

# Cosmic Evolution: Chapter 1, Chains and Rounds, Part 3

## Globes

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Let us consider first **the great nebula in Orion**<sup>1</sup> [M42<sup>2</sup>, or NGC<sup>3</sup> 1976] (Left). It is a chaotic mass of matter in an intensely heated condition, millions and millions of miles in diameter. It is a vague, cloudy mass, full of energy; but, so far as we can see, it is energy not performing any useful work.

But there are other nebulae which give us an indication of a definite trend in evolution. The (spiral) nebula [*Whirlpool galaxy M51<sup>4</sup> NGC 1549*] in **Canes Venatici**<sup>5</sup> (right) is not only revolving round a center, but it also appears to be breaking up into distinct sections or arms. The material of each arm, while retaining its motion round the center, will slowly condense round one or more nuclei. Each nucleus will become a star.

A similar process can be postulated for the next stage in evolution. The material of each star undergoes a change. Either because of its internal condition, or because it is affected by a passing star, it will develop subsidiary centers. The nebular matter will condense round them, and slowly these centers will become planets circling round the star's central nucleus. Thus, with regard to our own star, the Sun, we note what evolution has accomplished; it is today an orderly solar system, having a central sun and attendant planets circling round it.

(First Principles of Theosophy, C. Jinarajadasa)

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<sup>1</sup> The Orion Nebula (also known as Messier 42, M42, or NGC 1976) is a diffuse nebula situated south (if you are in the northern Hemisphere) of Orion's Belt in the constellation of Orion. It is one of the brightest nebulae, and is visible to the naked eye in the night sky. M42 is located at a distance of  $1,344 \pm 20$  light years and is the closest region of massive star formation to Earth. The M42 nebula is estimated to be 24 light years across. It has a mass of about 2000 times the mass of the Sun. Older texts frequently refer to the Orion Nebula as the Great Nebula in Orion or the Great Orion Nebula.

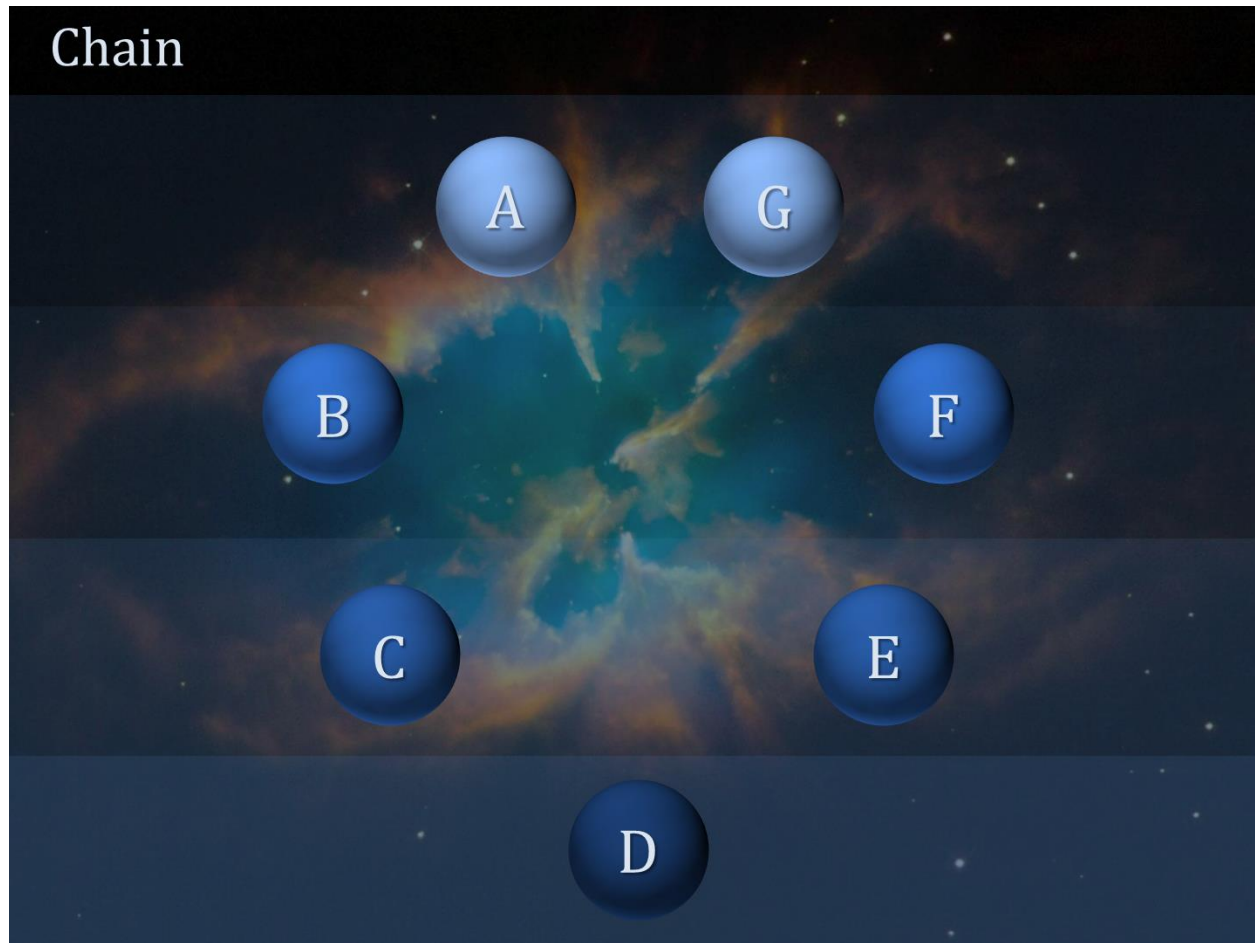
<sup>2</sup> The Messier (*Fr. pr. Messi-yay*) objects are a set of astronomical objects first listed by French astronomer Charles Messier in 1771

