

## THE COSMIC PARTHENOGENESIS.

BY LAWRENCE PARMLY BROWN.

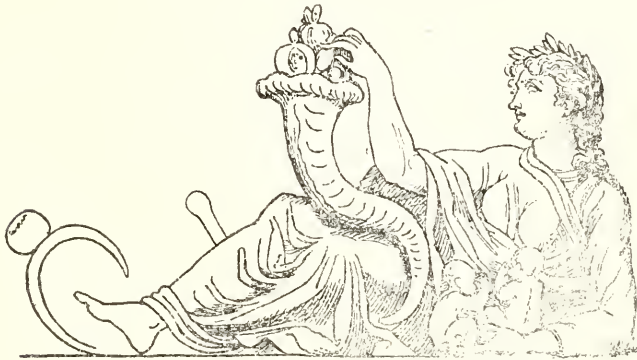
### I.

THE mythic parthenogenesis is primarily referable to the earth as the great mother whose progeny includes not only all things in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, but also the sun, moon and stars as supposed to be living beings. This preternatural genesis is rarely abiogenesis or spontaneous generation (as in the case of the Egyptian Net or Neith—see below), and strictly speaking, in accordance with the meaning of the word “parthenogenesis,” it is never epigenesis of normal character (as in the multitude of stories in which the celestial sire has a philoprogenitive role, either as anthropomorphic or in some metamorphosis). The mythic parthenogenesis, on the contrary, is generally epigenesis in which the paternal progenitor operates from a distance; and thus with the cosmic man, or the heaven (or sometimes the sun or moon) as the paternal figure, inseminating elements or intermedia are recognized in rain, dew, light, heat, wind, lightning, thunder, etc., and even in the setting sun—as also in certain symbols and personifications of these intermedia. In some myths they appear without reference to their source, as if independent potencies, while in others a transporting agent or messenger between heaven and earth is introduced.

The earth as the parthenogenous mother of all things is properly ever-virginate, with her solar offspring sometimes considered the first-born, and even the only-begotten; and she is not infrequently represented as an indevirginate wife. The idea of a periodical revirgination of the earth-mother appears to be found in only one extant story, according to which Hera (Juno) was revirginated annually by bathing in a spring called Canathus, at Nauplia in the Peloponnesus—a story which Pausanias says is a secret one, borrowed from a mystery which the Argives celebrated in honor of the goddess (II, 38, 2). It was probably of Oriental origin, for Hera

was fabled to have bathed in a spring in Mesopotamia after her marriage to Zeus, whence the spot was said to be ever fragrant with perfume, while shoals of tame fishes gamboled in the water (*Ælian, Nat. An.*, XII, 30). It is not improbable that the annual bathing of the goddess originally belonged to the rainy season of winter and spring, with the rain supposed to be the cause of the renewal of the earth's vegetation, and thus also of her rejuvenation and revirgination; but it appears that in some parthenogenesis myths the bathing-place is identified with the western division of the earth-surrounding ocean-river, with the setting sun as the original inseminating intermedium.

Mythology, folk-lore and pseudo-history abound in stories of parthenogenesis; the following examples being the most ancient and the most transparently related to the nature mythos. (For many



GÆA AS THE BOUNTIFUL MOTHER.

(After Conze, *Götter und Heroengestalten*, II, Pl. 56, fig. 2.)

similar stories in the later legends of various peoples, see especially De Charencey, *Le folklore dans les deux mondes*, pp. 121-256; Bastian, *Die Völker des östlichen Asiens*, Vol. I; Hartland, *Legend of Perseus*, Vol. I, and *Primitive Paternity*, Vol. I.)

The personified Æther (the upper blue region of space) was closely assimilated to the cosmic man by the Greeks, some of whom recognized him as the father of the heaven, earth and sea, while in the *Orphic Hymns* he is the primordial spirit and soul of the universe. Lucretius says that "we are all sprung from celestial seed: the father of all is the same Æther, from whom, when the bountiful earth has received the liquid drops of moisture, she, being impregnated, produces the rich crops and the joyous groves and the race of men. . . . on which account she has justly obtained the name of

mother" (*De Rer. Nat.*, II, 998—cf. Ecclesiasticus xl. 1, where the earth is "the mother of all things"). According to Ovid, in the springtime "almighty father Æther descends in fertilizing showers into the bosom of his joyous spouse. . . Then bounteous earth is teeming to the birth" (*Georg.*, II, 324—following Æschylus, *Frag. Danaid.*, frag. 38, Dind.; and Euripides, *Frag. Chrysipt.*, frag. VI, Dind.) Zeus was also a sender of rain (Jupiter Pluvius); and he was sometimes identified with the rain itself as the inseminator of both Ceres for the earth and Proserpina for vegetation (Arnobius, *Adv. Gent.*, V, 32, 35). He took the form of a shower with Imandra, daughter of Geneanus, at Rhodes (according to the *Clementine Recognitions*, X, 22). In the *Rigveda*, Indra as the sender of rain is Parjanya, the fertilizer of all living things (V, 83, 1, 7; VII, 102, 2; cf. VIII, 6, 20). The original Cretan Curetes, "children of the earth" (Diodor., V, 65), are said by Ovid to have sprung from the earth after a plenteous shower (*Met.*, IV, 281). The Pueblo Indians fabled that the celebrated Montezuma was engendered by a fertilizing shower that fell upon his parthenogenous mother as well as upon the earth after a great drought and famine; and the Pimas related that their first ancestor came from a raindrop and the goddess of maize (Bancroft, *Native Races*, III, pp. 174, 312).

