

A Glance at the Three First Races of Mankind

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Reprinted from "Theosophical Siftings" Volume 4

The Theosophical Publishing Society, England

THERE is probably no part of the Secret Doctrine, as revealed to us by H.P.B., which offers a more startling contrast to the opinions of ordinary men, than the information laid before us in reference to the origin of mankind on earth. Neither common knowledge nor science furnishes us with any particulars of primeval man at all comparable with this scheme of development of mankind in the Fourth Round. Back to this early age the Secret Doctrine provides a fairly clear view of the steps of human development, but anterior to the Fourth Round even H.P.B. has only been able to supply glimpses. The history of the world in the first Three Rounds, and the pre-human forms and existences associated therewith — these have been treated of by other members of our T.S. In this short essay it is only proposed to make a survey of the early manhood of the world in its Fourth Round, including what H.P.B. describes as the Three First Races — those preceding the Atlanteans, and our Fifth Race Humanity.

It is supposed that you have learned of others the knowledge of the Universals and have brought your studies down to particulars as applicable to our globe and man upon it: having commenced the survey of existence in the dawn of time you are to trace anthropogenesis down to a period, which to a Theosophist is almost a recent one, the establishment of Man as a being exhibiting the existence of contrasted sexes. The chief difficulty of the task is that of having to take up the history of the human race at a point in regard to which the world is in entire ignorance; and so there is immense difficulty in giving any intelligible description of the earliest beings from whom our present mankind has during the lapse of untold ages gradually been evolved.

For those who are only now commencing to study our philosophy and doctrine, it would perhaps have been more simple, and the subject more easy to illustrate, if the elucidation of the origin of Man had been begun at our own times, and that we had been able to proceed from the known to the unknown. But the advantage, if any, would have been more apparent than real, because it would have been at a very early stage of our journey that we should have left all "history" behind us. For we are in [Page 4] the Fifth Race, and there exists apart from the Secret Doctrine and a few hints of tradition, no trace of a history of the rising up even of the Fifth Race. Modern Christian civilization has no narrative extending back more than 6,000 years; while the Fifth Race alone has had an independent existence for more than a million years: and modern science in its latest form only postulates the antiquity of man as counted by tens of thousands of years. Of any world *history* previous to 6,000 years the only recognised glimpse of the past is the scanty reference to Atlantis mentioned by Plato, who died 347 B.C., and even he gives us no idea of the date of its disappearance, which the Secret Doctrine has fixed at 11,000 to 12,000 years ago. Even this reference to Atlantis has for centuries been laughed at by the orthodox of the time, and it is only quite recently that any scientific authority has really considered the possibility of the event of the submergence of a past *nation*, and its home beneath the present Atlantic ocean.

The three earliest Root Races are associated each with a home on earth of its own; the two later Races also. These lands require for purposes of reference a name to be allotted to each. Remember then, we have agreed to speak of the First Race as " Sons of Will and Yoga", whose home was the "Imperishable Sacred Land"; the Second Race, the "Sweat Born", dwelt on the Great Hyperborean Land; the Third Race, the Egg Born, in its early days, developing later on into beings with sex, came to perfection on the continent of Lemuria; the Fourth Race dwelt on Atlantis; the Fifth developed on the earth somewhat more as we now know it, although tremendous changes of level, of hill and valley, of sea and river, have taken place even in *its* course.

The Imperishable Sacred Land of the First Race is so called because it has the notable character that in the main it forms the only portion of the earth's surface existing at the origin of humanity continuing intact through all the races, through all the millions of years of growth and development, and it will remain until the end of the Manvantara through each round, until it bear on its bosom the spiritualised form of the last divine man. No description of its size, nor its limits, may be attempted; we only have heard that "from the dawn to the close of twilight of a day of Brahma, or of the 'Great Breath', the Pole Star has its watchful eye upon it".

