

18 TERMINOLOGY AND SYMBOLISM

18.1 The Traditional Esoteric Symbolism

¹True knowledge affords power, and that power has always been abused by all who have been able to use it for their own good. Knowledge is for those who have for all time to come consecrated their lives (they cannot do otherwise) to the service of mankind, evolution, and unity. Others do not need it and so they are content with the fictions supplied by theology, philosophy, and science.

²The knowledge that was imparted in the secret knowledge orders through the ages did not afford power to others than those who had reached the highest (seventh) degree, and they were always few. But it liberated the other initiates from the need of accepting the ruling world views and life views and so from becoming the victims of all manner of illusions and fictions.

³Most initiates remained in the lowest two degrees. Seldom anyone reached beyond the third degree. Nobody suspected there were higher degrees than the one he had attained.

⁴In the Greek mysteries, every “well-known” citizen received facts about reincarnation and the state between incarnations in the emotional and mental worlds. That was all.

⁵The knowledge imparted in the esoteric knowledge orders was thoroughly symbolic. The symbols were common to the different degrees but the interpretation was different in each higher degree. In addition, the exposition had to be adapted to the stages of development and conceptions of reality generally prevalent. That was why they time and again established new orders in which the symbols were presented differently than before. The initiates were usually old esotericians who had been members of older orders and did not need magical experiments for objective apprehension any more. Their latent knowledge from previous incarnations enabled them to understand quickly.

⁶The symbolism of the esoteric orders had the advantage that the knowledge was made inaccessible to the unworthy. But it had the disadvantage that when it fell into the hands of the uninitiated, misinterpretation was almost unavoidable. In the orders and in the different degrees, the interpretation was given by word of mouth and never in writing.

⁷The esoteric symbols always have a sevenfold meaning and are not chosen at random. We perhaps understand how hopeless it is for an exoterist to try and interpret an esoteric symbolic writing. If such writings fall into the hands of the uninitiated, the result is superstition, for of course the “learned” understand everything (otherwise they would not be “learned”), typical of the sovereignty of ignorance and wisecracks.

⁸Here an example of an esoteric symbol with different interpretations according to the stages of development, the esoteric prayer, “Lead us from darkness to light, from the unreal to the real, from death to immortality”. This symbol has different meanings for the three selves.

⁹To the first self, “darkness to light” means esoteric knowledge; “the unreal to the real” means physical desirelessness (which solves the world economic problem); “death to immortality” means unlosable continuity of consciousness at reincarnation.

¹⁰To the second self in the fifth natural kingdom it is a matter of liberation from the worlds of the first self with their “darkness, unreality, and death”; and for the third self in the sixth natural kingdom, it has reference to the corresponding liberation from dependence on the worlds of the second self.

¹¹Thanks to the facts given by the secretary of the planetary hierarchy, 45-self D.K. (in his writings, published by Alice A. Bailey), we have obtained full clarity in the matter of the symbols and terms used in the esoteric knowledge orders and often misinterpreted by occult writers.

18.2 Terminology is in Need of Reform

¹Terminology has always been a troublesome chapter even in modern publicized esoterics, particularly since the writers have not had the requisite clarity in the things they have written about.

²What appears strange, to say the least, is that almost all the traditional terms are unsuitable, the whole of the old terminology of the traditional esoteric knowledge is positively deceptive and misleading. Those misleading terms have of course been misinterpreted by the uninitiated, which has often had catastrophic consequences.

³Two instances of misunderstood symbols should be cited:

⁴Man is not “saved” by the blood of the person Jesus but by the blood streaming in his own veins when he has acquired Christ consciousness, essential (46) consciousness. It is changed into another kind of blood that makes disease and decrepitude impossible altogether.

⁵In *The Secret Doctrine*, Blavatsky speaks of “imperfect gods” with reference to those planetary rulers who have taken over the management of a planet with its ungovernable monads. This is improper, however, and must lead to misconceptions. The planet (the planetary collective being) is “imperfect”, not the planetary government. The planetary ruler is not responsible for the state of affairs, since the monads have their freedom according to the law of freedom.

⁶The theosophical terminology, which has been adopted by almost all esotericians, is largely unserviceable for its purpose and should be replaced with an expedient one that is not misleading. Western esotericians have been far too dependent on Sanskrit terms that seldom can be given exact Western equivalents. The Sanskrit terms have also proved unsuitable on account of the misinterpretations by the yoga philosophy of both the terms and the realities they refer to.

⁷It is by no means necessary to find words that correspond to those found in the voluminous Sanskrit literature. Besides, it can never be a matter of literal rendering of that literature, not a translation but a reinterpretation made by a Western incarnation of a 46-self, for instance where such a work as the *Bhagavad-Gita* is concerned.

⁸Thus there is no reason to construct a Western terminology that in all its details would correspond to that of Indian philosophy and occultism. Indians have a mania for being occupied with all manner of unnecessary petty details which Westerners can without loss, even with advantage, spare themselves. The Indians themselves would profit by clearing away all unessentials. Just such a thing as the 84 different body postures of yoga, all of them perfectly unnecessary, even obstructive to Westerners, is an eloquent testimony.

⁹What we need is a radically new, uniform, simplified Western terminology starting from the Western conception of reality. Such a new terminology should be based on the terms of science and philosophy to make the reality content more comprehensible and better understood.