In another view, the fecundating rain becomes a liquor received by the mythic mother in the form of drink. Vishnu's fourfold incarnation as Rama, Bharat and the twins Laksman and Satrugna is effected when the three mothers, wives of King Dasaratha, drink celestial liquor from a golden bowl brought by a messenger from the Lord of Life; this messenger being a vast and splendid form of light that arises from the flame of a sacrifice, bearing the bowl (*Ramayana*, I, 15, 19). In the *Rigveda*, the fermented soma juice is called "the fecundating power of the rain-shedding steed" (for the wind or the cloud—I, 164, 35); and according to an Iranian legend, Zarātust (Zoroaster) owed his origin to a drink of *hom* (= soma) juice and cow's milk, respectively infused with his guardian spirit and glory ("Selections of Zad-Sparam," in *Sacred Books of the East*, V, p. 187). Here the rain is also identified with the milk of the celestial cow; and according to another legend, Zoroaster first appeared as the foliage on the tree of life, which was eaten by a cow whose milk as the only food of the future prophet's father effected the incarnation of the prophet, while in this legend the name of the mother is given as Daghdo and interpreted "milk" (Malcolm, *History of Persia*, pp. 192, 193—but the name is properly Dughda = daughter; see *Bundahish*, XXXII, 10, etc.). It is also held that

Hushedar, Hushedar-mah and Soshians, the three sons of Zoroaster, will be born as the Messiahs of three future millennial cycles, after the parthenogenous mother has drunk of the water in which she bathes—the same having been fertilized long previously and thence kept fertile by a miracle of preservation (*Bund.*, XXXII, 8, 9; *Dinkard*, VII, etc.). According to a Hindu myth, the mother of the human race arose out of the subsided waters of the primordial deluge, which were fertilized by a sacrifice of curdled milk and whey thrown into them by Manu (Weber, *Indische Studien*, I, p. 161).

Again, in the *Rigveda*, the earth is fertilized when the Maruts (winds) emit their perspiration in the form of rain (V, 58, 7); and in Norse mythology the first man and woman are created from the perspiration under the left arm of Ymir, the cosmic giant (*Elder Edda*, "Vafthrudnismal"; *Younger Edda*, Foreword, IV, 6). According to some of the Egyptians, the goddess Tefnut (= the wet Nut or rainy heaven) as a daughter of Tem or Amen-Ra, was produced *ab urina* (see Budge, *Gods*, I, p. 318; II, p. 88). The constellated giant Orion (Akkadian, Uru-anna = Light of heaven) was generally associated with rain-storms; and some supposed that the original form of the name was Urion, *ab urina*, whence the Latin fable that the earth-born Orion was engendered by micturated wine from Jupiter, Neptune and Mērcury (Ovid, *Fasti*, V, 493 seq.). In some Hindu myths, the insemination of the earth-mother is accidental, and incidental to a symbolized storm struggle—as in the variant accounts of the genesis of Drona and Kripa, originally for the sun and moon (*Mahabharata*, I, 5078-5086, 5103-5106; Wheeler, *History of India*, I, p. 78; Williams, *Sansc. Lex.*, s. v. Kripa; Goldstücker, *Sansc. Dict.*, s. v. Ayonija; De Gubernatis, *Zoo. Myth.*, I, p. 250). Similar stories are told of the earth-born Erichthonius, son of Hephæstus, the Greek god of fire (Apollod., III, 14, 6; Hygin., *Poet. Ast.*, II, 13); of the earth-born Agdistis, son of Zeus (variant versions in Pausanias, VII, 17, 5, and Arnobius, *Adv. Gent.*, V, 5); of the earth-born Centaurs, progeny of Zeus (Nonnus, *Dionys.*, V, 14), and even of Mohammed as son of a king of India and a Brahman's daughter (in a Hindu legend—see Wilford, in *Asiatic Researches*, IX, p. 159).

In the *Rigveda* it is said that Agni (as the fire or heat of the sun) fecundates the young plants, so they bring forth fruit (III, 55, 5), and he is called "the embryo of the earth-fertilizing rain" (*ibid.*, V, 14, 10). Some of the Greeks believed that the first human beings were produced by the earth, warmed by the sun (Diodor.,

I, 7; Pausan., VIII, 29, 3), as also did some of the Orinoco Indians (Gumilla, *Histoire de l'Orénoque*, I, p. 175). Again, after the Deucalion deluge the earth brought forth a new brood of creatures from the mud heated by the sun—according to Ovid, who explains that “when moisture and heat have been subjected to a due mixture . . . all things arise from these two,” as from the Egyptian fields after the subsidence of the Nile inundation (*Met.*, I, 415 seq.). In the generation of the Hindu savior Karticeya, son of Mahadeva, we find Agni taking the form of a dove (apparently for a cloud) as the transporting agent between heaven and earth—or, as the story goes, between Mahadeva and the river Ganges, from which Karticeya arose in due time (Moor, *Hind. Panth.*, pp. 51, 89). Quite similar, again, is the genesis of Aphrodite (as the planet Venus), daughter of Uranus (the heaven), in the foam (*aphros*) of the sea; but here we have the mutilation of the celestial sire by Cronus with his (lightning) sickle, and the casting of the propagatorium into the waters; while the earth-born Erinyes or Furies, the Giants and other storm figures are generated from the blood of the mutilated Uranus (Hesiod, *Theog.*, 170-190). In Egyptian mythology, the sun-god Ra is self-mutilated, and from the drops of his blood spring certain gods (*Book of the Dead*, XVII, Theban Recension, 60-64; Saïte, 23, 24; cf. Budge, *Gods*, II, pp. 99, 100); while according to Ovid, the first human beings were produced by the earth from the blood of the Giants (*Met.*, I, 156 seq.). Mushrooms were supposed to spring from the earth when fertilized by rain—or thunder, according to some—and the first inhabitants of Corinth were fabled to have been produced from rain-engendered mushrooms (Ovid, *Met.*, VII, 392).

