

# Duration of Rounds and Chains

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In an article found in volume XIII of H.P. Blavatsky's Collected Writings entitled *On Cosmic Cycles, Manvantaras, And Rounds*, she gives some information about the duration of rounds, humanity and races on each planet in the fourth round of the Terrene or (Earth) chain.

## About Figures and Patterns of the Durations

However, at the end of the article she gives a disclaimer as to the exactness of the numbers given.

We have already stated that the above figures are exact, if the exoteric calculations of the Brahmins about the day of *Brahma* be correct. But we may again state here that that figure is not correctly given out in exoteric numbers.

We may, however, add that the explanations given by us about the progressions, etc., are facts and can be faithfully utilized when anyone of the above described figures are correctly known—in calculating all the rest of the figures.

And these processes we have explained because we know that not one of the exact numbers will ever be given out, as they pertain to the Mysteries of Initiations and to the Secrets of the occult influence of Numbers. (CW XIII, 306)

## Background about the Manuscript

There is some background given about the manuscript from which the article is taken by the compiler of the collected writings Boris de Zirkoff.

[The MS. of this unfinished essay, in H.P.B.'s handwriting, exists in the Adyar Archives. Some of its pages are missing, and some of the sentences are broken off. There is no definite clue in it which would help to determine the date at which it was written, except for the fact that a footnote mentions the sixth and seventh editions of *Isis Unveiled*. This MS. contains numerical relations and data not mentioned by H.P.B. anywhere else in her writings. It contains important keys which some students might be able to apply to various cosmological problems arising in their individual studies. The most noteworthy point in connection with this MS. is that it is written in two different handwritings, one of which is larger and more rounded than H.P.B.'s ordinary one. It was originally published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. LXXIX, March, 1958, pp. 367-72.—Compiler.]

## Durations

Since HPB indicates that the explanations in the article about the progressions are facts and can be faithfully utilized in calculating all the rest of the figures, let us look at the numbers that she gives.

### HPB's Durations in Years

Rounds in Earth Chain		Globe 4 <sup>th</sup> Round		Race on Globe D	
1	154,285,714	A	11,020,408	1st	1,574,344
2	308,571,428	B	22,040,816	2nd	3,148,688
3	462,857,142	C	33,061,224	3rd	4,723,032
4	617,142,856	D	44,081,632	4th	6,297,376
5	771,428,570	E	55,102,040	5th	7,871,720
6	925,714,284	F	66,122,448	6th	9,446,064
7	1,079,999,998	G	77,142,856	7th	11,020,408
		Pralaya	308,571,424		
Total	4,320,000,000	Total	617,142,848	Total	44,081,632

Left: Duration of the existence of humanity during the Seven Rounds in the Earth chain.

Center: Duration of humanity on each Planet in our fourth Round, during the period of its activity.

Right: Duration of Each Race in our Round on our Planet.

## The Day of Brahma Subdivided

The reader will observe that in the above calculations we have given the key to the understanding of these different periods. Till now, the exoteric works only gave the period of the day of *Brahma*, without either giving the other periods which might help toward the discovery of the Secret, or giving that key itself which might give the results now shown above. (CW XIII, 304)

But if we have the period of the Day of *Brahma* and if we know that there are seven rounds, that each round covers seven planets, that the period of rest of a planet in every round equals that of its activity, and if to all this knowledge we apply the key of the septenary arithmetical progression series, then we get the numbers as given above. (CW XIII, 305)

## The Septenary Arithmetical Progression Series

There is a gradual rise of, from one to seven.

- The duration of the existence of humanity during *the Seven Rounds* is 1:2:3:4:5:6:7
- In each Round, the duration of the existence of humanity, on *the seven planets* of our chain is 1:2:3:4:5:6:7
- The period of human existence in *seven races, on one planet*, is again 1:2:3:4:5:6:7

Take then 4320 millions as the day of *Brahma*, and calculate according to the above explanation and you will arrive at the above given results.