<sup>3</sup> The **New General Catalogue of Nebulae and Clusters of Stars** (abbreviated as NGC) is a well-known catalogue of deep-sky objects in astronomy compiled by John Louis Emil Dreyer in 1888, as a new version of John Herschel's Catalogue of Nebulae and Clusters of Stars. The NGC contains 7,840 objects, known as the NGC objects.

<sup>5</sup> Canes Venatici (kay-nee-z ven-ə-tess-ai) is one of the 88 official modern constellations and contains five Messier objects, including four galaxies. One of the more significant galaxies in Canes Venatici is the Whirlpool Galaxy (M51, NGC 5194) and NGC 5195, a small barred spiral galaxy that is seen face on. This was the first galaxy recognized as having a spiral structure, this structure being first observed by Lord Rosse in 1845. It is a face-on spiral galaxy 37 million light-years from Earth. Widely considered to be one of the most beautiful galaxies visible, M51 has many star-forming regions and nebulae in its arms, coloring them pink and blue in contrast to the older yellow core.

# Chain

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The seven globes of a chain are, by recognized convention, known respectively as Globes A, B, C, D, E, F and G.

Each of the 7 globes, being a separate and distinct planet, may be regarded as having a definite location in space, revolving round, or in some way dependent upon, our sun.

Kindly observe and note the various kinds of shadings used to designate the different orders of matter.