The Continent of the Second Race, known as the Hyperborean, that is, beyond the Borean, Northern, or Polar region, comprised what we know now as Northern Asia, it stretched southward from the Northern Polar district in promontories now indefinable. One thing at least is certain, that in those far distant times its climate was not what we now associate with those regions. In those far different times, millions of years ago, it knew no winter and was an abode of ethereal mildness, fabled by the Greeks to be the dwelling-place of Apollo — a glyph of the vivifying sun. [Page 5]

The Third Race, whose development is marked by such vast steps and entire changes of being, grew on the vast portion of the earth's surface which we have agreed to call Lemuria. This name was invented by Mr. P. L. Sclater about 1860, to designate a land which his scientific researches into Zoology led him to suppose must have existed in prehistoric times. The vast Pacific ocean now rolls over much of this continent, whose dry land, including part of modern Africa, extended to Australia.

As to its era, in the language of modern geology it was a pre-tertiary formation. Atlantis, which followed it, had developed and had in great part disappeared before the end of the Miocene period.

The Fourth Race Atlanteans; and the rise and progress of the seven branches of the Fifth Race during the more recent thousands of years, will be described by others.

Great assistance is rendered to the Occultist by a well-*timed* and *ordered* use of reasoning by analogy, and the Origin of Mankind is a subject on which the clearest light is shed by this process. A study of the life history of a man today from ovum to maturity will exhibit most of the stages through which the human race itself has passed, and a glance at the existent animal life around us will exhibit a similar succession of stages of development.

In our researches into the earliest and lowest forms of being, and setting aside from our present purpose

the vegetable kingdom, we shall perceive the simplest animal to be but an animal cell, a simple portion of albuminous material, the protoplasm of science ; so simple an element, with life, as this may be, may yet show actual signs of movement by change of shape; and as development is progressing, an envelope of the finest membrane and a nucleus come into perception; then a still finer element, a nucleolus, arises.

So simple a being can grow and can multiply by division. Our microscopes will show us such cellular beings dividing and re-dividing: the child being equal to the parent and the parent not dying in its formation. From this most simple type nature does produce every form of development and differentiation: reproduction by budding in a marvellous series of asexual forms. In more advanced beings there arises a contrast of cells, forms becoming ova, forms becoming spermal in one individual — hermaphroditism arises; and a vast series of animal forms have to be studied before the separation of the sexes occurs. So in gradual progression is the system of blood vessels found to arise and perfect itself in the mammalia; and similarly is the scheme of development of the nervous system found to proceed from one solitary nerve cell to the complex and complete brain and spinal cord and sense organs of a perfect man.

By the analogy of Man himself is shown the germ of possible future [Page 6] life in the simple cell growing in the human ovary. In the human animal is exhibited the cellular differentiation — and the sperm cell is required. The ovum fertilised — takes on that division of fission exhibited by the lowest forms of animal life. The one cell becomes two, the two four, and sixteen, and a congeries. The mass of new cells becomes a layer, the layer becomes three layers, and in them is laid down the backbone and centres of energy of the future being; blood vessel, nerve and organ becoming gradually differentiated into the perfect man of matter, inspired by vitality, life essence, Prana: and as the Secret Doctrine instructs us that this material form is constructed upon a finer basis, an image, a groundwork of intangible material, which we call Linga Sharira or astral body, the personal mould of the human being in formation, so, I must show you, does the Secret Doctrine declare the human race in this Round to have, originated from shadows.

Humanity arising in the First Race of this Fourth Round, some three hundred million years ago, according to the Secret Doctrine, constituted the Sons of Will and Yoga; Yoga is, exoterically, union with Brahma — it is the supreme condition of infinite deity, the essence of Brahma, who is represented as energizing all creation by the power of Yoga.

