

***Re-visioning Astronoesis, Session 2: Intro to the mandala:*** A symbol of **fourfold reality**.

Geometric components of the mandala: circle cross and rings. Applying the fourfold to the four cardinal points of the Astrological chart.

***From The Notebooks of Paul Brunton:***

You cannot put It (Reality) into any symbol without falsifying what It really is. Yet you cannot even mention It in any way whatsoever without putting It into a symbol. What then are you to do? ... *The Notebooks of Paul Brunton 19.2.34*

... To confess that intellectually we know nothing and can know nothing about the Absolute is understandable. ... **words may nevertheless evoke an intuitive recognition of its beauty; they may suggest to sensitive minds a hint of its worth and they may arouse the first aspiration towards its attainment for oneself.** *The Notebooks of Paul Brunton 28.2.59*

***From Anthony:***

From the point of view of the ancient, philosophically oriented cosmologist, the astrological mandala is a rare instance of the intellectual imagination--a symbolic reflex portraying how the Gods or Principles are involved in the fabrication of the vehicles that the individual Soul employs for its manifestation. The mandala exemplifies and embodies the knowledge of superior beings--seers--who are capable of transmitting their knowledge of how fundamental principles are operative in the individual and can be understood from his natal chart.

*Astronoesis*

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

It is our belief that the astrological mandala is a fragment of an archaic wisdom, and was devised by the profoundly wise sages of the past. This mandala of the signs and planets is a rare instance--and product of--the archetypal imagination; it presents the topography of the subtle world through the forms available in sensible becoming. This root symbol of astrology represents the formulation by reason principles of a symbolic method through which those very reason principles are being manifested. Reason principles are those living meanings or categories of thought that are the substantial aspect (forms) of the soul. *Astronoesis*

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. --Anthony Damiani. AD Supp 596

### ***From the Tibetans:***

The sanscrit *mandala* is translated into Tibetan as *dkil-khor*. It literally means "center-circumference."

Also: *dkil-khor* has the added meaning "to grasp the essence." : "It is a process of circulating (circumference) our experience in order to distill the essence (center)." [Losang Pema]

A mandala represents philosophical and deific principles and their dynamic interplay by spatial and sequential arrangements

Mand, related to mundus, also means a **world**: it is a map of the Cosmos: shows the relation of inner and outer: of you and cosmos; visible and invisible.

Mandala is a **sacred space**, and the container, within which we are transformed-- and it is the sacred space of your own mind.

Mandala is a symbol of **wholeness**, Holiness, and the relation of whole/parts

The Mandala will allow us to represent in terms of picture and number the unfolding and reintegration of the emanated principles, including the Divine Mind, from and into the One, in both static and dynamic terms.

*a mandala is...above all, a map of the cosmos. It is the whole of the universe in its essential plan, in its process of emanation and of reabsorption... It is a geometric projection of the world reduced to an essential pattern...*

*The mandala represents the individual mind or microcosm as well as the macrocosm, and is a symbol for the reintegration of the individual mind back into the cosmic Mind.*

*...the mandala is no longer a cosmogram but a psychocosmogram, the scheme of disintegration from the One to the many and of reintegration from the many to the One*  
-- Tucci: *Theory and Practice of Mandala*

Mandala represents the process of transforming the mind: a process *in which* we are transformed, and *into which* we are transformed. **"You Become Wisdom"**

"Mandala is a way of realizing your Buddha nature. For its geometrical and spatial symbolism has above all, a dynamic quality which leads the person who lives this experience from the periphery towards the center; from multiplicity to unity, and from illusion and death to reality and life. The mandala is a visual symbol for meditation: a map of a deity's domain. Each deity emerging from and returning to emptiness is itself the door to knowledge of reality. For the center of the mandala is the alpha and omega: the center of the universe and the center of every person. It is the kingdom of heaven that is within us, within you." The Message of the Tibetans. *Arnaud Desjardin*

### **Circle:**

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. *AD Supp 195*

The eye is the first circle; the horizon which it forms is the second; and throughout nature this primary figure is repeated without end. It is the highest emblem in the cipher of the world. . . . Every action admits of being outdone. Our life is an apprenticeship to the truth, that around every circle another can be drawn; that there is no end in nature, but every end is a beginning; that there is always another dawn risen on mid-noon, and under every deep a lower deep open. --- *RW Emerson "Circles"*

### **Anthony Reads:**

We begin with a quotation from 5.1.10:

[We have shown the inevitability of certain convictions as to the scheme of things:]

"There exists a Principle which transcends Being; this is The One, whose nature we have sought to establish in so far as such matters lend themselves to proof. Upon The One follows immediately the Principle which is at once Being and the Intellectual-Principle. Third comes the Principle, Soul.

Now just as these three exist for the system of Nature, so, we must hold, they exist for ourselves. I am not speaking of the material order--all that is separable--but of what lies beyond the sense realm in the same way as the Primals are beyond all the heavens; I mean the corresponding aspect of man, what Plato calls the Interior Man."

We can pictorialize the preceding quote by taking the astrological mandala or wheel and divide the circle into four quadrants. The first symbolizing the One; the second intellectual-

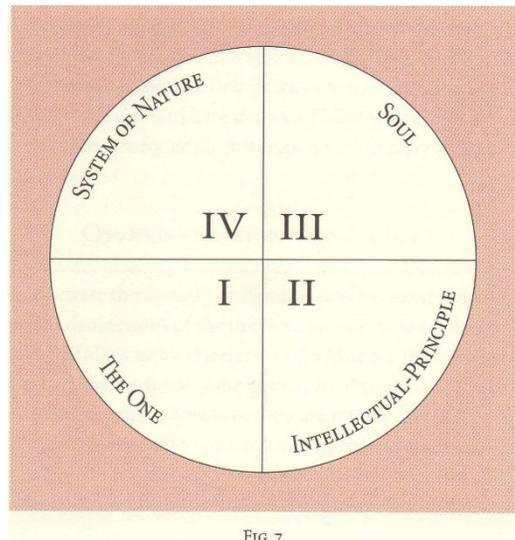
principle; third soul, and the fourth, what Plotinus calls The system of Nature or cosmos. So that we have the three pure hypostases and the cosmos.

This schemata will be more than a useful device to objectify our thinking only. Later on, as we shall see, it will become a mandala in the true sense of the word.

This is again repeated in Ennead 5.1.8.

“This is the explanation of Plato's Triplicity, in the passage where he names as the Primals the Beings gathered about the King of All and establishes a Secondary containing the Secondaries and a Third containing the Tertiaries.”

An emphasis is made that the first three principles are pure hypostases. Plotinus reinforces his argument by an appeal to Plato. And what we should note in this tractate is that the groupings of these principles with their derivatives, the establishment of priorities, an ordering among them.. And that here Plotinus is laying down in a general way, a solid foundation for the teachings of Neo-Platonism.



We could also pictorialize this passage by means of 4 concentric circles: the outermost circle representing the Intellectual -Principle, followed by the separative intellect which is also part of the IP, the third ring stands for Soul, and the Fourth for Body, or the entire System of Nature. For the present we will let pass this seeming discrepancy--explanation would be premature at this point. Combined, this allows us to conceive both viewpoints functional and substantial simultaneously.

Anthony Supp 638, 201