If the total period of the existence of our Planetary Chain (i.e., of the Seven Rounds) is 4,320,000,000 then we calculate the duration of each round.

$$1x + 2x + 3x + 4x + 5x + 6x + 7x = 4,320,000,000$$

$$28x = 4,320,000,000$$

$$x = 154,285,714$$

$$2x = 308,571,428$$

$$3x = 462,857,142$$

$$4x = 617,142,857$$

$$5x = 771,428,571$$

$$6x = 925,714,285$$

$$7x = 1,080,000,000$$

## The Calculations for the Duration of Globes in Each Round

Given the Arithmetical Progression given above one can calculate the duration of Globe activity in each of the other rounds. For example in the fourth round:

$$1x + 2x + 3x + 4x + 5x + 6x + 7x = \frac{617,142,857}{2}$$

$$1x + 2x + 3x + 4x + 5x + 6x + 7x = 308,571,428$$

$$x = 11,020,408$$

$$2x = 22,040,816$$

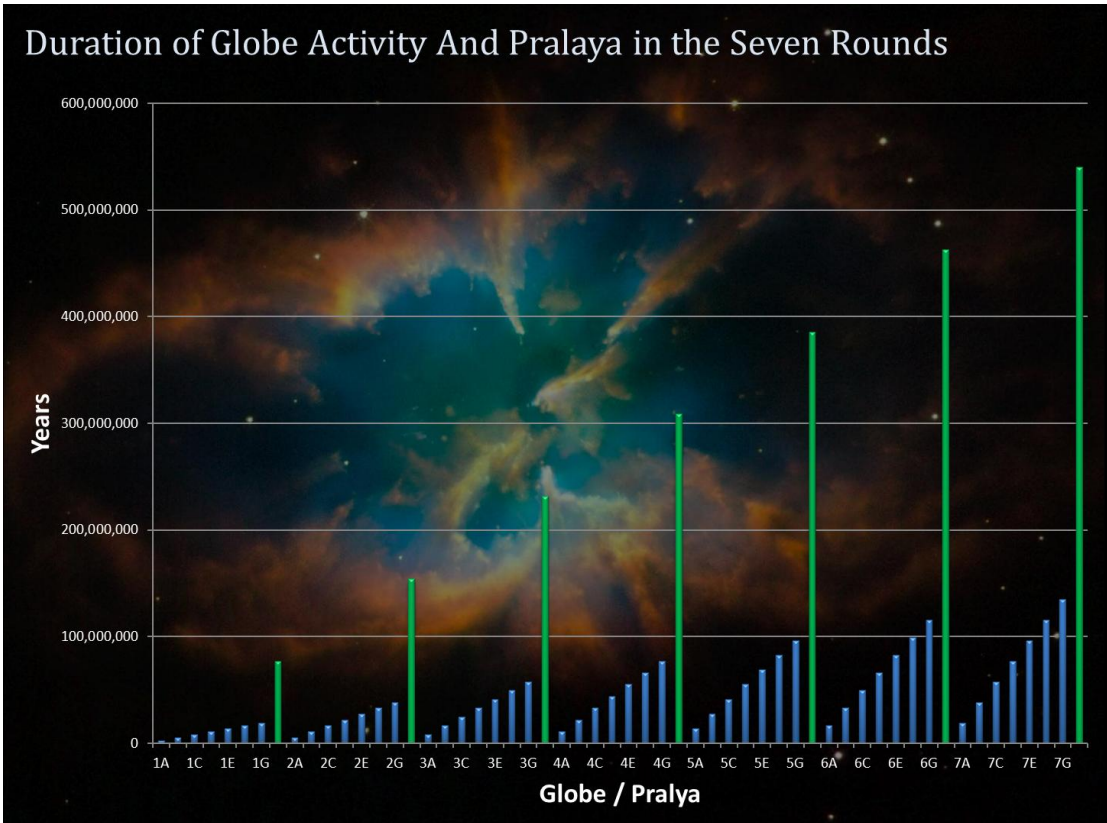
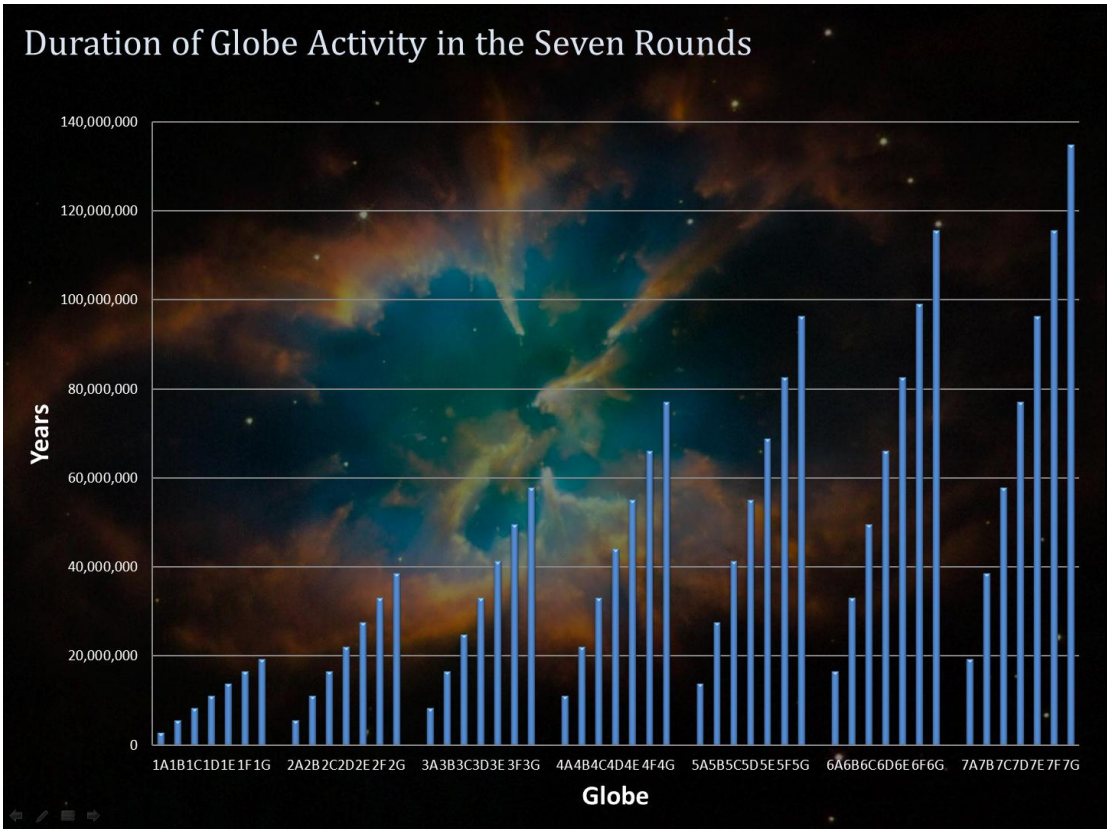
$$3x = 33,061,224$$

$$4x = 44,081,632$$

$$5x = 55,102,040$$

$$6x = 66,122,448$$

$$7x = 77,142,857$$



## Duration of Pralaya within a Round

Although, the article from the *Collected Writings* entitled *On Cosmic Cycles, Manvantaras, And Rounds*, indicates the existence of a Pralaya that is related to all the Globes of a Round, it is not clear as to *when* the duration of the Pralaya occurs or how the time may be distributed (and maybe it is not intended to be.) This passage from *The Secret Doctrine* indicates that a Pralaya exists between Rounds (we can call it and *inter-round pralaya*), but the duration of which can be interpreted in different ways:

... a Round was preceded and followed by a long Pralaya, a pause of rest which created an impassable gulf between two Rounds until the time came for a renewed cycle of life ... (SD1, 161)

The “long Pralaya” that precedes and follows a Round can be understood to be of equal duration to the period of activity of the last Globe (which would be the longest of all seven) with shorter durations of pralaya distributed between Globes or it can be understood to be equal to the sum of the periods of activity on all seven globes. In another passage from *The Secret Doctrine*, several other types of Pralaya are described.