Men of the First Race were the shadows of shadows; they were shadows of the astral bodies of the Lunar Pitris, that is fathers: ancestors of Lunar extraction. The Moon furnished the earth with its first human envelopes — formless shadows — which continuous development has converted into men. The First Race men were the images, the shadows of the astral forms of the most forward entities from that preceding lower sphere, whose dead shell is now recognized as the Moon. These Lunar Pitris had at the end of the Third Round made such progress that they were already human in their divine nature, and the law of ceaseless evolution compelled these monads to pass through further stages of life and being on this earth. They were by destiny to lay the foundation of forms on this globe, and to fashion the dwellings for less advanced Monads, whose turn for incarnation was approaching.

Primeval man was a Linga Sharira, an astral form, warmed into life by the force of Prana, life essence from the Sun.

The Monad, Atma Buddhi, the Higher Man, a Ray of the Universal Monad, born of Mahat, Universal Mind Essence, brooded over this spectral form, which from the absence of Manas was unconscious on our plane, a senseless shell; amanasa. The Higher Man, we now recognise, was afar off. The Mind, Manas, the Human Soul, still absent. The Kama passions at rest.

The material body not yet formed; for it took three and a half Races to perfect the descent into matter to its grossest point. As Hermes said in [Page 7] the Emerald Tablet, in reference to Man: — "Its father is the Sun; its mother the Moon": that is, the Moon beings gave its form, although but a shadow, a Chhaya. The Solar Lhas warmed it, gave it Prana, vital force, vitality. Mindless, speechless, bodiless, the changes of the earth's surface were hardly of appreciable effect on the first men. As the ages passed on, the material body grew on this astral form, even as the material body still grows on an astral model to constitute the frame of each one of us. No hint of what we know as sexual differentiation arose for untold ages.

Spiritually fireless, practically deathless, these beings were luminous — incorporeal — aeriform — mindless shadows, which Lunar beings had projected, which the Lunar Pitris had breathed out; senseless bhutas or phantoms too ethereal to be percipient of, or affected by any convulsions of Nature.

This almost inconceivable First Race passed on into the Second without either begetting it, or procreating it, and without what we call death. A thorough transformation occurred; as the ancient records say, "they passed by together, they ceased and others took their places". Before passing on, glance awhile at those Lunar beings, some of whom were the fathers of earliest men. Many hints are furnished us by the Secret Doctrine, but no complete insight ;they are too far removed from our plane of consciousness for us to form any complete picture of their state and history.

Occultism mentions twelve classes of creating powers, of which four have reached liberation to the end of the Great Age; a fifth is ready to reach it; and the seven others are still under the Law of Karma, and *may* act on those globes of our planetary chain which bear humanity. Exoteric Hindoo books mention the Seven Groups of Pitris or Ancestors; and two distinct classes — those who possess the "Sacred Fire" and those without it. The higher class are called Agnishwatta, devoid of creative energy, too pure and divine. The lower class are Barhishad, possessed of creative energy, more closely connected to our earth; these are Lunar spirits, who become what the old Hebrew legends call the creative "Elohim" of form, or of the Adam of dust. They were devoid of the higher Mahat element, and could not form a conscious divine man-god on earth, which conscious divinity the higher Agnishwatta could give; but they could and did give an astral form on which a human body could be moulded later on, and this the higher Agnishwatta, being bodiless, could not give.

These Agnishwatta, or fire Dhyanis, are the heart of the Dhyani Chohan body, and it is they who, ages later on, incarnate in the Third Race, bringing to them Manas, and by this link between the higher and the lower principles, render Man a perfect septenary, as we now know him.

Of the seven *classes* of Pitris, the Puranas assign the higher three classes [Page 8] to be Arupa, formless; and the lower Four to be Rupa, or having forms the first being intellectual and spiritual, the second material and without mind.

From this digression, the narrative must pass to the Second Race, whose beings gradually replaced the shadowy members of the First Race. Remember we are on the downward arc, the descent of spirit into matter, and shall be still becoming more and more material unto the midpoint of the Third Race. In somewhat epigrammatic form it has been said the First Men were spiritual within and ethereal without; while the Second Race was Psycho-spiritual within, and Ethero-physical without.