¹⁰Words that already exist in language and have got a definite, international meaning should not be used. The Greek and Latin languages (which are studied in all countries) offer rich possibilities, which science also has exploited to a very large extent. Where higher kinds of matter, envelopes, worlds, kingdoms, etc. are concerned, an international nomenclature should be used, and then of course the mathematical one is the most expedient, the only timeless (unchanging) and therefore the only truly exact one.

18.3 The Terminology of Laurency

¹Even at the very beginning of the publication of esoterics, K.H. (Pythagoras) advocated the necessity of establishing an esoteric terminology. The attempts since made by Blavatsky, Sinnett, Besant were mostly based on either Sanskrit terms or old theological ones and may be regarded as on the whole unsuccessful.

²For the esoterician, it is a demand of intellectual decency to cleanse his own vocabulary of all the traditional theological and religious expressions, which have a strange power to drag consciousness down into the old subconscious deposits of deceptive ways of looking at things. It has been Laurency's ambition to formulate new, exact terms and modes of expression. Perhaps the terminology found in PhS and KofR and further elaborated on in WofM is suitable as an international terminology. The author has been careful not to introduce more terms than he has considered necessary and to derive easily comprehensible terms from the least number of word-stems. Scientific terminology is generally based on Greek and Latin and has been considered worth following.

³As for the names of certain members of the planetary hierarchy, Laurency has complied with their expressed desire to be named by initials only. They should have reasons for this wish. The names of their previous incarnations known to history may be added to the initials.

⁴Laurency has been obliged to introduce new words for such realities as have no words to denote them in language. Using the writer's licence, when faced with the choice of different usage, he has chosen what is not contained in generally accepted dictionaries whenever the "incorrect" forms have appeared more logical to him. Even language is subjected to change and is nothing fixed for all time, a fact which purists dislike exceedingly. But everything that can promote the expression of individual character should be deemed to increase the flexibility of language whenever it does not lessen the possibility of understanding.

18.4 Universal Mind

¹"Universal mind", "mind of god", and "divine mind" are expressions occurring in esoteric literature. These can refer to collective consciousness of several different kinds: the planetary memory in the causal world, the essential (46) collective consciousness of the planetary chain, the solar systemic memory in the manifestal world, the plan of the planetary government for the immediate future, last of all even the cosmic total consciousness, everything depending on what the writer had in mind when writing. Usually, the reader is left in uncertainty about what kind is intended; exactitude is a rare thing. Such ambiguous terms appear to be intended to "train the intuition"; instead, they confuse mental consciousness.

²The term "universal mind" is erroneous, since the worlds of the solar system are meant and not those of the universe, and it is also a failure because "mind" is the vaguest of all English words and thus unserviceable if you want to be exact but highly suitable if you do not need to know what you are speaking about. Consequently, the term has become very popular, and in theosophical literature it has been used for one higher world after another. Later, it has also been used for the very consciousness aspect in the different worlds, not only the collective memory.

³In *The Secret Doctrine*, Blavatsky sometimes calls Augoeides the Son of Mind. This, too, has given rise to unclear notions.

⁴It is high time we had an exact terminology so that readers might know what authors mean. If the authors indeed know it, then they can best show it by using the numerical designation of the collective world memory they have in mind, thus: 47:1-3, 46, 45, 44, 43, etc.

18.5 Soul

¹With "the ancients" (= the initiates), the term "soul" had several meanings. It could refer to the first self or second self, the causal envelope or Augoeides, the active causal self or the second triad. Whatever was intended in each particular case was clear from the context incomprehensible to the uninitiated.

²As the knowledge has been made exoteric, the old term "soul" is unsuitable and should be replaced with a more exact one that cannot cause confusion of ideas. That confusion is serious as it is with the occultists. You cannot be too exact when attempting to think right, in accord

with reality, to acquire a new world view and life view. Most people have very diffuse conceptions for the very reason that their mental system has not been made sufficiently concrete. Abstract thinking must start from a concrete system to be correct. Even intuition must have a basis for its perception of reality.

18.6 *Twin Souls*

¹The esoteric symbol “twin souls” refers to the causal envelope and the triad envelope, which are separated during incarnation but coalesce upon the conclusion of the incarnation.

²The symbol has of course caused endless racking of brains and the misinterpretation of it has also had deplorable consequences. It is all typical of man’s tendency to believe himself to understand all or to take his freaks as revelations. When will he see his tremendous limitation and the fact that it is all guesswork?

³A contributory cause of the misinterpretation of the symbol was the experience of the “community of souls”. It is due not so much (as astrologers believe) to the harmony of zodiacal vibrations as to that rare combination where two people at the same, higher stage have the same department in their causal as well as triad envelopes. Between such people, misunderstandings are impossible.

18.7 *Spirit, Soul, Body*

¹The terms “spirit, soul, body” are symbols, as always with several meanings.

²They can refer to the three aspects: the motion, consciousness, and matter aspects.

³They can, as with the gnosticians, refer to the three triads, where “spirit” means the third triad; “soul, the second triad; and “body”, the first triad. Of course this meaning was lost after the theological ignorance took over these terms, and nowadays no one seems to be able to unravel the theological tangle of imaginative interpretations.

