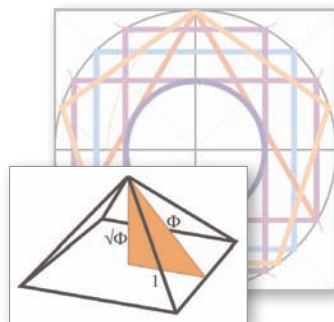


Reassessing the Roots of Theosophy: in Pursuit of the Precious Stone

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Transformation of understanding is rapidly unfolding right before our very eyes throughout the realms of science, consciousness studies and aesthetics. If one looks closely, this is occurring through the discovery and application of a “golden proportional numbering system” that when applied to Nature or the Cosmos, unlocks their deepest secrets (see video series, *Mohamed El Naschie in Conversation with Scott Olsen*, 2019). It is now central to physics, including the fine structure constant, quark masses, winding number, entanglement, non-locality, solutions to dark energy, dark matter, and the double-slit experiment, and Anyons – the golden exotic particles responsible for universal quantum computation – discovered by Frank Wilczek (see M. S. El Naschie, Golden Anyons for Cosmic Dark Energy Density, 2018, *World Journal of Condensed Matter Physics*, 8, 157-161). It is also central to the periodic table of elements, biology (including plant phyllotaxis and the divergence angle, genetics, Fibonacci-driven nucleotide organization, and DNA structure), heart physiology, computer technology, encryption, astronomy, music, weather turbulence, beauty and the unfolding of consciousness itself with golden Fibonacci resonance found in microtubule and clathrin structure (see Sir Roger Penrose, *Shadows of the Mind*, 1996). These discoveries point to an underlying harmony of mathematics throughout Nature and the Cosmos (see Alexey Stakhov, *The Mathematics of Harmony: From Euclid to Contemporary Mathematics and Computer Science*, 2009). It appears to be scale-independent, reaching from the nanoscale, including quark masses themselves, up through all kingdoms of nature, the earth, solar system, and galaxies to the very structure of the Universe itself (see Jean-Pierre Luminet, *The Wraparound Universe*, 2008).

Here’s the rub: unbeknownst to the majority within the Theosophical community is the fact that this “golden proportional numbering system” – this precious foundational or mother stone – lies at the heart and substance of the Theosophical Society including its very founding in 1875. This paper involves a simple reassessment of this founding, including a reexamination of the words and actions of Colonel Henry Olcott, the words of H.P.B. herself, particularly remarks about Plato and the Pythagoreans, her reference to what is revealed in initiation into

the Mysteries, the words of the Mahatmas regarding the existence of the One Law – The Law of Equilibrium, and most importantly the nature and content of the lecture by George Henry Felt regarding his rediscovery of the Ancient Egyptian Canon of Proportion that single-handedly set in motion the founding of The Society. The fact of the matter is that Colonel Olcott, not H.P.B. or George Henry Felt, is responsible for this misunderstanding. As we shall see, the problem lies with Olcott's overriding emphasis on psychism, spiritualism, and the production of phenomena. He does, of course, deserve credit for having the presence of mind to collaborate with H.P.B. to found The Society immediately following Felt's stunning lecture. However, his overemphasis on the importance of addressing the issue of spiritualist phenomena, has misled subsequent Theosophists from grasping the true import of both Felt's mathematical discoveries and the Pythagorean and Platonic nature of Theosophy itself – the foundational golden proportional numbering system, and thus the precious mother stone underlying it all.