Plutarch says: “The agriculturists call the lightning the fertilizer of the waters, and so consider it . . . and their union is the cause of vital heat” (*Sympos.*, IV, 2). According to Herodotus, the Egyptians affirmed that the cow-born Apis bull was generated by lightning (III, 28); as was the Chinese emperor Fu-Paou when his mother witnessed a vivid flash that surrounded the constellation of the Great Bear (Legge, *Chinese Classics*, III, Pt. I), and also Alexander the Great according to one account preserved by Plutarch (*Alex.*, 2—where the legend is to the effect that the mother, Olympias, dreamed that a thunderbolt fell upon her and was divided into flames which dispersed themselves on all sides). In the lightning we probably have the primary suggestion for the fecundating fire of other myths. According to some, Zeus, the wielder of the thunderbolts, assumed the form of a flame of fire when he generated Æacus, whose mother Ægina is a personification of the island of that name (Ovid, *Met.*,

VI, 113) ; and in one story of the genesis of Dionysus, whose mother was Semele, the form of fire was again assumed by Zeus—according to the *Clementine Recognitions* (X, 22) and *Homilies* (V, 14). In the *Aitareya Brahmana* various deities originate from burning coals, which Prajapati produces from himself by a certain transmutation (III, 34). In an ancient Italian story, Cæculus, whose mother is unnamed, is engendered by a spark of fire from a hearth, and is called a son of Vulcan (Serv. *ad Aen.*, VII, 678). In one legend of the origin of King Servius Tullius of Rome, whose mother is the beautiful captive Ocrisia, he is generated by an apparition of appropriate form that appears in the fire on an altar in the royal household; and either the household genius or Vulcan is said to have been his father (Pliny, *H. N.*, XXXVI, 70; Ovid, *Fasti*, VI, 625-636). The same apparition reappears in one of the legends of the genesis of Romulus and Remus, but here it rises out of the hearth in the house of Tarchetius, King of Alba, and stays there many days. The king commands his own daughter to go to the apparition, but she sends her serving maid. Both are imprisoned and enjoined in their chains to weave a web of cloth, with the understanding that they shall be permitted to marry when it is finished; but what they weave by day the king has others unravel by night—which identifies the women as figures of day and night, the weavers of the two celestial canopies which are alternately produced and destroyed. The serving maid (for the night) becomes the mother of the twin brothers Romulus and Remus (for the sun and moon), who are exposed by the riverside (for the eastern division of the earth-surrounding ocean); suckled by a wolf and fed by birds; reared and reared by a cowherd, etc. (Plut., *Rom.*, 2).

In the Old Testament, the dew refreshes the land and makes it fruitful (Ps. cxxxiii. 3; IIos. xiv. 6, 7, etc.). In one passage of the *Rigveda*, the earth-mother, "desirous of progeny," is inseminated by the dew (I, 164, 8), as was supposed to be the case with oysters that produce pearls (Pliny, *H. N.*, IX, 45). According to some, Montezuma was engendered by a dewdrop from the Great Spirit (Bell, *New Tracts in North America*, I, p. 199); and one legend of the Chinese emperor Yu attributes his origin to a pearl that fell from heaven upon his virgin mother (De Charencey, *Le folklore*, etc., p. 202; but a variant legend substitutes a falling star in the case of Yu—De Guignes, *Dynasties des Huns*, I, p. 7). As dew falls most abundantly on cloudless nights, it was supposed to come from the moon, and was called the daughter of Zeus and the moon (Plut., *Quæst. Conviv.*, III, 10; Macrob., *Sat.*, VII, 16). Plutarch tells

us that the Apis bull, as the living image or incarnation of the lunar Osiris, was engendered by a ray of light from the moon (*De Iside*, 43; *Sympos.*, VIII, 1); and the human "moon-calf" was anciently held to be of lunar genesis (Pliny, *H. N.*, X, 64, etc.).

"Light is the emblem of generation," according to Plutarch (*Quæst. Rom.* 2), who doubtless refers to the light of the sun; for that luminary is often represented as the father of all living things (Macrob., *Sat.*, I, 27; Euseb., *Præp. Evang.*, III, 13, etc.). According to some, the Apis bull was engendered by a ray of sunlight and was a son of Ptah (Bonwick, *Eg. Bel.*, p. 108). In a Siamese legend, the sunbeams fall upon a beautiful virgin while prostrate in prayer, thus generating the man-god and savior Codom, who is cradled in the folds of a lotus (a solar flower) that opened to receive him (Squier, *Serpent Symbol*, p. 185, note). According to one account, Gautama Buddha, son of the virgin Maha-Maya, owed his origin to a ray of light, and was received at birth in a (solar) golden bowl sent from heaven by Brahma (De Guignes, *Histoire des Huns*, Vol. I, Pt. II, p. 224). Some attributed the genesis of Zoroaster to a heavenly light that fell in the night upon the sleeping Dogno (Dughda) of Babylon, while in a dream she saw a bright messenger from Oromazes who laid magnificent garments at her feet (Tavernier, *Voyages*, II, p. 92); but others said that Zoroaster was generated by a ray of the Divine Reason (Malcolm, *History of Persia*, I, p. 494). Genghis Khan, the first of the Mongol emperors, called "Son of the Sun" (like the Egyptian kings), was fabled by some to have been one of triplets generated by a threefold visitation of blinding light in a dark room, as affirmed by the widowed mother (Petis de la Croix, I, 1; Higgins, *Anacalypsis*, II, p. 353). In the view of Julian the Apostate, Jupiter generated Æsculapius from himself, "but he was unfolded into light on the earth through the prolific power of the sun" (Cyril of Alexandria, *Contra Jul.*); but other mystics taught that the human Æsculapius proceeded from a god of the same name, who subsists in Apollo (see Taylor's *Iamblichus*, p. 19, note).

