

# Sensa: Part One, Archetypal Symbolism

Dorje Jinpa

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When the Elohim created the world they made the lower world as a reflection of the higher. Thus, they established a direct correspondence between the higher and the lower worlds as between the higher and lower letters of the spiritual language with which they created the world.

*The Book of Light (Zohar)*

All esoteric teaching is based upon the correspondence that exists between the macrocosm and the microcosm.

Rudolf Steiner

Although everything on earth is a more or less direct reflection of a higher reality, it is only the most direct reflections that can be called truly symbolic.

Abu Bakr Siraj Ed-Din

## Abstract

The following two-part series of articles is adapted from my forthcoming book *Sensa: The Lost Language of the Sun* to be published by Pentarba Publications 2011. Part 1 pertains to the principle of analogy or archetypal symbolism, which expresses the truth that there is a direct correspondence between the material world (microcosm) and the spiritual world (macrocosm). This basic esoteric principle not only forms the basis of *Sensa*, the language of the Mysteries, it is as Master Djwhal Khul, H.P. Blavatsky, and Rudolf Steiner suggest, the master key to understanding the esoteric works of initiates everywhere. Though often kept secret, this principle, and the symbolic language that is derived from it, can be traced through the esoteric writings of all world-class religious traditions. This we will attempt to do as much as possible, in Part 2, which will follow in the next issue.

## Introduction

According to the ancient Mystery Tradition, all living organisms, without exception, follow the pattern of growth predetermined by their seed. In the same way that

an acorn contains the complete archetypal formula for the evolution of an oak tree, so the seed of the human spirit contains the blueprints for the spiritual evolution of humanity. Therefore, in order to gain an understanding of the nature and purpose of evolution we must first examine its seeds. These seeds are contained in the language of symbols. In the same way that science relies upon the language of mathematics to give a precise and accurate description of its findings, so the spiritual scientists of the ancient Mystery Religion, in order to accurately express their understanding of fundamental principles, made use of the language inherent in the geometry of nature herself. This language, which has always been kept secret from the uninitiated, differs fundamentally from other languages in that its symbols do not arbitrarily represent an object, *but rather the original archetypal pattern from which that*

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## About the Author

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object was formed. In other words, symbolic language functions as the hieroglyph of the object's seed.

## The Esoteric Nature of Symbols

The languages of the world were created almost entirely in response to the material world and are therefore rarely applicable to the greater dimensions of the metaphysical or non-physical reality. Whenever seers attempt to describe the higher worlds they must do so, for the most part, symbolically, in the language of analogy, using symbols to represent higher corresponding truths. Johann Jakob Bachofen, in his *Gräbersymbolik der Alten*, shares with us an unusual insight into the nature of symbols:

Human language is too poor to clothe in words the wealth of intuitive insight that the interaction of death and life awakens, or those higher hopes that belong to the initiates. Only symbols, and the myths connected with them, can satisfy this noble requirement. Symbols awaken intuitive understanding while language can only explain. Symbols pluck all the strings of the human spirit simultaneously: language is always obliged to devote itself to a single thought. The roots of a symbol reach into the most secret depths of the Soul: language only touches the surface of understanding like a slight breath of wind. One is directed inward, the other outward. Only symbols can connect the most varied things into a unified collective expression.<sup>1</sup>

Manly P. Hall, a highly respected esoteric historian, has devoted several chapters of his important book, *The Secret Teachings of all Ages*, to the ancient Mysteries and the secrets of symbolism.

Symbolism is the language of the Mysteries; in fact it is the language not only of mysticism and philoso-

phy but of all Nature, for every law and power active in universal procedure is manifested to the limited sense perceptions of man through the medium of symbol. Every form existing in the diversified sphere of being is symbolic of the divine activity by which it is produced. By symbols men have ever sought to communicate to each other those thoughts which transcend the limitations of language. Rejecting man-conceived dialects as inadequate and unworthy to perpetuate divine ideas, the Mysteries thus chose symbols as a far more ingenious and ideal method of preserving their transcendental knowledge. In a single figure a symbol may both reveal and conceal, for to the wise the subject of symbol is obvious, while to the ignorant the figure remains inscrutable. Hence, he who seeks to unveil the secret doctrine of antiquity must search for that doctrine not upon the open pages of books which might fall into the hands of the unworthy, but in the place where it was originally concealed.<sup>2</sup>

Kenneth Mackenzie in his book, *The Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*, first published in 1877, states:

All esoteric societies have made use of emblems and symbols, such as the Pythagorean Society, the Eleusinia, the Hermetic Brethren of Egypt, the Rosicrucians and the Freemasons. Many of these emblems it is not proper to divulge to the general eye, and a very minute difference may make the emblem or symbol differ widely in its meaning. The magical sigilla, being founded on certain principles of numbers, partake of this character, and although monstrous or ridiculous in the eyes of the uninitiated, convey a whole body of

doctrine to those who have been trained to recognize them.

The master key needed to understand the true nature of the symbols being expressed by the initiates, as well as the principles of which they speak, is the law of correspondence or archetypal symbolism. Archetypal symbolism, as taught in the Mysteries, demonstrates the fundamental truth that everything in the physical world (the microcosm) is a direct proportioned reflection of a higher correspondence in the spiritual world (the macrocosm).

