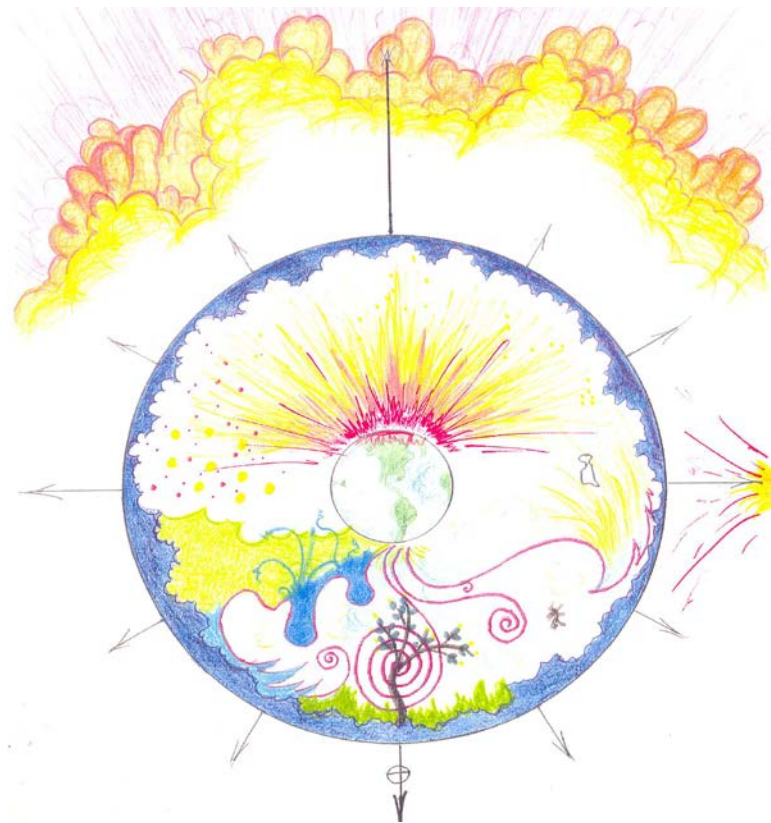


THE QUADRIPARTITE CIRCLE:

AN INQUIRY INTO ARCHETYPAL STRUCTURAL ORGANIZATION



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This essay is an inquiry into the significance of the quadripartite circle – which may also be called the four-fold circle, the circle with a cross, the circle of four quadrants, the circular mandala, sometimes the quaternion, or often just “the wheel” – as an archetypal structural model. Describing this form as “archetypal” implies that it is universal in scope and that it conveys some kind of deep psychological meaning. If it is “universal” then it should convey an analogous sort of meaning wherever it is applied (literally, anywhere in the universe!).¹

More functionally, I want to demonstrate that there is a cross-cultural relational isomorphism in the use of this symbol; that is, placement along the wheel is not at all arbitrary – each of the four quadrants, and the cardinal points within which they are framed, correspond to comparable meanings in whichever cultural system this wheel is applied. An overlay pattern will reveal that each cultural system, in its choice of material or referents to place within the quadrants, and at the cardinal points, is expressing its own translation of an overarching archetypal theme. What’s more, the meaning contained in each quadrant is not independent of the circle as a whole; that is, there is an evolution of meaning as one moves around the wheel going from quadrant to quadrant.

Finally, with all this deeper understanding, I want to show how “the wheel” can be applied as an organizational tool by using a specific case study. In this exercise I will be indebted to, in some ways contributing to, and on a few

occasions embellishing, the pioneering work of Annabelle Nelson, Ph.D., who, in her pedagogical book *The Learning Wheel*, articulates a comprehensive system for lesson-planning and curriculum development using the quadripartite circle as a template.

While there are a multitude of possible cultural examples using the quadripartite circle, the main content of this relatively brief essay will concentrate on the examination and comparison of just four: Jungian typology, the inner structure of the *I Ching*, Western tropical astrology,² and the mandala tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. Other systems will be referred to incidentally to highlight the ubiquitous application of this archetypal model, symbol, and at times, metaphor.³



In order to set the tone, here is an apt passage from a book called *Sacred Geometry*, in the opening of a chapter entitled “Sacred Geometry: Metaphor of Universal Order”:

“Whether the product of an eastern or western culture, the circular mandala or sacred diagram is a familiar and pervasive image throughout the history of art. India, Tibet, Islam and medieval Europe all have produced them in abundance, and most tribal cultures employ them as well, either in the form of paintings or buildings or dances. Such diagrams are often based on the division of the circle into four quarters, and all the parts and elements involved are interrelated into a unified design. They are most often in some way cosmological: that is, they represent in symbol what is thought to be the essential structure of the universe...But what is most consistently striking about this form of diagram is that it

expresses the notion of *cosmos*, that is of reality conceived as an organized, unified whole” (Lawlor, p.16).

Indeed, to move from *Chaos* to *Cosmos*... that is the role of the human being:⁴ To bring order into the seemingly wild randomness of the world; to retard the inevitable flow toward entropy by establishing meaningful structure; to store energy and potential for spontaneous new emergence through organization, codification, symmetry and alignment; to communicate essence through an idealized form – all this is achieved through symbology; and as a symbol, the four-fold circle certainly can assist in conceiving reality as an “organized, unified whole.” But is this form really a metaphor for the “essential structure of the universe?” That is, is there really an objective universe ‘out there’ whose essential structure resembles a circle of four quarters? Or is this an anthropomorphic projection? A visualization exercise will help to answer these questions:

*Picture yourself standing firmly on the surface of the Earth. Then visualize a line, like a golden cord, running through the length of your straight and erect spine. As the line extends below you it will eventually touch the center of the Earth. As the line extends overhead you can imagine that it will eventually reach some distant star. Thus there is an inherently vertical spatial orientation to the human experience. Tripping on a stone will readily confirm this as the body automatically reacts to regain verticality.*⁵

Once again picture yourself standing firmly on the surface of the Earth. Now extend both of your arms fully so that they are perpendicular to the vertical spine axis. As

you look down the extension of each arm you come to see a distant point on the horizon. This visualization exercise illustrates the inherently horizontal spatial orientation of the human experience. The horizontal outstretched arms perpendicular to the vertical spine creates, of course, the image of a cross, with the heart at the center – a potent religious symbol.

Once more picture yourself standing firmly on that spot of Earth, and this time stand there for a full circadian rhythm, for a complete 24-hour cycle. For this part of the exercise make sure you're facing toward the equator so that your back is poleward. From your vantage point the Sun seems to move in a smooth arc across the sky; later the Moon and stars and planets appear to do the same. Projecting the movements of these heavenly bodies below the horizon we can imagine that they continue their circular arc patterns until they reappear where they began – over our outstretched arms at the horizon, in the direction that in English we call "East." In the northern hemisphere this reappearance will occur over the left arm but in the southern hemisphere we will be looking toward our right.

These simple visualization experiments demonstrate, clearly I believe, that the quadripartite circle, as a psycho-cosmological symbol, is first and foremost a *phenomenological* interpretation of reality – 'phenomenology' being a perspective intended to "describe as closely as possible the way the world makes itself evident to awareness, the way things first arise in our direct, sensorial experience...toward the world as it is experienced in its felt immediacy" (Abram,

p.35). The quadripartite circle, then, is not at all an abstraction or some kind of theoretical or conceptual model but rather is a direct representation of the field of corporeal human experience, of physical orientation in the space-time continuum, of the human body living on a revolving sphere. This makes it a symbol universally applicable, relevant to any culture or cultural system that is attempting to communicate existential orientation within the “lifeworld;” that is, within “the biosphere as it is experienced and *lived from within* by the intelligent body – by the attentive human animal who is entirely a part of the world that he or she experiences” (ibid, p.65).

Thus, the quadripartite circle, as a cosmological or ordering symbol, is not so much a model of the “essential structure of the universe,” in the sense of a pre-given universe ‘out there,’ as it is a metaphor for the orientation of living human experience – in a universe of its own making.⁶ This human uni-verse (one song) is centered within the bio-physical, bio-psychic, and bio-spherical context within which human life unfolds – and then extends (or more specifically, *spirals*) outward from there at ever greater scales. The “wheel” under consideration is not the only organizational tool for modeling reality but since it represents the somatic, existential, *phenomenological* experience of every human being, going back through antiquity, it is archetypal.⁷



At this point, I think it is reasonable to suggest that the quadripartite circle can be considered, in many applications anyway, as a two-dimensional, symbolic, graphic representation of the four-dimensional space-time continuum – *as that continuum is experienced situationally in direct, living human experience*. This phenomenological interpretation opens the possibilities for rich thematic and cultural overlays on what is essentially an archetypal structural organization tool. Recognizing this potential for deeper significance in the ubiquitous wheel – deeper, say, than only knowing it as “the four directions” – we are ready for the main content of this essay: taking a closer look at some of these thematic and cultural overlays.