## **The Earliest and The Latest Globes the least Material**

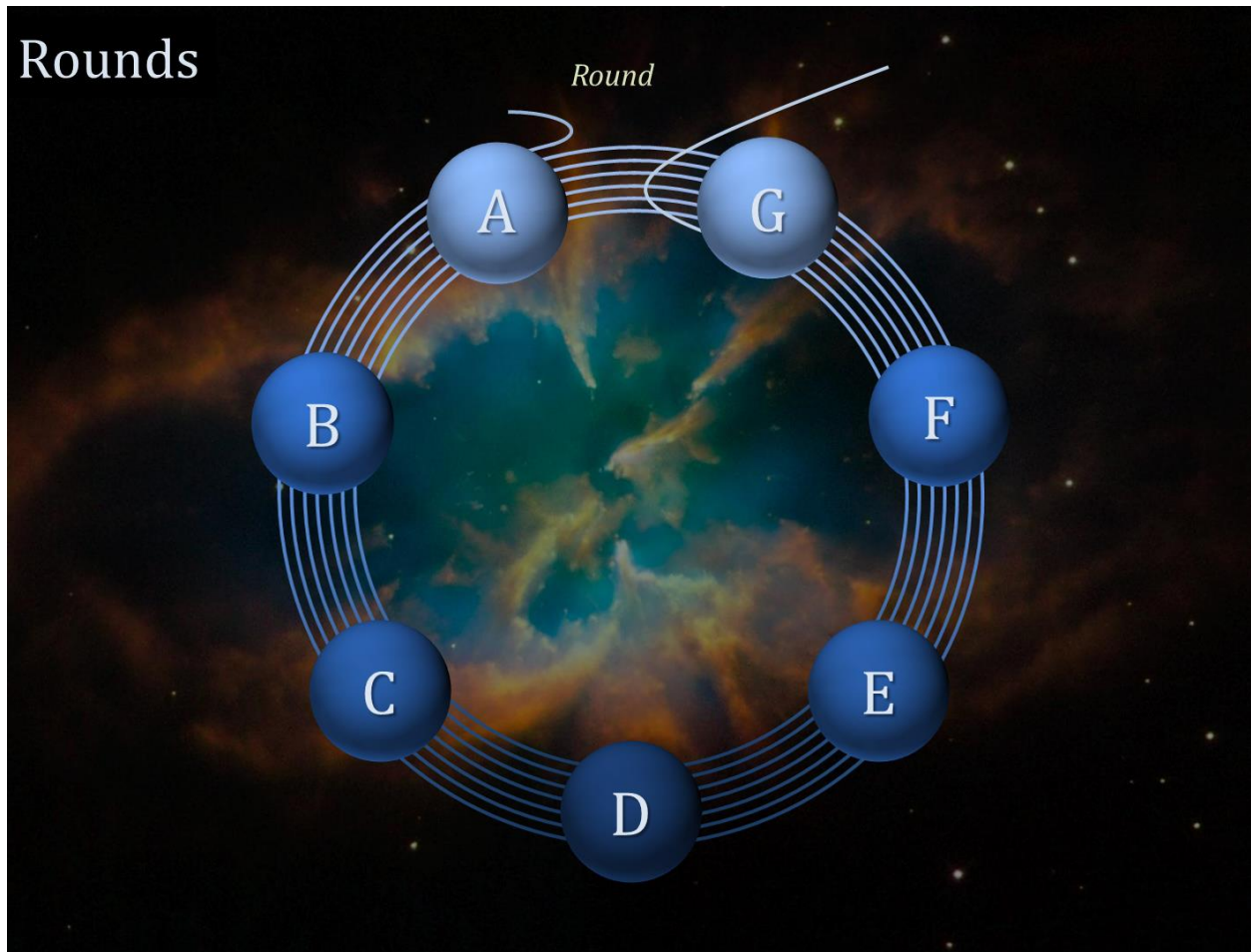
The earliest, as also the latest, developed worlds . . . are the most immaterial, the most ethereal of the whole series.

## **Pathway of Life through the Chain**

That the superior worlds which man may come to inhabit in his onward progress should gradually become more and more spiritual in their constitution — life there being more and more successfully divorced from gross material needs — will seem reasonable enough at the first glance. But the first glance in imagination at those which might conversely be called the inferior, but may with less inaccuracy be spoken of as the preceding worlds, would perhaps suggest that they ought to be conversely less spiritual, more material, than this earth. The fact is quite the other way, and must be so, it will be seen on reflection, in a chain of worlds which is an endless chain — i.e. round and round which the evolutionary process travels. If that process had merely one journey to travel along a path which never returned into itself, one could think of it, at any rate, as working from almost absolute matter up to almost absolute spirit; but Nature works always in complete curves, and travels always in paths which return into themselves. (EB)

# Rounds

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## Rounds in Esoteric Buddhism

### Rounds are currently in progress

The system of worlds is a circuit round which all individual spiritual entities have alike to pass; and that passage constitutes the Evolution of Man. For it must be realized that the evolution of man is a process still going on, and by no means yet complete. (EB)

The higher evolution will be accomplished by our progress through the successive worlds of the system; and in higher forms we shall return to this earth again and again. But the avenues of thought through which we look forward to this prospect, are of almost inconceivable length. (EB)

### From World Z back to A

The furthest forward of the worlds is not a region of finality, but the stepping-stone to the furthest back, as the month of December leads us back again to January. But it is not a climax of development from which the individual monad falls, as by a catastrophe, into the state from which he slowly began to ascend millions of years previously.

From . . . the highest world on the ascending arc of the circle, to that which must be regarded as the first on the descending arc, in one sense the lowest — i.e. in the order of development — *there is no descent at all*, but still ascent and progress.