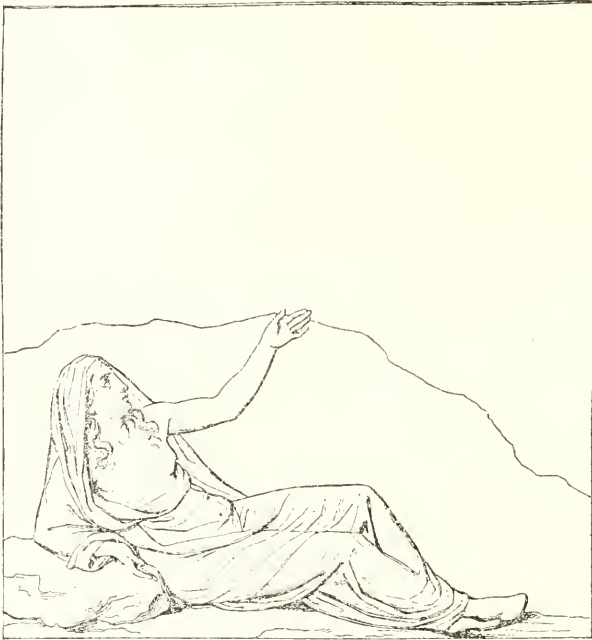
The sunlight, like the sun itself, is often considered of a golden hue; and Zeus descended in the form of a shower of gold as the divine progenitor of the solar Perseus, whose mother Danaë (for the earth in winter as at night) was imprisoned at the time by her father Acrisius (the "dark" or "gloomy"). Mother and child were set adrift on the (originally celestial) sea in a chest, but reached a distant shore in safety (Soph., *Antig.*, 944 et seq., Apollod., II, 4, 1; Horace, *Carm.*, III, 16; Pausan., II, 23, 7; etc.; for variant imita-

tions, see Frazer, *Golden Bough*, III, pp. 220, 221). The sunlight, again, is not infrequently considered the golden (yellow), red or white hair of the sun-god; and in Hindu mythology Mahadeva produces heroes from the dust of the earth when he strikes it with his hair during a combat with Daksha (Moor, *Hindu Panth.*, I, p. 107). Black hair is sometimes assigned to the night, in contradistinction to white hair for the day; and the Hindus fabled that the cosmic Vishnu plucked a black and a white hair from his own head and caused them to descend to earth as intermedia in the genesis of Balarama and Krishna respectively (*Mahabharata*, "Adi Parvan," 7306-7308; *Vishnu Purana*, V, 1). Balarama, who came from the black hair of night, is apparently a lunar figure, while Krishna, from the white hair of day, is unquestionably of solar character; and they are represented as the seventh and eighth *amsas* (= portions) or *avatars* (= descents) of Vishnu, as well as the seventh and eighth sons of the imprisoned Devaki (primarily for the earth at night), wife of Vasudeva (probably for the heaven). In the *Vishnu Purana* we also have the ante-natal transference of Balarama and Krishna from Devaki to Rohini and Yasoda respectively; and this occurs at midnight (IV, 15), as doubtless suggested by a cosmic engendering in the west and parturition in the east—primarily at sunset and sunrise (for Krishna), but also at the setting and rising of the moon (for Balarama). The same idea appears in the *Book of the Dead*, where the deceased as identified with Horus declares that he was conceived by Sekhet and delivered by Net (LXVI,—both Recensions), and again in the ante-natal transference of Dionysus to the thigh of Zeus (Apollod., III, 4, 3; Ovid, *Met.*, III, 310, etc.). Hair is replaced by the feathers of birds; and Huitzilopochtli or Mexitli, the Mexican god of war, was generated by a little gaily colored ball of feathers that floated from heaven to Coatlicue, a most devout woman. Her divine son was born full-grown and armed (like Pallas Minerva), and adorned with feathers like the humming-bird; indeed that bird is said to be represented by the fecundating ball of feathers, which in all probability was originally solar, like Neekris (= the Ball), father of Nanna, in Norse mythology (Bancroft, *Native Races*, III, pp. 289, 296, 310, 318).

In another view, the setting sun (or occasionally the moon) becomes the inseminating intermedium in the form of a cosmic egg, seed, fruit, flower or other symbolic object, which is often eaten by the mythic representative of the earth-mother—the latter being represented by Rhea welcoming Cronus = the Heaven in the



accompanying illustration. With her head to the west, she has much the same position as the Egyptian earth-god Seb as sometimes pictured in association with Nut, the goddess of the heaven (see especially Lanzone, *Dizionario di Mitologia Egizio*, Plates CLVI-CLXIII; Budge, *Gods*, II, Plate opp. p. 96; cf. previous article of this series on "The Cosmic Mouth, Ears and Nose"). According to a very ancient Chinese legend, the great King Scēh came from an egg (apparently for the moon), which was dropped by a swallow (in Chinese, "the dark bird," and so for the night) and eaten whole

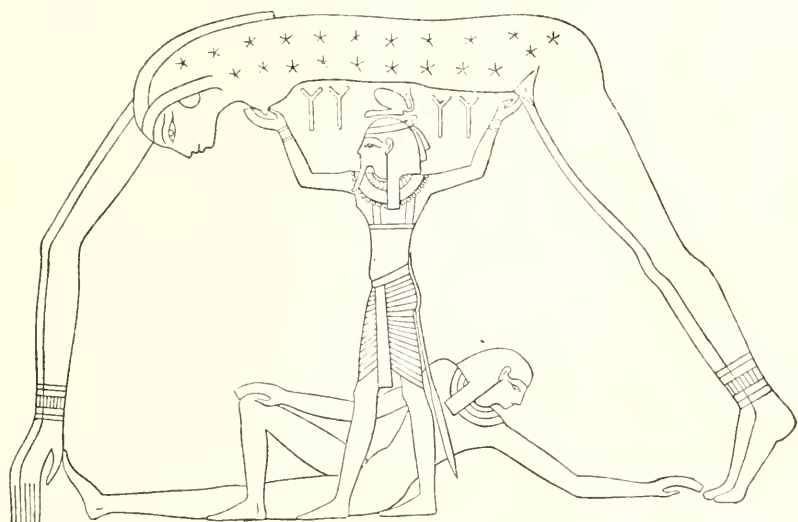


RHEA WELCOMING CRONUS.