⁴Blavatsky says in *Isis Unveiled* (Vol. 2, p. 362) that “the spirit alone is immortal – the soul, *per se*, is neither eternal nor divine”. Such loose expressions have always harmed esoterics. By “spirit” the esoteric writers meant the third triad; and by “soul”, the second triad. No triad is immortal, eternal, or more divine than the other two. The monad in the triads alone is immortal. However, if you take into consideration the enormous difficulties the first writers had when formulating the teaching, that their absolutizations, although necessary psychologically, should be taken in a relative sense, etc., that symbolical terms were almost unavoidable, then our assessment must be toned down accordingly.

⁵Whatever terms you use, they can only refer to milestones along the way of the self’s (the primordial atom’s, the monad’s, the individual’s) development. What is essential in this is to understand the capacity of consciousness and of energy displayed at the different stages of development. The terminology, which people quarrel about, is rather misleading, is actually deceptive.

⁶The esoteric orders (since 45 000 years ago) have used several different terms (most of them misleading), and these have been used by modern occultists in any way possible.

⁷The old symbolic expression, the “union of spirit and matter” had reference to the direct connection between the first and third triads, in which the second triad is dissolved. The monad had acquired omniscience and omnipotence in the seven atomic worlds of the solar system (43–49). The 43-self could ascertain seven dimensions (nine if line and area are counted separately) even in world 49, that world 43 penetrates all the lower worlds.

⁸The old formulation, “matter is the lowest form of spirit; and spirit, the highest form of matter”, becomes comprehensible when you learn that the matter aspect grows in importance in each lower world, and the consciousness aspect grows in importance with each higher world. This is said in reference to the ancient expression spirit–matter.

⁹The symbol “the descent of spirit into matter” meant the process of incarnation (“everything comes from higher worlds”); even the whole process of involution in which the primordial atoms are involved to form ever more composed atomic kinds.

18.8 The Oversoul

¹In esoterics, the “oversoul” has reference to the highest collective being of the solar system (which has nothing above it in the solar system), expressed symbolically as the “soul of all souls”.

²Even Emerson spoke about the overself, the oversoul. Then ignorance took over the term. It has become such a word as people take to when they do not know what they are speaking about. Since everybody means something different, it can (from the factual point of view) mean any one of the higher envelopes. It is not worthwhile for an esoterician to enter into any attempts at explanation of such brainwaves.

18.9 The Monad

¹The theosophists never understood what Pythagoras meant by “monad”. They made the fatal mistake of confusing the monad with the third triad (the third self). In so doing they have caused an irremediable confusion of ideas. Besant as well as Leadbeater apparently believed themselves able to “interpret the scriptures” on their own, without asking their teachers whether they had got it right. It is once again confirmed how necessary it is that all information about higher worlds, etc., beyond your resources of research is checked by higher selves competent to do so. We understand that disciples do not wish to trouble their teachers unnecessarily, those teachers who have an unreasonable work-load without cease. The teachers, however, would probably prefer such mistakes to be avoided.

²Inasmuch as the term “monad” has been given different meanings in the occult sects, it is emphatically stated that Pythagoras (the author of the term) by “monad” intended the primordial atom (the indivisible primordial atom) and that this is the original and only true meaning. This, too, has caused confusion of ideas, as usual.

³In Laurency, there are many statements that do not agree with those already accepted in theosophical and other occult literature. Anyone who has mastered the hylozoic mental system of Pythagoras can decide for himself who is right. It is high time that at least esotericians stopped their credulous parroting of authorities, which only causes division. As for the rest, everyone may have his own view. Esotericians should learn to tell main issues from side issues, essentials from unessentials, and not to quarrel about details. The system, the perspective, is the one essential thing.

18.10 The Self

¹The expression found in occult literature, “man is a soul that has a body”, is evidence of the fact that the idea of the soul was a very hazy one. Man is a monad that has several envelopes and will acquire ever more envelopes with which it will identify itself, first the physical one, then the emotional, mental, causal, essential (46), etc., according as it reaches higher stages of development. If instead of “envelopes” you want to say “consciousnesses”, it is of course quite all right. It depends on whether the individual is extravert or introvert. But if you start from the idea that the organism is an envelope, then you find it easy to go on referring to “envelopes”. To the hylozoician it is all the same whichever mode of expression is used.

²It was typical of the subjectivist conception of the time that readers of Sinnett’s works often objected to his starting from the matter aspect. Very rightly Sinnett answered that this was easiest for Westerners but after they had comprehended it all they could switch over to the consciousness aspect.

³To the second self, his first self is something unnecessary, discarded, nothing to care about anymore; thus in the symbolic parlance of the ancients, “nothing”. The third self thinks the same about his second self when the second triad has been definitively eliminated. In the esoteric orders as well as in the ancient oriental terminology, the different states of the self have been given a number of symbolic designations which need circumstantial elucidations to be apparently comprehensible, although such terms are never understandable to others than those who have the corresponding experiences behind them. The matter-of-fact Western esoterician, who has got the requisite perspectives on existence and the whole evolution comprehensibly elucidated to him, is grateful to be liberated from such unnecessarys, however profound they appear, being wrapt up in the veils of mysticism appealing to imagination. To call the third self “true be-ness” is, besides, as erroneous as to call the world of Platonic ideas the same. Every kind of be-ness is in its own world as true as the other kinds in their worlds. And if such a term as “the absolute”, etc., is to be used at all, it should be reserved for the highest cosmic kingdom.