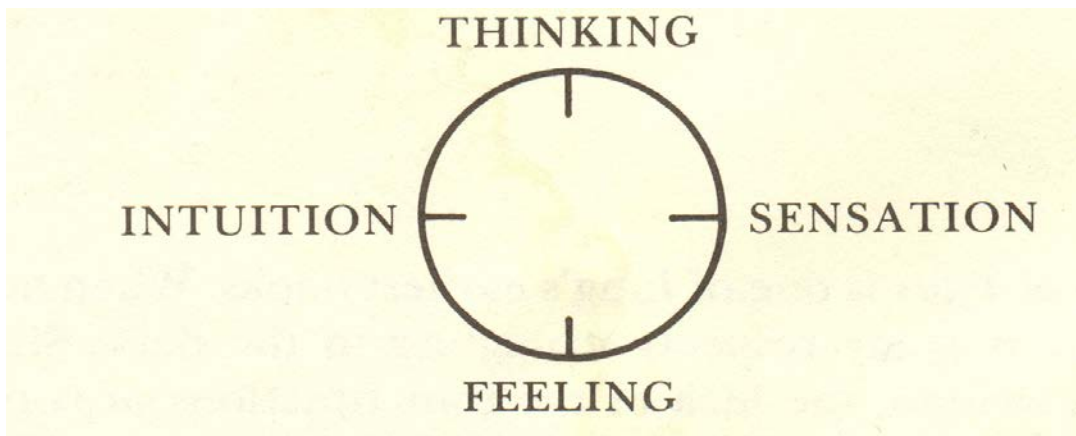


Fundamental to the psychological system of C.G. Jung is the development of a typology to differentiate the human psyche into “four functions” – intuition, feeling, sensation, and thinking – where a “function” can be considered as a means for apprehending or assimilating reality, as a way of relating to/with the world.⁸ “These types are defined by the observation that the ego will tend to habitually align itself with one predominant mode of conscious actualization” (Mare, p.1). Since Jung began developing this quaternary system early in his career, “it was a great discovery when he later found confirmation of his more intuitively conceived idea in the fact that everywhere in myths and religious

symbolism there appears the model of the fourfold structure of the psyche" (von Franz, p.4). So fundamental was this "fourfold structure" to his system that it eventually assumed the rank of an archetype in its own right:

"Jung's teaching is also based on an archetype which finds its expression particularly in 'tetrasomy', four-bodiedness (cf. the theory of the four functions, the pictorial arrangement of the four, orientation by the four cardinal points, etc.). The number four is also discernible in dream contents, and probably the universal distribution and magical significance of the cross or of the four-part circle may be explained by the archetypal character of the quaternity" (Jacobi, p.47-8).⁹

Jung's typology is always graphically displayed in the following format:



(from von Franz and Hillman, p.4)

On the vertical axis lies Thinking-Feeling, together a polarity, and on the horizontal axis lies Intuition-Sensation, likewise a polarity. The vertical axis is called the "rational" functions, characterized by the supremacy of reasoning and judging. The horizontal axis is called the "irrational" functions, relying not on rational judgment but on the sheer intensity of perception.

The two functions on each axis are intended to be mutually exclusive of one another and yet complement each other perfectly; thus, for example, one cannot be thinking while one is feeling, and yet the two combined complete one whole process, the “rational” process of apprehension. Likewise, the rational and irrational axes in themselves could not operate simultaneously, they are fundamentally incompatible, yet the two combined complete all possible modes of apprehension” (Mare, p.2).

If these are indeed all possible modes of apprehension, than they are appropriately contained within the ‘wholeness’ of the circle.

“Dr. M.-L. von Franz has explained the circle (or sphere) as a symbol of the Self. It expresses the totality of the psyche in all its aspects, including the relationship between [humanity] and the whole of nature. Whether the symbol of the circle appears in primitive sun worship or modern religion, in myths or dreams, in the mandalas drawn by Tibetan monks, in the ground plans of cities, or in the spherical concepts of early astronomers, it always points to the single most vital aspect of life – its wholeness” (A. Jaffe in Jung, 1964, p.266).

I want to suggest that the particular arrangement in the above diagram, the functions at their respective cardinal points, does not arrive by chance but rather is a product of the distillation of Jung’s extensive study. The actual positioning of these four functions, in other words, is deliberate and purposeful, and by arranging them in this manner Jung was intentionally aligning his system with an archetypal structural pattern. This means that placing ‘Intuition’ at the top, for example, would not make any sense; nor would making ‘Sensation’ a polarity of ‘Thinking.’ This will all become clearer as this essay progresses...

Considering the way the Jungians write, it may be apposite at this time to introduce some quasi-mythological material: In a fascinating book called *Initiation*, where the author is purportedly recanting, through meditations, the experience of being initiated into the priesthood of ancient Egypt, the high priest Ptahhotep instructs:

“The four sides of the pyramid symbolize the four faces of God, each of which taken alone and by itself manifests the three aspects of the first source, the divinity *at rest within itself* and standing above all creation. The pyramid reveals a living reality, the living law, in which *God* always and absolutely manifests himself in the material world, and because he does so he is in-dwelling in everything that has been created.

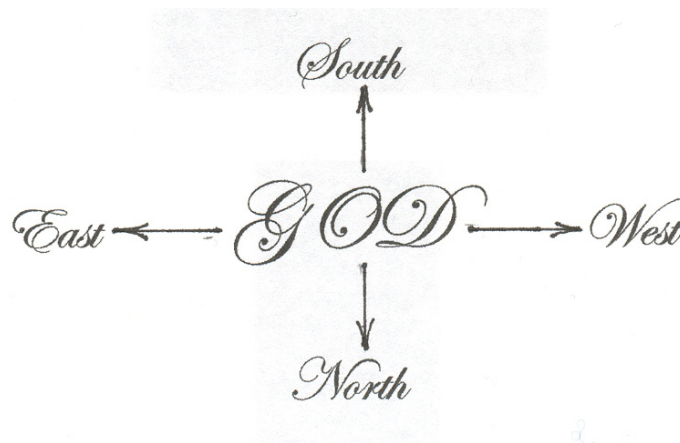
From every point in the universe God manifests himself four-fold. In each of the four directions of the earth and the sky he radiates with a different effect. And because these streams of force, which originate at one point and yet are so very different, all come forth from the paradisiacal unity, we can speak of them figuratively as four great rivers springing up in the centre of paradise, where the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil are rooted, and flowing out into the external world in four different directions.

You will find this four-fold manifestation in everything that has been created. (Haich, p.241).

A little later Ptahhotep insists “*The four faces of God never turn or shift. They always stand unchanged, immutable, facing in their original direction* (ibid, p.243).

I am not prepared to comment on the accuracy of these teachings. I have seen some of the sacred geometry supposedly originating in ancient Egypt, and it is provocative; but the above book is fictional, or is it? I didn’t think the Egyptians were so monotheistic, for example; and the author *is*, after all, a northern European...so who knows? But being able to prove the accuracy is not

the point: My purpose in including these passages here, in the context of our discussion, is that I find it intriguing to ponder the possibility that there are qualities to the four directions that might be “immutable,” that are the same at “every point in the universe.” If that is true, than it calls into question somewhat my theory that the quadripartite circle is fundamentally a phenomenological interpretation. It does, however, support my assertion that relative position on the wheel is not at all an arbitrary matter. Anyone working with the wheel as an organizational tool should read on; but first, for reference, here is a graphic of “the four faces of God:”



It is very important to explain that the orientation of the directions here is taken from the perspective of someone in the northern hemisphere facing toward the equator with their back poleward. From that vantage point, the observer can watch the heavenly bodies, particularly those in our solar system, moving in a smooth arc across the sky. The way maps are typically drawn, with “East” to the right, makes more sense for a southern hemisphere observer.











The next cultural overlay to place on top of the four-fold circular pattern originated in ancient China – the famous *I Ching*, or Book of Change:

“The terminology of yin and yang is a primary element of the foundation of the language of the *I Ching* and Taoist spiritual alchemy. In the *I Ching* proper, and in alchemical texts, the words yin and yang are not used directly but are indicated symbolically by other terms. Taoist commentaries use the words yin and yang on the primary level of interpretation, but these in turn are given a variety of meanings, such as the mundane and the celestial, the acquired and the primal, the human mind and the mind of Tao. These pairs are used to refer to a dichotomy in the human mind that can be bridged by practice.” (Cleary, p.16).

The original formless, unmanifest Unity of pure living potential – Tao – in its movement toward material manifestation, or self-realization, first polarizes into yin and yang; this is a binary system. Polarizing again, differentiating for a second time, produces the four-fold nature of material reality, represented by “the four timeless hexagrams” (ibid, p.22). Polarizing once again by dividing the ‘four,’ differentiating for a third time, gives rise to the number ‘eight,’ the octagon, and the total number of trigrams used in the *I Ching* system. “The eight trigrams are *heaven, earth, fire, water, thunder, mountain, lake, and wind*...held to represent fundamental elements of life through which human development can be fostered; hence in Taoist alchemy they are sometimes called “the cauldron of

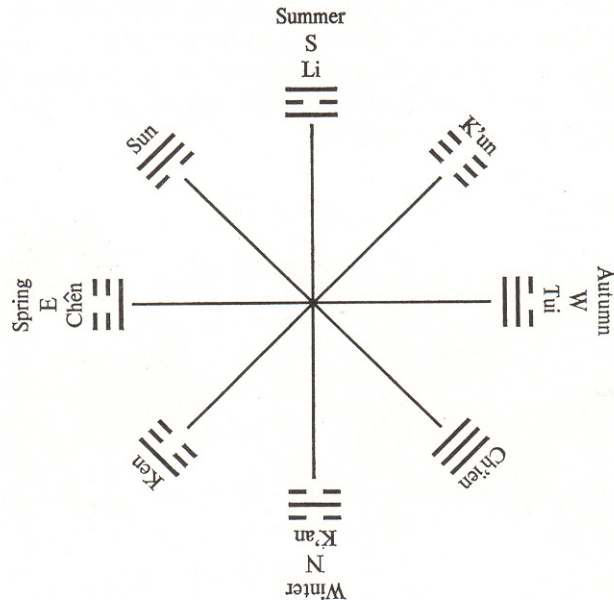
the eight trigrams,” in which the refinement of consciousness is carried out”
(ibid). For a brief description of the eight trigrams:

	HEAVEN (Ch'ien) – creativity, activity, strength, time-experience, duration
	THUNDER (Chen) – exciting, impetus, volition, stimulation, impulse
	WATER (K'an) – dark, the formless, uncertainty, emotion, eros
	MOUNTAIN (Ken) – steady, heaviness, quietness, equanimity, concentration
	EARTH (K'un) – receptivity, passivity, surrender, space-experience, extension
	WIND (Sun) – penetrating, sensitivity, responsiveness, following, assimilation
	FIRE (Li) – bright, the formed, clearness, discrimination, logos, light-giver
	LAKE/METAL (Tui) – reflecting, lightness, gaiety, observation, relatedness

(from Govinda, 1981)

This listing of the trigrams will be well-known even to the casual student of Taoism; what is not so well known is that there were Taoist scholars who arranged the trigrams into an axial system of analysis. Around 1100 B.C. King Wen and the Duke of Chou, intellectual heirs to Confucius, created a system that came to be called ‘The Later Heaven sequence’ (Govinda, 1981). Around the circumference of their axial model, the trigrams, representing fundamental natural processes, could be portrayed in their cyclic unfoldment over time, reflecting the various stages of human growth and the cycles of Nature in general – with the cycle of the four seasons, a principal cause of our time-sense

(for residents of temperate latitudes), being the representative example. Here's what their model looks like (notice that they must be observers of Nature from the northern hemisphere):



(from Sherrill and Chu, p.17)

"The Later Heaven sequence is very important, for...it forms the basis of most of those Chinese studies associated with the *I Ching*, such as medicine, astrology, geomancy, meditation, philosophy, and the proper conduct of one's life. The underlying concept combines numerology with the philosophy of the *I Ching*. The fundamental idea is that everything in the world is ordered...in accordance with the Laws of Heaven and the Laws of Earth, and therefore [discernable] and understandable here on earth at any given time..." (Sherrill and Chu, p.18).

There's been enough data gathered now to begin making some formulations. If the quadripartite circle is truly an archetypal, cross-cultural

organizational tool, then there should be some sort of analogous correspondence within and between the systems already reviewed, and this proves to be so.

Lining up the cardinal points reveals the following relationships:

East – Intuition – Spring – Thunder

South – Thinking – Summer – Fire

West – Sensation – Autumn – Lake/Metal

North – Feeling – Winter – Water

What is evolving here is an archetypal model of orientation to the space-time continuum relevant to human life and terrestrial conditions. On whatever level we choose to describe, the four-fold manifestation of reality, as perceived phenomenologically, appears to orient itself in a consistent, recurring, ultimately *ordered* pattern. In this ordered pattern, direction, or positioning around the wheel, is not at all an arbitrary matter: there is a fundamental quality, an inherent, psychically meaningful situational value associated with each direction, so that:

East is not just the location on the horizon where the Sun and the whole sky seem to rise; East is also *Intuition*. East is pregnant with unforeseen though dimly sensed possibilities – a subconscious apprehension of the meaning of the whole cycle based on a few clues gathered at its inception, a penetration into the essential nature of a pattern based on prior revelation. There is an exciting freshness about East, an attitude of expectancy, like that which comes at the dawn of a new day. There is a regeneration of impulse and initiative that arises

spontaneously, as with those first buds of early Spring. East is also *Thunder* – a surge of electricity that flashes into our consciousness where the relation between things is suddenly known, without prior mental deliberation, springing us into volition and action.

South is not just the area of the sky where the Sun reaches its zenith, becoming full and warm, like the basking glow of the middle of Summer; South is also *Thinking*. South is where consciousness comes into the full light of knowing – *illumination*. South is the Promethean Fire of clarity, discrimination, and understanding, where the human gift of rational reason allows us to analyze, and create new ideas, theories and all sorts of mental constructs in the bright light of mid-day.

And West: West is not merely the direction on the horizon where the Sun sets; West is *Sensation*. After a full day our sensory input is overloaded: we're full of photographic sense impressions and tactile sense perceptions that need to be processed and evaluated. Meaningful relationships must be formed between ourselves and all we have experienced. Especially important are our relations with other people: as Autumn arrives we'll need to go indoors with these folks and work out mutually-beneficial (or at least tolerable) social arrangements. Pausing to reflect (as off a still lake or shiny piece of metal) after a period of intense daytime activity may bring us satisfaction if we've handled our affairs properly; otherwise there will be the necessity to adjust and balance our attitudes

and actions so that in the next cycle we may experience more joy, a more authentic sense of being.

And North is not just the place where the warmth of the Sun seems to be absent, as the polarity of Summer; no, North is *Feeling*. North gives us a chance to withdraw for awhile, to become still and centered, to form emotional value-judgments to all we have experienced in the previous cycle – whether that cycle was a day, a year, or a lifetime. North is like Midnight, a period of quiet rectitude and inactivity when archetypal dream images are stirring – whether we’re asleep or not! North is like Water – the dark, cold, fluid, inner depth and intensity whose experience can nurture transformation, and can impel us to form ethics and standards of personal behavior that can be impetus to further growth and development ...which, of course, will come about in the Spring, Eastern, Intuitive, Dawn, Thunder phase...and the cycle will continue, cycles upon cycles upon cycles.

Of course, the preceding commentary was an act of *hemispherism* – a phenomenological interpretation situated firmly in the northern hemisphere. What’s interesting is that, for the South, the horizontal descriptions – East and West – still apply, but the vertical orientation – North and South – is reversed. Could this indicate an essentially different use of the “rational” functions in the southern hemisphere, directed more toward the collective than the individual, more toward Unity than Multiplicity? Or is there really an “immutable” quality

to the direction “North,” whether we’re facing poleward or toward the equator?

This paper is still an inquiry.



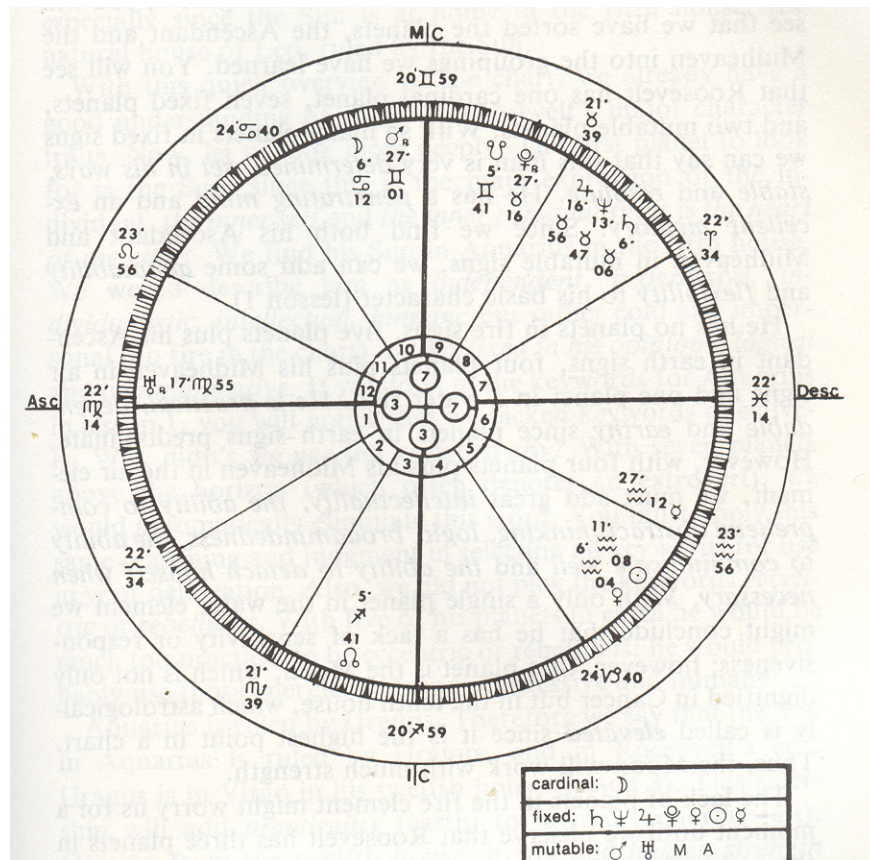
In the initial act of Creation, Unity was divided into two – the primordial polarities of yin and yang, or, psychologically speaking, the attitude types of introversion and extraversion. Dividing that initial polarity by two again gives rise to the four-fold nature of material reality, experienced phenomenologically as the four directions, the four seasons, the four elements, the four cardinal points on the wheel, etc. – two sets of polarities on the cross of matter.¹⁰ Dividing by two again, that is, polarizing the primordial form of matter, gives rise to the octonary, expressed in one well-known cultural system as the eight trigrams, representing in essence the fundamental natural processes of matter. If the original four-fold nature of material reality is divided by *three*, however, three “symboliz[ing] spiritual synthesis...the solution of the conflict posed by dualism...the harmonic product of the action of unity upon duality” (Cirlot, p.232), then we get the number *twelve*, “symbolic of cosmic order” (ibid, p.234);¹¹ and twelve happens to be the number upon which the study of astrology is based.¹²

“Most astrologers would probably agree with the general statement that astrology is the study of the correlations that can be established between the positions of celestial bodies around the Earth and

physical events or psychological and social changes of consciousness in [people]. The motions of celestial bodies are, with very few exceptions, cyclic and predictable... Thus astrology, by referring [humanity's] seemingly unpredictable and aleatory experiences in [their] earthly environment to the rhythmic and predictable changes in the position and the interrelationship of the celestial bodies, gave to [humankind] a most valuable sense of order, which in turn produced a feeling of at least transcendental security" (Rudhyar, 1972, p.3).