Occultism divides the periods of Rest (Pralaya) into several kinds;

- there is the individual pralaya of each Globe, as humanity and life pass on to the next;<sup>1</sup>
- seven minor Pralayas in each Round<sup>2</sup>;
- the planetary Pralaya, when seven Rounds are completed<sup>3</sup>;
- the Solar Pralaya, when the whole system is at an end;
- and finally the Universal Maha — or Brahma — Pralaya at the close of the “Age of Brahma.”

These are the three chief pralayas or “destruction periods.” There are many other minor ones, but with these we are not concerned at present. (SD1, 172)

The phrase “These are the three chief pralayas” is confusing, because she talks about 5 kinds here. Presumably, the three she refers to are the ones related to our scheme of evolution: between globes, between rounds, and between chains.

The phrase “seven minor Pralayas in each Round” is also problematic, since it seems to be saying “seven pralayas in one Round”, which would be the same as the individual pralayas of each globe. However, all the different pralayas are separated by semicolons, so the two must be different. Probably the right phrase would have been “seven pralayas, one per Round”.

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<sup>1</sup> inter-globe pralaya

<sup>2</sup> inter-round pralaya

<sup>3</sup> inter-chain pralaya - seven rounds is referred to as the day of Brahma



In Volume II of *The Secret Doctrine*, HPB broadens the scope of the definition of Pralaya given so far by including Root Races.

Pralaya . . . is not a term that applies only to every “Night of Brahma,” or the world’s dissolution following every Manvantara, equal to 71 Maha-yugas. It applies also to each “obscuration” as well, and even to every Cataclysm that puts an end, by Fire or by Water in turn, to each Root-Race. (SD2, 307)

The article entitled *On Cosmic Cycles, Manvantaras, And Rounds*, presents some additional views that raise the question as to whether the duration of pralaya given is spent between rounds, globes or some combination of the two.

Now, as the planet evolves the 7 races in succession, before humanity can pass on to the next planet, the interval between the disappearance of humanity from one planet and its reappearance on the next, is equal to its existence on the planet which it has just left. (CW XIII, 305)

Now, we have already stated that the period of activity of the planetary chain in one round is equal to its period of rest during the same round, while humanity rests in its passage from planet to planet. (CW XIII, 305)

### **Life-Waves: a Brief Description of the Term as used in Theosophical Writings**

An explanation of what is meant by the term life-wave in the writings of C.W. Leadbeater may prove helpful at this point.

The conception of the successive life-waves which pour out from the LOGOS should not be a difficult one, yet it frequently happens that some confusion seems to arise in the mind of the student in connection with it. Perhaps this comes partially from the fact that the term “life-wave” has been employed in our literature in three distinct senses.

- First, it has been used to denote the three great outpourings of Divine Life by means of which our solar system came into existence - by which its evolution is carried on.
- Secondly, it has been applied to the successive impulsions of which the second outpouring is formed.
- Thirdly, the expression has been accepted as signifying the transference of life from one planet of our chain to another in the course of evolution.

A life-wave of this third type [*globe to globe*] does not at all correspond to the life-wave of the second type, but consists of synchronous portions of seven of the latter, treated as though they constituted a single entity. As we all know, we have with us at the present time seven kingdoms in manifestation - the human, the animal, the vegetable, the mineral, and the three elemental kingdoms which precede the mineral. (TIL II, Successive Life-Waves)

### Passing of the Life-Wave from One Globe to Another

Once we understand the life-wave that passes from Globe to Globe to be a composite of seven kingdoms we can differentiate between life passing between globes and human activity.