It is important to note that according to H.P. Blavatsky, "Plato is the world's interpreter." (*Isis Unveiled*, Vol. 1, p. xi). Plato penetrated into the mysteries of existence through initiatory experiences at the hands of the hierophants of the ancient Egyptian and Eleusinian mysteries. In fact, according to the Kashmiri adept, KH, "Plato was a 5th Rounder," far in advance of ordinary humanity (*The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, no. 66 in chronological order). H.P.B. maintains that the teachings of ageless wisdom or Theosophy are not only timeless but one with Pythagoreanism. In fact, "The ideas of both Pythagoras and Plato [are] identical with ours." (H.P.B., *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 71). Most significantly one's consciousness is transformed through initiation into higher and broader stages of awareness as one approaches enlightenment. And it is striking that it is the geometric secrets of ratio and proportion that are revealed in these initiatory leaps in consciousness. Thus, in *The Secret Doctrine* she writes, "...all the rules of proportion are those taught anciently at Initiations, [and one should] acquaint himself with the truly divine art, and understand the *deep esoteric significance hidden in every rule and law of proportion....*" (Vol. 1, 1888, p. 208; italics for emphasis are those of H.P.B.!).

She goes on to write, "Pythagoras was an Initiate, one of the grandest of Scientists. Plato and Euclid were Initiates.... Euclid learned his Geometry in the Mysteries." (*The Inner Group Teachings of H.P. Blavatsky*, compiled by Henk J. Spierenburg, p. 110). H.P.B. points out how Plato, as an Egyptian and Eleusinian Mysteries initiate, had to be extremely careful not to openly reveal the great secret of what I have termed "the precious stone". All initiates were under the Sodalian oath to remain silent regarding this great mystery under penalty of death. (*Isis Unveiled*, Vol. 1, p. 409). One early Pythagorean, Hippasus, in fact lost his life for revealing the golden construction of the pentagon-faced dodecahedron. Plato nevertheless

was able to secrete the secret into his dialogues for those alone able to recognize the hints and anomalies and creatively abduct the solution. Plato's Indefinite Dyad turns out to be the Golden Section (the Greater) and its inverse (the Lesser), $\Phi = 1.618...$ and $1/\Phi = \phi = 0.168...$, respectively, in relation to 1 which acts as the geometric mean between the two; therefore, giving us the Divine Proportion, $\Phi : 1 : 1/\Phi$, the key to the golden proportional numbering system. (See Scott Olsen, *The Golden Section: Nature's Greatest Secret*, 2006).

Euclid was even more overt in his recognition of this precious secret, openly employing the "cutting of a line in extreme and mean ratio" or the Golden Section in his *Elements*. In fact, Proclus later stated that Euclid's primary objective in writing the *Elements* was to give a systematic theory of the construction of the 5 Platonic Solids, demonstrating Nature's underlying Pythagorean Harmony in the proportional relationships of the various logoi or root ratios ($\sqrt{2}$, $\sqrt{3}$, $\sqrt{5}$) centered on the Golden Section (Φ and $1/\Phi$) in the final Book XIII. Ironically, not unlike the failure of Theosophists to recognize the true Pythagorean "golden proportional numbering system" behind the founding of their society, this underlying Pythagorean Harmony of the *Elements* was missed by modern scholars and teachers of mathematics. And instead the emphasis was thought to be limited to the axiomatic approach to geometry. Stakhov's work has gone far in correcting this oversight.

The Theosophical Society was formed as a direct result of interest stimulated by a lecture given before seventeen people in H.P. Blavatsky's New York apartment on September 7th, 1875 by George Henry Felt (engineer, architect and inventor) on *The Lost Canon of Proportion of the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans*. According to Felt this Egyptian geometrical canon which "unlocked the mysteries of art and nature" had been adopted by Greek architects to build their temples and forums, but then lost. Those in attendance were wrapped in awe. Olcott had Judge pass a note to H.P.B. proposing to form a Society to do research in the areas covered by and similar to Mr. Felt's discovery. Following her assent, a discussion ensued in which Olcott recognized Felt's achievement in extracting the Key to the Architecture of Nature. Josephine Ransom points out, "[Olcott] proposed to form a society for the investigation of science and religion; the society to be entirely eclectic, the friend of true religion and the enemy of scientific materialism. It would be a nucleus around which might gather those willing to work together to organize a society of occultists, begin to collect a library, and to diffuse information concerning those secret laws of nature which were so familiar to the Chaldeans and Egyptians, but were unknown to the modern world of science.... It was unanimously agreed that a society be formed for the study and elucidation of Occultism, the Kaballah, etc." At the September 13th meeting, "Felt further described his discoveries.... and