Is not the quest for a sense of "transcendental security" the reason for all religion and metaphysics? Indeed, all of the cultural systems reviewed so far have had as their purpose bringing a sense of *order* to human life – order apparently being a pre-requisite for security. The quadripartite circle is itself an *archetype* of structural order with significant psychological consequences. The characteristics that make astrology distinct and unique, as a structural ordering tool, are determined by this tripartite division of the four-fold circle into twelve segments (called "houses"), with their respective planetary inhabitants.

For visual reference, here is a typical natal horoscope, or birth chart; this one just happens to be the birth chart of Franklin Delano Roosevelt (from March and McEvers, p.49):¹³



As can be expected from all that's been demonstrated up till now, the cardinal point on the left, labeled 'Asc' (for Ascendant), represents the eastern horizon; the cardinal point on the right, labeled 'Desc' (for Descendant), represents the western horizon; the cardinal point at top, labeled M/C (for Medium Coeli) represents the direction South; and the cardinal point at bottom, labeled I/C (for Imum Coeli) represents the direction North.

But there is a little more to it than that: since the chart is a two-dimensional model of three-dimensional space, then the M/C simultaneously represents both South and the *Zenith*, or point overhead (on the elliptic); while

the I/C simultaneously represents both North and the *Nadir*, or point below our feet (coming out on the other side of the Earth and extending into the sky from there) – and these two points or coordinates are not necessarily identical. Dane Rudhyar helps to explain this potential for confusion:

“When we reach the stage of development at which, in theory at least, the individual becomes the basic unit – self-reliant, free, creative – then astrology, having become person-centered, should logically use as its frame of reference the three-dimensional geometric structure produced by the six directions of the space *at the center of which* the individual stands...Wherever this person goes, [s]he remains the center of this space. *Everything* that moves in the Sky – stars, Sun, planets, comets, etc. – has its place within this space structure. The position of any celestial body could be pinpointed and measured with references to it...It is the three-dimensional space structure which every individual person carries around hi[r]self wherever [s]he goes – at least where [s]he stands on a solid surface – that should be considered his [or her] *fixed* frame of reference” (Rudhyar, 1972, p.26-7).

This sounds remarkably phenomenological; and that is confirmed in the next sequence:

“To sum up: In a person-centered astrology we are dealing with two essential factors: (1) the basic geometrical structure of the space of which the individual person is the center, and (2) *all* celestial bodies which *pass through* this structure in ever-varying interrelationships, or “aspects” ...[T]here is nothing ambiguous about East, West, North, South, Zenith, Nadir. These points and the space structure they define are *universal facts of human experience* and provide us with a universally valid structural foundation for the interpretation of our individual relationships to the universe” (ibid, p.27-8).

This obviously is **not** an astrology of constellations supposedly beaming down mysterious forces to effect the destinies of human beings; no, this is an astrology of *personal experience* – of embodied, direct, living

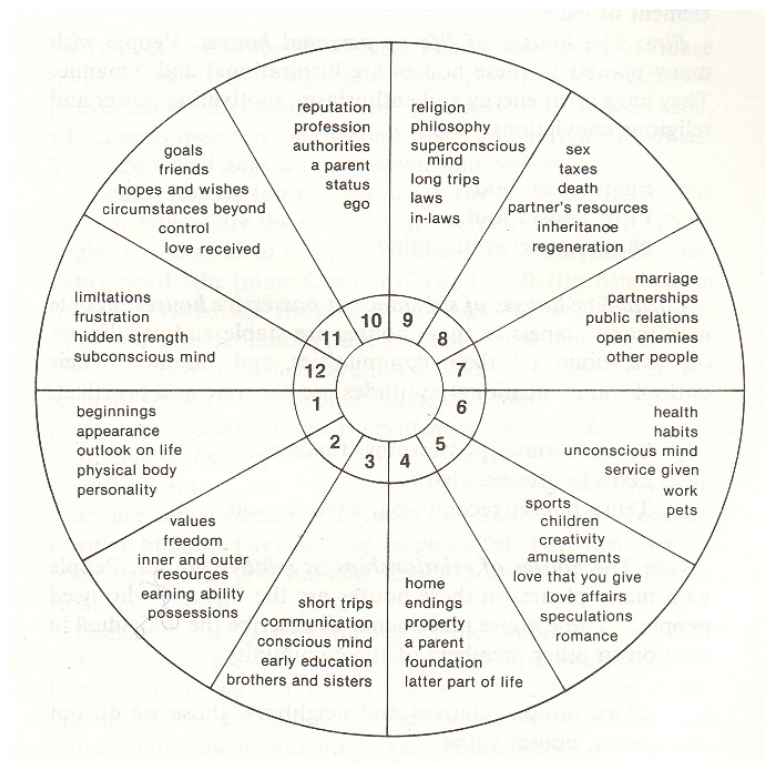
relationship with the greater cosmos, the three- (or four-) dimensional, universal cyclic order within which the individual person is situated.¹⁴ In this sense, a *spherical* astrology would be more accurate and practical, but that development may be some ways off, like three-dimensional chess.

And as for the implications of the ‘twelve?’ Rudhyar explains this in terms of our familiar quaternary organization:

“As, in two-dimensional charts, the basic six directions of three-dimensional space must be reduced to four, that is, to the cross made by horizontal and vertical, four sections of space are established; and as a person-centered astrology deals essentially with problems rooted in personal experience and in changes in consciousness, each of these four sections should be subdivided into three subsections, for the reason that consciousness develops in a Trinitarian dialectical mode” (ibid, p.28).

Rudhyar goes on to describe this “Trinitarian dialectical mode” alternately as “thesis, antithesis, synthesis” or “subject, object, and the relation between subject and object” or “spirit, substance, and form” or “action, means of action, and the evaluation of the results of action.” In the birth chart these are depicted as ‘cardinal,’ ‘fixed,’ and ‘mutable’ houses.

This tripartite division of the quadrants seems to give a sense of movement to the wheel, a movement in three-dimensional space. This movement begins in the East, at the Ascendant, and proceeds *counter-clockwise* around the chart, because that is the way planets (including the Moon) move in their orbit over time.¹⁵ A look at the house meanings will reveal more analogous continuity with other quaternary-based cultural systems:



(from March and McEvers, p.39)

The meanings attributed to the cardinal points on this wheel correspond to a recurring pattern: East (the cusp of the first house) is always the beginning; West (the cusp of the seventh house) is always associated with relationship of some kind; North (the cusp of the fourth house) always denotes inward, personal experience; while South (cusp of the tenth house) repeatedly points to an outward moving, more visible expression.¹⁶ These meanings are derived, not esoterically, but phenomenologically.

I think it is evident that a certain thematic meaning is being conveyed by the intentional *tripartite* division of the quadrants into *twelve* segments – namely the intersection between divinity (three) and matter (four). Dividing the

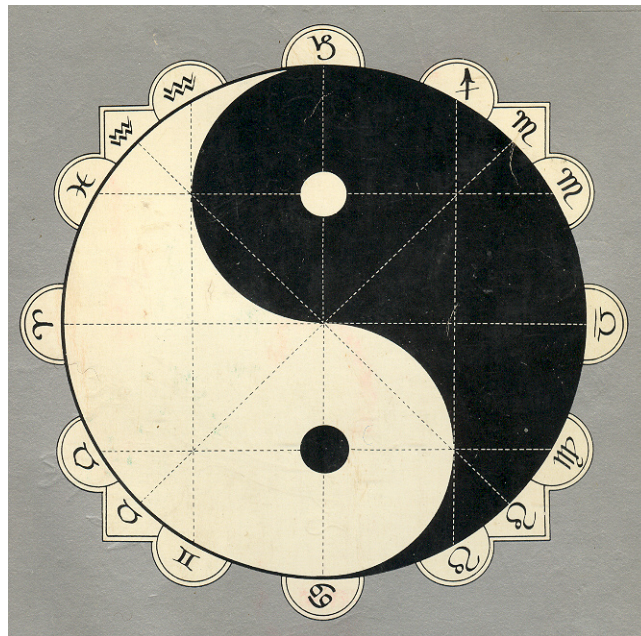
quadrants by any other number would give an entirely different meaning, this meaning depending on the quality or symbolic significance of the number that was the divisor; so that, for example, dividing by 'four' to get sixteen segments suggests a reiteration of or emphasis on the squarish "material reality" theme; while dividing the quaternion by 'five' to get twenty segments suggests a more humanistic theme, since 'five' is "symbolic of Man...the four limbs of the body plus the head that controls them¹⁷...the four fingers plus the thumb...the four cardinal points together with the [heart at the] centre" (Cirlot, p.233). Thus, there is no absolute correct or right way to divide the quaternion; there are only different meanings or intentions related to the symbolic significance of different divisors, including the total number of segments produced.