⁴In the esoteric literature there is mention of the monad consciousness as the “seeing eye”, “all-seeing eye”, etc., symbolic locutions for the monad consciousness in the higher worlds where subjective and objective consciousness are no longer differentiated but all lower kinds of consciousness are included in the monad consciousness.

⁵In order to avoid confusion of ideas it is probably more suitable to use the word “triad” instead of “self”. Otherwise the ignorant can have the wrong impression that it is a matter of two different individuals, unless it is clarified to him that the first self and the second self are the same individual in different triads. The same confusion has been caused with the theosophical terms “personality” and “individuality”, as well as “the Ego” and “Augoeides”. They differentiated between “personality” and “individuality” as if they had reference to two different individuals, instead of making clear that “personality” meant the self in its envelopes of incarnation and “individuality” the self in the causal envelope upon the conclusion of its incarnation. They never explained that the self is a primordial atom (monad) in a first triad both in its envelopes of incarnation and in the causal envelope, that the “personality” is the self in the first triad in a particular triad envelope (a lesser part of the causal envelope incarnating) and that the “individuality” was the same self upon its return to its greater causal envelope.

18.11 Symbols for the First Self and its Worlds

¹“When a complete detachment from the phenomenal world has been effected, emancipation has been attained.” (Patanjali)

²How much acute and profound balderdash has been used up to explain only that statement. To the esoterician it is immediately evident. The “phenomenal world” in the widest sense is the worlds of the first self. When the monad has become a second self, it is emancipated from the dependence on its first self (even when fully developed) with its life ignorance and impotence.

³The worlds of the first triad (47–49) were called by the ancients the “worlds of illusion”, since the conception of life in these worlds must be illusory. The expression “living in appearance” was also used. “Illusion” meant life ignorance. No esoterician could call matter “illusion”, as philosophical subjectivists do.

⁴“Maya”, or the “great illusion”, simply means that the individual without esoteric knowledge inevitably takes the physical world, then the emotional world, later the mental world, according as his envelopes of incarnation (the worlds of the first self) dissolve, to be the only existing reality.

⁵The “personality” is the monad in the lowest triad in the triad envelope, thus the monad as sovereign in the triad and the synthetic consciousness of the triad consciousness. Thereby the monad has developed as far as is possible for it in the human kingdom. In order to acquire consciousness in the causal envelope assistance is necessary, subjectively by Augoeides and objectively by a member of the planetary hierarchy, in which the latter imparts the right, causal

methods of activation. Normally, this process would require several million years of incarnations of the monad. Concentrating it into just a few incarnations requires one-pointed purpose and work on all the energies the personality may dispose of. It is not enough to have esoteric knowledge. To receive assistance the individual must serve evolution and mankind. That is what the ancients called to “serve god”. What god needs are collaborators in the human kingdom, if mankind is not to relapse into barbarism ever and again.

⁶“Impersonality” in the esoteric sense is possible only for the monad in the second triad. In the first triad, the monad is itself entangled in the worlds of ignorance with their illusions and fictions. Detachment is necessary to assess without affection.

⁷The word “dweller” has been taken to mean “guardian” in the expression “dweller on the threshold”, romanticized in Bulwer-Lytton’s novel *Zanoni*. This refers to the one who remains at, cannot pass, the “threshold” (between the first and second triads). What is intended is the monad before it has become a causal self, the monad in the first triad, the integrated personality (mental consciousness controlling lower kinds of consciousness, emotional and physical), man as his own master, ignorant of the laws of life, not knowing of Augoeides, the self in its triumph as sovereign, without anything higher, anything above it. Then the self will not become anything higher, but catastrophe is inevitable sooner or later.

⁸In the old occult literature this symbol was completely misinterpreted. Steiner, who misunderstood most symbols of the ancient esoteric literature, tried to surpass Bulwer-Lytton in fantastic excesses about his fairy-tale figure.

18.12 Symbols for Essentiality

¹The words of Paul, “the love of Christ compels us”, has been misunderstood by the theologians, as usual, since they have never known what Paul meant by “Christos”, namely essential consciousness (the consciousness of world 46), the consciousness of unity. Paul was an initiate and wrote to the initiates in their symbolic language. The theologians cannot know that the father of the church, Eusebius, got hold of some of those epistles and rehashed them as he saw fit.

²“Blessing” in the esoteric sense means the calling down of essential (46) molecules from world 46. Whether they will influence the individuals depends on their receptivity.

18.13 “Death”

¹Men love pathetic or drastic expressions, “destruction” or “death”, for instance. The most suitable term would be “elimination”.

²The old esoteric term “death” (abortive as most terms) meant everything the individual had left behind him on the path of evolution, all the emotional illusions and mental fictions he had eliminated, all the crutches that had helped him to get along until he could walk by himself. Unfortunately, those are no “dead products”, not dead to those who accept them as suitable tools. Literature, for instance, contains works of all stages and levels of development, and everybody has to pick and choose (leave everything that does not increase his understanding of life and affords him power to realize). How little of the content of all those libraries, of the Himalaya or Niagara of books, will remain a hundred years hence or be regarded as little more than matters of curiosity!

18.14 “Sin”

¹“Sin” is not “a crime against an infinite being who, being unable to forgive, exacts an infinite punishment”, but is a mistake as to the laws of life, a mistake the effects of which we shall experience according to the law of sowing and reaping.

