

IMPORTANT SYMBOLS

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A GLOSSARY OF
IMPORTANT SYMBOLS

IN THEIR HEBREW, PAGAN AND
CHRISTIAN FORMS

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INTRODUCTION

Each year, the stream of travel increases and many people are brought in contact with ancient terms and devices with which they are totally unfamiliar. Each year, new classes are formed in the History of Art and thousands of students enter art schools where they copy classic designs which represented in the past the customs and beliefs of powerful and intelligent people.

In order to thoroughly enjoy historical and religious works or to interpret the exact language of form and color in ancient buildings, it is necessary to be acquainted with the most important emblems, from their origin in the past to the present application of these terms.

The Bible contains the largest number of symbols of any history in the world. Readers and teachers need to be familiar with the popular forms of expression employed by Hebrew, Pagan and Christian, in order to interpret correctly the Scriptures as well as classic and romantic literature.

Architects, sculptors, decorators and illustrators of fact and fiction, designers of book covers and plates, smiths and jewelers are often at a loss to find an object which will lend itself to their design and at the same time typify something or someone that they desire to suggest or memorialize in its plan.

The reasons governing the connection between the larger number of symbols and their meanings are so wrapped in myth and legend that an entire volume is often necessary to explain a few emblems. The

greatest need seems to be—which are the important symbols and what do they signify.

Therefore, the compiler of this manual respectfully submits to all readers, travelers and students, a list of symbols culled from her collection of notes covering a period of nine years' study upon the subject and an equal number of trips abroad. In the majority of cases the emblem has been personally verified. Also, a selected bibliography of helpful books for those who desire to make a study of the subject. All of these works may be found either in the libraries of Boston or of Chicago.

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EXAMPLES

<i>Medium</i>	<i>Place</i>
Architecture and Sculpture.	Temples of Egypt, India, China and Japan. Cathedrals and other early churches of Europe. Monuments. Tombs. Ornaments. Amulets.
Painting.	Tomb decorations in Egypt and India. Kakemonos or wall hangings in China and Japan. Frescoes, easel pictures and illuminated manuscript. Stained glass windows. Heraldic shields and banners. Porcelain and pottery in folk lore designs.
Weavings and Embroideries.	Tapestry from Babylonian times to the present; rugs, carpets, brocades, tissues, and garments.
Crafts work in chiseling, incising and carving.	Coins, medals, seals, ornaments, altar ware, table ware, and jewelry.

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T R E E S

“ The festival of the Christmas tree is the survival of tree worship among the Germans. The first care of the missionaries was to cut down the groves of the pagans and to consecrate the spot by the erection of a chapel. One of the last vestiges of a grove is the tree ‘Stock am Eisen’ in Vienna.”—*Fergusson*.

The ancients attached the utmost importance to the significance of trees, their poetic and impressive language. We find this when we read the Scriptures, look at our oriental rugs, or examine a Gothic cathedral.

HEBREW AND PAGAN FORM

THE TREE OF LIFE OR UNIVERSE TREE

<i>Country</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Signification</i>
EGYPTIAN	Date Palm	1. Life in the abstract. 2. Residence of the gods.
ASSYRIAN	Pine Seven budded, seven branched.	Completeness.
CHALDEAN	Date Palm	Food for the soul.
SCANDINAVIAN	Ash “ Yggdrasil ”	Meeting place of the gods.
INDIAN	Pine	Fertility.
ZOROASTRIAN	Cypress	Emblem of Ormuzd, Creator of light.
GERMAN	Wishing Thorn	Divine succor and guidance.

RESIDENCE TREES

(Conventional and natural)

EGYPTIAN	Sycamore	1. Residence of Hathor as goddess of the West.
“	“	2. Residence of Nut, Goddess of creative power.
“	Acacia	Residence of Osiris, god of the sun.
“	Tamarisk	
PHŒNICIAN	Cypress	Astarte, goddess of virility.
CASHMERE	Five trees of the Garden of Indra	Ambrosial sap for the gods.

RESIDENCE TREES—Continued

<i>Country</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Signification</i>
PERSIAN	Cypress	Residence of Mithra. Emblem of Zoroaster. Sovereign power.
BABYLONIAN	Palm	Residence of Istar, the divine mother.
GRECIAN	Willow	Birthplace of Hera, divine mother.
ROMAN	Myrrh	Birthplace of Adonis, god of beauty.
JAPANESE	Icho or Gingko tree	Sacred emblem of the gods: Eternal life.

GEM BEARING TREES OF PARADISE

EGYPTIAN	Golden Sycamore of gem fruits and flowers	Sacred to Nut as god- dess of the sky.
EAST INDIAN	Gem bearing tree	Sacred to Buddha.
CHINESE	Pearl bearing tree of Paradise	Purity in eternity.
ASSYRIAN	Luminous gem bearing tree	The Great Light of the god.

TREE OF HAPPINESS

MOHAMMEDAN	Bearing all man- ner of fruits	Paradise: Joys of the Tooba.
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CALENDAR TREE

CHINESE	“Ming Kap” or Monthly tree. Fifteen buds on right of central stem and fifteen on left; one falls daily	Time's flight.
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THE PINE TREE

EGYPTIAN AND ASSYRIAN	Natural form	Symbolic tree of the gods.
CHINESE	“	Longevity.
JAPANESE	“	Longevity: Emblem- atic of spirits of Tak- asago and Suminoye. Conjugal affection and long life.