The passing of the life-wave from one globe to another is gradual and there is considerable over-lapping; it will be remembered that globe A of the terrene Chain began to form when globe A of the lunar Chain was in process of disintegration, the passing of the Spirit of the globe being the signal of the transference of activity.<sup>4</sup> Thus life-activity is continuous, though egos have long periods of rest.

A globe 'passes into obscurity' when the attention of the LOGOS is turned away from it, and thus His Light is withdrawn. It passes into a kind of coma, and there is a residuum of living creatures left behind; these creatures do not seem to increase in number during this period. But while the Races die out, the egos inhabiting them having passed on. . . . The globe to which the attention of the LOGOS is turned starts into active life, and receives the streams of egos ready to go forward on their journey. (MWHW Early Times on the Earth Chain - Third Round)

### From the Mahatma Letters . . .

(1) The individual units of mankind remain 100 times longer in the transitory spheres of effects than on the globes; *[this probably refers to the time on the inner planes after death.]*

(2) The few men of the fifth Round do not beget children of the fifth but of your fourth Round.

(3) That the "obscurations" are not Pralayas, and that they last in a proportion of 1 to 10, i.e., if a Ring or whatever we call it, the period during which the seven Root races have to develop and reach their last appearance upon a globe during that Round — lasts say 10 millions of years, (of course it lasts far longer) then the "obscurations" will last no longer than one million. When our globe having got rid of its last fourth Round men and a few, very few of the fifth, goes to sleep, during the period of its rest the fifth Round men will be resting in their devachans and Spiritual lokas — far longer at any rate than the fourth Round "angels" in theirs since they are far more perfect.