it was agreed that the name of the proposed society be THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.... [which] 'both expressed the esoteric truth they wished to reach and covered the ground of Felt's methods of occult research.'" [A *Short History of the Theosophical Society*, 1989 (1938), pp. 77-79]. On October 18th, "the 'Objects' of The Society were very simply stated as being **'to collect and diffuse a knowledge of the laws which govern the Universe.'**" (Ibid., p. 81). On the 30th the first officers were elected: President, Colonel Henry Olcott, two Vice-Presidents, George H. Felt and Dr. S. Pancoast, Corresponding Secretary, H.P. Blavatsky, and Counsel, William Q. Judge.

Olcott also noted that: "[Felt's] lecture, illustrated by a set of very fine colored drawings, was tenfold heightened in interest by his assertion that he had not only found, on reading the hieroglyphs, that the elemental spirits were largely used in the temple mysteries, but he had even deciphered the mantrams by which they were subjugated, had practically tested them, and found them efficacious." (*The First Leaf of T.S. History*, 1890, pp. 65-70). Unfortunately, thereafter the new President seemed much more fascinated with Felt's claim to be able to invoke the elementals, than with the rediscovered "knowledge of the laws which govern the Universe." Accordingly, he placed the emphasis on the proposal that "Mr. Felt was to teach the right kind of person how to evoke and control the elementals." On November 17th, Olcott gave his Inaugural Address. The new President "promised that through his discoveries Mr. Felt would, by simple chemical appliances, exhibit 'the races of beings which, invisible to our eyes, people the elements,' and the name of The Theosophical Society would hold its place in history as the first to exhibit these 'Elementary Spirits' – and thus astound the churches, the unimaginative academies of science, the materialists and the 'shade' ridden spiritualists." (Ibid., pp. 82-83). But in reality this was only a tangential aspect of the real discovery – what appears to be the foundational secret behind the Great Work itself.

In April 1876, Felt proposed four titles for his next lectures: 1. A Demonstration that the Universe is Constructed Upon Strictly Geometric Principles; with Illustrations of the Vegetable, Chromatic, Harmonic and Astronomic Laws. 2. The Applications of the Law to Egyptian, Greek, Roman and Hebraic Constructions (Temples, Statues, etc.). 3. Practical Experiments in Electricity and Chemistry, to Demonstrate the Egyptian Philosophy of Evolution, etc. 4. Philosophic Experiments Relating to Their Spiritualistic Beliefs, Incarnations, etc.

By June the first two talks had been given. Both lectures focused upon the geometric principles of the Universe and in their constructive application, thus exemplifying even more fully the central mathematical canon of the original September 7th talk. But apparently Felt decided against producing the elementals before The Society. And as Olcott himself noted, somewhat disparagingly, "They had also counted

upon H.P.B. to display her powers, but she refused to do the slightest phenomenon at their meetings....” (Ransom, p. 89). Felt and H.P.B. were both focused upon bringing their magnificent manuscripts embodying the Principles of the Ancient Wisdom out before the eyes of humanity. My research¹ indicates that Felt was opposed to exposing the technique before a crowd. It was to be much more of a guarded esoteric secret. What is most important regarding this purported failure, is that in her scrapbook Blavatsky placed a clipping from the *Banner of Light* of January 15th, 1876 pertaining to Olcott’s Inaugural Address, adding a handwritten note stating: “And Mr. Felt has done it in the presence of nine persons in all.” (see H.P.B.’s *Collected Writings*, Vol. 1, pp. 192-193). Thus, indicating that Felt had in fact produced the phenomenon before a select group of witnesses.