Abu Bakr Siraj Ed-Din in his Sufi classic, *The Book of Certainty*, which is based to a large extent upon the esoteric writings of one the greatest of Sufi masters, Muhyiddin Ibn' Arabi (1165-1240), illustrates this truth:

Symbols have the power to remind [us] of their counterparts in the higher worlds, not through mere incidental resemblance but because they are actually related to them in the way that a shadow is related to the object which casts it. There is not the least thing in existence that is not such a shadow.... Nor is there anything that is any more than a shadow. Indeed, if a world did not cast down shadows from above, the worlds below it would at once vanish altogether, since each world in creation is no more than an issue of shadows entirely dependent on the archetypes in the world above.<sup>3</sup>

Ibn' Arabi says that when the term "*Mathal*," which means "symbol" or "likeness," is used in the Quran it refers to "the essential or vertical likeness that exists between the higher and lower worlds." It means both a symbolic image (*Mathal*) and the science of analogy itself ('*Alm al-Mathal*). In the Quran it was often used along with a word or symbolic phrase to refer the reader to that symbol's higher or lower corresponding meaning.

In the Mysteries when symbols are used to represent a hidden meaning it is called esoteric or occult. One

of the advantages of writing in symbols, besides veiling esoteric truths that are inappropriate for general use, is that a lot of information can be stated very briefly and simply. A well-presented symbol can represent to an initiate a vast hierarchy of corresponding levels of meaning.<sup>4</sup>

Proclus, the illuminated commentator on the teachings of Plato and the Pythagoreans, in the opening lines of his book *A Dissertation on Theurgy*, states:

In the same way that lovers of beauty gradually advance from the beauty which is apparent to the senses to that beauty which is divine, so the ancient priests, gradually advanced from an understanding that there exists a certain correspondence and sympathy between natural things and things occult, to the discovery that all is contained in all. *From this mutual sympathy and correspondence they fabricated their sacred sciences.* Thus they recognized things supreme in such as are subordinate, and the subordinate in the supreme.<sup>5</sup>

## Archetypal Symbolism and the Renaissance

St. Augustine, who was greatly influenced by the writings of Plato and the Neoplatonic philosophers, states in his *De Musica* that the function of geometry in art and music lies in its analogical aspects, or that which has the ability to lead the mind from the world of appearances to the contemplation of the divine order behind it. True beauty, he maintained, is anchored in spiritual (non-physical) reality. When the created physical form—whether in painting, architecture, or music—corresponds to divine principles, beauty is the result. This idea became the central theme and motivating impulse behind the Renaissance of Europe. Many of the great gothic cathedrals were based upon these principles. Leonardo, Dürer, and many other great artists of that period affirmed it as the

basis of their aesthetics and art. They sought to create audible and visual echoes of metaphysical perfection by following what the Pythagorean mystics ascribed to the sacred science of number and harmonic proportion. Just as a religious icon was thought to partake of a portion of the sacred reality it represented, so the visual and audible proportions of divine harmonics when applied to their art were thought to partake of the metaphysical truths with which they corresponded.

Otto von Simson, in his illuminating book *The Gothic Cathedral: Origins of Gothic Architecture and Medieval Concepts of Order*, gives us a few hints as to the worldview and motivating impulse behind the designs of the great cathedrals of France. The idea, says Simson, was to create a true “symbol of the kingdom of God on earth.”<sup>6</sup> The architects of the great cathedrals felt that because everything natural was a reflection of the spiritual world, then the house of God should correspond as close as possible to the archetypal forms originating from the spiritual world. One of the ways this could be done, they reasoned, was by translating the natural harmonies of musical consonance into geometric relationships. This idea they called “*commodulatio*” or “*symmetria*.”

### The Law of Analogy

In the ancient Mystery schools the principle of harmonics and archetypal symbolism was applied to the correspondences that naturally exist between planes, dimensions, and levels of being. Plato, who by his own semi-veiled account had been initiated into the Mysteries in Egypt, said that the analogical agreement that exists between a divine paradigm<sup>7</sup> and its reflection in form is called “geometrical equality,” which he said was “mighty among both the Gods and men.” One of the most obvious examples of this kind of correspondence can be seen between an atom of matter and a solar system. And although this analogy exists between two aspects of the physical universe, it nevertheless demonstrates to some degree the principles involved. Sir James Jeans, the distinguished British scientist, explains:

In the universe around us the attraction between electric charges of opposite signs, positive and negative, follows, as it happens, precisely the same law as gravitation, the attraction falling off as the inverse square of the distance between two charges. Thus the nucleus-electron system [of an atom] is similar in all respects to a sun-planet system.<sup>8</sup>

Another example of this law can be observed in the way pitches on the sevenfold musical scale correspond in kind to their higher and lower octaves. Pythagoras is said to have used the example of octaves and harmonics to teach the analogical structure of the cosmos. Proclus tells us in his commentary to Plato’s *A Dialogue on Nature (Timaeus)*: that according to the law of analogy “ten is equal to one, thirty is equal to the three, and fifty is equal to five, not in quantity but in analogy.”<sup>9</sup> Master Djwhal Khul affirms the importance of the Law of Analogy in his monumental work *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, published in 1925 under the name of one of his students, Alice Bailey:

A study of the laws of correspondence and analogy is the one thread by which we can find our way through the labyrinth and the one ray of light that shines through the darkness of the surrounding ignorance.... In the study of this law we need to remember that the correspondence lies in its essence and not in the exoteric working out of details.<sup>10</sup>

H. P. Blavatsky, the initiate founder of Theosophy, says that the law of analogy is “the first and most important key to cosmic physics.”<sup>11</sup> In one of the secret instructions given to the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society she states:

One who comprehends well the above explanations will readily see how important it is for every student, whether he is striving for practical occult powers or only for

the purely psychic and spiritual gifts of clairvoyance and metaphysical knowledge, to master thoroughly the right correspondence between the human or natural principles and those of Kosmos.<sup>12</sup>

In the Mysteries, it is taught that the true laws of nature are not physical at all, that the physical plane is merely the plane of effects produced by causes originating from higher planes of being, and that even the laws of evolution as perceived by material scientists are but reflections (a reflex action) of the higher laws of spiritual evolution. The Sufis, who trace their lineage back to the ancient Persian Mysteries, rightly maintain that the science of correspondence (*alm al-Mathal*) is based upon the greater Science of Balance (*ilm al-mizan*), which governs the inner and outer equilibrium and harmony of the cosmos. Henry Corbin, a gifted interpreter of the Sufi doctrine, devotes a chapter to this idea in his book *Temple and Contemplation*.<sup>13</sup>

In Islamic gnosis... the balance of the things religious (*mizan al-diyana*) makes it possible to specify the correspondence between the earthly esoteric Hierarchy and the celestial angelic Hierarchy and more generally the correspondences between the spiritual and corporal worlds. The visual aspect of a being presupposes its equilibration with an invisible and celestial counterpart; the apparent and exoteric (*zahir*) is balanced by the occulted and esoteric (*batin*).<sup>14</sup>

Dr. Theodor Landscheidt speaks of the revival of the principle of analogy in his book *Cosmic Cybernetics*:

Everywhere we look, forces that were part and parcel of the ancient state of being are reviving. In particular the analogical approach, which at the turn of the [20<sup>th</sup>] century was still regarded as a primitive form of perception, is now experiencing an unsuspected renaissance.


This applies not only to the fields of graphology and depth psychology, but also to such rigorous sciences as theoretical physics, where quantum theory can only be linked with the laws of traditional physics by means of correspondence.<sup>15</sup>

The law of correspondence is one of the central themes of Hermetic Science. Hermes Trismegistus, the Grand Hierophant of the Mystery Schools of Egypt, affirms it in the opening lines of his famous *Emerald Tablet*:

That which is above is like that which is below, and that which is below is like that which is above, to bring about the miracle of the one-thing.<sup>16</sup>


## Archetypal Symbolism in Buddhism

The great *Kalachakra Tantra*, a highly esoteric Buddhist scripture, expresses this truth by stating, "As it is in the outer world so it is with the inner world of man."<sup>17</sup> The Hindu scripture *Shaiva Siddhanta* states: "What is in man corresponds to what is in the universe." An advanced yoga technique (*Karana*) of Kashmir Shaivism instructs the yogi to contemplate the body, along with its nerve centers, as a replica [mirror image] of the cosmos.<sup>18</sup>

Simply stated, this law asserts that the microcosm or lesser material universe, particularly the body, is formed in a direct corresponding likeness to the macrocosm, the greater spiritual world. The same laws, the same fundamental energy patterns and geometrical theorems apply to both of these worlds, as well as to each plane of existence. In Buddhism this law or truth has been called "Mirror-like Wisdom" (*Adarsa-jnana*), one of the five levels of understanding realized by the Buddha. Its symbol is the crescent moon.  In the same way that the moon has no light of its own but merely reflects the light of the sun, so the material and conceptual world, having no life of its own, merely reflects the life of the spiritual world, the *Dharmadhatu*,

symbolized by the sun. In the Buddhist scriptures “Mirror-like wisdom” is said to be the realization of the essential unity of ultimate truth (which does not change) with relative truth (which is in constant change). This unified relationship is

symbolically represented as a sun disk over a crescent

moon.  According to the *Kalachakra Tantra* the vibrational frequency of this kind of relationship corresponds to the sound made by the Sanskrit vowel “h” (*visarga*), which when written is depicted as two dots, one over the other ( : ).

The science of analogy is a central theme of the *Kalachakra* or Wheel of Time. Its first chapter pertains to the cyclic evolution of the cosmos using astrological symbolism. The second chapter pertains to the direct correspondence of these same cyclic principles as applied to the individual. Many other analogies are also given, such as their natural correspondence with the nerve centers within the vajra body of the yogi. At the beginning of the second chapter Sucandra asks of the Buddha:

“How can the entirety of the three worlds be within the body?” Hearing Sucandra’s words and applauding him, the Sugata [Buddha], with supreme compassion, expounded the measure of all things within the body, for the sake of liberating sentient beings.<sup>19</sup>

The *Kalachakra Tantra*, along with its famous commentary, the *Vimalaprabha*, gives in symbolic form the primary analogies that exist between cosmic bodies and currents, earth centers, the spiritual path of the yogi, the energy centers of the etheric body, and certain subtle vibrational frequencies that correspond to the sounds of the individual letters of the Sanskrit alphabet. For example,

Mt. Meru, “situated at the center of the world,” symbolically represents the central magnetic axis of the Earth. It finds an exact correspondence in the central magnetic axis of the human body as well as the central

magnetic axis of the solar system. Its vibrational frequency is said to correspond to the sound of the Sanskrit vowel “m,” which when written is represented by a single dot. Alice Bailey students might be interested to know that the *Kalachakra Tantra* hints briefly at the correspondence that exists between the Seven Rays, the Seven Planets, and the Seven Rishis (of the Great Bear constellation).

