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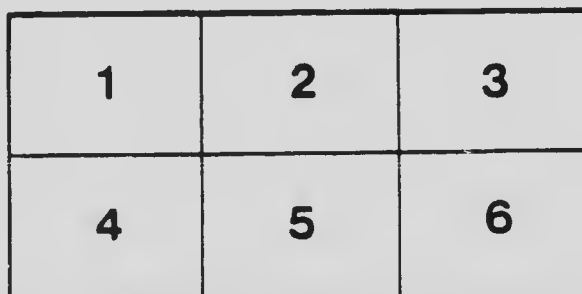
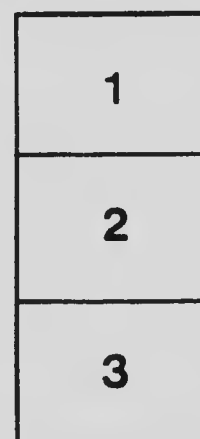
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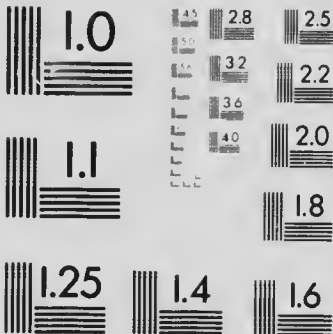
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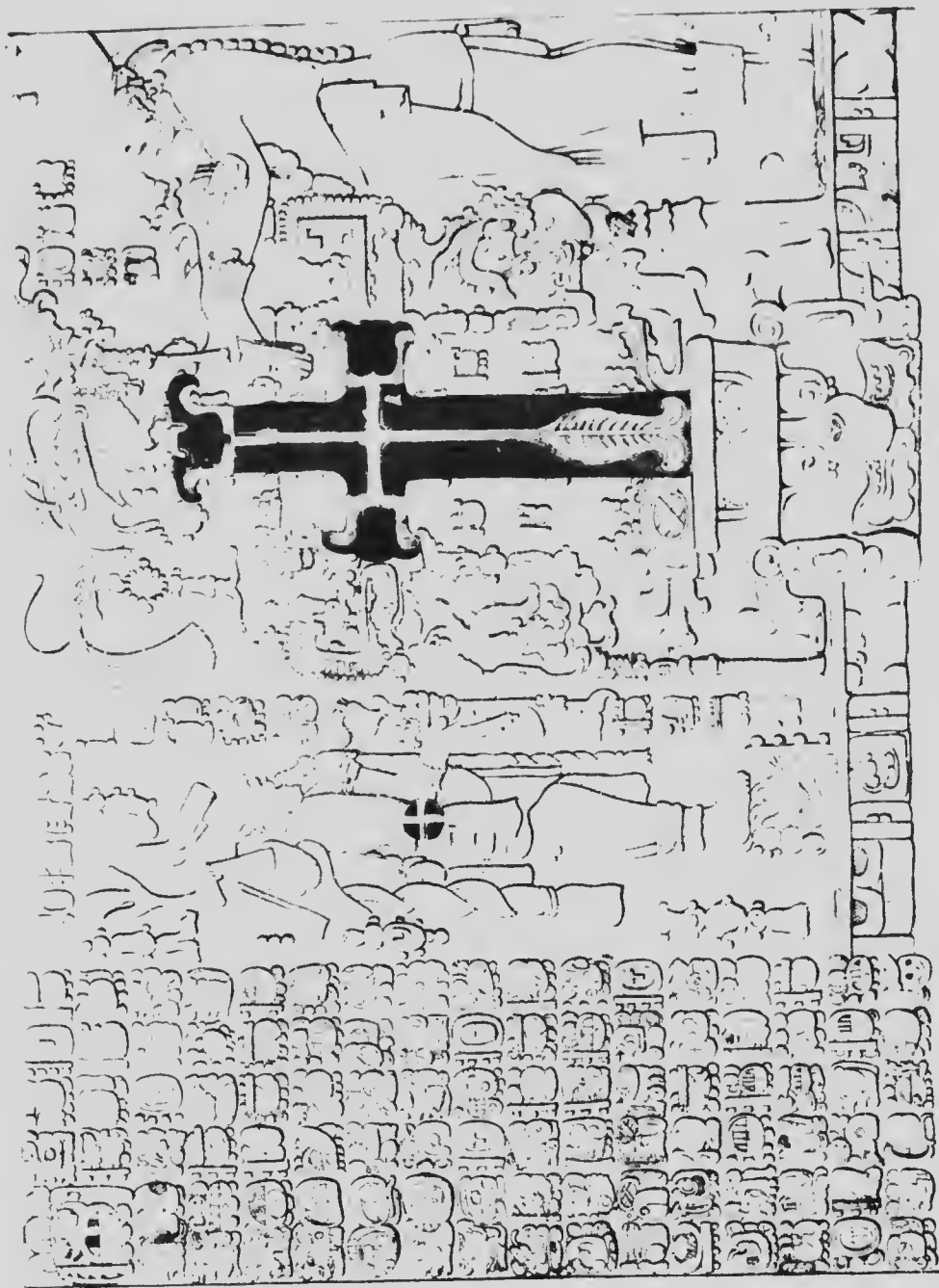
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# THE PRE-CHRISTIAN CROSS

BY  
VERY REV. W. R. HARRIS, D.D., LL.D.

REPRINTED FROM THE ARCHEOLOGICAL REPORT, 1914



The Palenque Cross and Hieratic Writing : in Mexico National Museum.