The Second Race came into existence under the domination of the powers of Brihaspati which we call Jupiter, and upon the Hyperborean continent: here the shadowy forms of the First became clothed, the astral shadows retired beneath a garment of matter, and nature carried out her first attempts at building material men. Heterogeneous was their structure now, and their forms gigantic, these semi-human monsters existed and reproduced themselves by expansion, by budding, gemmation, and by sub-division, by expression and separation of their own material, hence the Secret Doctrine names them "sweat born". Still we may say there was no death, only transformation, the older being giving up of his old body to form newer beings, and he existed beside them. Still is the reproduction entirely asexual: still is there no principle of Karma, no will nor wish nor body of desire.

Through aeons of time the early Second Race — parents of the sweat born — passed on, and the beings of the later Second Race were sweat born themselves. These early beings were produced without thought or desire, unconsciously under Karmic Law, even as some lowest forms of animal life are today seen evolving one from the other. Watch the tiny life spot which the naturalist calls Amoeba, and the whole process may be seen, even so *did* the progenitors of mankind slowly evolve into higher beings — albeit on a more impressive scale, and of more ethereal substance. Almost structureless, albuminous, boneless, a viscid indeterminate mass was such a seed like forerunner of ourselves.

In the very latest of the Race dawned the primitive and weak spark of understanding, and also a suspicion of sound production emanated in these, and the earliest sounds were like the vowels, soft and fluent.

Passing from these mere glimpses of the men of the first two races, we reach in the Third a more concrete form of humanity, and we obtain a deeper insight into the modes and progress of evolution; and I realize that here I am more embarrassed by the quantity of available material, than I was puzzled to afford you any insight into the status of the previous races on account of the scarcity of the record concerning them. Vast ages of [Page 9] change and progress passed in the course of this Third Race, whose domain was Lemuria, and whose presiding powers were associated with Lohitanga and Sukra — Mars and Venus. Lemuria, we are told, was destroyed at last by fire, subterranean convulsions broke up the ocean floors, giving vent to the concealed "fires of the earth's interior; while its successor, Atlantis, was overwhelmed by water, water floods produced by successive disturbances of the axial rotation. We have still, it is asserted, one link remaining with the ancient domain of Lemuria, the islands of New Zealand. The Lemuria of the Third Race is believed to have possessed a climate of constant mildness, a period of eternal spring; a climate whose variation was very limited — such as is now attributed to that existent on the planet Jupiter.

In associating Lemuria with the dictates of the science of geology we may say that it was mainly destroyed 700,000 years before the Tertiary Period had begun.

The Third Race is the most notable because its median period produced the more perfect man, to whom was granted Manas, Mind, Consciousness; for the Lower Quaternary, as now we know it in the human being, was linked with the Supernal Triad of Atma, Buddhi and the Higher Manas; the Monad, instead of merely brooding over the lower man, exhibited a more intimate connection with the earthly shell, and inspired it (with Kamic elements) to a state of consciousness of its own nature and powers, and rendered possible the spiritual aspirations of the personal life. Until then there was no real death, until man possessed Kama, the source of desire: and until Manas was seated in the Septenary, the full effect of Karmic could not appear, for moral responsibility did not exist. Karmaless there was no Nirvana to attain, no Kama Loka for the shell after death, no Devachanic interlude of peaceful rest.

But with Kama and its tendencies to be controlled, and Manas evolving full consciousness on the plane of life, then morality and the higher aspirations were developed, while as a contrast sinfulness and shame began to meet with Karmic punishment. For the nations drifted deeper and deeper into matter, and heavier and heavier were the faults of those beings who were on the descending arc, a degenerative moral process which continued on, through the Fourth Race, when the most heavy Karma was generated, and, indeed, no general improvement became marked until the ascending arc was reached by the nascent Fifth Race.