²No god can forgive sins, violations of the laws of life. What seemingly implies forgiveness of sins is either the ascertainment that the sowing has already been reaped or (in exceptional cases) a transfer of the reaping meted out for them to their next incarnation.

³Sowing has to be reaped. No god can abolish that law. And why should he do so? To make it suit the transgressors of the law who wish to escape the consequences of their actions? That would be the right way of promoting lawlessness, as the church's forgiveness of sins has done.

⁴The theologians cannot know the effects of a mistake. The amends they may demand are perfectly illusory or fictitious. And the notion that Christos would or could have abolished the law of sowing and reaping is just a figment of life-ignorant imagination.

18.15 God Immanent and Transcendent

¹The term "god immanent" has several different meanings. In the last analysis it refers to the primordial atoms, of which all matter has been formed, as they are beings sharing in the cosmic total consciousness. To the esoterician, the symbol summarizes a whole series of ever higher natural kingdoms; to man it is first of all the knowledge of the existence of Augoeides.

²"God transcendent" is the symbolic term of all kingdoms (planetary or cosmic) containing the superconsciousness of the individual. To a normal individual in the human kingdom, the fifth as well as all higher kingdoms are of transcendent divinity. To a cosmic self in the third cosmic kingdom, the fourth kingdom is "god transcendent".

³The symbols "god immanent" and "god transcendent" have different meanings to individuals at different stages of development. The different meanings of the symbols have always caused confusion of ideas and endless disputes among the uninitiated.

18.16 Pairs of Opposites

¹In esoterics, the term "pairs of opposites" is often used in two quite different respects: in the meaning of lower and higher, lower and higher kinds of matter, of consciousness, energies, worlds, kingdoms; also as opposites, good–evil, right–wrong, attraction–repulsion, identification–liberation.

²The greater the distance between the worlds, the greater the opposition in various respects. In the old symbolic literature, exact definition of things was not desirable, and the different interpretations were given in the successively higher degrees of the orders. Many symbolic terms live on and become sources of misconceptions. According as esoterics becomes exoteric the symbolism will be interpreted as well.

³One expression may be cited as an instance. It is the old saying of the opposition of spirit and matter. "Spirit is the highest form of matter; matter is the lowest form of spirit." In fact, consciousness asserts itself less and less in ever more composed atomic kinds and, contrariwise, asserts itself more and more in ever atomic kinds. The greatest opposition in the solar system is of course obtained between worlds 43 and 49, and that is why world 43 is improperly called "spirit" and world 49, "matter".

⁴Since consciousness development, consciousness activation, begins in the lowest world and reaches its highest possible expression within the solar system in world 43, physical matter (49) has been called the "mother aspect" (the symbol of the development of the foetus) and manifestal matter (43), the "father aspect".

18.17 Light and Darkness

¹The symbol "light" has many different meanings. In esoteric symbolism there was always talk of light and ever more light, of light being a substance (matter), and that substance being energy (manifesting itself as sound), depending on which aspect of reality the initiate could apprehend and use.

²“Light” is the etheric matter enabling physical vision in darkness, the emotional matter enabling emotional clairvoyance, the mental matter (idea) enabling understanding.

³Light is matter, but “light” also is the objective consciousness revealing an object by shedding light on it. There are as many kinds of consciousness (“light”) as there are kinds of matter.

⁴To subjective consciousness, “light” is the symbolic expression of understanding through experience.

⁵The “dark night of the soul” is an esoteric expression meaning several different states with varying intensity. Everybody experiences it sometimes. Waves from the emotional world flood us in darkness, fear, suffering, despair. The most intensive “night” is the one in which the individual can identify himself with, experience, the bottomless distress of mankind, an agony corresponding to the momentary state at the transition from the causal to the essential world when the self feels abandoned. It is an experience that even those in higher kingdoms have whenever they look upon mankind.

18.18 The Holy Grail

¹The symbol of “the holy grail” denotes the holy vessel which, once filled, makes its possessor perfect. The “chalice” refers to man’s causal envelope; and the “wine”, to causal consciousness. The “chalice filled with wine” thus is the perfect first self, man when he lives to let himself be filled like a chalice by the energies of the second self. In this process, the first self’s envelopes of incarnation have ceased to react to other vibrations than those from the second self, thus have become perfect tools.

²In Christian symbolism, the symbol corresponds to the “holy ghost”, the causal self, the temple with the veil rent in twain.

³Like all symbols imaginative speculation has taken care of, even the tale of the holy grail has, of course, degenerated into diverse nonsense; this time, fortunately, harmless.

⁴There is always some basis for the ancient tales, but in most cases man remains long yet ignorant of this basis, until his understanding of its evidence awakens some time.

18.19 The Triangle and the Square

¹“Triangle” was Blavatsky’s term for the triad. In the esoteric literature, the symbol was used as a description of the universal motion round three points, the geometrical form of all the outputs of energy of manifestation.

²The symbol of the six-pointed star, formed by two intertwined equilateral triangles, has never been any “seal of Solomon”, although the Jews claim that. It is a very ancient esoteric symbol with several different meanings. The most well-known meanings are that of the triangle pointed upwards denoting the planetary hierarchy and the triangle pointed downwards denoting mankind; the triangle pointed upwards representing evolution and the one pointed downwards, involution. They also represent the second and first triads.