For the spiritual monad or entity, which has worked its way all-round the cycle of evolution . . . begins its next cycle at the next higher stage, and is thus still accomplishing progress as it passes from world Z back again to world A.

Many times does it circle, in this way, right round the system, but its passage round must not be thought of merely as a circular revolution in an orbit. In the scale of spiritual perfection it is constantly ascending. (EB)

### **The Tower Analogy**

Thus, if we compare the system of worlds to a system of towers standing on a plain — towers each of many stories and symbolizing the scale of perfection — the spiritual monad performs a spiral progress round and round the series, passing through each tower, every time it comes round to it, at a higher level than before. (EB)

### **The Spiral Effect**

It is the spiral character of the progress accomplished by the life impulses that develop the various kingdoms of Nature, which accounts for the gaps now observed in the animated forms which people the earth. The thread of a screw, which is a uniform inclined plane in reality, looks like a succession of steps when examined only along one line parallel to its axis. (EB)

### **Rounds in the Secret Doctrine**

By a "Round" is meant the serial evolution of nascent<sup>6</sup> material nature, of the seven globes of our chain\* with their mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms (man being there included in the latter and standing at the head of it) during the whole period of a life-cycle. The latter would be called by the Brahmins "a Day of Brahma." It is, in short, one revolution of the "Wheel" (our planetary chain), which is composed of seven globes (or seven separate "Wheels," in another sense this time). When evolution has run downward into matter, from planet A to planet G, or Z, as the Western students call it, it is one Round. (SD1 231)

The work of each Round is said to be apportioned to a different group of so-called "Creators" or "Architects". (SD1 233)

In the Esoteric System, the Dhyanis watch successively over one of the Rounds and the great Root-races of our planetary chain. They are, moreover, said to send their Bhodisatvas, the human correspondents of the Dhyani-Buddhas . . . during every Round and Race. (SD1 42)

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<sup>6</sup> nascent - starting to exist, grow or develop; being born



Every “Round” (on the descending scale) is but a repetition in a more concrete form of the Round which preceded it, as every globe—down to our fourth sphere (the actual earth)—is a grosser and more material copy of the more shadowy sphere which precedes it in their successive order, on the three higher planes. . . . On its way upwards on the ascending arc, Evolution spiritualises and etherealises, so to speak, the general nature of all, bringing it on to a level with the plane on which the twin globe on the opposite side is placed; the result being, that when the seventh globe is reached (in whatever Round) the nature of everything that is evolving returns to the condition it was in at its starting point—plus, every time, a new and superior degree in the states of consciousness. (SD1, 232)

### **Pralaya between rounds**

A Round is 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)

### **Only One Globe is Active at a Given Time**

Although the seven globes of a chain all exist simultaneously, yet they are not all, at any given time, equally active in supporting life. Broadly speaking, *at any given time, one globe only is active and fully functioning*, the other 6 being in a dormant condition. The globes come into full activity, i.e., they become fully inhabited by various classes of beings . . . First, globe A becomes active: after a vast period of time the life on it begins gradually to lessen and almost to disappear, passing to the next globe-B. Globe A then becomes dormant, whilst B begins to awaken. (TSS)

After another vast period of time, globe B in turn “goes to sleep,” the greater part of the life passing on to the next globe in order, globe C. This process continues until each globe in turn has awakened from its sleeping condition, has supported the main stream of life for an eon, and again become dormant.

The period during which a globe is fully active, supporting the main stream of life, is called a globe-period.

The passage of the cycle of life round all 7 globes is known as a round. A round thus consists of 7 globe-periods, or world-periods, as they are sometimes called.

When one round has been completed, the whole process begins again with the re-awakening of life on Globe A, its subsequent passage to Globe B, then to Globes C, D, E, F and G successively until a second round has been completed. The whole process is then repeated until 7 rounds have been completed. (TSS)

The Slide illustrates the 7 rounds of the earth chain, the spiral line indicating the life wave which passes 7 complete times round the whole chain of 7 globes.

We thus see that: 7 globe-periods make 1 round, and 49 globe-periods make 7 rounds or 1 chain-period.

We spoke above of each globe in succession passing, as the stream of life leaves it, into a dormant condition. When this happens, the life on the globe does not entirely cease: a small amount of life, a kind of nucleus, always remains, and serves several important purposes. (TSS)

## **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)

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