(From Baumeister, *Denkmäler des klassischen Altertums*, II, p. 798.)

by Kēn-teih while she was in bathing (as if in the western division of the earth-surrounding ocean—Legge, Prefatory Note to Ode III, Book III, Part IV of the *She-King*, where an allusion to this legend is found). In a Peruvian legend there is a like result when the lovely virgin Cavillaca eats a ripe lucina (as if for the sun) which the god Ceniraya produces from himself by transmutation after transforming himself into a beautiful bird (as if for the day sky) and flying up into a lucina tree (*Rites and Laws of the Yncas*, trans. by Markham, p. 125). In the marvelous legend of Taliesin,

the greatest of the Welsh bards, called "Radiant Brow" (for the sun), Taliesin is a reincarnation of Gwion the Little, who had transformed himself into a grain of wheat which was swallowed by Ceridwen in the form of a black hen (for the night). The parents had previously assumed several other forms; and the infant Taliesin was set adrift on the sea (like many other solar figures), being found and rescued on the first day of May (Michelet, *History of France*, II, Append., p. 382). According to Pausanias, the earth-born Agdistis (see above) was a demon so feared by the gods that they mutilated him; and the fertilized earth brought forth an al-



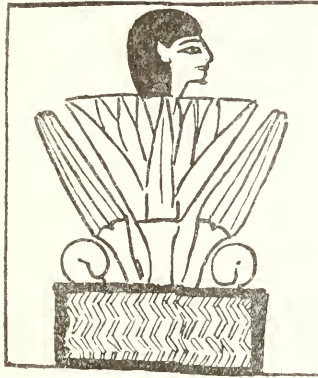
NUT BENDING OVER SEB,  
supported by Shu. (From Budge, *The Mummy*, p. 292.)

mond-tree with ripe fruit, from some of which, plucked and embosomed by a daughter of the river Sangarius, came the solar Attis (or Atyis) of Phrygia, who was exposed and nurtured by a he-goat (VII, 17, 5). But according to Arnobius, on the authority of Timotheus, Agdistis was a monster who became intoxicated and self-mutilated through a stratagem of Bacchus, whence the earth produced a pomegranate tree which immediately blossomed and bore fruit. Attis owing his origin to a single pomegranate (for the sun) plucked and embosomed by Nanna, daughter of the Sangarius (*Adv. Gent.*, V, 6; cf. 42, where we are told that Attis was identified with the sun). In the myth of Persephone, abducted by Hades

or Pluto, Zeus grants that she shall return for all time to the upper world if she has had no food below; but she has eaten the seeded part of a pomegranate, and is therefore doomed to spend one third or one half of the year with Hades—for the winter season (Apollod., I, 5, 1; Ovid, *Mct.*, 565). The original of the forbidden fruit of Genesis was perhaps the pomegranate, the Latin *malum granatum* = apple with many seeds; and the seedy characteristic of the fruit, taken in connection with its globular shape and yellowish-red hue, made it an appropriate symbol of the setting sun as the cosmic inseminating intermedium. In Norse mythology, the first of the mighty Volsungs came from an apple sent from the abode of the gods to an aged and childless royal couple, the bearer being a celestial maiden transformed into a crow (for the night); but the accounts differ as to whether the king or the queen ate the apple, and whether Odin or Freya sent it (see *Volsungasaga*; Thorpe, *North. Mythol.*, I, p. 92; Cox and Jones, *Popular Romances of the Middle Ages*, "Story of Sigmund and Signy"). The Hindu Ayonija came from a certain wonderful fruit supplied by a yogi (miracle-working ascetic) for the wife of Vidyananda; but the latter ate it himself and produced the beautiful boy, "radiant like the disk of the sun" (Goldstücker, *Sansc. Dict.*, s. v. Ayonijeswara). According to some, Bacchus (Dionysus) transformed himself into a bunch of grapes with Erigone (Ovid, *Mct.*, VI, 125; Hygin., *Fab.*, 130).

The Egyptian lotus floated on the Nile, and every day unfolded its radiating petals as the sun rose in the heaven, and folded them again as he descended in the west—so appearing to honor the sun, as Proclus has it (MS Comment on Plato's *Alcibiades*, in Taylor's *Iamblichus*, App., p. 302). It is a symbol of the rising sun, according to Budge (*Gods*, I, pp. 521, 522); but it is equally appropriate for that luminary in his setting. Ra, the sun-god, was born of a lotus, according to some, and some said that Isis was inseminated by this flower (Bonwick, *Eg. Bel.*, pp. 243, 244—and the earth was considered the body of Isis, according to Plutarch, *De Iside*, 38). Fo-hi, the traditional founder of the Manchu empire of China, had his origin from a lotus with its coral (red) fruit, which was found and eaten by a nymph when bathing in a river—or from a rainbow that surrounded the virgin (Thornton, *History of China*, I, pp. 21, 22; Squier, *Serpent Symbol*, p. 184. note). The primordial deity of the Thlinket Indians of British Columbia was Yehl (= Crow, apparently for the night). Before the universal deluge he effected his first incarnation through the medium

of a small pebble in a draught of sea water swallowed by a certain widow (as if for the earth at night as in winter). For his second incarnation, before light was given to mankind, he transformed himself into a blade of grass, which was swallowed in a cup of drinking-water by a young girl; and as a child he successively released the stars, moon and sun from the boxes in which his maternal grandfather had concealed them (Bancroft, *Native Races*, III, pp. 100, 101). The Hottentot god Heitzi-eibib is sometimes considered a bull, sometimes a man; and in both forms his origin is attributed to blades of grass, which were eaten by a cow in one legend, while in another a girl chews them and swallows the juice (Hahn, *Tsunigoam*, p. 69). The mythical blades of grass are probably symbols



THE LOTUS RISING FROM THE WATER,

with the head of the sun-god emerging from it. (From the Papyrus of Paqrer, Theban Recension of the *Book of the Dead*, Chap. LXXXI, B, vignette; from Budge, *Book of the Dead*, ed. 1901, II, p. 264.)

of light rays, from the sun or moon. In a Russian story there are twin boys, one with the moon on his forehead, the other with a star (for the sun) on his neck; and after they are killed by being buried alive (in the underworld), a gold and a silver sprout (for rays from the sun and moon respectively) grow from their graves and are eaten by a sheep which in consequence produces two lambs, marked like the boys. Then the mother of the boys eats the intestines of the lambs, and her sons are thus reincarnated (Afanasiëff, *Russian Popular Stories*, III, 7).

