

Helena P. Blavatsky on SYMBOLISM in general

The Secret Doctrine, Vol. I, pp. 202; 305; 305-306; 613-614

The Secret Doctrine, Vol. II, pp. 58; 536-537; 551-552; 574; 590

***The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 202**

The Secret Doctrine is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages, and its cosmogony alone is the most stupendous and elaborate system: *e.g.*, even in the exotericism of the Purânas. But such is the mysterious power of Occult symbolism, that the facts which have actually occupied countless generations of initiated seers and prophets to marshal, to set down and explain, in the bewildering series of evolutionary progress, are all recorded on a few pages of geometrical signs and glyphs. The flashing gaze of those seers has penetrated into the very kernel of matter, and recorded the soul of things there, where an ordinary profane, however learned, would have perceived but the external work of form.

***The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 305**

The untiring researches of Western, and especially German, symbologists, during the last and the present centuries, have brought every Occultist and most unprejudiced persons to see that without the help of symbology (with its seven departments, of which the moderns know nothing) no ancient Scripture can ever be correctly understood. Symbology must be studied from every one of its aspects, for each nation had its own peculiar methods of expression. In short, no Egyptian papyrus, no Indian tolla, no Assyrian tile, or Hebrew scroll, should be read and accepted *literally*.

***The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 305-306**

As a learned Mason and Theosophist, the late Mr. Kenneth Mackenzie, has shown in his *Royal Masonic Cyclopædia*, there is a great difference between *emblem* and *symbol*. The former “comprises a larger series of thoughts than a symbol, which may be said rather to illustrate some single special idea.” Hence, the symbols (say lunar, or solar) of several countries, each illustrating such a special idea, or series of ideas, form collectively an esoteric emblem. The latter is “a concrete visible picture or sign representing principles, or a series of principles, *recognizable by those who have received certain instructions*” (initiates). To put it still plainer, an emblem is *usually a series of graphic pictures* viewed and explained allegorically, and unfolding an idea in panoramic views, one after the other. Thus the Purânas are written emblems. So are the Mosaic and Christian Testaments, or the Bible, and all other exoteric Scriptures.

***The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 613-614**

[see also the file

‘HELENA P BLAVATSKY on THE PYTHAGOREAN TRIANGLE’ - SD Vol. I, p. 612-615]

Nor did the “hierogram within a Circle, or equilateral Triangle,” ever mean “the exemplification of the unity of the divine Essence”; for this was exemplified by the plane of the boundless Circle.

What it really meant was the triune co-equal Nature of the first differentiated Substance, or the *constitutivity* of the (manifested) Spirit, matter and the Universe — their “Son,” who proceeds from the Point (the real, esoteric LOGOS) or the Pythagorean MONAD. For the Greek *Monas* signifies “Unity” in its primary sense. Those unable to seize the difference between the monad – the Universal Unit – and the *Monads* or the manifested Unity, as also between the ever-hidden and the revealed LOGOS or the *Word*, ought never to meddle in philosophy, let alone the Esoteric Sciences. It is needless to remind the educated reader of Kant's *Thesis* to demonstrate his second *Antinomy*. Those who have read and understood it will see clearly the line we draw between the *absolutely Ideal* Universe and the invisible though manifested Kosmos. Our Gods and Monads are not the Elements of *extension* itself, but only those of the invisible reality which is the basis of the manifested Kosmos. Neither esoteric philosophy, nor Kant, nor Leibnitz would ever admit that extension can be composed of simple or unextended parts. But theologian-philosophers will not grasp this. The Circle and the Point, which latter retires into and merges with the former, after having emanated the first three points and connected them with lines, thus forming the first *noumenal* basis of the Second Triangle in the Manifested World, have ever been an insuperable obstacle to theological flights into dogmatic Empyreans. On the authority of this Archaic Symbol, a male, personal god, the *Creator* and *Father* of all, becomes a third-rate emanation, the Sephiroth standing *fourth* in descent, and on the left hand of En-Soph (see the *Kabalistic Tree of Life*). Hence, the Monad is degraded into a Vehicle — a “throne”!