Olcott, frustrated by the refusal of both Felt and H.P.B. to produce phenomena in front of The Society at large, acted as if he was still intent on forming a “Miracle Club” which he had initially proposed early in 1875, but had abandoned because of the complete failure of the medium, David Dana. He nevertheless did his best to entertain The Society’s attendees. He states: “I did what I could in the way of getting psychometers, clairvoyants, mesmerisers, and spiritual mediums to show us sundry phases of psychical science.” He was however aware of the suspect “character among our members of the first year... a majority come to gape and be astonished, to get psychical powers for selfish ends without personal effort, a minority are prompted by a yearning after knowledge...” (Olcott, *The First Leaf of T.S. History*, *The Theosophist*, November 1890, pp. 65-70).

In addition to an emphasis on brotherhood, the real deeper purpose of the Theosophical Society, with the Mahatmas supporting it behind the scenes, was the pursuit of the perennial wisdom, with its divine golden mathematical underpinnings. And now Felt had single-handedly triggered the quest, but the goal went out of focus primarily due to Olcott’s pandering after phenomena in the miasmatic Maya of the spook-ridden astral world. But as Ransom records, the most significant aspect of Felt’s initial lecture was its geometric content. “Felt showed how, upon a certain temple wall, a ‘**Star of Perfection**’ could be inscribed, within which the whole secret of geometrical proportion could be read, and the hieroglyphics outside the star were mere blinds to deceive the curiosity-seeker. The ‘Star of Perfection’ consisted of a circle with a square within and without, containing a common triangle, two Egyptian triangles and a pentagon. This diagram not only unlocked the secrets of the Kaballah, but when applied to ancient Egyptian architecture as well as to the Greek, showed how all masterpieces of both were constructed, even the statues. In music, in prismatic colours, in the configuration of leaves, and in the world’s circumference, he found the same law of proportional harmony.” (Ibid., pp. 76-77). It is clear from this description that the Star of Perfection includes suggestive

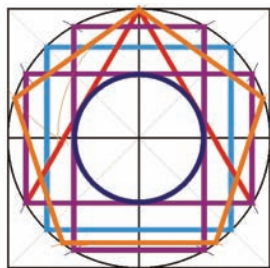


Figure 1. Star of Perfection.

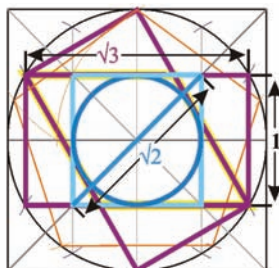


Figure 2. Root 2 and Root 3.

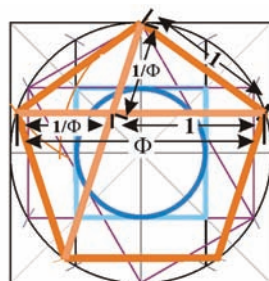


Figure 3. Φ , 1 and $1/\Phi$.

hints of the root ratios and particularly the Golden Section along with its golden proportional numbering system as detailed in Figures 1, 2 and 3.

Unfortunately, this seems to have been almost completely forgotten by Theosophists. The manuscript that Felt had originally prepared for publication had been tragically destroyed in a Boston fire back in November, 1872. Felt, like Blavatsky with her *Secret Doctrine*, was apparently now feverishly at work preparing a replacement copy of *The Kaballah of the Egyptians and the Greek Canon of Proportion* for Bouton Publishing (H.P.B.'s *Isis Unveiled* publisher). In an announcement in *The Academy* on September 18, 1875, eleven days after the original lecture, it was asserted that Felt had, “discovered the true geometrical system of the Egyptians, the long-lost and eagerly-sought-for key wherewith Egypt unlocked the mysteries of art and nature.” This is the wisdom that Pythagoras and Plato received as initiates in the Egyptian Mysteries. This is the central doctrine that is one with Theosophy and lies behind its founding. Felt believed that his discoveries would “give to the world for the first time in three thousand years an exact knowledge of that marvelous system of proportion....” (Ibid.) This is none other than the golden proportional number system, the key that unlocks Nature and the Cosmos. This is the precious stone, the mother stone upon which the Theosophical Society is built.