(ML) 93B Chronological, (23B Barker) Received October 1882, Section 28

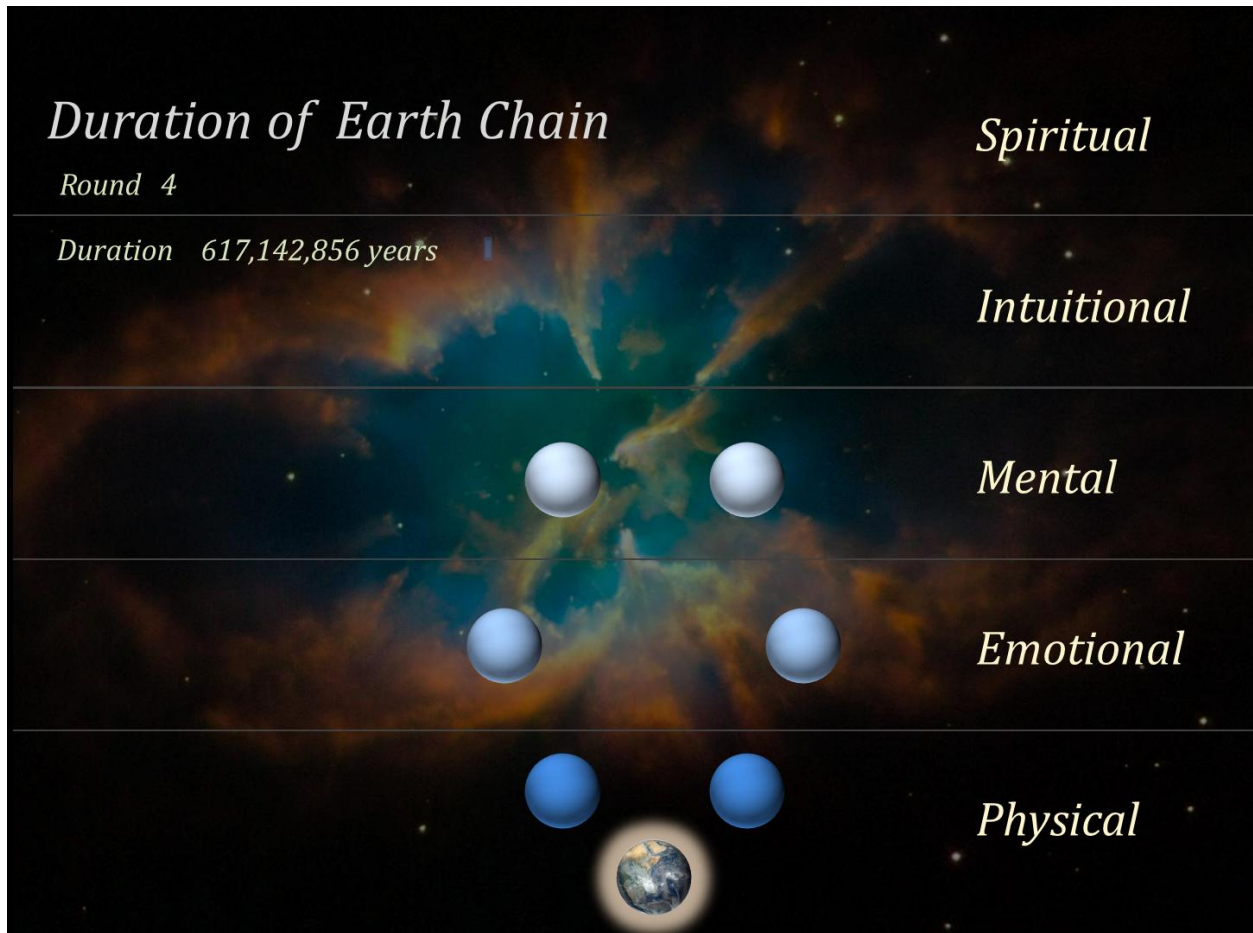
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<sup>4</sup> Globe A of the terrene Chain began to form as the life-wave left globe A of the lunar Chain. The Spirit of a globe, when its life is over, takes a new incarnation, and, as it were, transfers the life with himself to the corresponding globe of the next Chain. The inhabitants, after leaving the Chain, have long to wait ere their new home is ready for them, but the preparation of that home begins when the Spirit of the first globe leaves it and it becomes a dead body, while he enters on a new cycle of life and a new globe begins to form round him. Molecules are built up under the direction of Devas, humanity not being at all involved.

## Where are we now?

### Based on Globe and Round Durations stated in *On Cosmic Cycles, Manvantaras, And Rounds*

If we are on the 4<sup>th</sup> globe of the 4<sup>th</sup> Round and we take the durations of the first three rounds, add them to the durations of the first three globes in the fourth round and then add the time that humans have been on Globe D we can approximate where we are in the Manvantara or day of *Brahma*.