The Monad – only the emanation and reflection of the Point (Logos) in the phenomenal World – becomes, as the *apex* of the manifested equilateral triangle, the “Father.” The left side or line is the *Duad*, the “Mother,” regarded as the evil, counteracting principle (Plutarch, *De Placitis Placitorum*); the right side represents the Son (“his Mother's husband” in *every* Cosmogony, as one with the *apex*); at the basic line is the Universal plane of productive Nature, unifying on the phenomenal plane Father-Mother-Son, as these were unified in the *apex*, in the supersensuous World. By mystic transmutation they became the Quaternary — the triangle became the TETRAKTIS.

The Secret Doctrine, Vol. II, p. 58

To some extent, it is admitted that even the esoteric teaching is allegorical. To make the latter comprehensible to the average intelligence, requires the use of symbols cast in an intelligible form. Hence the allegorical and semi-mythical narratives in the exoteric, and the (only) *semi*-metaphysical and objective representations in the esoteric teachings. For the purely and transcendently spiritual conceptions are adapted only to the perceptions of those who “see without eyes, hear without ears, and sense without organs,” according to the graphic expression of the Commentary. The too puritan idealist is at liberty to spiritualise the tenet, whereas the modern psychologist would simply try to spirit away our “fallen,” yet still divine, human Soul in its connection with *Buddhi*.

The Secret Doctrine, Vol. II, p. 536-537

The idea of representing the *hidden* deity by the circumference of a Circle, and the Creative Power (male and female, or the Androgynous WORD), by the diameter across it, is one of the oldest symbols. It is upon this conception that every great Cosmogony was built. With the old Aryans, the Egyptians, and the Chaldeans, it was complete, as it embraced the idea of the eternal and

immovable *Divine Thought* in its absoluteness, separated entirely from the incipient stage of (the so-called) *creation*; and comprised psychological and even Spiritual evolution, and its mechanical work, or cosmogonical construction. With the Hebrews, however, though the former conception is to be distinctly found in the *Zohar*, and the *Sepher Jezirah* – or what remains of the latter – that which has been embodied subsequently in the *Pentateuch* proper, and especially in *Genesis*, is simply this secondary stage, to wit, the mechanical law of creation, or rather of construction; while theogony is hardly, if at all, outlined.

The Secret Doctrine, Vol. II, p. 551-552

The Secret Doctrine teaches us that everything in the universe, as well as the universe itself, is formed (created) during its periodical manifestations — by accelerated MOTION set into activity by the BREATH of the ever-to-be-unknown power (unknown to present mankind, at any rate) within the phenomenal world. The Spirit of Life and Immortality was everywhere symbolized by a circle: hence the serpent biting his tail, represents the circle of Wisdom in infinity; as does the astronomical cross — the cross within a circle, and the globe, with two wings added to it, which then became the sacred Scarabæus of the Egyptians, its very name being suggestive of the secret idea attached to it. For the Scarabæus is called in Egypt (in the *papyri*) *Khopirron* and *Khopri* from the verb *Khopron* “to become,” and has thus been made a symbol and an emblem of human life and of the successive *becomings* of man, through the various peregrinations and metempsychoses (reincarnations) of the liberated Soul. This mystical symbol shows plainly that the Egyptians believed in reincarnation and the successive lives and existences of the Immortal entity. Being, however, an esoteric doctrine, revealed only during the mysteries by the priest-hierophants and the Kings-Initiates to the candidates, it was kept secret. The incorporeal intelligences (the Planetary Spirits, or Creative Powers) were always represented under the form of circles. In the primitive philosophy of the Hierophants these *invisible* circles were the prototypic causes and builders of all the heavenly orbs, which were their visible *bodies* or coverings, and of which they were the souls. It was certainly a universal teaching in antiquity. (See *Ezekiel*, ch. 1.)

The Secret Doctrine, Vol. II, p. 574

We have now to speak of the Mystery language, that of the prehistoric races. It is not a phonetic, but a purely pictorial and symbolical tongue. It is known at present in its fulness to the very few, having become with the masses for more than 5,000 years an absolutely dead language. Yet most of the learned Gnostics, Greeks and Jews, knew it, and used it, though very differently.

The Secret Doctrine, Vol. II, p. 590

These sacred numbers (3, 4, 7) are the sacred numbers of *Light*, *Life*, and *Union* — especially in this present manvantara, our Life-cycle; of which number seven is the special representative, or the *Factor* number.