Another example of the natural correspondence that exists between the microcosm and the macrocosm, as hinted at in the

*Kalachakra Tantra*, concerns the mythical kingdom of Shambhala situated at the top of the world. Shambhala is to the etheric body of the world what the crown chakra is to the vajra [etheric] body of a human being. The Master Djwhal Khul, who most likely was a *Kalachakra* master, affirms this truth in his book *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*. David Reigle, an accomplished Sanskrit and Tibetan scholar, points out that the subjects covered in the writings of the Master Djwhal Khul are basically the same as those covered in the *Kalachakra Tantra*, though without the Buddhist terminology.<sup>20</sup>

The correspondences that exist between life principles, as they manifest in like kind upon each plane, along with their geometric formulas and subtle sound vibrations, remain among the most secret of all the esoteric doctrines.

The author of the Agni Yoga Teaching, reverently referred to as the “Teacher,” has said, “Since psychic energy is an energy it will not contradict the laws of physics.”<sup>21</sup> This state-

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ment demonstrates quite simply the fundamental unity of the laws of nature. If scientists would apply the law of correspondence to the known laws of physics they might soon discover that thoughts and emotions are in fact substantial yet subtle forms of energy. Many people instinctively know this when they speak of feeling someone's good or bad "vibrations." A useful book could be written correlating electro-magnetic energies as they circulate through an electric circuit to the vital and magnetic currents circulating through the etheric body, or on a higher level, to the currents of psychic energy circulating through the sphere of the mind. *Telepathy, no matter how well proven according to the existing standards of probability, will not enter the mainstream of science until thoughts are understood as a subtle form of energy.*

According to Proclus, Plato's writings were often veiled in symbolic phrases that could only be understood by applying the law of analogy. This is true of the writings of nearly all the ancient initiates. Because of their strict vows of silence they could not write openly on subjects that were taught in the secret schools. They often veiled universal principles by presenting them on one level only leaving it to the student to make the necessary application to other fields. For example, when Plato writes in *Timaeus* of Egypt and the Nile he is referring, says Proclus, to the stream of vital life entering and giving nourishment to the whole world from its source, the constellation of the Bear. Many examples could be given including the Tibetan Buddhist technique of veiling the higher meanings concerning the law of polarity and union of opposites by giving them in yab-yum<sup>22</sup> symbolism. Once the keys of correspondence are known, the hidden meaning behind this kind of symbolism is understood.

### **The Paracelsus, Boehme, Newton, Goethe, Steiner Lineage**

**P**aracelsus, the 16<sup>th</sup> century initiate, alchemist and healer developed his worldview based upon the analogies that naturally

exist between the divine signatures of the macrocosm and their corresponding reflections in the physical world. Paul M. Allen, in his excellent introduction to Rudolf Steiner's *Mysticism at the Dawn of the Modern Age*, writes of this view:

One of Paracelsus' most far-reaching concepts is that of Signatures, that is, the idea that each single part of the microcosmic world of man corresponds with each single part of the macrocosm.<sup>23</sup>

Jacob Boehme expanded upon this idea in his *Signature of All Things*. Isaac Newton also understood this principle as is demonstrated in his book *The Prophecies of Daniel*. In this work he devotes a whole chapter on how to decipher the symbolic language used in the *Prophecies of Daniel* and the *Apocalypse of St. John*.<sup>24</sup>

For understanding the *Prophecies*, we are in the first place, to acquaint ourselves with the figurative language of the Prophets. This language is taken from the *analogy* between the world natural, and an Empire or Kingdom [of God] considered as a world politic. Accordingly, [the things of] the whole world natural, consisting of heaven and earth, signify [symbolize] the world politic, consisting the Thrones and Powers; and the things of it in that world signify *analogous* things in this.<sup>25</sup>

In other words, the subtle language of the Prophets can be understood by applying the analogies that exist between the so-called natural world and the spiritual world. The "world politic," or spiritual Kingdom, he says, is "*the Hierarchy of spiritual beings that govern the spiritual progress of the saints.*" The structure of the "natural world," he says, corresponds to the "Kingdom of Thrones and Powers." Isaac Newton (1642-1727), while primarily known for his material-science writings, really belongs to that spiritual-science lineage that begins with Paracelsus (1493-1541) and Jacob Boehme

(1575-1624), and continues with Goethe (1749-1832), and Rudolf Steiner (1851-1925). Newton was essentially a Hermetic philosopher and alchemist. His surviving manuscripts on alchemy, Hermetic philosophy, Pythagorean science, and occult theology, written in his own hand, amount to over 650,000 words. This remarkable lifetime achievement was inspected after his death by prominent members of the Royal Society and marked “not for publication.” To this day they have not been made public! Early in his career he was accused of plagiarizing his *Three Principles* from the writings of Jacob Boehme, which he had studied extensively. Newton is credited with the discovery of gravity and its properties, but according to Newton it was Pythagoras who first made the discovery years before. In his notes, intended for the second edition to his *Principia Mathematica*, but never published, Newton states that Pythagoras discovered the inverse square relationship in vibrating strings. He then extended this idea to the corresponding relationships of the weights and distances of the planets from the sun. And while the knowledge of the correspondence that exists between the principles of music and the motion of the planets was generally kept secret, Newton rediscovered it by studying the writings of the Pythagoreans. The following excerpt from his notes demonstrates that he understood the esoteric teachings on this point and could translate them into the scientific language of the day.