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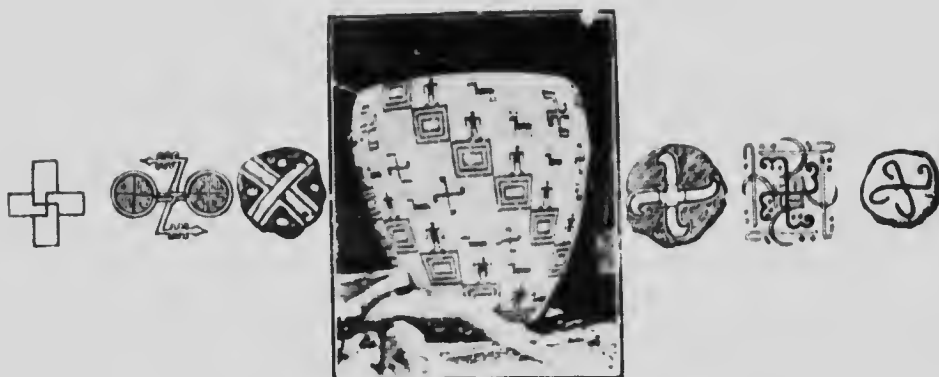
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## THE PRE-CHRISTIAN CROSS

VERY REV. W. R. HARRIS, D.D., LL.D.

In the volume embracing the papers read before the International Congress of Anthropology (Philadelphia, 1893) there is a learned disquisition on "Various Supposed relations between the American and Asiatic races," by that eminent anthropologist, the late Dr. Daniel G. Brinton. After reviewing the reckless statements made by a few writers, who endeavoured to find analogies between the Eskimoan and Ural-Altai races and establish an Asiatic origin for the American Indian, Dr. Brinton continues: "But the inner stronghold of those who defended the Asiatic origin of Mexican and Central-American Civilization is, I am well aware, defended by no such feeble outposts as these, but by a triple line of entrenchment, consisting respectively of the Mexican calendar, the game of Patolli, and the presence of Asiatic Jade in America." In conclusion, he declares that: "Up to the present time there has not been shown a single dialect, not an art or an institution, not a myth or a religious rite, not a domesticated plant or animal, not a tool, weapon, game, or symbol, in use in America at the time of the discovery which had been imported from Asia, or from any other continent of the old world."

I may add that this expression of Dr. Brinton's belief is applauded by many eminent American Antiquaries, who, with him, have now abandoned the search for Egyptian, Babylonian, or Chinese influences underlying the ancient civilization of Central and South America as profitless, if not a waste of time.

But is not Brinton's creed too positive and dogmatic, face to face with the bewildering similarities between the cultures of Asia and America? The great German, Von Humboldt, tells us in his "*Voyages aux régions Equinoxiales : Nouveau Continent*" that he found among the tribes of the Western Continent things and ceremonies similar to what he afterwards saw in parts of Asia. Professor Culin in his paper "America the Cradle of Asia" writes: "We find in America things not only similar to those of Asia, but precisely identical with them." He instances as an example the "Straw Game or Indian Cards" played by the Hurons and among tribes from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast, as identical with the Japanese Yeki and the Chinese Yi. Towards the end of his address he makes this startling statement: "The games of the Eastern Continent—and I speak now of what we know of the remote past—are not only similar to, but practi-

cally identical with those of America, and are not only alike in externals, but in their morphology as well."\*

Tentatively we might venture to explain or account for this singular identity by assuming that it was simply accidental, but this assumption can have no standing in the case of other examples cited by Alexander Von Humboldt and Professor Culin. Take, for example, the cross, particularly that very ancient and hieratic symbol the Grammata Cross commonly known as the Swastika, the mention of which is so strangely omitted or forgotten by Brinton and Culin.

The symbol which, beyond all others, goes back to the Deluge and, for aught we know, to the Garden of Eden, is the cross. Anthropologists and Archaeologists in Europe and America dwell upon its sacredness in many natural religions and have invariably assigned to it a very great antiquity. Nearly all have reverently admitted its origin and symbolic meaning as a great mystery.

In our study of the sacred symbol we will go back to the death of Adam.

#### THE CROSS OF SETH, SON OF ADAM.

Before we begin the study of the mysterious Swastika and the singular rites with which this hieratic symbol was intimately associated among nearly all ancient nations and among many tribes of the old world and the new, let us deal reverently with the Cross of the Crucifixion, its origin and vicissitudes. There is a strange legend, found in the Sacred Books of the Copts, originating in the apocryphal last Gospel of Nicodemus—a ruler in Israel who visited Jesus when darkness shrouded Jerusalem. The legendary narrative informs us that when Adam lay sick unto death, his son Seth appeared at the entrance to the Garden of Eden and begged of the Angel with the flaming sword for a small cruse of oil from the Tree of Mercy that he might anoint the eyes of his dying father. By the side of the Angel guarding the entrance to Paradise stood a Spirit of radiant beauty who, moved by compassion for the sorrowing Seth, went to the Tree of Mercy and broke off a small branch of this tree, so intimately identified with Adam's fall: "Your father died when you were on your way here," said the Spirit to Seth, "but return with this branch and plant it at your father's head, and say to Eve, your mother, that when this branch becomes a tree, and is again planted, it will bear one very precious fruit and that when that fruit is taken from the tree, she and Adam will enter into Paradise."

Seth, returned, opened his father's grave and at the head of Adam planted the branch. In time it grew to be a large and very beautiful tree which was standing and fair to look upon in the reign of the great King Solomon. When Solomon was laying the foundations for his wonderful Temple, he thought of the beautiful tree, and wishing to preserve its wood for all time, ordered it to be cut down and sawed into beams for the Holy Building. The workmen felled the "Tree of Seth," but, when they began to cut out the beams, their saws made no impression on it, so, worn out by repeated trials, they stealthily carried it away by night and threw it across a stream where it was used as a bridge.