According to some, Hera (Juno) engendered Ares (Mars), and also Hephæstus (Vulcan), by smelling or touching a certain flower which had been tested with success on a sterile cow; while

others said that she produced Mars, and Hebe, by eating lettuce at the table (for the earth) of the sun-god Apollo (Ovid, *Fasti*, V, 225; Apollod., I, 3, 2, 7, and see Anthon, *Biblioth. Class.*, s. v. Juno; for a Hindu story of parthenogenesis through the smelling of a properly fertilized flower, see *Indian Antiquary*, XI, p. 290). In the *Vishnu Purana* (IV, 7), Jamadagni and Viswamitra owe their origin to two dishes of consecrated food prepared by Richika and eaten respectively by his wife and her mother.

The Sia Indians of New Mexico say that their hero Poshaiyanne was the son of a parthenogenous mother who ate two pinon nuts (*Report Bur. Ethnol.*, XI, 59). According to some, after Dionysus Zagreus had been cut to pieces, his heart (as the seat of the soul) was pounded up and given in a potion to Semele, thus effecting his reincarnation (Hyginus, *Fab.*, 167); while others fabled that Zeus swallowed the heart and begat Dionysus again by Semele (Proclus, *Hymn to Minerva*; cf. Pausan., VIII, 37, 3). In the ancient Egyptian tale of "Anpu and Bata," the latter draws out his heart or soul and places it upon a flower of an acacia tree. After this tree is cut down, Bata's soul enters a sacred bull, and when the bull is slain, the soul enters a Persea tree. This, too, is cut down, and a splinter from it flies into the mouth of Bata's widow, an Egyptian princess; Bata himself thus being reincarnated, to become king of Egypt (*Records of the Past*, II, pp. 145-152). The Chinese *Shu-King* alludes to a very ancient legend according to which Keang Yuen, a barren wife, engendered How-tseih, the father of the Chinese race, by simply treading "upon a toe-print made by God" (Part I, Book XV, Ode I, Legge's trans.).

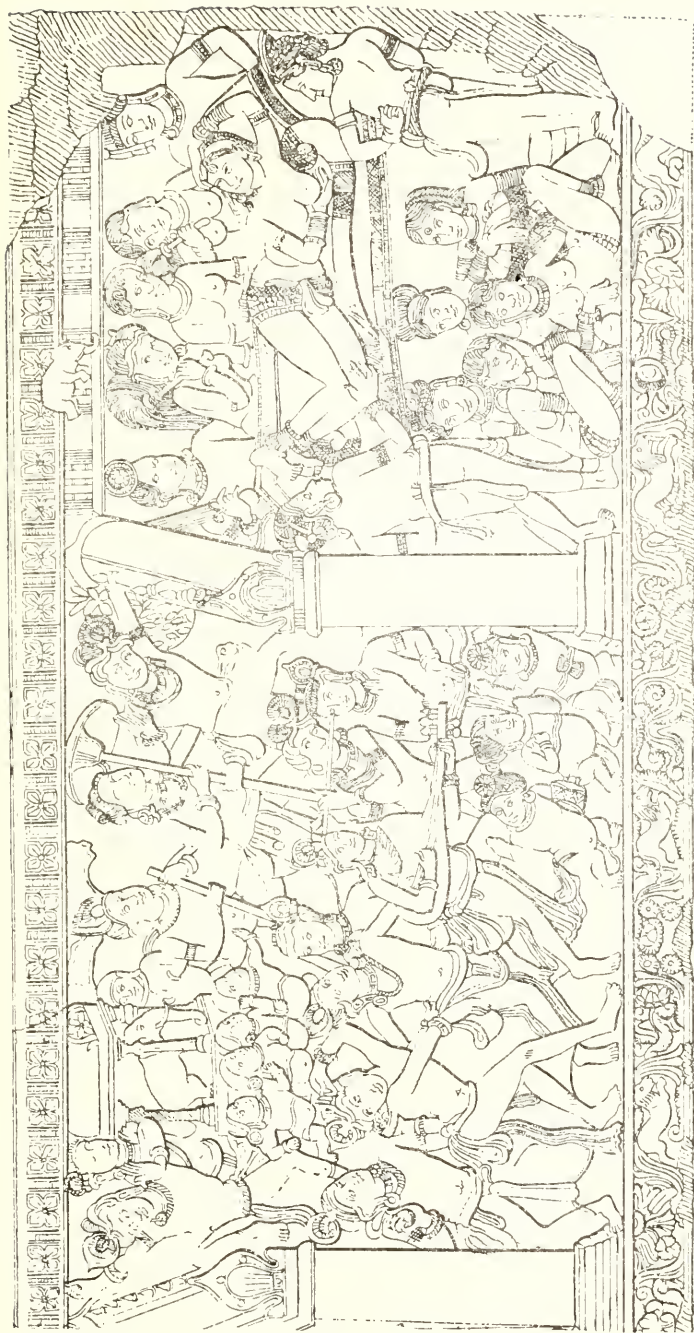
In one view the wind is the breath or spirit of the cosmic man or father-god. Hephæstus, son of Hera, was engendered by the wind, according to Lucian (*De Sacrif.*, 6). The Teutonic earth-mother Hertha or Ertha (whence our "earth") was said to be fecundated by the "active spirit" (Knight, *Anc. Art and Mythol.*, p. 21). The Mexican solar-god of the air, Quetzalcoatl (= Feathered Snake), was begotten by the breath of the supreme deity Tonacatecotle when the latter sent a celestial messenger to announce the event to the parthenogenous mother, sometimes called Sochiquetzal = Queen of heaven (Bancroft, *Native Races*, III, p. 272; Kingsborough, *Mex. Antiq.*, VI, pp. 175, 176—where it is said that Sochiquetzal was in her house with only her two sisters, both of whom died of fright at beholding the angelic visitor). According to variant accounts, Quetzalcoatl was the son of Mixcoatl, the cloud-serpent, the spirit of the tornado (Bancroft, *op. cit.*, III,