Before moving on to the next cultural tradition, I want to add one more familiar overlay to the astrological wheel; but first a review of the fundamentals:

"One should understand the philosophical-psychological as well as the cosmological meaning of this fourfold pattern which dominates astrological thinking. The fourfold division of any cycle rests on the realization of the dualism inherent in all existence and in human consciousness...the polarity of day and night, light and darkness, conscious activity and sleep, *Yang* and *Yin*" (Rudhyar, 1972, p.12).

This inherent dualism means that the fourfold circle can be initially conceptualized, in an interpretive way, as being divided into two active hemispheres. "The spring-summer half of the year cycle [the lower hemisphere of the astrological chart] is marked by an *individualizing* trend, while the fall-

winter half [the upper hemisphere of the chart] witnesses the opposite, that of *collectivization*. Each of the annual hemicycles displays a moment of triumph, or of maximal intensity at the solstices” (Rudhyar, 1973, p.31). The solstices appear on the “rational” axis, at the cardinal Midheaven and Nadir, zero degrees Capricorn and zero degrees Cancer, the birth of Winter and Summer. At the eastern and western cardinal points, the Ascendant and Descendant, zero degrees Aires and zero degrees Libra, occur each year the equinoxes of Spring and Autumn - when the Day Force and the Night Force are equal. Mapping this annual waxing and waning of the Day Force and Night Force, the collectivizing and individualizing trends, reaching maximum intensities at the solstices, looks like this:¹⁸



(from the front cover of *Astrological Signs: The Pulse of Life*, Rudhyar, 1943,1970)



The final cultural system that will be reviewed in this brief inquiry of the ubiquitous quadripartite circle comes from the mandala tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, especially as it is enacted in the elaborate sacred practice of creating Kalachakra Sand Mandalas. “The Sanskrit noun *mandala* means any circle or discoid object such as the sun or moon” (Leidy, p.17).

“In Buddhist usage, a mandala is a matrix or model of a perfected universe, the nurturing environment of the perfected self in ecstatic interconnection with perfected others. It is a blueprint for buddhahood conceived as attainment not only of an individual’s ultimate liberation and supreme bliss, but also as the attainment of such release and bliss *by an individual fully integrated with his or her environment and field of associates*” (Thurman, p.127).

As with all other applications of the quadripartite circle, we find that “[m]andalas are often described as cosmoplans in both the external sense, as diagrams of a cosmos; and in the internal sense, as guides to the psycho-physical practices of an adherent” (Leidy, p.17) Jung emphasized the ordering or integrating function of the mandala on the psyche: “The contemplation of a mandala is meant to bring an inner peace, a feeling that life has again found its meaning and order” (1964, p.230), and observed how mandala motifs would often enter the dream contents of clients who were experiencing a reintegration phase after periods of confusion. Rudhyar says the mandala “suggests a process of unfoldment” and insists “the entire zodiac is a mandala” (1973, p.11).

This notion of the mandala as a “cosmoplan” is more than just abstract conceptualizing:

“The cosmogony and cosmogram of any people provides them with a world-picture or world-model within which their feelings, perceptions, and thoughts take place. Our insight into the mandala principle allows us to see that this is not only a matter of vague cultural imagery contributing to a vague personal sense of things, but is rather a matter of imaginal world-patterning directly affecting inner structuring of physical and mental senses *through actual brain organization*” (Thurman, p.143, emphasis added).

Paraphrasing this last sentence will bring this brief inquiry into the quadripartite circle to its climax and conclusion, for it seems that the very study of this mandala as an organizational tool – as a means for achieving or restoring order, integration, balance, and harmony – has been all along effectively influencing the structuring of our neuronal pathways! So why go any further? Perhaps this primordial symbol feels so right because the brain itself is shaped as a quaternion?

Anyway, the Tibetan Buddhist monks take this “imaginal world patterning directly affecting inner structuring of physical and mental senses through actual brain organization” to a whole new level with their Kalachakra sand painting. “The Kalachakra Sand Mandala is a two-dimensional representation of the five-story palace of the deity Kalachakra...[It] consists of five square mandalas, one within the other, surrounded by six concentric circles. Each square mandala represents one of the five levels of Kalachakra’s palace. The

largest is known as the Mandala of Enlightened Body” (B. Bryant in Leidy and Thurman, p.154).¹⁹

The actual mandala itself, underlying all practices and performances, is a complete, three-dimensional environment, an alternative universe, a world centered on a divine mansion that contains Buddha archetype deities with specific types of bodies, surrounded by gardens and charnel grounds, replete with mountains, lakes, trees, and various divine, legendary, and historical beings. The borders of this world are sealed against all negative influences by rings of fire and diamond-thunderbolt energies, which, when desired, can be made permeable to absorb beings from ordinary worlds to bless and transform them. This real alternative mandala world exists in a realm of divine substance within the realities perceived by all buddhas, and can only be perceived in the trained holographic imaginations of tantric adepts, who see it as made of limitless quantities of jewel substances, exquisitely shaped by divine energies into inconceivably balanced and finely wrought exalting structures” (Thurman, p.131).



(sand painting from *Mandala: The Architecture of Enlightenment*, p.152)

So we learn that the Kalachakra Sand Mandala is more than simply a structural organizational tool, and even more than a psychological centering aid – it's a meditative discipline for entering into an alternative reality. Since all the monks are meditating simultaneously on this same image, as they patiently and carefully create it, they must be able to go to this “perfect place” together. Of course, every single detail in the placement and arrangement of icons and symbols around this sacred wheel is prescribed, precise, inviolable and unvarying – exactly the same each time a new sand mandala is created, the product of many centuries of tradition. Analyzing these placements at this point will not add anything more useful to this inquiry; we know they correspond to archetypal patterns and that there is a relational isomorphism with other mandala systems; better to let go of analyzing now and instead attempt to achieve four-fold integration by meditation on the mandala.

Before moving on to the final section of this report – applying our learning to a specific case study – it may be very interesting to know that the Navajo of the high American Southwest also have a tradition of mandala sand painting, and Peter Gold wrote a book drawing the remarkable comparisons between these two cultures at opposite ends of the Earth. He says that both

“have continued to live what we call a mystical or spiritual way of life, based on how the cosmos properly operates without and within. Tibetan and Navajo life is a process of constant rebalancing and perfecting of one’s actions, expressions, and thoughts into an ideal state as befits each culture’s ultimate role models: tutelary deities and spiritual heroes and heroines of the past who are remembered and celebrated in myth and ritual. Both groups see the process of living as a spiritual journey, an individual and communal effort to develop each person into the best version of him or herself, in the company of like-minded people dedicated to the integration of matter and spirit” (P. Gold in Leidy and Thurman, p.160).

Neither culture has a specific word for ‘religion’ but insists instead that theirs is simply a “way of life.” “I have called the principles that underlie the Tibetan and Navajo systems of natural philosophy the Circle of the Spirit. Both systems envision a special kind of circle. It consists of a small, inner circle connected to an outer, larger one by means of four lines, creating four quadrants...explor[ing] the way in which the two-in-one unity differentiated into four phases or aspects...Tibetans and Navajos artistically render these fourfold states of being, expressing, and knowing in the form of sand painted circles of the spirit, which herein are called by their universally recognized Sanskrit name, *mandala*” (ibid).

Finally:

“[I]n the sand-painted mandalas of the Tibetan and Navajo spiritual traditions, the directional meanings, colors, and symbols are uncannily similar, encoded as they are according to the same system of logic, the dialectical language of nature.

The two traditions’ mandalas serve identical purposes. They are interfaces between a yet-to-be-perfected “real world” outside the mandala and a sacred “ideal world” whose qualities and divine beings temporarily abide in the mandala’s inner sanctum” (ibid).

How interesting that these two spiritual, yet relatively technologically simple, cultures should both envision an ideal world of perfect order, balance, symmetry, harmony, and centeredness – with this ideal sumptuously portrayed in their art. What, then, does that suggest about a techno-industrial culture whose so-called “modernist” art is abstract and random, lacking any sense of wholeness, centeredness, cohesiveness, or order?



In this final section, there will be a chance to apply all the lessons gained from this inquiry into the “quadripartite circle as an archetypal organizational structure” to a specific case study. The case study in question is a noble effort called the Ecovillage Designer Education (EDE).

The EDE was officially inaugurated in the Spring of 2004 at the ecovillage of Findhorn by a group of twenty-three distinguished ecovillage educators from around the globe. The purpose of this new global educational initiative was to create some form of standard for all the various ecovillage educations currently being practiced, so that they may all be speaking the same kind of language (so to speak). At Findhorn, over the course of a week, a group process was enacted to achieve consensus on the basic structure and format of the new education. Synchronistic with the cultural organizational systems that have been

investigated in this inquiry, a four-fold pattern was agreed upon for the EDE. Within this quadripartite system, the four fundamental areas of concern, or *dimensions* as they came to be called, were identified as: *Social, Spiritual, Ecological, and Economic*. Taken together as a whole, these four dimensions were intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the essential issues involved in a holistic, truly integrated ecovillage design scenario – thus the standard.

