



Ancient Gods and Paradigm Shifts Towards the Omega Point

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Despite the global confusion and political unrest apparent throughout the world today, humankind might very well be on the brink of a paradigm shift in human consciousness. Indeed, the unrest may even be the proof that such a shift has already begun. There are distinct lenses through which historians can view patterns of psychological and philosophical upheaval. One method is the A / B / A1

stage-pattern of spiritual growth. By employing this method progress can be discerned in areas that reveal humankind's understanding of who we are and where we are going:

A-Stage: The Age of Religion

This stage consisted of a world rich in dreams and magic. An early ancestor, some 40,000 years ago, had a vision. Did it suddenly appear in his consciousness in the form of a spiritual insight? Was it perhaps inspired by a mushroom he



Neanderthal man (Fotolia)

ate? Did he ingest a natural chemical that, for a moment at least, expanded the filters that had evolved in his brain—filters now referred to as the senses of smell, sight, touch, taste and hearing—that up until that moment kept too much reality from flooding his mind with information that might have distracted him when he most needed to be alert to the approach of a predator? Was he now open to a sixth sense—metaphysical discernment?

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Shaman Drummer (Adobe Stock)

However it happened, this ancestor seems to have been suddenly smitten with new possibilities of what appeared to be spiritual worlds he had never before even considered. He then crawled back into a great cave to be alone with his thoughts. Using natural pigments, he transferred his vision to the cave walls, becoming the world's first inspired artist. When he emerged back into the sunlight to teach others of his tribe about the wonders he had experienced, he became the first Shaman.

Maybe he was a gifted teacher. Maybe he was hard-wired to become a priest. Maybe he was the first to realize that it was time for humans to take the next step in their evolution. Maybe he was just brilliant. The rest of the tribe probably did not all blindly follow his lead. People were doubters back then, just as they are now. There were a few, no doubt, who thought he was a prophet. There were others, certainly, who must have considered him crazy. They probably exiled him more than a few times. They might have argued with him, trying to convince him to settle down and be normal. One of the few constants of human behavior is to denigrate agents of change.

However and whenever it may have happened, the world changed on that day. An advanced species of animal became uniquely human. Humankind discovered a spirituality that would eventually crystallize into religion. Evolution began to work on our minds and hearts as well as

our bodies. It was now practical to develop better tools and weapons, but no longer sufficient. Music, art, symbolic thought and mythology, began to be as important, perhaps even more important, than simple survival. It was no longer expedient to just perpetuate the human species. Man needed to pass on a reason to do so. The necessity of life now took a back seat to the meaning of life. And that simple change made all the difference.



Maya Music: Bonampak temple room 1, file of musicians: rattle and ocarina; trumpets; and theatrical scene (Public Domain)

B-Stage: The Age of Curiosity

It took a long time, but the first stage of human development, the A Stage, eventually led to the second stage - the B Stage. During this stage humankind gave vent to their powerful human intellectual curiosity. It drove us to extremes. We wanted to know how things worked and we wanted to learn how to control the process so as to turn it to our advantage. It became an innovative stage, with bumps in the road, of course.

Copernicus, for instance, thought the world revolved around the sun. The rest of the world thought he was wrong. He turned out to be right. Isaac Newton had a dust-up with the Catholic Church over the boundaries of what they considered to be their sacred territory. They finally apologized—a few hundred years later.

Humankind experimented with economics, governmental policies, philosophies, social systems, and race relations. We learned to be comfortable in all sorts of weather. We learned to be well-fed even in times of drought and famine. We learned to fly through the air, walk on the moon, speed down roads that are marvels of engineering, conquer every inch of the planet, pave over our environment, destroy our ozone layer, wreck our ecosystems, bring our species to the brink of extinction by means of many different technologies, and overpopulate to our heart's content. We became fat and happy, even though continually discontented, and we generally

accepted, as if it was our birthright, our rule as the dominant life form ever to arise on planet earth.