³In the esoteric literature there is mention of fourfold man as the square and the threefold soul as the “triangle”. The square can refer to the four envelopes of incarnation – the mental, emotional, physical-etheric and physical-organic – as well as all mankind. The triangle means the three centres of the causal envelope (corresponding to 47:1-3), the second triad, and all the other three-partite realities. This predilection for geometrical designations is connected with the fact that most abstract concepts in the forms of mental matter are geometrical figures.

18.20 Astrological Symbolism

¹The Sphinx at Gizeh in Egypt represents a human head on a leonine body: the symbol of man in astrological interpretation – the energies of the zodiacal constellation of Leo facilitate man’s acquisition of self-reliance, self-determination, purposiveness, and work for self-realization: acquisition of second self consciousness.

²It was the Chaldeans who some thirty thousand years ago made astrology a discipline for the learned in the temples, a discipline that subsequently declined until it degenerated into gross superstition. The very symbol of the cross also originates from the Chaldeans who graphically divided the twelve zodiacal constellations into four equilateral triangles and three equicrural crosses inscribed in a circle. These two divisions facilitate the understanding of reciprocal relations.

³In esoteric astrology, the three crosses have their counterparts in the three triads. The lowest cross (that of the first triad) is made up of Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius, and Pisces. It is also called the Swastika. The middle cross (that of the second triad) is formed by Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius. The highest cross (that of the third triad) consists of Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn.

⁴Their significance appears in the fact that the energies indicated can be apprehended, understood, and mastered in those triads only.

⁵Later, the gnosticians made the three crosses refer to mankind, the planetary hierarchy, and the planetary government.

⁶In a very general sense it can be said that the more the individual develops, the more he can assimilate of all the zodiacal energies pervading his envelopes.

18.21 The Cross

¹The symbol of the cross has many meanings. To an esoterician, the most apposite one is to apprehend the vertical line as an expression of “power from on high”, energies from higher worlds pouring down through the envelopes, and the horizontal line as a representing the disciple’s use of these energies in the service of life.

²Another meaning to the individual is that he is connected with the “four cardinal points” with his heart in the point of intersection. The more the individual develops, the more meanings he will discover. The purpose of the symbols was to have different meanings to different degrees in the knowledge orders, corresponding to different stages of development. It took many incarnations to ascend through the degrees. Once an initiate, always an initiate; until now when the knowledge has been allowed for publication and everybody is to rise through the degrees on his own. It was a turning-point in the history of mankind when the orders were closed in 1875. There will be new orders some time in the future, however, and then for disciples of the planetary hierarchy to give them exceptional training with a knowledge that would be misinterpreted and misused by the uninitiated.

³In the esoteric astrology of the Chaldeans, the twelve zodiacal constellations of the celestial circle (observable from the earth in the course of 24 hours) as three crosses with three quite different meanings; the crosses of the three triads. The monad in the first triad can rightly use only the energies from the four constellations the energies of which form the lowest cross. The corresponding is true of the monad in the other two triads.

⁴The authors of the Gospel symbols made out of those three crosses a tale of the crosses on Golgotha with three individuals at different stages of development (fourth, fifth, and sixth natural kingdoms), a symbolism that the literalists have not been able to understand right. When they will be able to do so some time in the future, the universities will abolish their faculties of divinity replacing them with chairs in esoteric symbolism, the only true history of religions.

18.22 Crucifixion

¹At the transition from causal self to essential (46) self or the monad’s passage from the first triad in the causal envelope to the second triad in the newly formed essential envelope, the monad for a moment “is suspended in an unknown nothing”. The self has the dizzy feeling it

“has lost everything” (causal consciousness with all its content). The only thing it knows in that instant is its self-identity: “I am that I am”.

²The process was dramatically represented in records in Babylonian (originally Atlantean) archives, where Jewish young men in the time of the captivity received their education. As in so many other cases, not much remained of the original version (in this case only the expression “I am that I am”, referring to Yahweh in the canonical scriptures of the Jews). The dramatical representation was utilized by the authors of the gnostic Gospel novels. The causal self, crucified in incarnation, who during his crucifixion (incarnation) has become aware of his “divine sonship” (immanent divinity), cries out at the transition from the first to the second triad: “My god, my god, why hast thou forsaken me?”, expressive of the sense of boundless abandonment in this moment of “condensed eternity”.

³“Crucifixion” has many other meanings in the esoteric symbolism. One was the self’s rebirth to the physical world, this hell, this madness, this chaos of the individual views of ignorance. Everyone has his own religion, his own philosophy, his own wisdom. Everyone is the authority of his own ignorance.

18.23 Sacrifice

¹The expression “law of sacrifice” is positively misleading. The only ones who really sacrifice themselves are the highest cosmic collective beings who build a cosmos. For everyone else it is not a sacrifice, since giving is a condition of development. (To him who gives will be given.) To sacrifice the lower to win the higher is only an apparent sacrifice. It is by serving that man develops all the qualities and abilities that are the conditions of higher evolution. The “law of sacrifice” should preferably be called the “law of giving”. Egoism counteracts unity, and it is only in unity that we can reach superhuman kingdoms. The misleading term “sacrifice”, which only initiates are able to understand, entailed the grotesque misconception that god demanded a sacrifice to be able to “forgive sins” and therefore gave out his one-begotten son to be crucified. You only need to ask how it is on other planets and in other solar systems to see the absurdity of this delusion. Does god need to sacrifice “his one-begotten son” there too, or perhaps he has many sons, one for each planet? For it must be inevitable that the human beings there make mistakes about the Law in their ignorance of life. Or perhaps on those planets there are no apples for Adam and Eve to eat.