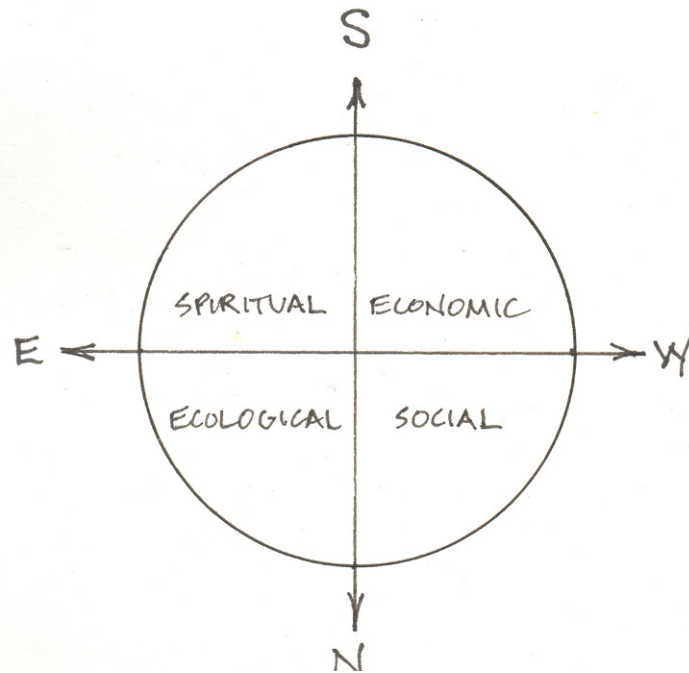
It was also decided, through the course of the group process, that there would be ‘five’ individual modules contained within each of the four dimensions – twenty modules total. As was proposed earlier in this report, this divisor suggests a ‘humanitarian’ flavor to this particular four-fold model. (‘Six’ would suggest ‘organic wholeness’).

Now, the opportunity exists to align this educational system with the archetypal structural organization pattern that’s been identified here, and in so doing, give it a primordial, psychologically and spiritually significant validity. To do that we simply need to decide how the four dimensions are to be arranged around the wheel – which dimension corresponds to which of the four cardinal points. Here are some design criteria to guide the decision-making process:

- 1) We always begin in the East, the cardinal point at the left-hand side of the wheel (for northern hemisphereans).
- 2) The dimension chosen for each cardinal point ideally will be an expression of the essential qualities of that direction.

- 3) The four dimensions can be first divided into two sets of polarities, with the polarities positioned opposite each other on the wheel.
- 4) There should be an evolutionary movement around the wheel in a counter-clockwise direction, corresponding with the movement of the *Tai Chi* and the signs of the zodiac.
- 5) The evolutionary movement around the wheel, beginning in the East, should increase in complexity and refinement as it goes.

Based on these criteria, I have taken the initiative of drawing a proposed arrangement for the EDE curriculum wheel:



This curriculum wheel begins in the East with *Ecological* because, of all the dimensions, this one is most basic, most fundamental, primitive, spontaneous and wild – the beginning, evolutionarily, from which all else arises. Without a viable ecological base, there is no human life or culture to advance to the other dimensions. Ecological knowledge can be considered *Intuitive* because it depends on a direct apprehension of Nature, unfiltered by concepts and rational judgments.

The wheel turns to *Social* from there since, after a human group establishes sustainable, mutually-supportive relationships with its local ecology, it can move on to creating viable social arrangements. These social arrangements strengthen and endure by way of learning effective techniques for human interaction – the essence of the social part of the curriculum. The *Social* dimension is placed here in the Northwest also because the cardinal point of this quadrant – the Nadir of the birth chart – is the cusp of Cancer and the fourth house, the home of ‘family,’ the nucleus of social life. The *Tai Chi* overlay also pinpoints this cardinal point as the Summer Solstice, when the Yin or collectivizing (socializing) energy is just beginning to stir.

The *Economic* dimension is placed next, in the Southwest quadrant following the *Social* dimension, because economics is a complex order of sociology; *Social* comes first in the evolutionary wheel because you cannot say that sociology is a complex order of economics. Economics requires cooperative interaction among pre-existing social groupings coming together to form

meaningful and constructive *relationships*. The very center of this quadrant, the 'fixed' modality of the eighth house, is traditionally associated with business, finance, inheritance, etc.; money may not be able to buy happiness but it can sure buy *Sensation*. The *Economic* dimension is also a logical polarity to *Ecological*, both being 'eco-' words, with economics a methodology for making productive use of ecological systems.

There is only one quadrant left to place the *Spiritual* dimension of the curriculum: It is fitting that this dimension should go last, not because it is least important, but because it is the culmination of all that has gone before. Spiritual awareness, spiritual concerns, spiritual work – these are the pinnacle of refinement to a human life, the highest of vibrations, the omega of which East is the alpha. The highest expression of *Thinking* is *illumination*. The final third of this quadrant, bordering the eastern Ascendant, is home to Pisces, the sign of the mystic, with a Neptunian vibration that dissolves ego-boundaries and fosters mergence with the collective unconscious. This part of the mandala represents the time of year when Yang begins to rise, its cardinal point the Winter Solstice – the birth of the *Christos*, the divine seed potential. The *Spiritual* dimension is a logical polarity to the *Social* because it represents the exalted possibilities when social energy and potential is directed toward the highest good, toward the benefit of the whole.

I believe this proposed arrangement of the EDE curriculum around the quadripartite circle is consistent with the archetypal qualities outlined in this brief inquiry; however, this is not intended to be the final word: feedback, argument, counter-position or –proposal are heartily welcomed, until consensus is comfortably reached. Of course there will be other cultural systems whose use of the mandala does not correspond exactly to the pattern described in this essay. I think that any system is valid as long as it is analogous to the lifeworld as directly experienced by its adherents; and any lifeworld can have varying or unique micro-climatic conditions. If this monograph contributes anything at all, I hope it can be the recognition that the quaternion, the four-fold mandala, is an archetype of the human psyche; and so when working with this potent symbol as an organizational tool, care should be taken to maintain consistency with existing systems so that order, harmony, and balance can be preserved.

“It is through the language of archetypal symbols that we reconnect ourselves with the primordial ground from which all human culture has sprung and through which we may discover our common heritage.” --- Lama Anagarika Govinda



As an epilogue to the current study and as a sort of transition into the next phase, I want to introduce and credit the work of Dr. Annabelle Nelson, President of the WHEEL Council (see www.wheelcouncil.org). In her influential book *The Learning Wheel: Ideas and Activities for Multicultural and Holistic Lesson*

Planning, she articulates a comprehensive pedagogical methodology using the quadripartite circle as a template.²⁰ In her words:

“This book presents a conceptual framework for multicultural cognition, or how various cultures lead their members to know about the world. It describes the symbol of the wheel as an ancient organizational model from Asia, Europe, Africa, and North America. An analysis of wheels from these cultures leads to a system that includes the diverse ways of knowing and learning that these cultures teach. Wheels can organize the relationships of the differences into a unified whole. This book proposes a multiple intelligence model, where intelligences are ways of knowing that are supported by different cultures. The wheel gives these different modes equal emphasis so that we can understand human cognition and match instructional strategies to natural ways of learning. I call this the Wheel Intelligence Model” (1998, p.3).

The brilliance of this book, and of the “Wheel Intelligence Model” in general, comes from its use of an archetypal structural model to address or accommodate the diversity inherent in multicultural applications. In other words, since this wheel is universal, it can be intuitively understood cross-culturally, and applied to a wide range of learning styles. This gives this pedagogical tool enormous flexibility and adaptability, once the initial framework is internalized.

Although the book is “dedicated to the indigenous North American ancestors on whose bones we walk,” Nelson’s analysis of wheels is broadly multicultural: represented are “a circular pattern of stones on a mountain in Wyoming, the Celtic board or map of the four directions, the wheel of the Celtic goddess Arianrhod, and the Tibetan sand painting called the Kalachakra” (ibid, p.7); also included are the Aztec calendar stone, the Dine (Navajo) wheel (where East is curiously depicted at the top (p.12)), the Roman Wheel of Fortune, the

Yoruba Divination Tray, the Lakota Wheel (often called “the medicine wheel”), the Tsalagi Wheel, the Dharma Wheel, and “Gandhi’s Wheel.”

As could be expected, a number of commonalities are identified between each of these wheel systems: “Culling the concepts that are common to these wheels results in a model for achieving integration and harmony in any undertaking, particularly when diverse elements are at play” (ibid, p.22). More than simply highlighting the qualities of the directions, Nelson’s insights point to the valuable holistic nature of the wheel:

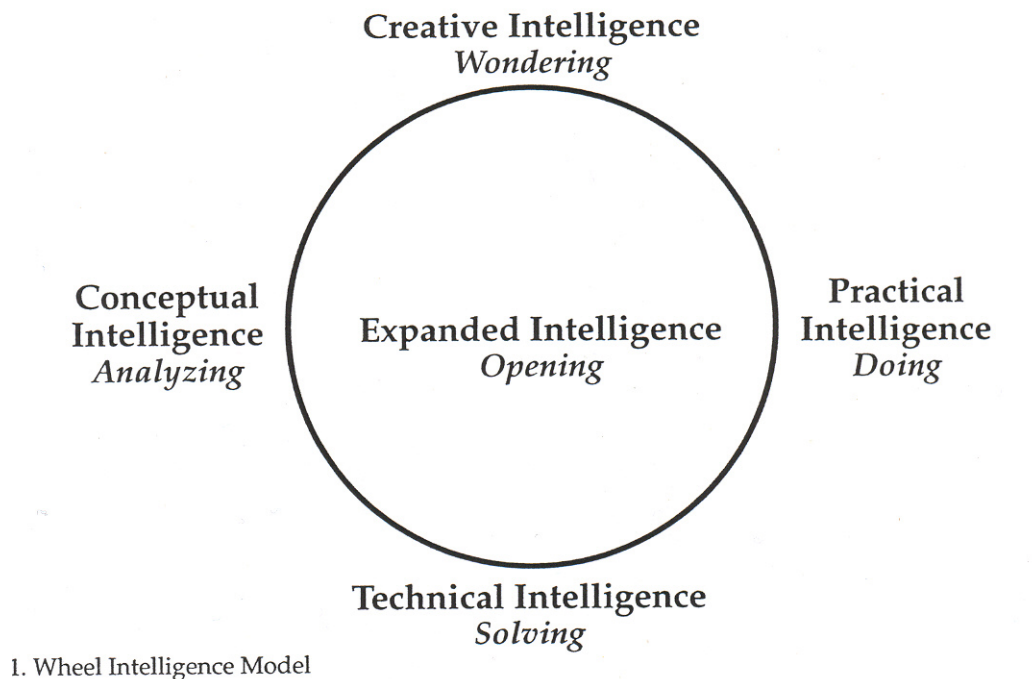
“Since...diverse qualities are all on an equal footing around the wheel, the wheel offers a system for integrating diversity into a harmonious whole. More energy is available to accomplish a task because opposing and diverse forces are unified instead of working at odds with each other” (ibid, p.23).