But the voice of the mystic, the spiritual craving of our first visionary ancestor, the impulse of the shaman, artist, poet, and musician refused to evolve away. From the long forgotten A Stage of human development the now exposed questions still echoed down the corridors of time: Who are we? Why are we here? Is there more? It is a plea that refuses to die no matter what established institutions do to snuff it out.



Astronomer Copernicus, conversation with God by Jan Matejko (1872) (Public Domain)

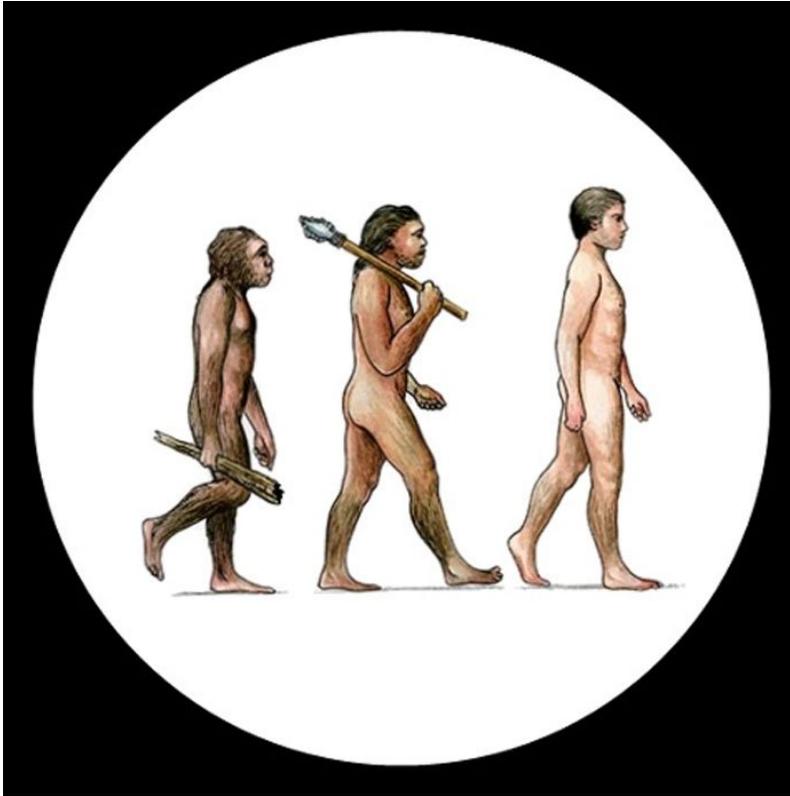


The Ancient of Days (William Blake, 1794)
(Public Domain)

A1-Stage: The Age of Scientific Spirituality

Thus it is that today a few visionaries believe that other dimensions, populated by sentient, hard to imagine beings, who were the very basis for the belief in ancient gods, actually exist in scientific fact and reality. They wonder if the mythical gods of old were more than evolved representations of the survivors of actual lost civilization.

Most scientists think those visionaries are misguided at best, seriously deluded at worst, or, at the very least, overtly superstitious. But what if the visionaries are on to something? What if they are, indeed, agents of change? Could this be the beginning of a new stage of human development? Are quantum hypothesis and spiritual speculation beginning to merge into one lane of traffic? Are they converging, after all these years, centuries, and millenniums? Is the voice of our ancient A Stage mystical ancestor melding with the informed opinion of the modern B Stage scientist while pointing the way to a new A1 Stage understanding of what it is and means to be human?



Human evolution (CC BY-SA 3.0)

If so, what will the ‘new’ human look like? With this question we come to the boundaries of a land called Hope. We need only use a little creative imagination to navigate it. Consider the following examples drawn, with one exception, from the history of America. One can easily find such examples from many other places on the planet:

On January 1, 1775, there were not very many people living in the North American Colonies who had much hope that they would ever become a free and independent nation. A decade later it became apparent that the sweep of history was greater than the hopelessness of soon-to-be Americans. Against all odds, a rag-tag army defeated the mightiest monarchy on earth and the hope of democracy triumphed at last.