18.24 Esoteric History

¹The historians can safely leave to those astronomers who have an esoteric orientation (the true astrologers) to establish the historical epochs, because they coincide with the zodiacal epochs.

²When the esoteric history is publicized some time, these zodiacal epochs will be summarized in groups as they are presented in the history of the third, fourth, and fifth root-races. Then we would obtain an overview of some 40 million years. Or you could make history begin with the advent of the planetary government some 18 million years ago, or with the causalization of ape-man, which began some 21 million years ago.

³When the esoteric history is publicized, it will be evident that the ideas that have brought mankind forward originate from members of the esoteric knowledge orders. Their existence was a generally known fact before the spread of Christianity, but Christian fanaticism forced those orders to “go underground”. The Rosicrucian Order spoken about during the 17th century was a Jesuit forgery and was therefore tolerated by the Church. Saint Germain’s publication of the genuine Rosicrucian symbols, which no one was able to interpret, was intended to expose the forgery. The known esoteric orders have always been imitated with the intention of fighting them and leading people astray. Nowadays, no such orders are needed since the knowledge of reality has been allowed to become exoteric. Any mystery-cult still going on is deception pure

and simple. The new orders that are calculated to be founded after the year 2200 will not be secret but will teach everything openly. It is quite another matter that it will not be possible to understand that knowledge without special teaching.

⁴Each zodiacal epoch produces its culture, and there are as many cultures in the past as there have been zodiacal epochs. They are products of the peculiar kinds of vibrations of the zodiacal constellation. Each zodiacal epoch exhibits seven special main kinds of flora and fauna in accord with the seven departmental energies in which the zodiacal energies are distributed.

18.25 Culture

¹Culture is above all freedom for all within the limits of the equal right of all (“tolerance”), then humanity beyond limits of any race or nation, the understanding of positive (constructive) as well as negative (destructive) forces in human life, of inclusivity in contrast to exclusivity, of the whole as being more than its parts.

²Culture is understanding of the laws of life.

³All art must have reality as its basis and is the opposite of formlessness.

⁴Culture includes the insight that every nation has its particular task in the consciousness development of mankind. All of them have hitherto failed in their tasks.

⁵Egon Friedell’s *Cultural History of the Modern Age*, a three-volume work, can be recommended to those who are interested in a history of culture affording perspectives. It is the best of its kind.

18.26 Some Esoteric Terms

¹The name “esoterician” should be reserved for those who have accepted hylozoics as a working hypothesis and should not be used for higher selves (causal selves, for instance).

²The esoteric faculties include:

telepathy: the transference of psychic states (thoughts, emotions) without the intervention of the expressive organs of our senses.

telekinesis: the faculty of setting objects in motion through remote action.

levitation: raising objects from the ground without touching them.

psychoscopy (psychometry): the faculty of stating the origin of unknown objects.

clairvoyance: the faculty of seeing through walls; seeing objects at long distance; seeing into the past and into the future.

clairaudience: the faculty of hearing at long distance.

apport: the faculty of attracting objects at long distance, even through walls.

materialization and dematerialization: the faculty of forming and dissolving physical objects.

³Anyone who denies the existence of these faculties does not know what he is speaking about.

⁴From the esoteric point of view, consciousness development and revelation are synonymous. The one cannot exist without the other. Continuous consciousness development implies a continuous revelation of things previously not understood. Revelation becomes knowledge when formulated in words to be comprehended by other people.

⁵Continuity of consciousness is a wide concept. It may refer to emotional continuity implying that the individual can recall what he has experienced in the emotional world during sleep. If continuity of causal consciousness is meant, then the individual is always conscious in his causal envelope even after his envelopes of incarnation have dissolved and he has incarnated again.

⁶The causal-mental world (47:1-7) and the physical world (49:1-7) are divided in molecular respect into higher and lower. The higher mental (also called the causal or “abstract mental”) consists of 47:1-3; and the lower mental (or mental proper), of 47:4-7. The physical world is divided into the etheric (49:1-4) and the visible (49:5-7). The secretary of the hierarchy, 45-self D.K., divided the mental world into three parts, the higher mental, the causal envelope or causal

being (“son of mind”), and the lower mental. He did so since the causal being has a special function being the necessary connection between the second triad mental atom and the first triad mental molecule.

⁷For lack of serviceable words for higher worlds, a lack that has always been a serious encumbrance, the first cosmic kingdom (36–42) was called the “cosmic astral world”; and the second cosmic kingdom (29–35), the “cosmic mental world”; thus in analogy with the worlds of the solar system, which are also called the “cosmic physical”. How enormously simpler is the mathematical nomenclature that can never be misunderstood.

⁸Words that also should go into abeyance are “abstract” and “concrete”, which have been used for as many as 21 kinds of consciousness within worlds 45–47; and “pure reason” (Kant’s expression) for essential (46) consciousness. You could certainly call this terminological helplessness. The whole of the old terminology should be replaced with a comprehensible and exact one, the mathematical when it has once received its definition.