So far I have expounded the properties of gravity. Its cause I by no means recount. Yet I shall say that the ancients thought about this subject. Thales regarded all bodies as animate, deducing that from magnetic and electrical attractions. And by the same argument he ought to have referred the attraction of gravity to the soul of matter. Hence, he taught that all things are full of Gods, understanding by God's animate bodies. He held the sun and the Planets for Gods. And in the same sense Pythagoras, on account of its immense force of at-

traction, said that the sun was the prison of Zeus, that is, a body possessed of the greatest circuits. And to the mystical philosophers Pan was a supreme divinity inspiring this world with harmonic ratio like a musical instrument and handling it with modulation, according to that saying of Orpheus “striking the harmony of the world in playful song.” Thus they named harmony God and the soul of the world composed of harmonic numbers. But they said that the Planets move in their circuits by the force of their own Souls, that is, by the force of the gravity, which takes its origin from the action of the Soul.<sup>26</sup>

### Was Albert Einstein an Initiate?

Initiates, we are told, work in all fields of human evolution including the scientific arena. It is well known, for example, that Albert Einstein had a copy of H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* on his desk until the day he died. What is not well known is that he also occasionally borrowed books from the Lucis Trust Library in New York. As their records show one of the books he borrowed was the aforementioned *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* by Alice A. Bailey.

### The Archetypal Symbolism and the Mysteries

Plato also based his worldview upon the hierarchal principle of correspondence. Throughout his writings he maintained that the essential nature of intelligence is of the spiritual world, that the Soul prior to physical experience lives in the spiritual world, and that the original “idea-form” (*Eidos*), the archetypal thoughtform of the intended manifestation, remains impressed upon the deeper levels of the consciousness even while in physical incarnation. It is because of this, he says, that we can obtain a direct understanding of higher truth simply by elevating the consciousness.

By understanding the true and essential nature behind the shadowy projection into material form we can begin to understand its evolution toward perfection. This marks the major distinction between material science and esoteric science. Esoteric science directs its attention toward the universal rather than the particular, toward synthesis rather than analysis, toward holism rather than specialization. In the Mysteries it is taught that from the original archetypal vibration, or WORD, arise those formative forces that give shape to their mental and material manifestation. To understand fully, therefore, how cosmic vibrations form images, concepts, and material forms requires a transformation of our thinking process. Instead of attempting to discover causes merely from their effects in the material world as science attempts to do, we must learn to include in our calculations the concept, even if not yet fully realized, of the original archetype from which the object is formed. In other words we must learn to think holistically. Rudolf Steiner, in his introduction to the compiled scientific writings of Goethe states:

Natural science before Goethe was unaware of the essential nature of living phenomena. It simply investigated organisms with regard to the composition of their parts and external characteristics, just as one investigates inorganic phenomena. Consequently, that older science often interpreted details incorrectly and presented them in a false light. Investigation of the particulars themselves cannot, of course, reveal any such error. Interpretive judgments can only be made after we have first understood the organism [as a whole], because the particulars, considered separately, do not contain the principle that explains them. They can be explained only through the nature of the whole, because it is the whole that gives them being and significance.<sup>27</sup>

H. P. Blavatsky states:

To arrive at the macrocosmical, you must begin by the microcosmical; i.e. you must study Man, the microcosm—in this case as physical science does—inductively, proceeding from particulars to universals. At the same time, however, since a keynote is required to analyze and comprehend any combinations of differentiations of sound, we must never lose sight of the Platonic method, which starts with one general view of all, and descends from the universal to the individual. This is the method of Mathematics—the only exact science that exists in our day.<sup>28</sup>

Proclus, in his commentary on the first book of Euclid's *Elements*, has this to say:

Some sciences are closer to the Truth than others. A science that starts from simpler principles is superior to one whose starting point is more complex. A science that considers causes is superior to one that studies only effects. A science that is concerned with principles perceived by the mind is superior to one that is concerned with objects perceived by the senses.<sup>29</sup>

Esoteric Buddhism takes a similar view. The Vajrayana student is instructed to look for the essential nature behind the manifestation of shadowy phenomena, to look for the original purity behind our illusive and fragmentary thoughts and feelings, and to discover our true Buddha-nature behind the illusion of a separate identity. By penetrating to the root source of the natural world we can discover the reality behind it that does not change. The science of correspondence was taught in many of the ancient schools of religious philosophy. Philo Judaeus, the first century historian and religious scholar of Alexandria, indicates that the science of analogy was used extensively by the Essenes, a spiritual community of which John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth were connected:

In the interpretation of scripture they [the Essenes] indulged greatly in the use of allegory and correspondence, for *the Law appeared to them as a living being*, the body of which was the letters and words, the Soul being the invisible spirit hidden within.<sup>30</sup>

Pythagoras, who was an initiate of the Egyptian Mysteries, taught his students that the incorporeal unchanging essence of things could and should be approached, but only after the mind had been trained in the sciences, or those laws and principles by which the universe manifests itself into form; namely, music, mathematics, geometry, correspondence (archetypal symbolism), and harmony. He taught that in this way we could begin to trace the thread of creation back to its source, from the world of effects to the world of causes. He taught that only by degrees should we progress from a study of the parts, to how those parts evolve and are united together, to an eventual understanding of the essential nature or universal synthesis of the One hidden behind it. Bodhisattva Maitreya, the future Buddha, in his treatise in verse, *Understanding the Difference Between the Appearance of Phenomena and Its Essential Nature*, presents the same idea from the Buddhist perspective:

It is first essential to perceive the difference between the appearance of phenomena and its essential nature before we can understand that [from a higher perspective] there is no difference between them at all.