As the Queen of Sheba was on her way to visit Solomon she came to this brook, but when she was about to step upon the tree-bridge, she stopped, drew back, and, moved by a feeling she could not control, fell upon her knees and refused to cross the bridge. Then when, brought by another road, she was received with great honours by the King of the Jews, a divining Spirit entered into her and she

\*This scholarly address was published in *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, March, 1903, pp. 534-540.



THE CROSS.  
From the Tridentine Missal

prophesied that a time would come when the death of One who would be the fruit of the bridge-tree would end for all time the Empire of the Jews.

Solomon, astonished and alarmed by her prediction, ordered the tree to be taken away and buried deep in the earth.

Many years after the death of King Solomon, when the Queen of Sheba and the tree were forgotten, the Jews made, over the ground where the tree was buried, a pond for washing sheep, called afterwards the Probatica, or the Pool of Bethesda. At once, because of the sacred wood, this pool became wonderful. The sick and those suffering from disease bathed in the water, then an Angel breathed upon the pool and, all at once the water began to be troubled, and the first person who entered into it after the Angel had passed over received renewed health because of the blessing of the Angel and Seth's tree buried beneath.

Now the morning before Judas betrayed our Saviour, this tree of Seth rose to the surface of the water and was seen floating in the pool by a man named Simon, a Cyrenian. This Simon lifted up the tree from the pool and sold it to a carpenter who, the next day, was commanded to make crosses on which three malefactors were, that afternoon, to be crucified. And one of the malefactors was Jesus of Nazareth. Now from the tree of Seth he made one of the crosses, and this cross was the one that our Saviour, assisted by Simon the Cyrenian, carried from Pilate's Court to Calvary and on which He was crucified, the First and Only Fruit it ever bore.

#### THE CROSS OF JESUS.

We now reach a period when the legendary dissolves into the historic and makes tradition. After the crucifixion, and while the body of Christ lay in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea and the bodies of the two thieves were thrown into the Gehenna, the common dumping ground, as food for fire or carrion-birds, the three crosses and the instruments of crucifixion—the nails and ropes—were buried in conformity with a long established custom of the Jews.

When Constantine the Great and Maxentius contended for the Imperial Crown, Constantine worn with fatigue entered his tent one afternoon and sought repose. While he slept he dreamt that an Angel came to his cot, and, placing a hand upon his head, told him to look up. Then the silken covering of the tent disappeared and the Emperor saw a great and luminous cross in the heavens and, immediately over it, in large letters of burnished gold was the inscription: "By this sign thou shalt conquer." Late that night he again saw in a dream the luminous cross and then Christ appeared to him and told him to carry a figure of the cross on his banner and standards.

Constantine summoned his captains to a consultation and made known the vision. The pagan Emperor and his pagan generals agreed that the dream was of happy omen, and that the voice of the Angel and the apparition of the mysterious Jew meant the friendship and aid of a strange god. The following day, on the Imperial Banner, the cross was blazoned and to the Imperial Standard was given the name "Labarum—the Gift of God." When Constantine met the troops of Maxentius at the Milvan Bridge he won a great victory. His soldiers, though nearly all pagans, went into battle carrying the monogram of Christ on their shields. This battle which was fought October 28, 312, led to the conversion to Christianity of Constantine and his mother, and to the downfall of Paganism as the national faith of Rome.

After defeating Licinius in a pitched battle on the plains of Italy, Constantine returned to Rome and issued his famous "Edict of Tolerance," proclaiming

freedom of worship. Hearing that it was the custom of the Jews to bury the wood on which the condemned were crucified, Constantine asked his mother Helena to go with an Imperial retinue to Jerusalem and find, if possible, the cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified. Helena, then eighty years of age, went to Jerusalem and began her search for the true cross. While excavating at "Golgotha—the Place of Skulls"—the diggers came upon the three crosses, but the title board bearing the inscription "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" was lying at a distance from the crosses and no one could tell to which one of the three it belonged. Macarius, a Christian Bishop, who was standing near, caused the three crosses to be carried, one after the other, to the bedside of a worthy woman who was at the



RUINS OF TEOTIHUACAN.

point of death. The woman by the advice of Macarius placed her hand on each of the crosses, and when she touched that on which Christ was crucified, she was immediately restored to health.

After a time Constantine and his mother erected a magnificent Basilica over the Holy Sepulchre, which was destroyed by the Turks in the 13th Century.

This then is the tradition handed down to us from the early centuries. It may or may not be true.

#### BIRTH OF THE CROSS.

Let us now, before we deal with the Swastika and the commanding symbolism of the cross among the very remote nations of antiquity, glance at the position the cross fills in the Bible, and possibly trace the origin and the conspicuous position it occupies in the iconography (i.e. images, pictures, etc., of ancient arts and religions) of the early races in the old world and in the new.

In the second chapter of Genesis, verse 10, we read: "And a river went out of the place of pleasure to water Paradise, which from thence is divided into four heads"; which means that the river with its tributaries flowed towards the cardinal points, or east, west, north and south. Here we have the cross. From the time of Adam, who lived one hundred and thirty years, the tradition of the locality of paradise and its four rivers, crossing at right angles, would remain in the memory of his scattered descendants. From them it would be transmitted to their successors, who, forgetting the patriarchal religion of Adam and inventing new forms of worship, would yet retain the traditions of Adamic days though in a mutilated and fragmentary form.