The Third Race for a long period exhibited a gradual change of means of reproduction, passing from the mode known as Sweat Born to the origin by Ovulation. They have been called Egg-Born; generation and new personalities arose from extrusion of a viscid cell, oviform, developing into the new being apart from the progenitor: from the [Page 10] asexual principle the human race had become oviparous. Then, from a condition of androgyne being, development at last formed mankind into entities with reproductive contrast. Human male and female became distinct beings, and modern mankind arose and has continued through millions of years without new departure in this particular. Parallel with these vast changes, the body hardened, became more and more material, and all the several groups of internal organs became more and more perfect: notably the digestive system — man had become wholly dependent on the *material* world for food to nourish this ever-increasing carcass of rude matter. The forms were still massive, gigantic, and the Secret Doctrine suggests somewhat we may describe as ape-like. The body became firm and solid, and jointed by the increasing perfection of the endo-skeleton, the bony framework we call of the vertebrate type: each limb moveable and of importance to the individual by the growth of the muscular system. Mankind in fact, as suggested by analogy, passed through many of the stages now exhibited by classes of Avian and Reptilian types. Coincident with these changes, even as occurs in foetal life today, there was a gradual growth of complexity in the vascular system of blood vessels — originating in a pulsating vacuole as seen in the Protozoa now, the process of development produced the blood-vessels and their capillaries; the single-celled heart became two-celled, auricle was defined from ventricle, and the four-celled heart of the mammalia and of ourselves became existent.

Coincident with the full sex development, the Kamic principle had to become dominant, for when the reproduction had been by gemmation, budding, or oviparous, it had been unconscious and the process of natural law; and not the conscious promptings of the animal passions which now became felt.

The fully-developed Third Race man was of yellow complexion, a golden tint marked the nations; some scattered tribes of almost direct descent from them still remain in Australia. Other yellow-tinted savages

are still found elsewhere, but are mainly of descent from the Atlanteans, or Fourth Race men, whose era followed that of Lemuria.

At the close of the Third Race we may perceive a vast change in the constitution of man, in regard to his pristine state at the opening of the Fourth Round. An astral form alone in the earliest first race, the material body became added, both supported and vivified by Prana; by the addition of Kama, the principle of desire, love and all the passions, the Lower Quaternary is complete: the eternal pilgrim of the Upper Triad yet broods over it, but without union.

We have now to show how this Triad became, by the descent of Manas into the now perfected animal man, to occupy a closer connexion with men of the Third Race. [Page 11]

The Monads, born from Mahat, the universal mind principle, are rays from one absolute essence; they are indeed Manasa-putras.

In their course of evolution under Karmic law they have to pass through the many and varied experiences of human lives to attain to wisdom, and to pass up the steep paths of the ascending cycle. These incarnate in the beings of the latter part of the Third Race, for their own advancement, and transformed the mindless into beings with consciousness — knowing good and evil. It is indeed told us that some of the fully developed latest Third Race men were towering giants of godly strength and beauty and were depositors of all the mysteries of the heavens and the earth; and that the nations of the still later races looked back on some of these superior beings as the demigods, the hero deities of a past golden age.

After the full development of this Third Race material progress arose; ruled and taught by the divine beings, civilization originated, cities were founded; arts and sciences were cultivated.

The simple vowel sounds uttered by the latest Second Race men developed still further; and as the progress of the Third Race went on, true articulate speech first began with mono-syllabic utterances.

This Manas — this link between the Quaternary of lower principles and the divine Triad — was furnished by the Solar Pitris, even as the original form was the gift of the Lunar Pitris or progenitors. The three higher classes of Arupa or formless Pitris were concerned in this transcendent change in humanity.

Many names have been given to these supernal beings; such as Agnishwatta, celestial ancestors, Sishta, Fire Dhyanis, Solar Pitris, Lords of Flame, and the Heart of the Dhyan Chohan Body.

These Pitris are the one-third of the Dhyanis, who, we are told by the *Book of Dzyan*, were doomed by Karmic law to re-incarnate upon this earth before attaining further perfection.

