

Ancient Religious and Astronomical Symbols – A Reappraisal

O. P. Srivastav

ABSTRACT

Symbols have the pivotal role in any society or any culture of mankind. You cannot think of a society without any symbols. Symbols are used to relate a tangible object with an intangible concept. Symbols give meaning to objects, so members can identify each other. As far as the importance of symbols is concerned, humans would essentially be even less organized in groups without the sets of symbols that are associated with each culture. Another significant characteristic of symbols is its concurrence with religion. Religion itself is based on a belief in the supernatural power or God. However, symbolism started playing a significant role in trying to explain the different aspects of their respective religions. Every religion has its own body of symbols which suggests the ultimate reality, the deity and other spiritual truths. There are religious symbols, like 'swastika, AUM, Cross or the crescent moon to name a few. Buddhism is very symbolic. The whole world knows eight auspicious symbols. A variety of Hindu symbols are used in art, sacred objects and ritual. They usually signify Hindu concepts, the attributes of deities, or the gods or goddesses themselves. No religion is so replete with symbols as this ancient religion and all Hindus are touched by this all-pervasive symbolism all through the life in some way or the other.

Keywords: Religion, Astronomy, Symbol, Swastika, Moon, Sun