They associated the rivers with fertility and abundance, and, as they now had "fashioned gods unto themselves," they quite naturally gave to the god of fertility and of water the symbol of the four rivers of paradise. In the twelfth chapter of Exodus we read: "And take the blood (of the lamb) and mark the upper door posts of the houses and the lintels." This instruction is given as a command to Moses by an Angel with the voice and in the Name of God, and by Moses delivered to the Chosen People the night before the Angel of Death strikes the first-born "in the land of Egypt both of man and beast." St. Jerome in his dissertation on the 95th Psalm, contends that the mark of blood on the door posts of the enslaved children of Israel took the form of a cross, thus **T**, the Hebrew Tan, and he is probably right, for as the lamb symbolised our Saviour—the Lamb of God—and the blood, His blood, it was fitting that the cross on which He was to be crucified should appear and establish the symbolic unity of the Triune God.\*

Once more, and for the last time before the real cross, the Cross of Jesus Christ, is raised aloft for the Redemption of the human race, the symbol of the cross confronts us in Holy Writ. It is worthy of remark that in this instance, as in the case of the redeemed Israelites, the cross is intimately associated with blood and mercy. This is what we read in the ninth Chapter of Ezekiel, fourth verse: "Go through the midst of the City (God is commanding His Angel) through the midst of Jerusalem and mark Tan—**T**—upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and mourn." By the mark of the cross on their foreheads the destroying Angels knew those who should be spared and passed them with a benediction.

#### THE CROSS OF TEOTIHUACAN.

Twenty-seven miles south-east from the City of Mexico, on the way to the sea, are the ruins of an ancient Toltec city covering an area of about two miles. Very

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\*Our Saviour was crucified on a Tau-T-Cross. The small headpiece bearing the inscription, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews," was nailed to the transverse beam of the Tau, thus forming what is now called the Latin Cross, thus **+**. Death by the cross was common among the Syrians, Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, Romans and Jews. Pharaoh's chief baker was beheaded and his body fastened to a cross (Gen. xl: 19). Haman prepared a great cross on which to hang Mordecai (Esth. vii: 10). The Jews do not admit that they crucified living men. They contend that they first put them to death, and then fastened them to the cross by the neck or the hands. But though there are many examples of men thus hung on the cross after death, there are indisputable proofs of living crucifixions in their history. The worshippers of Baal-Peor (Num. xxv: 4) and the King of Ai (Josh. vii: 22) were hung on the cross alive. Alexander Jannaeus, King and High Priest of Jerusalem, seventy years before the Christian Era, crucified eight hundred of his rebellious subjects at a great entertainment organized for his friends. The seven sons of Saul were also crucified, while alive, by the Gideonites, and this was done by permission of King David (2 Sam. xx: 9). The three hundred citizens of Tyre crucified on the seashore by order of Alexander the Great were nailed to the "Cross Ansata or Phallic." The Macedonian general ordered the crucifixion by the Phallic to show his contempt for a people who were given to phallic worship.

near these ruins is the quaint village or mission of San Juan de Teotihuacan which, at once, offers to the antiquary two of the most remarkable examples of Toltec remains in stone yet found in the Republic of Mexico.

When, in 1519, Cortes, with his mailed company of heroic fighters, on his way to the conquest of Mexico, passed this heap of ruins, more than one thousand years had expired since the foundations of the ancient city were laid.

Around the walls of this capital of a very old and half-civilized empire the two oldest civilizations of America, the Quiché from the south and the Nahoé from the north, met and united. Here are the famous and very curious pyramids of the Sun and the Moon. They rise from the banks of the little river of Teotihuacan. Here also is the Street of the Dead, and here—cut from a single block of stone—was found, not long ago, the cross of Teotihuacan, now in the National Museum, Mexico City. We will return to it, but let it rest for the present.

#### UNIVERSALITY OF THE CROSS IN ANCIENT TIMES.

In Egypt, in the days of the Pharaohs, the cross figured on the gigantic statue of the god Serapis, which, three centuries before the Christian Era, was transported by order of Ptolemy Soter to Sinape on the southern shore of the Black Sea. Six centuries after the death of Soter, this Egyptian idol with its cross was destroyed by the soldiers of the Emperor Theodosius, against the pleadings of the priests of Isis and Sorosis to spare the cross, the emblem of their god and of generations yet unborn.

Among the Phœnicians, the Tyrians, the Carthaginians and Sidonians, the cross occupied a conspicuous place in iconography, that is in their ancient religious art, as represented by symbols, images and mural sculpture.

With the serpent it was a central object of reverence among nearly all ancient races. It is figured on the Phœnician coins found among the ruins of Trocadero. It was found, wonderfully sculptured and embellished, in the sand-buried Nineveh. Rollin, in his history of ancient peoples, says that Alexander the Great, when he reduced, and entered with his soldiers, the city of Tyre, crucified on the sea shore three hundred of its noblest citizens, and "this the Macedonian did," writes Plutarch, "to show his contempt for the cross, which they worshipped."

The Phœnician "Temple of Gigantia" was built in the form of a cross.

In India it was the symbol of Buddha and was cut by the Brahmins into the walls of the Cave of Elephanta, one thousand years before the Redemption. It is seen to-day in India in the hands of the statue of Siva, Brahma and Vishnu. Among the Gauls, in Caesar's time, it was the sign of their water god, and the Druids used it in their religious ceremonies.

#### THE CROSS IN ANCIENT AMERICA.

When the Spanish missionaries learned, soon after the discovery of America, that the cross was worshipped in Mexico and Central America they did not know whether they ought to account for its existence and adoration among these strange people to the pious zeal of St. Thomas, the Apostle of the Indies, or to the sac-religious subtlety of Satan.

Sahagun in his "*Cronica de Nueva Espana*" informs us that the cross was an object of worship in the great temple of Cosmucel, Yucata. He writes: "At the foot of the tower of the temple, there was an enclosure of stone work, graceful and turreted; and in the middle was a cross ten palmos high. This they held and adored as (the symbol of) the god of rain." (Lib. I. C. 2.)

In 1878, the French anthropologist Désiré Charney discovered an abandoned and ruined city in the country of the Lacandon, Chiapas. By a strange coincidence Charney met here the English explorer, Mr. Alfred Maudsley and his companions. This newly discovered ruin is supposed to be the Phantom City of Stephens. This phantom city, according to Charney in his "Ancient Cities of the New World," (Chap. 22), stands on the left bank of the Largauitos River, in a region hitherto unexplored between Guatemala, Quezaltenango and Chiapas.