They are also called in a mysterious manner the Fifth Hierarchy presiding over Makara, the principality

associated with the zodiacal sign of Capricornus.

These "projected the spark", that served to impart Manas to the Amanasa, mindless shells of humanity.

The Secret Doctrine informs us that only a part of the completed unisexual men and women received this anima, this spark divine from the sun beings, at first, and that others remaining without the higher mental powers, sank into gross sins from their unrestrained Kamic passions.

Then we are told those lords who had refrained from incarnation, hastened to carry on their progress repenting of their delay; and they incarnated in all these human beings — lest worse evil should befall their [Page 12] destined earthly frames; and mankind recognised what had been the sins of the mindless.

These Third Race men may be again fitly viewed as forming three groups. In the first the Lords of Flame incarnated even before the separation of the sexes, *i.e.*, in Androgyne or Hermaphrodite man.

These included the notable personalities of whom the most ancient tradition speaks as demigods, heroes, rishis.

Secondly, the group of common humanity in each of whom a spark entered, in the far distant past of eighteen million years, a spark of Solar divinity, of mind, of intellect, conscious on our plane.

Thirdly, as already mentioned, there was the group of the mindless, who brought into the world much sin and suffering, and strange forms of life; but who were later on joined to the second group.

Greco-Roman mythology enshrines at least one truth in the myth of Castor and Pollux; the twins, one of whom — Castor — was mortal, and the other — Pollux — immortal. The one amanasa — mindless; the other having the divine spark: born of one mother, Leda — the Third Race: the one fathered by the lower Lunar ancestor, and mortal; the other immortal, springing from the divine Solar progenitor: the one from the Barhishad; the other from the Agnishwatta or Solar Dhyanis.

The *Secret Doctrine* of Madame Blavatsky, our honoured teacher, is a vast storehouse of history and doctrine, and its pages contain an explanation of this and many another myth of the ancient world. Wandering among its numerous illustrations of the past, one could select therefrom matter enough on our present subject to extend this article to an indefinite length. But we must bring this *résumé* to a close with the short statement that ere the Atlantean Fourth Race arose in its strength, and while the Third faded into the past, a vast concourse of forgotten nations came upon the scene, flourished and passed away: that there was an ever-increasing separation between the higher groups and the lower sub-races of the delayed group; between the sons of light and the progeny of darkness. From the sons of light was developed the nascent civilization of Atlantis; from the low forms of Lemuria, reinforced by interbreeding with the more degenerate of the Atlanteans, sprang series of races, fitly comparable to and indeed forerunners of the savage races we now know as Tasmanians — now extinct; Australians, Andaman

Islanders, certain wild tribes in China and Borneo, Veddahs of Ceylon, Bushmen and Negritos.

Convulsions of nature made an end of Lemuria and of the Lemurians; and it is stated that the sinking began at the most northerly part, proceeding to the equatorial regions, and that the last portion to disappear was that adjacent to what we know now as Ceylon, which was the Lanka of the succeeding Atlantean continent. In these profound changes of the earth's [Page 13] surface the Lemuro Atlantean stock was saved, as by a divine interposition, as by a Manu, a Noah: this substitution of a Fourth Race for a Third destroyed after a state of deluged world, is the foundation of the myths of the Chaldeans, and of Genesis, and of the Hindoo Vaivasvata; a salvation indeed which was repeated millions of years later, when the Fourth Race itself disappeared and was replaced by the nascent Fifth, after similar convulsions of nature and a deluged world.

We must now bring this article to a close. Having traced mankind on the Fourth *Round* from his origin as an astral form to his full material development into a being exhibiting the dual phenomena of sex; and having indicated the stage at which Man became a conscious, sentient, intellectual being, suffering punishment and earning rewards, we conclude this essay with the hope that its readers may be led to make a deeper study of this most interesting and instructive doctrine.