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— Harvard University —

VOL. II.

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF OLD AND NEW WORLD CIVILIZATIONS

A COMPARATIVE RESEARCH BASED ON A STUDY OF THE
ANCIENT MEXICAN RELIGIOUS, SOCIOLOGICAL
AND CALENDRICAL SYSTEMS

BY

ZELIA NUTTALL

Honorary Special Assistant of the Peabody Museum

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SEVEN PLATES AND SEVENTY-THREE ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

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EDITORIAL NOTE.

THE author of this volume explains in her preface how she came to be led beyond her special field of research into a comparative study of the early civilizations of the Old World; and how she traced the origin of the swastika, in Mexico, to an astronomical source and, in all countries alike, found its use as a sacred symbol accompanied by evidences of a certain phase of culture based on pole-star worship, and the recognition of the fixed laws of nature, which found expression in the ideal of celestial kingdoms or states organized on a set numerical plan and regulated by the apparent revolutions of circumpolar constellations.

The results of the author's researches seem to justify her summary of conclusions; but she distinctly states that she does not wish to propound any theory. She invites further study and discussion by Orientalists and Americanists before drawing final conclusions from the facts she has gathered. The publication of this paper will open anew the consideration of pre-Columbian visits to the New World, shown, as many have believed, by identities too many and too close to be considered as mere resemblances or as the natural results of independent intellectual development.

The illustrations are nearly all from drawings by the author. The analytical Index has been prepared by Miss Mead. It will be seen, by the numbering at the bottom of each page, that it was at first intended to include this paper in Volume I of the Archaeological and Ethnological Papers of the Museum; but the addition of the text relating to the Old World made too bulky a volume, and it is therefore issued as Volume II of the series.

To Mrs. Nuttall for the gift of her work, the results of years of research, and to the several generous friends who have provided the means for publishing this volume, the editor expresses his gratitude in behalf of the Museum.

F. W. PUTNAM,
Curator of the Peabody Museum.

Harvard University,
March 1, 1901.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

IN February, 1898, while engaged upon the translation and commentary of the anonymous Hispano-Mexican MS. of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Library, of Florence, my interest was suddenly and unexpectedly diverted from my self-imposed task by the circumstances described in the opening pages of the present publication.

Laying my work aside, as I then supposed, for a few days only, I seized the new thread of investigation with a keen and enthusiastic interest, little knowing that it, in turn, was not only to hold me fast for nearly three years, but was to lead me out of my original field of research, into distant, and to me, hitherto untrodden realms, in close pursuit of facts relating to the oldest forms of religion, social organization, and symbolism.

The first portion of the present publication was planned as a short monograph of forty-one pages, treating of the origin of the native swastika or cross symbols, and was written in July, 1898, its outcome being the unforeseen conclusion that the cosmical conceptions of the ancient Mexicans were identical with those of the Zuñis. I next traced the same fundamental set of ideas in Yucatan, Central America and Peru and formed the wish to add this investigation to the preceding. The result has been the portion of the work extending from page 41, paragraph 2, to page 284, which was printed in 1899.

Having once launched into a course of comparative research, the deep interest I have always taken in the question of Asiatic contact led me to carry my investigation of the same subject into China. It then seemed impossible not to extend researches from Eastern to Western Asia, and from Asia Minor to Egypt, Greece, Rome and Western Europe. It is in this unpremeditated way that the scope of the present investigation enlarged itself of its own accord, for the simple reason that the most interesting and precious