Among the strange things discovered in the great ruin, Charney tells us of a bas-relief which he describes in his book, and from which we quote: "It fills the central door of the temple and is 3ft. 6 in. long by 2 ft. 10 in. wide. Two figures with retreating foreheads form the main subject, having the usual head-dress of feathers, cape, collar, medallion and maxtli. The taller of these two figures holds in each hand a large cross, while the other bears but one in his right hand. Rosettes end the arms of the crosses, a symbolic bird crowns the upper portion, while twenty-three Katunes are scattered about the bas-relief. We think this a symbolic representation of Tlaloe, the Maya god of rain, whose chief attribute was a cross."

Charney, in his deeply interesting work, presents drawings of crosses found in the pre-Toltec city of Mitla, Mexico, at Mayapan, Yucatan, and indeed of crosses found all over the land from the Southern Guatemala to Northern Mexico.

Everywhere, even to-day, may be seen diversified forms of the cross, more or less artistically delineated on the walls of the temples, on ancient buildings, on galleries and natural rocks, in caves and on vases and pottery dug from the soil.

In the pre-Columbian city of Palenque, Chiapas, there dominates the forest shrouded ruins a remarkable building, known to American antiquaries as the Temple of the Cross. This structure bears a striking resemblance, in its dilapidation, to an early Italian temple and, in age, probably antedates by many years the Roman Coliseum.

The floors of the corridors and of many of the rooms are laid in cement as hard as the best seen in the remains of Roman buildings. The walls are about ten feet high and some carry the Greek cross + while others bear the Hebrew or Egyptian

**T** These crosses have occasioned much learned speculation.

In the inner sanctuary of this temple was found in 1783 a wonderful tablet in stone, now in the National Museum, Mexico City. It is called popularly the "Palenque Cross" and, archaeologically, "La Cruz Enramada de Palenque." It is eleven feet wide by six feet high. It deserves to be examined closely. The man standing to the right of the cross and holding aloft a newly born babe is the god of fecundity returning thanks to Votan, the Jupiter of the Mayas, for driving from the land the evil spirit of sterility. The opposite figure represents Hunaphue, one of the gods, who serves and ministers to the supreme god Votan. On his scarf is the transverse cross, emblematic of fertility among the Quichés, the Mayas, and of all the semi-civilized or civilized races of Mexico and Central America long before the coming of the Spaniard. It was also, among the Egyptians the symbol of the equinoxes or times of rain. The bird perched upon the cross is the Cnevite or Royal Quetzal, sacred to the sun. The hieroglyphics on the left of the tablet, among them the Tan, have not to this day been deciphered. If we could read them they, perhaps, would explain the full meaning of the representation and might furnish a clue to all the hieroglyphics on the ancient monuments of Mexico and Central America.

This tablet of the cross, with its mysterious figures and symbolic writing, has led to more learned speculation than any other relic—the "Calendar Stone" alone



excepted—found in the vast regions of Mexico and Yucatan. The French military explorer, Capt. Dupaix (1807) and his commentators believe Palenque belongs to a very remote antiquity and antedates by many years the Christian Era. He accounts for the appearance of the cross among these ancient Americans on the



STATUE OF HUNAPHUE. PALENQUE.

assumption that it was known and had a symbolic meaning among pre-Christian nations long before it was established as the emblem of Christianity.

Desire Charney mentions another tablet of the cross found also at Palenque, one panel which is now in the Smithsonian Institute, Washington.

The English archaeologist, Alfred Maudsley, who, in 1879, explored the ruins of Palenque, agrees with Charney when he states: "That it was a cherished symbol among nearly all ancient races in Asia and America thousands of years before it was accepted as the symbol of the Christian Faith at the time of Constantine."

Conceding his contention to be true, we are then brought face to face with a problem of serious import, and that is: What did the cross stand for, or what did it symbolize to those ancient peoples and those lost civilizations?

Without, in any way, compromising my independence of thought, or identifying myself with any party, I am free to state what, in my opinion, the pre-Columbian cross in America symbolized in the religious lives of the Mexicans and Mayas. From the dim traditions which yet linger among the tribes of Central America, from the civilized Indians, and from conversations held with the priests ministering to these Indians, I am satisfied that the cross was the symbol of the god of rain, of water, and fertility. I refer now to what we call the Greek cross  $\Gamma$  and not to the Swastika with which I will presently deal. The Mexican astronomer, Pelagio Gama, is of the opinion that the "Cross of Teotihuacan" served for an astronomical expression of the vernal and autumnal equinoxes when days and nights are of the same length: the times, March 21st and September 22, when the sun in its revolution stops for a moment, crossing the Equator.



RUNIC STONE. ZEELAND.  
*Pre-Christian.*

It was to the cross that the dwellers on the Aztec Plateau made a pilgrimage to Cholula to invoke the help of Quetzalcoatl, god of the winds, and offer sacrifices to him that he might send down rain upon their parched lands.