Although there is no indication that the replacement manuscript was ever completed, the theosophical link to the precious stone – Nature’s great secret of the golden proportional numbering system – does not end here. The connection, again unbeknownst to most Theosophists, re-emerged through a fortuitous event with Krishnamurti’s good friend, Claude Bragdon. By a stroke of good fortune, a portion of Felt’s material along with crucial drawings were passed on. Ultimately Viola de Gruchy came into possession of it through her physician. She then passed this on in 1936 to Bragdon, a Rochester architect, geometer and theosophist.¹ Drawings that de Gruchy shared with Bragdon are extremely significant, and appear to be a sophisticated nesting of root rectangles including the golden proportional numbering system. In a September 15th, 1936 letter to Dorothy Brett

describing the drawings and de Gruchy as a “Delphic Sister”, Bragdon states: “Some of the things she showed me were very impressive – new and direct ways of getting the root rectangles from the circle, etc. etc. It’s simple and convincing. **The golden section everywhere appears.**” (Dorothy Brett Correspondence, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library). It was the Neopythagorean Bragdon who maintained that sacred number, what he termed “the within of all things,” held the secret to the Universe.

Bragdon was followed in his thinking by another Theosophist, L. Gordon Plummer, who wrote: “the Golden Section appears to provide the Mathematics of life itself.” (*By the Holy Tetraktys*, p. 32). Golden Triangles “were revered by the ancient Greeks who had made a study of the Golden Section, and used this proportion in their architecture.” And in *The Mathematics of the Cosmic Mind*, Plummer asserts that the Universe begins with “...the ‘Great Breath’... producing the principle of the Golden Section... the first bond between life on our Earth and the life of the Universe, a bond that is immutable... that makes all things *one with the Infinite*.” In his writings, he demonstrated the inherent Divine Proportion symmetries through the geometric construction of nested Platonic Solids.

More recently in my own work I demonstrated that the Golden Section and its related golden proportional numbering system was at the heart of Plato’s esoteric doctrine. Together the *Timaeus* (31b-32a and 53a-54b), *Republic* (508b-520a), and *Parmenides* (133b) (“worst difficulty argument”) point to continuous geometric proportion as that which binds together Plato’s realms of Being and Becoming through the One and the Indefinite Dyad. In the *Republic* (figure 4 below), Plato subtly and with great economy embeds the Golden Section in his series of similes

flowing from the One to the Sun, the Divided Line and then the Cave. The Sun Simile precisely Golden Cuts the *Republic* scroll! (see Scott Olsen, *The Indefinite Dyad and The Golden Section: Uncovering Plato’s*

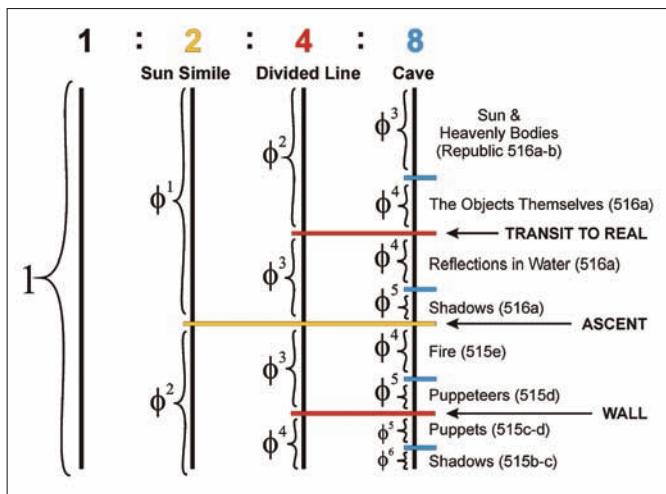
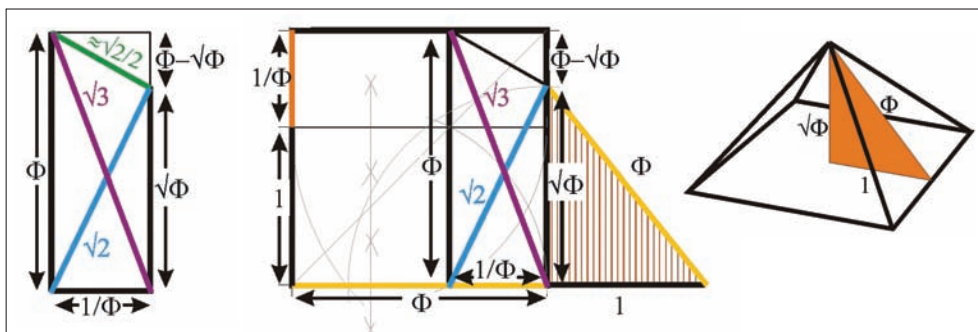