On January 1, 1861, there were not many American slaves who dared dream of ever becoming free citizens in a land they had built by the blood, sweat, and tears of their labor. By May of 1865, hope had triumphed against all odds.

On January 1, 1920, there were not many American women who thought they would ever be allowed to vote alongside their husbands. That all changed eight months later.

On January 1, 2008, very few people dared hope Americans would ever elect a black president. That changed the following November. Barak Obama, the author of a book appropriately entitled *The Audacity of Hope*, was elected president of the United States.

On January 1, 2012, Peter Higgs thought the radical new particle now named after him would never be found during his lifetime. Six months later a whole community of physicists gathered for the announcement of its discovery.

New Dawn of Hope

What do these examples all have in common? Hope! Against all odds, something that was considered hopeless become a reality. It is as if destiny is a positive force that will not be denied. The power of a nation, the threat of a Fuhrer, the scorn of peer rejection, the dominion of a monolithic church—nothing can stop it. When the time is right, the force of history triumphs.

These illustrations make it seem as though evolution is not pushing us up from the primeval ooze. It is pulling us toward a fixed destination. Call it fate. Call it predestination. Call it anything one wants, but sometimes it feels as if we are being ordered and structured to fulfill a destiny. We often fight it. We usually resist tooth and nail. But our inexorable trajectory has been upward and outward ever since we crawled out of those great painted caves. In spite of our failures, love still triumphs in the midst of hate. Freedom's song is sung anew. Compassion reigns even in prison camps. Seemingly invincible rulers become footnotes.



The Ramesseum, Head of Colossus of Ramses II, Thebes. (Brooklyn Museum) (Public Domain)

The poetry of Percy Bysshe Shelley expresses the plight of the tyrant whose subjects despaired of hope:

*I met a traveler from an antique land
 Who said: "Two vast and trunk-less legs of stone
 Stand in the desert . . . Near them, on the sand,
 Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
 And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
 Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
 Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
 The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed:
 And on the pedestal these words appear:
 'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
 Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!
 Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
 Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
 The lone and level sands stretch far away."*

Metaphysical growth, spiritual growth, intentional focus, religious maturity, all are the hope that refuses to die. It is almost as if the questing voice within is hard-wired into our circuits. Ozymandias, called by many names—science, atheism, common sense, materialism, reductionism, progress, and intellectualism, are just a few—has his day in the sun, but eventually he is covered over by the relentless sands of history.

*"Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
 Man never Is, but always To be blest.
 The soul, uneasy, and confin'd from home,
 Rests and expatiates in a life to come."*

Thus says Alexander Pope. He may be on to something. The idea that we are being pulled toward a future that is indicated by clues from our past is not a new one.

The Omega Point

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a Jesuit priest who lived in the first half of the 20th century, popularized the idea of what he called the Omega Point, a future point in time which is drawing everything towards a final unification. Drawing on his biblical background he identified that point with the words recorded in Revelation 1 and Revelation 22: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end."



Night Sky With Moon And Stars (CC0)

The Omega Point concept was later expanded by writers such as John David Garcia and Tulane University's Frank Tipler. Tipler has been soundly criticized by many in the science community, calling his ideas pseudoscience. But various theorists followed his lead

while trying to avoid his critics. When a TV episode of Morgan Freeman's *Through the Wormhole* popularized both Tipler and his theories, the public responded with delightful curiosity. Now all sorts of fanciful variations on this theme have caught hold in the science fiction realm.

Yogi Berra said it best: "Our future is all ahead of us!" From a 40,000 year-old mystical ancestor to an understanding of quantum identity, from our ancient origins to a hopeful future, we have come a long way. There are no guarantees, of course. Perhaps other civilizations have walked the same path and been found wanting, finally ground into the dust of history through their acts of hubris and ego. But if we can envision it, it is possible. That is why we need to study the past. That is why we need to listen to the ancestors. Their wisdom might provide the very paradigm shift that will prove to be our salvation.

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