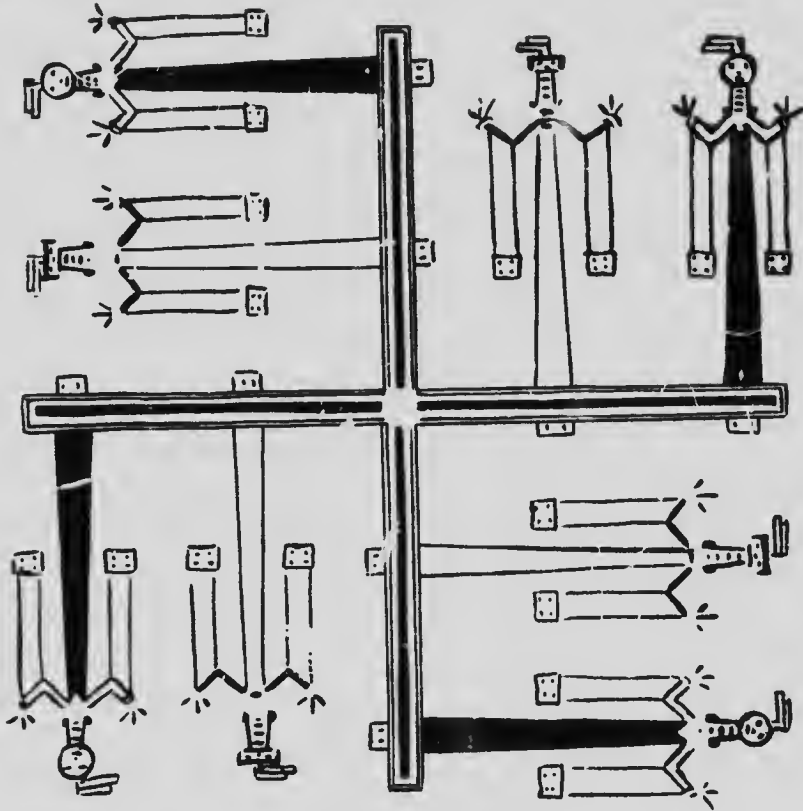
At the foot of the cross the people of Oaxaca offered their supplications to Votan, "Heart of the Heavenly Kingdom," when their lands were parched with prolonged droughts, and it was before the "Cross of Cozumel" the Mayas and Quichés stood when they petitioned their god Chuehucan to send them rain and save their crops from the locusts and the hot winds. The temple of the cross on the Island of Cozumel off the coast of Yucatan was frequented, at times, by such multitudes from Tabasco, Chiapas, Honduras and Yucatan that paved roads were constructed from the distant towns to the shore where embarkation was made for Cozumel (Gogolludo, "Hist. de Yucatan," Book IV. C. 9.)

It is a singular and striking analogy, that among the Egyptians in the time of Moses, the cross was also the symbol of rain and fertility. Placed in the hand of Osiris, it was the emblem of spring, and in the hand of Isis it represented autumn and the inundation of the Nile. In Yucatan the crosses in the temples of Nachan, the god of dews, and the Taus— $\Gamma$ —discovered in the ruins of Chi-Chin-Itza symbolized the overflow of the waters of the Uzunmacinta and Tabasco Rivers on the

bordering lands. As the inundation of the Egyptian Nile is periodic and caused by the great rains falling on the mountains of Ethiopia, so the overflow of the two rivers of the peninsula of Yucatan results from the rains which fall on the distant mountains of Caahumatanes.

#### THE SWASTIKA CROSS.

I was in Tucson, Southern Arizona, fourteen years ago, when a jeweler showed me a strangely designed scarf-pin he had made to the order of a lady, a guest at the Santa Rita Hotel. It was fashioned in gold and the design was peculiar and



THE SWASTIKA CROSS.  
On Navaho Altar Floor.

unique. The jeweler asked me if I had anywhere seen anything like it and, if so, by what name was it known? I answered that I had seen the design painted on Navajoe blankets and on Zuni and Papago ceremonial articles on exhibition in the anthropological department of the Field Columbian Museum, Chicago. I could not tell him the name of the symbol or what it stood for. So far as I know, this strangely fashioned gold pin was the first of its kind made in the United States and with it began the remarkable vogue which made the uncanny design a popular ornament as a belt buckle, brooch, scarf and hat pin.

The jewelers and curio dealers will tell you now that this weird design with each of its four arms bent to a right angle is called the "Swastika" and that it is an Indian amulet conferring good luck and prosperity on the wearer. The Tucson

jeweler, had he known of the wonderful properties of the thing he had just finished, might have sold a gross of the enchanted pins, in a few weeks, to the citizens of Arizona and to tourists from the east.

This mysterious symbol, wherever found, in Europe, Asia, Northern Africa, or America, marks the migration of a great and numerous race of a common origin or of common religious affiliations. It was the symbol of the water god of the Gauls and is known to French and German anthropologists as the *Gramponné*. Among the Scandinavians it was the "Hammer of Thor" their war god. It was cut into the temple stones dug by Schlieman from the ruins of Troy, and burned into the terra-cotta urns found by Desire Charney in the pre-Toltec city of Teotihuacan, Mexico. It was an iconism of the ancient Phoenicians and was carved on the walls of the inner sanctuary of the Temple of Gigantea. It was chiseled thousands of years before the Redemption, by the Brahmins on the sacrificial stones in the Cave of Elephanta, India.

It is the "Hylfol" cross of Buddha and is seen to-day on the breast of Buddha, in China; and many of the ancient temples of India, Barmah, Cambodia, Java, and Corea show a high development of the Swastika in ornamental embellishment. Bishop Hanlon, Vicar-Apostolic of the Upper Nile, says: (I. C. Missions, Oct., 1894) that it is a symbol of worship among the Ladaeks, a Buddhist community, living in Gebel-Silsili and in the land of Edfou, Egypt.

When we search for it in Europe and America we are surprised to learn that Cedric the Gaul carries it on the sail of his ship when he enters the port of Bally, Isle of Man, one hundred and fifty years before the Christian Era. It was venerated by the pagan Icelanders, as a magic sign of the god of the winds and by the Celtic Druids in their forest rites in the oak groves of Ireland and Scotland.