Figure 4. Plato’s Sun, Divided Line and Cave Similes.

Second Principle, *NEXUS JOURNAL of Architecture and Mathematics*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2002 and *The Golden Section: Nature's Greatest Secret*, 2006; Stichometry; J.B. Kennedy, *The Musical Structure of Plato's Dialogues*, 2011).

This precious stone, the golden proportional numbering system, is rooted in the Golden Section, or as the ancient Egyptians named it, the Primordial Scission, emerging from what Plummer called, "the Great Breath". It is also known as the Principle of Equilibrium. In Mahatma letter no. 90 (chronologically), KH states, "We recognize but one law in the Universe, the Law of Harmony, of Perfect Equilibrium." And the great alchemist and Egyptologist, Schwaller de Lubicz, after studying the Temple of Luxor for 15 years concluded, "The Golden Section is not a product of mathematical imagination, but the Natural Principle of the Laws of Equilibrium." (*The Temple of Man*, vol. 2). It is the basis of the golden proportional numbering system that is taking the world by storm, and lies at the heart of the Theosophical Society itself. Not only was it the central feature of George Henry Felt's discovery, but was at the very foundation of the wisdom traditions throughout antiquity, and was the great guarded secret of initiation into the Mysteries. It is time that Theosophists recognize this primary principle, the Law of Equilibrium, recognized by the Mahatmas, as central to their heritage. Its rediscovery and success reveals the timeless nature of the ancient wisdom. It is perennial, precious, and alchemically transforms whatever it touches. It was the great Neopythagorean scientist Johannes Kepler, champion of the Harmony of the World, who once noted, "Geometry has two great treasures: one is the theorem of Pythagoras; the other the division of a line in extreme and mean ratio [the Golden Section]. The first we may compare to a measure of gold; the second we may name a precious jewel [stone]."



Figures 5 and 6. Golden Chalice of Orion construction deriving Root 2 and Root 3 from the Greater and Lesser Golden Ratios; displaying the Great Pyramid's semi-elevation.

Figure 7. Great Pyramid semi-elevation.

Scott Olsen, Ph.D., Emeritus Professor of Philosophy & Religion at the College of Central Florida, is a life-long student of the ancient wisdom. He studied with esotericist Douglas Baker, physicists David Bohm and Mohamed El Naschie, philosopher of religion, Huston Smith, sacred geometers, Keith Critchlow and John Michell, and mathematician, Alexey Stakhov. A national lecturer for the Theosophical Society in America and the Foundation for Theosophical Studies in the UK, Scott lectures widely on the perennial philosophy with special emphasis on Plato, the golden mean numbering system, and transformative states of consciousness.



An avid collector of shamanic visionary art, he has also authored *Mysteries of the Amazon: Visionary Artwork of Pablo Amaringo and His Students*. On January 4, 2019, Scott will open his month-long gallery exhibit at the Marion Cultural Alliance in downtown Ocala, Florida: UNCOVERING NATURE'S GREAT MYSTERY of Art, Mathematics and Science.

Jaguar Transformation by Alfredo Zagaceta. He was aware that I was having experiences with the jaguar in the rainforest, and did the painting, which will be a centre piece of the exhibit.

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