right about the race having been "dumb," for long ages of silence were required, for the evolution and mutual comprehension of speech, from the moans and mutterings of the first remove of man above the highest anthropoid (a race now extinct since "nature shuts the door behind her" as she advances, in more than one sense) — up to the first monosyllable uttering man. (ML 128)

³ *axial point* - the axes of a coordinate system as center of a circle. "The axial point where the development equilibrates or adjusts itself in each race evolution." (ML 178)

Fifth Round

Secret Doctrine

It will only be in the next, or fifth, Round that the fifth Element, ETHER—the gross body of Akâśa, if it can be called even that—will, by becoming a familiar fact of Nature to all men, as air is familiar to us now, cease to be as at present hypothetical, and also an “agent” for so many things. And only during that Round will those higher senses, the growth and development of which Akâśa subserves, be susceptible of a complete expansion. (SD1, 257)

Mahatma Letters

5th Round. — The same relative development, and the same struggle continues. (ML 180)

(8) "M" said all mankind is in the fourth round, the fifth has not yet commenced but soon will. Was this a slip? If not, then collating this with your present remarks we gather that all mankind is on the fourth round (though in another place you seemed to say we are on the fifth round).

(8) "M" knows very little English and hates writing. But even I might have used very well the same expression. A few drops of rain do not make a monsoon though they presage it. The fifth round has not commenced on our earth and the races and sub-races of one round must not be confounded with those of another round. The fifth round mankind may be said to have "commenced" when there shall not be left on the planet which precedes ours a single man of that round and on our earth not one of the fourth round. You should know also that the casual fifth round men (and very few and scarce they are) who come in upon us as avant couriers do not beget on earth fifth round progeny. Plato and Confucius were fifth round men and our Lord a sixth round man (the mystery of his avatar is spoken of in my forthcoming letter) and not even Gautama Buddha's son was anything but a fourth round man.

Sixth Round

Mahatma Letters

The Mahatma Letters state that during the sixth Round human development will be such that a portion of humanity will attain Buddhahood. (ML 122)

In agreement with this, Mme. Blavatsky said that Gautama Buddha and Sankaracharya are considered Sixth Rounders. (SD1, 162)

Seventh Round

Mahatma Letters

Master K.H. said that by the end of the seventh Round, before the Pralaya, man may become a "Dhyan Chohan". (ML 122)

He also wrote that during the seventh Round "men will have become Gods and animals — intelligent beings". (ML 332)

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<http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/sd/sd1-0-co.htm#contents>

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