p. 268), or he was engendered by Chimalma when she picked up a certain small green stone (*ibid.*, p. 250). Among the North American Indians, several man-gods are the first-born sons of Manitou, the great and good Spirit (Squier, *Serpent Symbol*, p. 191, etc.). According to the *Fo-sho-hing-tsan-king*, a Chinese life of Gautama Buddha, he owed his origin to "the spirit" that descended on Maya (an indevirginate wife), and came forth from her right (= eastern) side (I, 1). In the Finnish *Kalevala*, the wizard Vainamoinen is a son of the virgin Ilmatar and the east wind (Runes I, XLV); while the Minahassers of Celebes claim to be descended from the west wind and an East Indian girl (Schwarz, *Ind. Arch.*, XVIII, p. 59). The horse, from its swiftness, is a common symbol of the wind, and wind-gods are frequently represented as or associated with horses. According to Homer, Boreas, the north wind, in the form of a horse was the progenitor of the twelve winds in the form of mares, by some of the three thousand mares of Erichthonius (perhaps cloud figures—*Il.*, XX, 221-228); but in Hesiod, Boreas is brother of Zephyrus (the west wind), Notus (the south wind) and Hesperus (the evening star—*Theog.*, 379). Zephyrus is poetically said to produce the flowers and fruits by the sweetness of his breath; and it was supposed that certain swift horses, especially those of Lusitania (in the extreme west of southern Europe, the modern Spain and Portugal), were engendered when the brood-mares inhaled the west wind (Pliny, *H. N.*, VIII, 67; Virgil, *Georg.*, III, 274-275; Varro, II, 1, 18; 7, 7; Columella, VI, 27, 29; cf. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, XXI, 5, of Cappadocian horses). In Egypt, the vulture was the symbol of Nekhebet, goddess of the south; of Neith, as goddess of the west, and of other goddesses identified with Nekhebet (Budge, *Gods*, II, p. 372; I, pp. 438, 450), and it was probably through the association of these goddesses with the south and west that all vultures came to be considered females fecundated by the wind (see Horapollo, *Hieroglyph.*, I, 11; Ælian, II, 56—the latter referring the fecundation of vultures to Notus, the south or southwest wind). Origen refers to the parthenogenesis of several kinds of creatures, including vultures, in evidence of the credibility of the miraculous conception of Jesus (*Contra Cels.*, I, 37). Neith is the great goddess who produced all things including the sun-god Ra, originally by abiogenesis (see above), thus being the Egyptian prototype of the parthenogenous mother of mythology (Budge, *Gods*, I, p. 462); and it is not improbable that some, at least in later

times, imagined that she was fecundated by the wind or cosmic spirit.

The Greek and Roman naturalists generally held that partridges were generated by the action of the air (Aristot., *Hist. An.*, V, 5; Pliny, *H. N.*, X, 51; Ælian, *De Anim.*, XVII, 15); while some supposed that all infertile eggs were thus originated, whence they were called "wind eggs" or "zephyr eggs" (Aristot., *H. A.*, VI, 2, 10; X, 6, 2; *Gen. An.*, III, 1, 5; Pliny, *H. N.*, X, 80, etc.). According to the Orphic cosmogony, Night alone first produced a wind egg, from which Eros was hatched—i. e., the primordial Love or Desire came from the unfertilized cosmic egg or celestial sphere (*Orphic Hymns*, V; Aristoph., *Av.*, 695). The first king of Northern Gaoli (in China) was the son of a maid slave by an influence which she felt to be like air in the form of an egg (Ross, *Corca*, p. 121). The Egyptians believed that a human being might be engendered by a divine spirit (Plutarch, *Numa*, 7), and the Hindus attributed the same power to evil spirits or ghosts (Wheeler, *Hist. Ind.*, II, p. 515). The Algonquin women who desired offspring flocked to the side of a dying person in hope of begetting them by the departing soul (Brinton, *Myths of the New World*, p. 270). On the suggestion of Gen. vi. 4, it was held by some of the Jews that the giants were the offspring of the fallen angels and the daughters of men (*Book of Enoch*, XV, 8, 9; *Clementine Homilies*, VIII, 15-20); while some of the early Christians referred the origin of demons directly to the fallen angels and the daughters of men (Justin Martyr, II *Apol.*, 5, etc.). It was a common belief in the Middle Ages that daughters of men might have offspring by angels, devils, demons, incubi and ghosts (see Inman, *Ancient Faiths*, pp. 273-277, etc.); and some held that the Antichrist would be engendered by Satan or an evil spirit (Lactant., *Div. Inst.*, VIII, 17, etc.).