In a foot note to the Sagas, first edition of Longfellow's Poems, we are told that the Hammer of Thor, the Scandinavian god, who gave his name to Thursday, was shaped like a Swastika. It was with this mighty hammer Thor crushed the head of the Midgard serpent and destroyed the giants. Longfellow, after recording the conversion to Christianity of King Olaf tells us in charming verse how the King kept Christmas or Yule-tide at Drontheim:

O'er his drinking horn, the sign  
He made of the Cross Divine,  
As he drank and muttered his prayers;  
But the Berserks evermore  
Made the sign of the Hammer Thor  
Over theirs

Long after the conversion to Christianity of the Norsemen the Swastika hammer of Thor was retained in festal ceremonies and was often introduced to ecclesiastical decorations.

The eminent Egyptologist, Prof. Edouard Naville, when excavating (1912) in Abydos, the modern Arabat, Upper Egypt, tells us he found the Swastika on the tomb of Osiris and among the inscriptions and designs on tablets buried for five thousand years in Upper and Lower Egypt.\*

Professor Petrie says it is on the pictorial representation of the "Judgment of Death," done sometime after Menes, the first of the Pharaohs, became the god Osiris.

Among the wonderful articles--paintings, statuary and unfamiliar objects--on exhibition in the Boston Museum there is a large painting on silk. This is the "Fugie" which six hundred years ago hung in a Temple of Buddha, Japan. It

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\*Encyclop. Met. Article, Egypt.

pictures Buddha seated on a throne of ivory and gold, surrounded by winged spirits and, higher up in the painting, two minor divinities. Between these two divinities in the centre of a golden ring is a brilliant Swastika resting on a cushion of silk. It is sacred to Buddha and is one of the marks by which his worshippers will know him, when he returns to earth.

In the woven fabrics found in Swiss lake dwellings of Neolithic man, in Scandinavia and in nearly all parts of Europe, we find this strange emblem. It is cut into the old Devonshire stones, a good specimen of which is in the Museum of Torquay, England. It was a sacred sign among the British Druids and, strangest of all, among the Nilotic negroes, it is to-day found shaven upon the heads of locally famous warriors.\*



THE CROSS OF CEBRIC THE 3

Turning now to ancient America and looking over the known pre-Columbian world we see the Swastika on monuments, sacrificial altars and on small and comparatively insignificant articles of pottery and moulded ware.

M. Desire Charney as late as 1869, in his expedition to Mexico and Yucatan, dug up the, now well known, "Cross of Teotihuacan," which had been fashioned and set up in the once populous city by the Toltecs in honour of Tlaloc, their god of rain and fertility.† Dr. Hamy, who read a paper before the Académie des Sciences, Nov. 1882, supports M. Charney in his contention that the cross everywhere in America symbolized water and fertility. Of the time when this cross was raised in Teotihuacan we may only conjecture.

The Mexico-Spanish historian Torquemada writes (Tome 2, Lib. 7, p. 23 of his History), that Tlaloc was the oldest of the Toltec gods. Certainly Tula and Teotihuacan seem to have been nearly coeval. Tula, according to the native historian Ixtlilxochitl, was founded A.D. 556; Clavigero has it A.D. 667, while Vetia makes it as late as A.D. 713. Even if we accept Vetia's date the cross is very old. At the base of this cross when found was a Swastika boldly sculptured and dedicated to Tezcatlipoca, the god of the winds.

\*"Uganda," Sir H. Johnston, Fig. 143.

†"Cités et Ruines Américaines," p. 48 *et seq.*

‡Ellan, Vannin, Dy, Bragh—"The Middle Island for Ever." The Manx motto is—*Quocunque Jeceris stabit*—"In whatever direction you throw him, he will stand," referring to the three legs on the shield.



STATUE OF BUDDHA. COLOSSAL FIGURE FROM CHINA.

In the last edition of the *Encyc. Americana*, we read that the Swastika has been exhumed from burial mounds within the limits of the United States.

Baron von Humboldt in his "*Voyages aux Regions Equinoxiales du Nouveau Continent*" (Hauff, 1859, p. 93) tells us it was a conspicuous ornament on the tombs of the Incas of Peru.

Professor Herbert J. Spinden in his "*Study of Maya Art*" (Cambridge Press, 1913) assures us that everywhere in Yucatan and Central America the Swastika is found on the ancient buildings. It fills a conspicuous place in America to-day in the religious rites of the Navajoes, the Zuni and Papago Indians in New Mexico and Arizona. The sacred totem of the Crow Indians, both Mountain and River men, is the Swastika placed above two circles with another Swastika on a disk in the centre of a circle. ("*Signs and Symbols of Primordial Man*," Churchwar 1910.)



TERRA COTTA URN.  
Pre-Christian Saeden.

The elaboration of this cross in ancient religious and ceremonial rites leading to identities in strange and mysterious features, has proved to be one of the most singular phenomena of native culture throughout the World and indeed in the Old. Nor has anyone been able to account for the perpetuity and universality of this obscure figure.

Professor Black and John Fiske, late of Harvard, say it is of Phallic origin, but it bears no resemblance to the "*Crux Ansata*," the true Phallic icon, resting in the hand of Serapis at Sinape and destroyed by the soldiers of Theodosius. John Fiske and Prof. Black, when giving a Phallic origin to the Swastika, forget that nowhere in America has anything been found, or any tradition been handed down, indicating the existence, in the remote past of the people, of Phallic worship.

#### SYMBOLISM OF THE SWASTIKA.

Among the ancient races of the Old Continents and among the pre-historic Southern Indians of North America, and among the early Peruvians, the Swastika was the emblem of the sun and of the winds which blew from the four cardinal points.



Methen Cup.