Rudolf Steiner, in his lectures on *The Gospel of Mark*, makes a similar statement:

What is important is that we should recognize things in such a way that we look for *both* differentiations and the underlying unity behind them; that we characterize things according to their differences and only afterwards look for the higher unity to be perceived in these differences.<sup>31</sup>

With some exceptions this marks one of the distinctions between the methods used in the Mystery Schools and those of Mysticism. While the spiritual goal is the same for both, namely the understanding of and identification with our true nature, the method of approach often differs greatly. In the Mystery culture one develops gradually, step by step, from the rational to the abstract and then on to the higher intuitive faculties. Mystics, on the other hand, often attempt to bypass the rational mind altogether by penetrating the essential nature directly. In both cases the rational conceptual mind is eventually transcended through direct firsthand understanding. Initiates and mystics are as brothers and sisters on the Path. We might note here that the term “mystic” from the Greek *mystikos*, was according to Proclus “the name given to an initiate who had reached the first degree of the Mysteries.” The terms “mystery” and “mystic” have a common root in “mythos,” meaning “to be silent.” In the Mysteries the injunction “to be silent” has at least three progressive levels of meaning—the silence of the tongue, the silence of the senses, and the silence of concrete mental activity. The term “myth” has the same root. Many world-class myths were originally veiled esoteric teachings given to the public in an allegorical form. Albert Pike writes:

There was a distinction between the lesser and greater Mysteries. One must have been for some years admitted to the former before he could receive the latter... In the lesser Mysteries, they were prepared to receive the holy truths taught in the greater. The Initiates in the lesser were called simply *Mystes*, or initiates, but those in the greater, *Epoptes*, or Seers.<sup>32</sup>

The esoteric tradition of ancient Greece, as interpreted by the Pythagoreans, taught that music when approached through the law of correspondence, could be an accurate way to understand and express the original archetypal vibrations of the cosmos as they are stepped down through the many octaves of Being. According to an esoteric interpretation

of some of the early Greek myths the seven-stringed lyre of Apollo represents a key to the seven basic archetypal vibrations originating from the seven sacred planets. Pythagoras made use of this master key to express the principles of nature geometrically. According to the ancient science of Taoism, which as suggested by Rudolf Steiner, can be traced clairvoyantly back to the time of Atlantis, the seven archetypal vibrations originate with the seven Gods of the Great Bear constellation. In the Vedic Mysteries these same seven Gods are called, the "Seven Rishis." The Master Djwhal Khul calls these seven archetypal currents the "Seven Rays," which he says emanate from the seven Rishis of the Great Bear constellation, forming the seven basic archetypes for all manifested life as found in the seven principles, the seven sacred planets, the seven etheric centers in the body, the seven races, the seven planetary periods, the seven planetary schools (ashrams, churches), the seven planes, and the seven Soul qualities, to name only a few of the possible correspondences. An important book will someday be written concerning these fundamental energies and their harmonic expression through music, geometry and architecture.

Plato taught that divine music, originating from the pure unchanging nature of the Logos or WORD, manifests as those divine idea-forms (*Eidos*) that are the true nature and origin of all things. Throughout his writing he speaks of these archetypal thought patterns but always in a veiled manner. Nowhere does he write plainly on the subject. This is undoubtedly due to the strict vow of silence that was required of the initiates of the Mys-

**The master key needed to understand the true nature of the symbols...is the law of correspondence or archetypal symbolism. Archetypal symbolism as taught in the Mysteries, demonstrates the fundamental truth that everything in the physical world (the microcosm) is a direct proportioned reflection of a higher correspondence in the spiritual world (the macrocosm).**

tery culture at that time. Plato taught that the supersensible world, the origin of these archetypal patterns, was the world of being, while the physical world, the materialization

of those divine ideas, was the sphere of becoming. This divine becoming, he taught, follows the evolutionary impulses emanating from the archetypal world. The archetypal patterns that pertain to humanity's becoming, when voluntarily followed, lead to the world of pure Being. These archetypal seed-forms, therefore, are the formulas, the blueprints for humanity's evolution into the higher worlds and toward pure understanding and Being. So say the Initiates. Adrian Snodgrass, in his monumental work, *Architecture, Time and Eternity*,<sup>33</sup> gives a clear picture of Plato's perspective on this idea:

In the allegory of the cave Plato likens the condition of man to that of prisoners chained within a cave so that they cannot move and can only look ahead to the cave wall, on which they see shadows cast by moving puppet-like figures lit by a fire behind them. The prisoners take the shadows to be the only reality. If, however, a prisoner can free himself from his bonds and turn around, he will see the objects whose shadows appear on the cave wall. Walking upwards through the cave he will pass the fire and leave the cave to emerge into the sunlight. At first his eyes will be painfully dazzled and will not be able to perceive the objects whose shadows he had seen upon the cave wall. Gradually, however, as his eyes become accustomed to the light, he will perceive real things in the light of

the sun. And finally he may even be able to glance at the sun itself.<sup>34</sup>

The fundamental principles of archetypal symbolism, however, did not originate with Plato, but with the Mystery community of which he was an initiate. It is through the sacred Mystery Schools, of both the East and the West, that the science of archetypal symbolism finds expression as a natural, though secret, language representing the true name of things, the signature of their essential nature. But as the temple brethren were not allowed to speak or write openly concerning the true nature of this symbolic language, they had to find other ways in which to preserve and pass on a portion of the mysteries to the world without revealing dangerous secrets to those who might thereby harm themselves and others. This they did by incorporating the natural and geometric symbols of the Ageless Wisdom in the architecture of their temples and cathedrals, through the many craft and builder's guilds that they established, and by creating allegorical stories (myths), songs and Mystery Plays. It is for this reason that initiates were often called "Temple Builders" and "Masons." The sacred architecture of the most ancient traditions, particularly those sacred buildings called stupas, if studied with an understanding of archetypal symbolism, can reveal many of the hidden secrets of creation, evolution, and the "Path of Return."<sup>35</sup> Many of the world-class myths and legends can be traced directly or indirectly to the esoteric symbolism of the Ancient Mysteries.