The Buddhists believed that human beings could be generated not only by apparitions, perfumes, foods, etc., but also by a touch, a look or the sound of the voice (Hardy, *Legends of the Buddhists*, p. 161—the five senses, of smelling, tasting, feeling, seeing and hearing, all being included). A simple look is thus efficacious in the story of the ascetic Pulastya and Trinavindu's daughter, in the *Ramayana* (VII, 2), and also in one account of the genesis of Genghis Khan (Radloff, III, p. 82). According to the *Vishnu Purana* there was a like result when King Jyamagha merely said to his aged and barren wife Saibya that a certain young girl would be wife to the future son of Saibya (IV, 12); and Pliny records



DESCENT FROM HEAVEN AND INCARNATION OF BUDDHA IN ELEPHANT FORM.

Sculpture from Amravati, India.

(From Fergusson, *Tree and Serpent Worship*, Plate LXXIV.)



the belief that partridges very often originate from the voice of the males, although generally from the action of the air (X, 51, and see above). The barren Hannah silently prayed that she might have a son (1 Sam. i. 11-13), and Clement of Alexandria says that "upon her merely conceiving the thought, conception was vouchsafed of the child Samuel" (*Strom.*, VI, 12). In a mystic refinement of the idea of a procreative transporting agent between heaven and earth, the Orphic male Metis(= Counsel or Wisdom) is called "the seed-bearer of the gods" (*Orphic Hymns*, Frags. VI, 19; VIII, 2). The Hindu god of wisdom is Ganesa, in the form of an elephant, or with an elephant's head on a man's body; "Buddha signifies "Enlightened (with wisdom)," and Gautama Buddha is fabled to have come from heaven to be born of the virgin-wife Maya, either mounted on a white elephant (*Fa-Hien*, XXII), or in the form of a white elephant which illumined all the universe (*Buddha-karita of Asvaghosha*, I, 19, 20), and which Maya saw in a dream, according to some (*Fo-pen-hing-tsi-king*, in Beal, *Romantic History of Buddha*, p. 37—this dream being a favorite subject of Buddhist artists; see Fergusson, *Tree and Serpent Worship*, Plates LXXIV and XCI, fig. 4). It is generally held that the elephant entered the left side of Maya, and that Buddha came forth from her right side—in which view Maya has the character of the earth-mother in connection with the setting sun (on the left) and the rising sun (on the right), just as Ra is said to have been produced from the right side of Neith (Bonwick, *Eg. Bel.*, p. 107).

The Egyptians believed that the solar Ra or Amen-Ra assumed the form of their reigning king, or incarnated himself in the royal husband, when the divine-human son was engendered (Budge, *Gods*, I, p. 329). In a Luxor representation of the generation and birth of Amenhotep III, it is Amen-Ra himself who, according to the text, announces the facts of the case to the mother, Mut-em-ua (Mautmes), and tells her that their son shall be named Amenhotep and shall grow up to be king of Egypt, "ruling the two lands like the sun": while in the sculptured scenes, Thoth appears as the divine recorder and messenger to the queen, who is shown (subsequently) receiving "life" from Khnemu and Hathor—with the birth and adoration of the child following (Sayce, *Rel. Anc. Eg. and Bab.*, p. 250, note 2, etc.). Theagenes the Thracian hero was reputed to be a son of the solar Heracles, who visited his mother in phantom form, in the likeness of her husband Timosthenes (Pausan., VI, 11, 2). According to a legend preserved by Philostratus, Apollonius of Tyana was a reincarnation of "Proteus, the Egyptian god," the latter having

announced the fact to the mother before the birth of Apollonius (*Vit. Apollon.*, I, 6—the Greek Proteus, who could assume all shapes, perhaps here representing Ra as the transformer); and we saw above that the annunciation of the incarnation of the Mexican god Quetzalcoatl was made to his mother by a celestial messenger or angel (cf. also the messenger from Oramazes in the fable of the genesis of Zoroaster by a heavenly light, as above cited). In other stories the annunciation is made to the husband of the mother.



PARTHENOGENESIS OF AMENHOTEP III (above)  
ADORATION OF THE DIVINE-HUMAN CHILD (below).

From Luxor.

the latter sometimes being parthenogenous. Shortly after the death of Plato, who is said to have been born on the birthday of Apollo, it was held that he was a son of that solar god and Perictione, virgin-wife of Ariston; the philosopher's nephew Speusippus being cited among other authorities for the claim, by Diogenes Laertius (*Vita Platonis*, 1). According to Apuleius (*De Dogmate Platonis*, 1), followed by Hesychius and Olympiodorus (each in his *Life of Plato*), it was said that Apollo came to Perictione in visionary

form (i. e., as a phantom, spirit or ghost), and that he also appeared to Ariston in a dream, enjoining him not to approach his wife until after the birth of her son—which injunction the foster-father obeyed. Plutarch (*Sympos.*, VIII, 1) and Diogenes Laertius (*loc. cit.*) tell only of the god's appearance in a vision to Ariston, who receives and obeys the injunction. In the original story of Ariston's vision, Apollo doubtless announced himself as the progenitor of Plato, and in all probability it was the wisdom of the philosopher which suggested that he was a son of the wise god of prophecy. Thus, too, Iamblichus tells us that Epimenides, Eudoxis and Xenocrates held that the wise Pythagoras was a son of Apollo (Pythius): the story being that the god announced the genesis of this philosopher to his foster-father Mnesarchus through the Pythian Oracle at Delphi, whence the mother's name was changed from Parthenis (= Virgin) to Pythais, while her son was called Pythagoras to signify that he had been predicted by the Pythian Apollo: and the Oracle also predicted that Pythagoras "would be of the greatest advantage to the human race in everything relating to the life of man." Iamblichus doubts the truth of this story, as well as the variant beliefs that Pythagoras was an incarnation of the Hyperborean Apollo, or of Apollo Pæon, or of some other god or celestial figure; but he says that it is to be inferred from the wisdom of Pythagoras that his soul "was sent from the empire of Apollo, either being an attendant on the god, or coarranged with him in some other more familiar way" (*Vit. Pythag.*, 2 and 6).

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]