“[T]he wheel model is nonhierarchical in nature; each element is equally important to the whole and must be addressed. I cannot overemphasize the strength of a nonlinear model in working with differences. If any one energy is considered to be more important than the others, then the wheel becomes out of balance and will not function” (ibid).

“The wheel prescribes a method for addressing diverse qualities equally...In this way the energies are unified into a whole, allowing more strength and power to emerge than is possible by concentrating on any one of the directions – synergy is created” (ibid).

Perhaps most important of all these holistic qualities is the cyclic, versus linear, nature of the Wheel Intelligence Model: “Instead of a competitive, achievement oriented approach to learning, what the wheel model offers is a personal development approach, in which a person’s integration and wholeness are the aim of learning. Integration and wholeness come from developing a student’s natural strengths and balancing those strengths by promoting other, less noticeable attributes” (ibid, p.22).

Here is a graphic of the Wheel Intelligence Model, intended to portray in total the various kinds of cognitive processes that individuals or cultures use for learning (from p.41):



The first thing to notice about Nelson's system is that, although not signified, East is on the right-hand side of the mandala. This indicates either: correspondence with typical map layouts that imply the observer is facing North, or a lack of relevance for the observation of celestial bodies in this system. Since East begins on the right, movement will be clockwise. Also highly significant is that a center has been included in this model (although 'center' is implied anytime the 'cross' is used).

But do all these Intelligences correspond, as in their qualities at the respective cardinal points, to the recurring and analogous themes of our previous analyses, particularly in relationship to the EDE curriculum wheel? I think so, but there is a twist:

East begins with "Practical Intelligence - *Doing*." "This intelligence deals with accomplishing activities in the physical world to fulfill a goal...tasks that require physical skills" (ibid, p.36). This certainly aligns with our intention for the *Ecological* dimension, where a good deal of the applied learning will be physical activities working with the Earth, such as planting a garden, building a greenhouse, pruning an orchard, or rehabilitating a riparian zone. In both systems, the eastern quadrant represents the most basic, practical, mind-body coordinated kind of learning.

The western cardinal points of both systems also have correspondence: "Conceptual Intelligence - *Analyzing*" lines up with the cardinal point of the *Economic* quadrant, and economics has sure become a conceptual science of

analyzing data and trends. But more importantly, the western cardinal point, in its archetypal expression as the polarity of the eastern cardinal point, is always the incipient motion for 'relationship,' and what is Conceptual Intelligence if not the creation of theories, concepts, laws, and models to help explain or represent meaningful relationships in reality? "For mastering conceptual intelligence...the learner must have the ability to analyze one concept and to compare and contrast it with another concept, and the learner must be willing to look at information regardless of its application. In this way, it is the opposite of practical intelligence" (ibid, p.38).

The interpretations of meaning for the horizontal, East-West, "irrational function" cardinal points of both the proposed EDE wheel and the Wheel Intelligence Model do indeed correspond nicely – although these points are reversed diagrammatically, giving the impression that the observer in one system is facing poleward while the other is facing toward the equator. The vertical, North-South, "rational function" cardinal points of both systems, however, seem to line up just as they are – and this has me experiencing a sort of dyslexia, for with East-West reversed, I would have expected a perfect mirror image, so that North-South is also reversed, but this doesn't seem to be the case.

"Creative Intelligence – *Wondering*," at the top of the Wheel Intelligence Model, is directly analogous with the *Spiritual* dimension of the EDE, also positioned at the top. This analogy is especially germane since 'Art' has been interwoven throughout the spiritual curriculum. Both *Wondering* and *Spiritual*

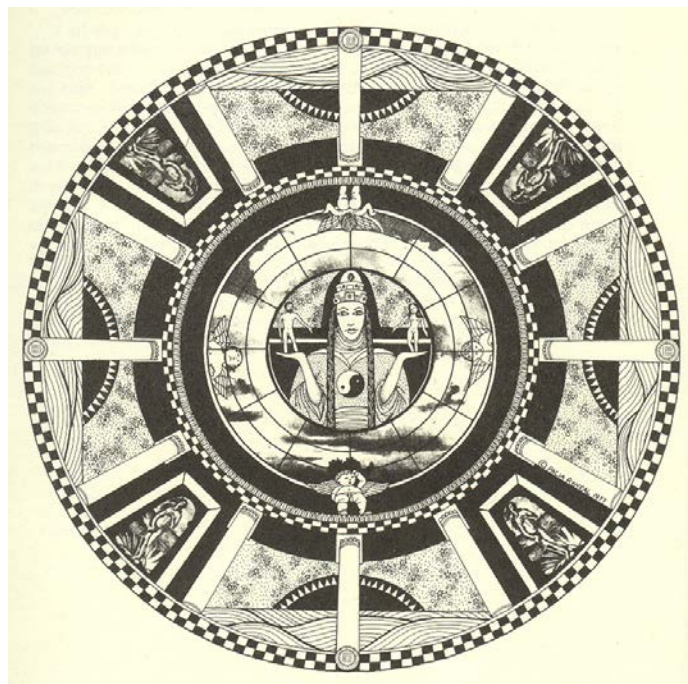
deal with learning that is least ‘practical,’ most ‘imaginative,’ and so they call on the activation of similar brain centers.

And “Technical Intelligence – *Solving*” could certainly be made to fit with concerns in the *Social* dimension, especially since much of the EDE curriculum in this area revolves around learning techniques for healthy human social interaction – such as nonviolent communication, conflict resolution, and consensus decision making...that is, *solving* social dysfunctions. Yet, Nelson makes clear that this quadrant is about learning that involves “designing ways to use material things to accomplish a goal,” so the analogy begins to wear thin, since this kind of “technical” has little relation to “social” issues within an Ecovillage Design.

Maybe it’s asking too much to discover ‘perfect’ alignment amongst all the organizational systems that use the quadripartite circle; and, after all, a good deal can be projected onto an interpretation. Nevertheless, Dr. Nelson’s Wheel Intelligence Model does indeed display a remarkable degree of correspondence, in essence, with the overall pattern that’s been demonstrated here. She obviously has studied the wheel as an archetypal organizational tool in great depth – enough, in fact, to set up the WHEEL Council (Wholistic Health Education and Empowerment for Life). This makes her an authority – ‘authority’ having the root word ‘author.’ The second half of her book describes in detail how to use her wheel model to create holistic lesson plans and curriculum. I ardently recommend this book and this system to the community of practitioners

designing and delivering the EDE – an holistic global education intended to have relevance in diverse multi-cultural settings.

I'm left with the feeling that there needs to be some more study into the differences between the East-West and North-South axes, the latitudinal and longitudinal orientations of living on a revolving sphere – for these appear to be experienced quite distinctly. From a phenomenological interpretation, we've seen a couples times now how East-West can easily be flipped in the models, depending on the direction one is facing, whether poleward or toward the equator, but North-South seems to stand "immutable," unchanging, radiating the same qualities and possessing the same characteristics no matter which way one is facing. I believe a study of electro-magnetics will help to solve this riddle.



(mandala taken from Arroyo, 1978, p.178)



Notes:

¹ “[I]n the most typical case of clarified analogy...two systems are analogous, if they agree in clearly definable relations of their parts” (G. Polya in Snodgrass and Coyne, p.58).

² “There are two kinds of astrology practiced in the west. One is called *tropical* astrology; the other, *sidereal*. Tropical astrology gives the position of a planet by sign. Sidereal astrology gives the position by constellation” (March and McEvers, p.2). The difference is actually profound. Tropical astrology is used here because it designates zero degrees Aires as the Vernal Equinox, at a point when the Day Force and the Night Force are equal. Sidereal astrology still claims zero degrees Aires to be a location in a constellation, despite the fact of the Precession of the Equinoxes. This will be explained further later.