### Symbolic Teachings

As we have stated a "symbol" to the initiates of the ancient Mystery Schools is an object or idea that awakens the intuitional awareness to a whole series of higher correspondences. Many of the greatest esoteric books were written using this kind of archetypal symbolism. The following examples, though taken from widely different time periods and cultural backgrounds show a remarkable similarity of both content and symbolic veiling techniques.

*The Old Commentary.*<sup>36</sup>

*The Book of Dzyan.*<sup>37</sup>

*Sri Kalachakra Tantra*, condensed from the now lost *Mula Kala chakra Tantra* attributed to the Buddha.

*The Golden Treatise*, attributed to Hermes Trismegistus

*The Rig Veda.*

*Book of Light* by Rabbi Simon.<sup>38</sup>

*Book of Revelation* by St. John the Divine.

*The Most Holy Trinosophia* by Comte de St. Germain.<sup>39</sup>

*The Chemical Wedding* by Christian Rosenkreutz

*Aula Lucis, or The House of Light*, by Thomas Vaughan.

*Book of Thoth (Tarot)* by Hermes Trismegistus.

### Divine Signatures

Plato, whom Proclus called a "hierophant of those true Mysteries into which Souls while separated from the terrestrial plane are initiated,"<sup>40</sup> writes briefly of an intermediate class of symbolic images between the pure archetypal thoughtforms (*Eidos*) of the spiritual world and their earthly counterparts. Here he comes close to revealing forbidden secrets, and it is no wonder that some of his fellow initiates complained loudly that he was revealing important secrets of the Mysteries to the uninitiated public.<sup>41</sup> Paracelsus hints at this intermediate class of archetypal signatures in his *De Nat*:

The divine signatures are threefold. The first depicts the world of man, the second are *archaeus* signs, and the third, originating from the stars, are of a transcendental nature.<sup>42</sup>

According to Rudolf Steiner the term "archaeus," so often used by Paracelsus, means etheric or subtle matter, sometimes the etheric body. Proclus expands somewhat on

this intermediate class of symbolic images in his commentary on Plato's *Dialog on Nature*:

According to the Pythagorean doctrine, Nature can be understood in a threefold division—divine ideas (*Eidos*), physical things, and the media between them, which is usually represented through mathematics [geometry].... This link manifests directly from the divine idea-form as symbolic images.... *Prior to physical things exist the images of their essential nature....* Plato defines the character of these pre-existing images as *geometrical figures*, the origin of which are the Forms (*Eidos*) of divine intelligence.<sup>43</sup>

“Anyone who is able to survey the world of spirit clairvoyantly,” says Rudolf Steiner, “can find there exact *images* of the great cosmic prototypes.”<sup>44</sup> Proclus says that the subtle vibrations of the WORD manifest as “geometric images of light.” It is from these archetypal images, seen clairvoyantly by the initiates midway between the divine archetype and its reflection in the world of form that *Sensa*, the language of the Mysteries, is derived.

## Conclusion

Through the language of analogy we can greatly expand our understanding of how the macrocosm is reflected in the microcosm. And if we apply this understanding to the nature of harmony in music and art, a new creative science may emerge. From this we may begin to understand the role that harmony and beauty play in the evolution of consciousness, in the evolution of the nerve centers through the etheric body, and even in our natural connection and profound interdependence with the currents of evolution. This important future science will of necessity include an understanding of the keynote of things, people, nations, and events, for as in a musical symphony, it is only through the relationship of the keynote with the parts that overall unity and harmony is maintained.

It is only through an understanding of the laws of archetypal symbolism that the “lost word,” the secret of the *Sensa* language, “will be recovered for all to hear.”

- <sup>1</sup> Johann Jakob Bachofen, *Versuch über die Gräbersymbolik der Alten* (Basel: 1859).
- <sup>2</sup> Manly Palmer Hall, *The Secret Teaching of all Ages* (Los Angeles: The Philosophical Research Society, 1988), 12.
- <sup>3</sup> Abu Bakr Siraj Ed-Din, *The Book of Certainty*, (London: Rider, 1952), 50.
- <sup>4</sup> See The Quran 2:24-26, 13:3, & 47:15
- <sup>5</sup> Plato, *A Dissertation on Theurgy* ((Princeton: Bollingen, 1988), xix.
- <sup>6</sup> Otto von Simson, *The Gothic Cathedral: Origins of Gothic Architecture and Medieval Concepts of Order* (Princeton: Bollingen, 1988), xix.
- <sup>7</sup> The term “paradigm,” as used by Plato and the Pythagoreans, means the divine archetypal reality behind physical manifestation. It does not mean “a working theory of reality” as the term is often misused today.
- <sup>8</sup> James Jeans, *A Treasury of Science* (New York: Harper, 1943), 195.
- <sup>9</sup> The mystery of the seeming contradiction between the two systems of counting (i.e. the 7 and the 10) might become apparent if we can agree that seven are manifested and three are not.
- <sup>10</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (New York: Lucis Publishing Co, 1951), 245-259.
- <sup>11</sup> H. P. Blavatsky, *Collected Writings*, Vol. XII (Wheaton: Theosophical Publishing House, 1980), 174.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 566.
- <sup>13</sup> Henry Corbin, *The Science of Balance and Correspondences between Worlds in Islamic Gnosis* (London: KPI, 1986), 55-131.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.
- <sup>15</sup> Theodor Landscheidt, *Cosmic Cybernetics* (Ebertin-Verlag, 1989), 7.
- <sup>16</sup> Hermes Trismegistus, *The Emerald Table* (London: Neville Spearman Publishers, 1971), 6.
- <sup>17</sup> Glenn H. Mullin, *The Practice of Kalachakra* (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1991), 154.
- <sup>18</sup> See Abhinavagupts's *Paratrisika Vivarana*, translated with extensive notes by Jaideva Singh (Delhi: Motilal Bararsidass, 2005), 37.
- <sup>19</sup> *Kalacakratantra*, Translated by Vesna A. Wallace (N.Y: Columbia University, 2004).