⁹The theosophists’ talk about the seven principles of man was an unsuccessful attempt at combining the first triad’s four envelopes of incarnation and the second triad’s three units. The vague notions resulting from this still haunt their presentation. It seems as if they were particularly keen on obtaining a septenary. It can be obtained in several ways, however, for example the two triads and the causal envelope connecting them.

¹⁰The term “time” is also a symbol meaning distance, development, faculties, use of and economizing on forces.

¹¹The term “initiation” has several different meanings. In a most general sense, it referred to the gradual acquisition of ever higher kinds of consciousness, atomic consciousness in particular. It was used to denote initiation into an esoteric knowledge order and its different degrees and, especially, into different degrees of the planetary hierarchy.

¹²To prevent misunderstandings it is pointed out that the Sanskrit terms occurring in the works of Laurency are the original names used by the planetary hierarchy to denote those realities. They do not agree with those distorted in the Eastern-Western vedanta and yoga literature.

18.27 Some Esoteric Symbols

¹The “will of god” that theologians speak about is evolution: the consciousness development of the monads, and this in all natural kingdoms.

²The “return of Christos” means the reappearance of the planetary hierarchy in mankind to reassume the spiritual leadership it had before it withdrew to demonstrate to human beings that they could not solve their political, social, economical, etc., problems on their own, which they have always believed they could do. After a failure of more than twelve thousand years they should finally have learnt to see their inability to do so.

³“Faith” in the esoteric sense is a mental atom, a mental idea, an irresistible mental energy. The parable of faith as the least of seeds was a profound allusion to its material insignificance and its enormous power. Faith is nothing that the ignorant just “takes to”. It either is there or is not there. “Faith is a gift of god.”

⁴“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”, is the formulation of Paul, the apostle, which D.K. (the mouthpiece of the world-teacher) has approved of and has often quoted. Note the word substance!

⁵The very ancient burial formula read: “Thou art come from earth; thou wilt once more become earth; the spirit will return to god who gave it.” This testifies to a pantheistic view according to which the universal soul separates the individual soul, which in death is annihilated by merging with the universal soul. One of the many imaginative speculations, that is to say: guesswork.

⁶In the ancient esoteric knowledge orders the newly accepted were called “the small brethren”. It was these that Christos had in mind when speaking about “the least of these”. The expression was apparently included by mistake in one of the Gospel novels and was of course misinterpreted.

⁷“Like is attracted to like.” A common platitude that we believe we understand, which is a great mistake. The greatest esoteric secrets were often hidden in such commonplaces. Their simplicity, directness, manifest correctness is the surest way to hide them. The English language has the expressive word “blinds” for these.

⁸In the esoteric symbolism, the “sword” means the energies of the first department; the “pen”, those of the second department; “money”, those of the third department.

⁹The three esoteric festivals at the full moon of Aries, Taurus, and Gemini are intended to remind us of the existence of the planetary hierarchy, the existence of the planetary government, and the necessity of universal brotherhood. The groups that are sympathetic to this prepare to receive energies from the essential, superessential, and causal worlds.

¹⁰In the symbolic tale of Jonah and the fish, Jonah represents the greater causal envelope and the fish the lesser triad envelope. At incarnation, the first triad moves from the higher to the lower. The fish swallows up Jonah, a little man in spiritual respect, since he needed to reincarnate. The triad envelope is much more densely packed with causal molecules than the causal envelope left behind and so justifies the metaphor.

¹¹In the symbolic language of the esoteric knowledge orders there is often mention made of the “word” and “words”. Like all symbols they have different meanings. If the relation to sound is intended, then they mean constant series of sound vibrations. The expression “the word was made flesh” meant the incarnation of a higher being representing some kind of “word”, that is to say: higher kingdoms. The “word” in the familiar expression the “lost word of the master” meant the esoteric knowledge as well as so-called words of power, mantras, different in the seven departments, the final act in the concentration of dynamis, which released a charge of energy.

¹²The circle with the point is a frequent esoteric symbol of form and consciousness whether referring to a solar system, a planet, a man, or an atom.

¹³The central point is the primordial atom in all compositions of primordial atoms, the primordial atom which is the consciousness in everything, the primordial atom which is the content of manifestational matter, which makes energy and consciousness possible.

¹⁴The “way” mentioned in the esoteric literature is characterized by the automatic activation of the seven main centres in the aggregate envelopes. The three lowest ones are active in everybody, so that the true way begins with the activation of the heart centre through devoted service to mankind and evolution.

Endnotes

To 18.24.4 “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” The Bible, Hebrews, 11:1

To 18.24.6 The “least of these”. The Bible, the Gospel according to Matthew, 25:40

To 18.24.11 The “word was made flesh”. The Bible, the Gospel according to John, 1:14.

CONCLUSION

The way of man is the way leading from darkness to light, from ignorance to knowledge, from foolishness to wisdom, from the lower to the higher. The life eternal is always here and now, the final goal will always be reached some time and everything will be, as in the fairy tale, well in the end.

The above text constitutes the essay *Terminology and Symbolism* by Henry T. Laurency. The essay is the eighteenth section of the book *The Way of Man* by Henry T. Laurency. Translated from the Swedish by Lars Adelskog in 1999. The translation was revised by Lars Adelskog in 2013. The present text is the revised one. Copyright © 1999 and 2013 by the Henry T. Laurency Publishing Foundation (www.laurency).

Last corrections entered April 4th, 2023.