³ For a brief review of semiotics, a general theory of signs: “A ‘sign’ is a representation which infers the presence of another thing, the most familiar example being words....a ‘symbol’ is a special case of a sign that is a constructed representation of something else” (Seif, personal notes). A brief working definition of ‘metaphor’ is “any comparison that cannot be taken literally” (Bartel, p.3). “Symbols and metaphors share several qualities, but they are far from being synonymous. Both are figurative expressions that transcend literal language. Both rely heavily on implication and suggestion. Both present the abstract in concrete terms, and both can be interpreted with varying degrees of openness or specificity. They differ, however, in important ways. A symbol expands language by substitution, a metaphor by comparison and interaction. A symbol does not ask a reader to merge two concepts but rather to let one thing suggest another. A symbol derives its meaning through development and consensus, a metaphor through invention and originality. A symbol is strengthened by repetition, but a metaphor is destroyed by it” (ibid, p.61). Further semiotics: “[T]he semantic and disclosive functions of models are not founded on their logical structures but on their metaphorical structures. Models are metaphors, and metaphors convey their meanings by way of a hermeneutical understanding...No matter what form the model might take...its validity is dependent on the precision of the correspondence between the two systems” (Snodgrass and Coyne, p. 56, 58).

⁴ See for example Elisabet Sahtouris’ *Gaia: The Human Journey from Chaos to Cosmos*, or, Prigogine and Stengers’ *Order out of Chaos: Man’s New Dialogue with Nature*.

⁵ Interestingly, for other human beings conducting this same thought experiment on other locations around the globe, their imaginary lines will all converge at the center of the Earth and each will reach out to a different and unique star. This suggests that in order to experience a sense of Unity, or a commonality with all humanity, the movement is inward, toward the center; while to experience unique individuality in a diverse Multiplicity, the movement is outward, away from the center.

⁶ In other thought experiments, it is possible to imagine beings or intelligences who do not stand upright, or perhaps are not symmetrical or who do not live on a revolving sphere, but who nevertheless use symbolism, for which this quadripartite circle as an image of the essential structure of the universe would be completely incoherent. This incoherence would likewise be felt by intelligences living on a planet like Uranus, which “rolls” on its equator instead of rotating around its axis.

⁷ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, one of the 20th century’s leading architects of phenomenology, expounds on this notion of the body’s spatiality as being situational versus geometrical: “We can therefore see what the question involves; empiricism would willingly take the actual orientation of my bodily experience as the fixed point we need if we are to understand that there are directions for us – but both experience and reflection demonstrate that no content is in itself orientated. Intellectualism starts with this relativity of up and down, but cannot stand outside it in order to account for an actual perception of space. We cannot understand, therefore, the experience of space either in terms of the consideration of contents or of that of some pure unifying activity; we are confronted with that third spatiality towards which we pointed a little

while ago, which is neither that of things in space, nor that of spatializing space, and which, on this account, evades the Kantian analysis and is presupposed by it. We need an absolute within the sphere of the relative, a space which does not skate over appearances, which indeed takes root in them and is dependent upon them, yet which is nevertheless not given along with them in any realist way... We have to look for the first-hand experience of space on the hither side of the distinction between form and content" (p.248).

⁸ The "four functions" of the personality are further differentiated from the two well-known, distinct attitudinal types: introvert and extravert. Whenever working with the fourfold pattern, there is initially a polarization of Unity, which then gets polarized again, this being the nature of the number '4.'

⁹ The word 'archetype' has appeared so often already in this short paper that it may be useful to define it further. According to Jacobi, "[t]he archetypes make up the actual content of the collective unconscious; their number is relatively limited, for it corresponds to 'the number of typical and fundamental experiences' incurred by man since primordial times" (p.47). Also, "In the language of the unconscious, which is a language of images, the archetypes are manifested in personified or symbolic form. 'An archetypal content,' writes Jung, 'expresses itself, first and foremost, in metaphors'" (p.46). As for the origin of the word "archetype" we can go straight to Jung: "The term 'archetype' occurs as early as Philo Judaeus, with reference to the *Imago Dei* (God-image) in man. It can also be found in Irenaeus, who says: 'The creator of the world did not fashion these things directly from himself but copied them from archetypes outside himself.'" In the *Corpus Hermeticum*, God is called...(archetypal light). The term occurs several times in Dionysius the Areopagite, as for instance in *De caelesti hierarchia*, II, 4: "immaterial Archetypes," and in *De divinis nominibus*, I, 6: "Archetypal stone." The term "archetype" is not found in St. Augustine, but the idea of it is. Thus in *De diversis quaestionibus LXXXIII* he speaks of "*ideae principales*, 'which are themselves not formed...but are contained in the divine understanding.'" "Archetype" is an explanatory paraphrase of the Platonic *eidos*. For our purposes this term is apposite and helpful, because it tells us that so far as the collective unconscious contents are concerned we are dealing with archaic or – I would say – primordial types, that is, with universal images that have existed since the remotest times" (Jung, 1990, p.300-1).

¹⁰ 'Four' also happens to be the number of valence electrons in the carbon atom, the so-called "building block" of life. Perhaps significantly, 'twelve' is the atomic weight of carbon.

¹¹ Going back to Ptahhotep: "You know why we always represent divinity in its primordial state of *resting within itself* as an equilateral triangle. God in his three aspects is *one in three* and *three in one*. But this condition – just like the equilateral triangle – carries within itself the possibility of the number *four*. When the three aspects of the basic number *one* separate from each other – and this happens when they move from the unmanifested into the manifested state – the "*one in three*" becomes "*one and three*". In this way the number *four* is born.

Cast a glance at the equilateral triangle: in it you see only one *unit* that has three sides, three aspects. But it contains, hidden and unmanifested, the number *four*, because the equilateral triangle can be divided up into four smaller equilateral triangles.

When the triangle moves out of the unmanifested into the manifested state *in the three dimensional world*, a tetrahedron is formed" (Haich, p.240)

¹² In the following discussion I will be relying almost exclusively on the work of Dane Rudhyar, who, more than anybody I know, is able to articulate the meaning of organic cycles of unfoldment.

¹³ "When a human being is born at a particular time and in a particular place on the surface of the Earth he is surrounded on all sides by celestial bodies, visible in the sky or invisible below the horizon. Astrology states that the positions of these celestial bodies, *if related to the newborn* and if this relationship is significantly interpreted, define the basic *structural character* of this child's biological and psychic organism as well as the manner in which his potential at birth will or should be actualized through a series of *personal experiences*. (Rudhyar, 1972, p.23)...The birth chart is seen as the formula structurally defining a man's "fundamental nature." It is a complex cosmic symbol – a word or *logos* revealing what the person is potentially. It is the individual person's "celestial name," and also a *set of instructions* on how a person can best actualize what at his birth was only pure potential – "seed potentiality." The birth chart is a *mandala*, a means to achieve an all-inclusive integration of the personality" (ibid, p.20).

¹⁴ "Celestial," "universal," "cosmic" – these terms, while they can be used technically, generally give the impression of "outer space," and that is a bit misleading. Overwhelmingly, the most influential of celestial bodies in human affairs are the Sun and Moon, followed by the planets of our solar system. The solar

system is sort of like the ‘cosmic neighborhood’ where human beings dwell. Only ephemeral is the influence of distant stars and constellations.

¹⁵ This is opposite to the *apparent* motion clockwise, which is the effect of the Earth continually rotating toward the East, not of the actual movement of these celestial bodies in space, as the Moon moves from new to full and back to new again.

¹⁶ While it would be divergent to enter a full discussion here, the meanings associated with the rest of the houses are not random or arbitrary, whimsical or capricious, but are derived directly from this movement around the wheel, as a cyclic process of organic unfoldment over time, representing the life-cycles of living things.

¹⁷ I see the image here of Da Vinci’s famous study of human proportions with the male figure standing with outstretched arms and legs slightly apart...“pentagonal symmetry.”

¹⁸ Dane Rudhyar sometimes describes these two polarities as “Unity” and “Multiplicity:” “When the two equal forces of Unity and Multiplicity move cyclically and symmetrically within a finite field of activity, one waxing as the other wanes, four moments mark especially significant turning points. At two points in the cycle, the forces are of equal strength; at two other points, one force reaches the maximum of power it can ever attain while the other is as weak as it will ever be. Thus two points of equilibrium and two points of maximum disequilibrium occur. The two points of equilibrium, however, differ greatly in the quality of being they represent. In one of them, the principle of Multiplicity operates in a condition of dynamic ascendancy and almost explosive expansion, while the principle of Unity is losing control of the movement and becoming internalized as a force of resistance and containment. At the other point of equilibrium, the principle of Unity is a dynamic and irresistible power of condensation and unification, while the influence of the principle of Multiplicity is waning, yet never totally overcome.

Each of these four moments in the cyclic process is the start of a definite phase of the total development of possibilities of being, but the whole cycle is most significantly divided into two hemicycles. During one of them, which can be conveniently symbolized as the Day-side of being, the power of the principle of Multiplicity predominates. During the symbolic Night-side, the principle of Unity controls the Movement of Wholeness. Nevertheless, in such a symbolism the “light” of Day is always to some degree present during the Night period as is the darkness of Night during the Day period.” Of course, Dane is describing the familiar *Tai Chi* symbol of Taoism.

¹⁹ “[R]oundness (the mandala motif) generally symbolizes a natural wholeness, whereas a quadrangular formation represents the realization of this in consciousness” (von Franz, in Jung, 1964, p.234). Lawlor agrees: “[T]he squaring of the circle is of great importance to the geometer-cosmologist because for him the circle represents pure, unmanifest spirit-space, while the square represents the manifest and comprehensible world. When a near-equality is drawn between the circle and the square, the infinite is able to express its dimensions or qualities through the finite” (p.74).

²⁰ Without dwelling on it, I want to mention that another landmark book about teaching style and curriculum development – *Experiential Learning* by David Kolb – uses the four-fold circle as a framework.



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