- See the Chapter on the Individual together with the Vimalaprabha, 2:1.
- <sup>20</sup> See “Djwhal Khul and the Kalachakra” by David Reigle, *The Beacon*, Jan.-Feb. 1991.
- <sup>21</sup> Helena Roerich, *AUM* (New York: The Agni Yoga Society, 1936), 487.
- <sup>22</sup> Yab-Yum is a symbol of the Tantric union of male and female, or father-mother in Tibetan Buddhism.
- <sup>23</sup> Paul M. Allen, *Mysticism at the Dawn of the Modern Age* (Herndon, VA: Steiner Books, 1960), 9.
- <sup>24</sup> Isaac Newton, *Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St. John*. [www.nuvisionpublications.com](http://www.nuvisionpublications.com) (accessed September 14, 2010.)
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 16
- <sup>26</sup> See Jocelyn Godwin’s *The Harmony of the Spheres: A Source book of the Pythagorean Tradition in Music*. (Rochester: Inner Traditions International, 1993), 305-308.
- <sup>27</sup> *Nature’s Open Secret: Introductions to Goethe’s Scientific Writings*. Translated by John Barns and Mado Spiegler (Spring Valley: Anthroposophic Press, 2000), 2. In a footnote to this passage the editor John Barns states: “Intrinsic in Goethe’s scientific method is that its explanations move from the whole to the parts, from the central principle to the outer particulars.”
- <sup>28</sup> Blavatsky, *Collected Writings*, XII, 517.
- <sup>29</sup> See *The Works of Philo*, translated by C. D. Yonge (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993), 689-690
- <sup>30</sup> Heart Essence: Two Mahayana Teachings by Maitreya (Ashland: Pentarba Publications, 2008), 102,103  
[www.pentarbapublications.com](http://www.pentarbapublications.com)
- <sup>31</sup> Rudolf Steiner, *The Gospel of St. Mark* (London: Anthroposophic Press, 1986), 70.
- <sup>32</sup> Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma* (Washington: House of the Temple, 1969), 432.
- <sup>33</sup> Adrian Snodgrass, *Architecture, Time and Eternity*, Vol. 1, No. 13. (New Delhi: Academy of Indian Culture 1994I).
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.
- <sup>35</sup> See A. Snodgrass, *The Symbolism of the Stupa*. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1992) This is possibly the best book available on the true meaning of sacred geometry.
- <sup>36</sup> Stanzas of this work have been quoted and translated by the Master Djwhal Khul throughout his voluminous writings under the name of his student Alice Bailey. According to David Reigle, a highly respected Sanskrit and Tibetan scholar, *The Old Commentary* may in fact be a portion of the original 60,000 verse commentary on the Kalachakratantra by Suchandra, which is now lost. Mr. Reigle also states in his *Books of Kiu-te in the Tibetan Tantras* that the Kalachakratantra is the first of the books of Kiu-te from which the *Stanzas of Dzyan* were taken.
- <sup>37</sup> There are two translated sources for excerpts of this book, both of which are said to have been translated from the original Sensa or Sensar language. The first is translated by H.P. Blavatsky at the beginning of her *Secret Doctrine*. The second is a translation of some of the stanzas by the Master Djwhal Khul at the beginning of his *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*.
- <sup>38</sup> One of the best editions in English is from Stanford University Press, translated with a commentary by Daniel C. Matt.
- <sup>39</sup> Translated from the rare French manuscript *La Tres Sainte Trinosophe* discovered by Manly Palmer Hall (Los Angeles: Philosophical Research Society, 1962).
- <sup>40</sup> This statement from *The Six Books of Proclus on the Nature of the Gods* reveals one of the secrets of the Mysteries, namely that initiation takes place in the higher worlds.
- <sup>41</sup> See Manly Palmer Hall’s *Secret Teachings of All Ages* (Los Angeles: The Philosophical Research Society, 1927) 21.
- <sup>42</sup> Edward Bulwer Lytton, *Zanoni: A Rosicrucian Tale*, [www.nuvisionpublications.com](http://www.nuvisionpublications.com). (accessed October 12, 2010.)
- <sup>43</sup> *The commentaries of Proclus on the Timaeus of Plato* (London: Thomas Taylor, 1820), 25.
- <sup>44</sup> Rudolf Steiner, *Macrocosm and Microcosm* (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1968), 137.