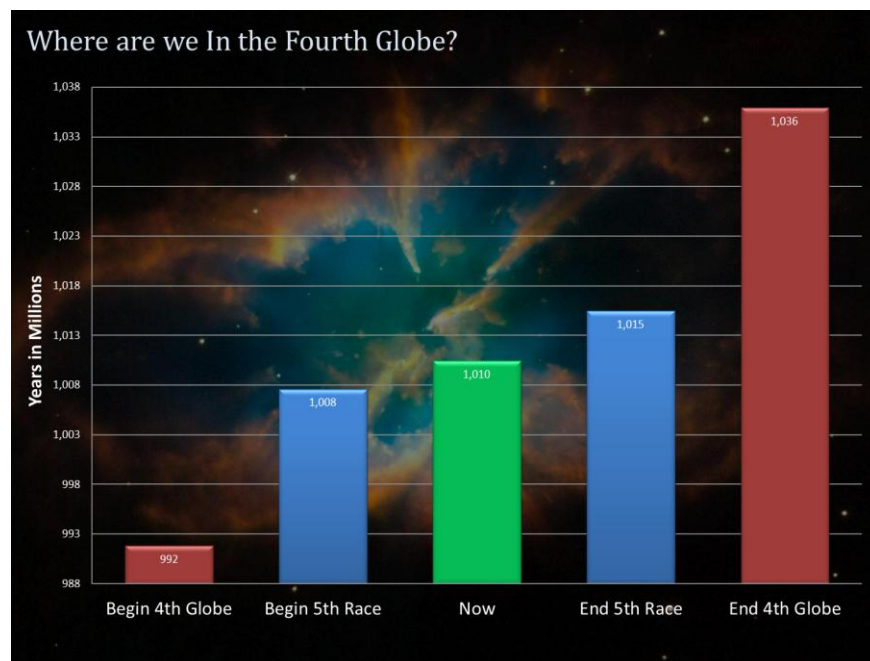




The number of years passed, since the Dhyan Chohan, known in India as Manu Vaivasvata, inaugurated the human Manvantara on our planet D, in the present Round—equals 18,618,725 years.<sup>5\*</sup> (CW XIII, 304)

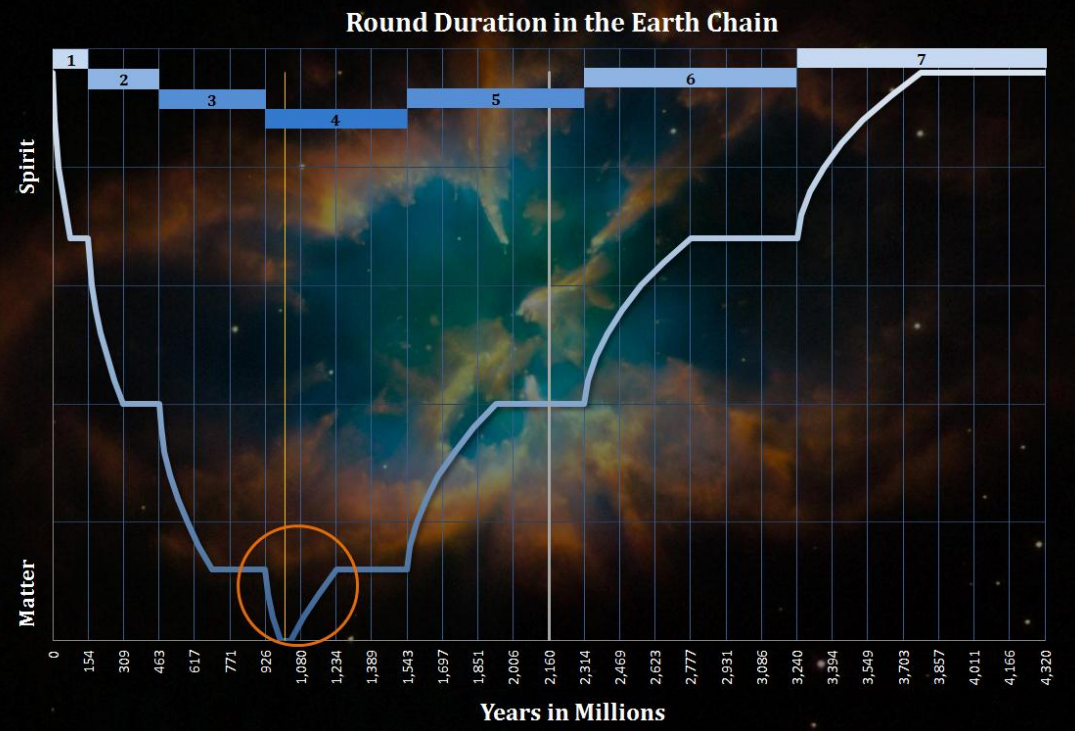
Time Period	Years
Round 1	77,142,857
Pralaya 1	77,142,857
Round 2	154,285,715
Pralaya 2	154,285,715
Round 3	231,428,572
Pralaya 3	231,428,572
Round 4 Globe A	11,020,408
Round 4 Globe B	22,040,816
Round 4 Globe C	33,061,224
Humans on Globe D (circa 1891?)	18,618,725
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,010,455,459</b>

We can add 123 years to make up the difference between 2014 and 1891, and get 1,010,455,582 but the difference is hardly noticeable.