NOTE.—Methen Cups were in common use among the early Celts in Ireland and Scotland. The ordinary drinking-vessel was a *methen* (so called from mead or meth, a fermented liquor of honey and water), made of wood and, at meals or drinking-bouts, passed from hand to hand, each giving it to his neighbour after taking a drink. Many of these ancient *methens* are preserved in public museums and in private collections. The *swastika* and the Latin cross are carved side by side on a few of the cups. They are found in deep bogs and in remote mountain wilds of Scotland and Ireland and are now becoming very rare. Their antiquity is very great, and when found are generally blackened with age, resembling bog oak. The photo reproduction is from a cup now in possession of Dr. Charles O'Reilly, "Ballinlough Lodge," St. Clair Avenue, Toronto. It is an exact duplicate of the cup now preserved in Ballinlough Castle, County Meath, the homestead of the O'Reillys of Brefney. The original cup has been in the possession of the O'Reillys since the time (1596) when the Irish chief, Malimora the "Handsome," better known in Irish history as Myles O'Reilly—"The Slasher," fell at the Battle of the Yellow Ford detending the Bridge of Finea against the invaders of his country. As the cup carries the pagan Swastika and the Christian Cross it probably belongs to the fourth century, when the Irish Celts were passing from Druidism to Christianity.



The god of the winds was the first offspring of the sun who was, at his rising in the east, saluted with the "Blazing Torch." When the Shaman after saluting the sun, turned to the four points from which came the winds he formed a cross and the blaze blown by the winds fell away from the torch and formed the right angles which, in time, suggested the Swastika. Let me illustrate my meaning. In the Tenth Letter of Father De Smets, "Life and Travels among the North American Indians," edited by Major Chittenden (Funk, Wagnalls, N.Y.), there is an interesting account of the customs, religious rites and habits of the Assiniboins.

The great missionary was a privileged guest when the salutation to the Sun and the Four Winds and Water occurred among the Assiniboins. He writes: "Sometimes three or four hundred lodges of families assemble in one locality. One sole individual is named the High Priest and directs all the ceremonies of the Festival . . . After these preliminaries the ceremony begins with an address and a prayer to the Great Spirit. He implores Him to accept their gifts, to take pity on them, to save them from accidents and misfortunes of all kinds. Then the Priest holds aloft the smoking Calumet to the Great Spirit, then to the Sun, to each of the Four Cardinal Points and at each time to the Earth."\*

Writing of the Cheyennes, Colonel Henry Luman, one time scout and trapper with General Crooke, informs us that this formidable "people had no religion: "if, indeed, we except the respect paid to the pipe. In offering the pipe to the sun, the earth and the winds, the motion made in so doing by them describes the form of a cross; in blowing the first four whiffs, the smoke is invariably sent in the same four directions."†

Here then we have the rectangular cross coming down through the ages from the time when, in the Garden of Eden, the rivers crossed and made Eden a Paradise of fertility, and the Swastika of Vedic India retaining the basic cross but altered by the dip of the torch in the hand of the priest, or by the blowing of the flame by the four winds which the Swastika symbolised.

#### THE CROSS IN THE DESERT.

When travelling in lower California a few years ago, I began on a beautiful morning the ascent of the mount overlooking the little Indian Village of San Hilario. As I advanced I looked up and saw something raise itself above me like a thing alive. It was a giant Saguaro, a candelabrum cactus, and near it a yucca tree, whose cream-like blossoms, trembling in the glorious sunlight, seemed strangely out of place in such forbidding surroundings. Higher up and to my left as I ascended I came to a rough and weather-worn cross standing in isolation by the lonely path. It marked the spot where five years before, an Indian wood-gatherer was slain and his body mutilated. On my return to the squalid village I learned that it was a custom among the Cochimis—Digger Indians—to raise a cross over a lonely grave or mark the place where a murder had been committed. The Padres—the missionary fathers—are gone and the chapels they built in the

\*The Cross and the Swastika in America, particularly in Yucatan and Mexico, are frequently mentioned by the early writers, such as: Garcia, "De Los Indios," Book 3, Chap. VI, p. 109; Sahagun, "Hist. de la Nueva Espana," Book 1, Chap. 11: Ixtlilxochtl, "Hist. des Chichimeques," p. 5; Cogolludo, "Hist. de Yucatan," Book 4, Chap. IX; Sotomayor, "Hist. de el Iza y de el Lacandon," Book 3, Chap. 8. In truth, if all references to the Cross were collected from the books and pamphlets left by the Mexican-Spanish writers of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, and bound together, they would make a large volume.

†The old Sante Fé Trail, p. 244.

wilderness are now melancholy ruins, but the wandering savage in the desert or on the mountain yet retains the tradition of the sanctity of the cross. The fire the Franciscan Fathers kindled, yet lives, and in every scattered encampment of the Digger Indians, and in every half-breed Nacal, a wooden or grass-woven cross reminds the Peninsular Indians of the Story of the Cross told to their dead sires by the Spanish missionaries, and "So it is," writes Henry C. Van Dyke, "the untutored dwellers of the desert have cherished what the inhabitants of the cities and the fertile plains have thrown away." Borrowing the language of the poet we may also say:

"This is all  
The gain we reap from all the wisdom sown  
Through ages; nothing doubted those first sons  
Of Time, while we, the schooled of centuries,  
Nothing believe."

And now may I end this dissertation on the cross with Longfellow's beautiful reference to the "Cross of Snow," in the Colorado range, a photographic reproduction of which appeared in the London *Graphic* not long ago.

In the long, sleepless watches of the night,  
A gentle face—the face of one long dead—  
Looks at me from the wall, where 'round its head  
The night-lamp casts a halo of pale light,  
Here in this room she died; and soul more white  
Never through fire of martyrdom was led  
To its repose; nor can in books be read  
The legend of a life more benedight.  
There is a Mountain in the distant West  
That sun-defying in its deep ravines  
Displays a Cross of snow upon its side.  
Such is the Cross I wear upon my breast  
These eighteen years, through all the changing scenes  
And seasons, changeless since the day she died.

