

Anthony Damiani: FROM AD SUPP on Symbol and Mandala

Perhaps the most comprehensive symbol bequeathed to man in his attempt to penetrate the formless is the cosmic mandala or horoscope. The meaning of symbol here must be taken in the largest sense.

Firstly, it is *multivalent* (by this we mean it has many frameworks included within one comprehensive framework and vica versa, that one would be included in the many).

Secondly, the symbol is a *revelation of reality*--through it reality speaks to us.

Yet another meaning of the symbol is that of a *vehicle for the transformation* of the lower empirical mind to higher stages of abstraction. A good beginning to this notion has been given to us by Jung in his concept of the transcendent function.

The symbol is *an approach to the realm of the formless*. --[AD supp 625] slide 12

The symbolism proffered to us in the cosmic mandala is the most comprehensive and integral approach to philosophy that at present is available. Within the compass of our discursive understanding--yet transcending its limitations and revealing the possibility of a more universal language. It includes the subject-object dichotomy yet is suggestive of a more intimate resolution. Its amplitude may resolve some of the most perplexing and profound problems of existence and knowledge. Its very nature demands that human preconception be put aside. The attempt to perceive through this manner produces thought that forces us to exclude boundaries. Truly a trying to understand rather than a claim to have done so. Philosophy as wonder--and the insight into that wonder--will produce for us the inspiration for our daily and ordinary lives. [Supp 622] slide 5

Is there a totally comprehensive schema or symbol that will permit us to combine the varied and many facets of truth that are to be found in each tradition, to sort out those basic and truthful presuppositions into a working hypothesis which will also aid the philosophic student in the investigation into the truth of his/her life? Such a schema does exist, and it can be used in helping us to resolve some of the most abstract problems of metaphysics as well as those emerging crises of the everyday life. Philosophy has conceived the experiment: astrology in its most inclusive context goes on trial. [Supp 596] *SLIDE 4*

Among the many symbols used in astrological lore, the circle--for the Greeks the most perfect of the geometrical forms--in its appearance resembles zero, sunya or the void for the Buddhists. This form, like the others, perpetuates those properties that make it especially suitable as a support for our thoughts in depicting those principles that Plotinus spreads out before us in his writings. Difficulties that constantly arise have to do with the incredible wealth of meanings that develop as the web of interconnections and relations pyramid. For many of us who wish to penetrate deeply into his thought find this vast web of ideas too proteus transforming themselves in the very process of understanding them. [Supp 19] *SLIDE 38*

Some method had to be found to

- a) isolate principles one from another
- b) follow these principles as they related to others in forming a network of different degrees of reality which previously did not exist.
- c) to be able to spread out for viewing the total.

This pictorialization has a stabilizing effect on the illusiveness that must face anyone who wishes to have something more than an acquaintance with Plotinus. [Supp 195]

Many of us who try to penetrate deeply into the thought of Plotinus find the spread of this ideas too vast and intricate to grasp with out limited mental sight. Some method has to be found to 1) itemize and isolate the principles from one another for individual study 2) follow these same principles thought the various interrelations that exist in and among themselves, i3. the spiritual universal relativity 3) how they are involved in universal manifestation and 4) to spread out the whole system in such a way to provide a comprehensive birds eye view of the totality. [Supp 636]

We have in mind a visual schematization that would somewhat stabilize all of the above notions and include the elusive nuances of paramount importance that anyone must face who wishes to have anything more than a passing acquaintance with Plotinus. At the same time we will to some extent be reconstructing the philosophic presuppositions of astrology. Through this procedure we hope to fathom the depths of implication buried in familiarity. [SUPP 636]

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...The object of knowledge for the soul incarnating here is the world ideogram which is given to an individual mind. This original world-thought is transparently lucid and subtle and a constantly metamorphizing logical unity or whole of its own intellectuality or the ideas which are the same as the 360 degrees.

It is these ideas or gods of the planetary mind that are the very substance or stuff included in the organization of the psychosomatic organism and the vehicles used by souls to understand the world idea. Thus the soul is a receptacle of the gods. Now the powers of the undivided mind of the earth which is symbolized by the Chaldean planets and represented by our instinctual functioning organize those ideas into specific and adventitious unities--i.e., psychosomatic organisms. 1/6/84