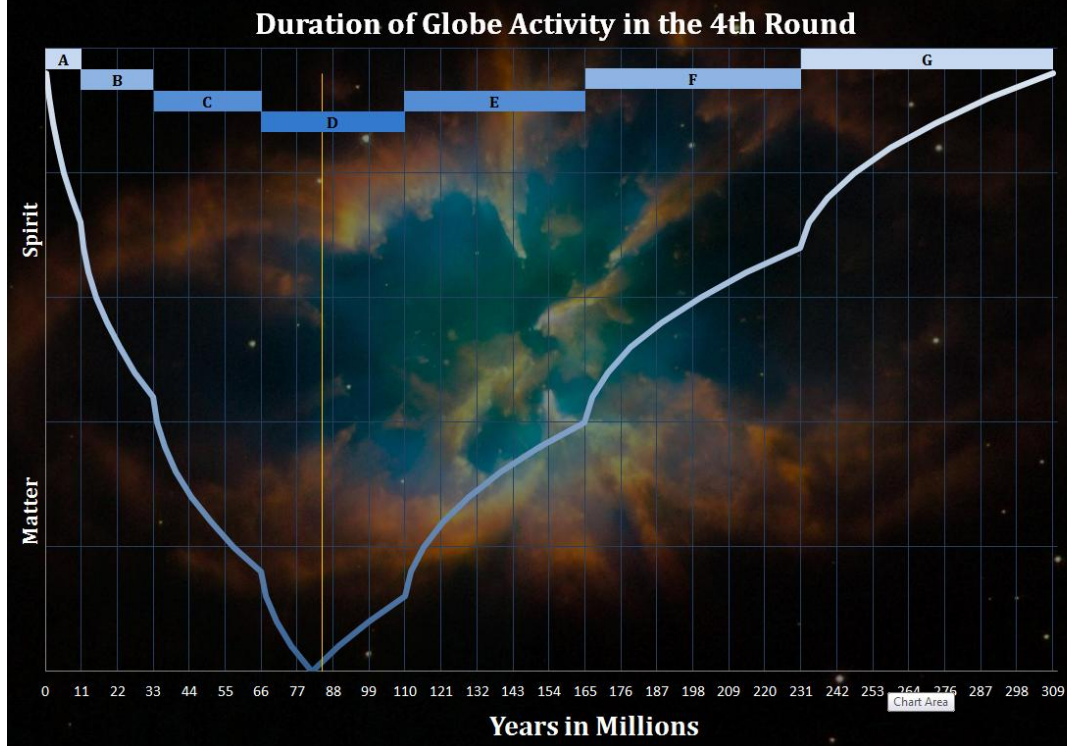


<sup>5</sup> \* See further on the Series of the Manus quoted from the July Theosophist of 1883. [See S.D. II, p. 69]

## Immersion of Spirit into Matter During the Earth Chain



## Immersion of Spirit into Matter During the Fourth Round



However HPB notes where we are in the planetary chain in *On Cosmic Cycles, Manvantaras, And Rounds*

Since the total period of the existence of our Planetary Chain (i.e., of the Seven Rounds) is—4,320,000,000—and we are now in the 4th Round; and since we have unto the present Terrene year period 1,955,884,685 years from the beginning of the Cosmic Evolution of Planet A; therefore, in point of time, we shall reach the middle point, or just 3½ Rounds in 204,115,315 years, although in point of space we have virtually reached it being on planet D and in our 5th race. (CW XIII)

## References

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