

Introduction

One of the rocks . . . is placed at the center of the round altar; the first rock is . . . at the center of everything. . . . The second rock is placed at the west . . . the next at the north, then one for the east, one for the south, one for earth, and finally the hole is filled up with the rest of the rocks, and all these together represent everything that there is in the universe.

BLACK ELK

The Sacred Pipe

Etymologists trace the origin of the word *sacred* back to Proto-Indo-European (PIE), the ancestral language of the majority of European and Indian languages. The speakers of that language are believed to have lived in the Pontic-Caspian steppe of Eastern Europe and Central Asia between the fifth and fourth millennia BCE, and perhaps as early as the last glacial maximum over twenty thousand years ago. The PIE word *sak* meant “to sanctify” or “to make pure or holy.” This is the root for the Greek word *saos* (“safe”) and Latin term *sanus* (“sane, sound, whole”). Also, according to *A Latin Dictionary* by Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879), *sanus* meant “dedicated or consecrated to a divinity, holy.” Similarly, the Latin *sacrum* referred to deities

and that which they controlled; note also the Latin *sacer* (“priest”) and *sanctum* (“something located spatially apart”).

The word *sphere* is derived from the Latin *sphæra* and the Greek *shaira*, meaning a ball or globe. A similar concept is *orb*, from the Latin *orbis*, which refers to a circle. Obviously, the difference between a circle and a sphere is a matter of the number of spatial dimensions under consideration. A circle is a two-dimensional (planar) representation of a line with constant curvature and forming a closed figure. In other words, a circle consists of all points in a plane that are equidistant from a given point (the center of the circle). In contrast, a sphere consists of all points in three-dimensional space that are located equidistant from a given point (the center of the sphere).

Based on etymology, then, the phrase “sacred sphere” suggests a globe-like form, whole and pure, consecrated with divine intent. Earth is often referred to as the sacred sphere in the context that it is our home, the Mother Goddess, Gaia. However, equating the sacred sphere with Earth places an unfortunate geographical limit on what I believe to be the true nature of the symbolism.

Why is the circle so prevalent as a religious symbol, across the millennia and around the world? Is there something intrinsic to a circle that has been recognized by people throughout history as an important symbolic representation of key religious concepts? Do important spiritual or religious concepts symbolized by the circle cross time and space to all people seeking to understand themselves and their role in the universe? These are questions I address in this book.

Interestingly, we can envision a sphere in two dimensions as a circle. No matter how we rotate a sphere, its orthographic form in two dimensions is a circle. This is true for a sphere and a sphere only. Placing a cube on paper, we can outline a square, but if we rotate the cube ever so slightly the two-dimensional outline becomes a rectangle or even a hexagon. We lose the symmetry of a square. The case is similar for a tetrahedron, from which we can outline on paper a triangle that is immediately reconfigured if we rotate this fundamental polyhedral structure the slightest amount.

It is this uniformity of shape that leads geometers (or geometricians, people who study geometry) to conclude that the sphere has perfect symmetry. The two-dimensional circle shares this quality. This recognition of perfect symmetry and the fact that every path therein leads one

back to the starting point seems to have taken hold within human consciousness very early in our evolutionary development, even before the first *Homo sapiens* (Latin: “knowing man”) walked the earth. As I demonstrate in this book, evidence for this is found in stone tools from the Paleolithic Era, over one million years ago. Even today the circle is one of the most common pictographic symbols found in the many and varied cultural traditions of the world.

In my study of the circle as a sacred symbol in ancient and indigenous cultures, I found that in virtually every case the message is intended to communicate an understanding of vital relationships between human beings, between ourselves and the world (the world often being a metaphor for the universe), and ourselves and the creator. As you will discover in this book, those relationships have been depicted symbolically in a unique spherical geometry across the world and throughout human history. Recognizing this fact was an epiphany for me.

I set out to study ancient and indigenous symbolism eight years ago. The journey began in 2003, when I encountered a previously undocumented Native American sacred site in the Rocky Mountains of Wyoming. Discovery of that site, which I later realized was detailed in tribal mythology, piqued my curiosity about the true meaning of the circle as a pervasive symbol of religious concepts. I should note that the site remains sacred and continues to be used for indigenous ritual purposes. Everyone should recognize the sanctity of any and all sacred sites encountered during our time here on Earth. Our ancestors, our brothers and sisters, and our descendants deserve nothing less.

I propose that ancient and indigenous cultures studied four-dimensional space and time, and the knowledge they received led them beyond understanding of the physical, mundane world and toward knowledge of metaphysical reality. Knowledge leads to wisdom, and wisdom can take us to the center of the world, the center of the universe, and the center of the heart. For ancient and indigenous cultures the circle symbolized life’s journey to understand who we are and why we are here. The circle is the two-dimensional representation of the four dimensions of space and time, and so it is also a symbol of the sphere and our lifelong journey of discovery. The Sacred Sphere—a system symbolized by the geometry of what I call the *disdyakis dodecasphere* and its various components, most often the circle—is the sacred geometrical construct recognized by

innumerable cultural traditions for thousands of years as the vehicle for receiving knowledge and gaining universal understanding.

The purpose of this book is to demonstrate that cultures from around the world, during all ages, expressed a common ideology communicated through each culture's form of geometrical symbolism. The symbols vary between cultures and fluctuate through time. Nonetheless, each symbol represents a facet of a geometry held in common by the framework of cultures across space and time. In this book I describe the fundamental geometrical structure that has been implied by these facets, the faces of sacred cultural traditions. To accomplish this goal I provide a pragmatic examination of the circle and the sphere as they symbolize concepts in religion and spirituality. Those concepts pervade human experience, suggesting that there is an innate comprehension of the nature of the universe and our place within it.

This book is the result of research in academic and theological literature and ethnographic records, including numerous mythologies and cultural traditions. However, as tribal elders and shamans know, we cannot gain knowledge from books. Books provide information. Knowledge is gained through experience, a turning away from the literature to open ourselves to the energies that fill the natural world and build relationships with other people. Most importantly, we learn by paying attention to what the universe has to say to us. When we open our hearts and our ears, we receive vital information that no book can contain. And so it is in this light that I hope you will listen to the words on these pages and continue on your own journey of discovery. I believe you will begin to see the Sacred Sphere in places you might not have expected, just as I have.

The findings presented in this book are founded on four premises.

1. Each prehistoric and historic human culture developed from a matrix of dynamic environmental parameters affecting the thoughts and actions of the individual and social group that served as the context for that culture. Those environmental parameters include chemical, physical, and biological conditions, whether readily discernable and understood by the population or not. As such, they include the geology, geography,

hydrogeology, meteorology, climate, and ecology affecting human livelihood. But they also include the human experience, our perceptions of the physical world and the cosmos, our relationships with each other, life and death, and the potential for an afterworld.

2. Each human culture developed means of compiling the information gathered from life experiences in the form of mythologies and traditions.
3. Mythologies are filled with both exoteric and esoteric information and purpose, typically evaluated at four levels of understanding: physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual (PIES). Each of those levels is important in its own right, but most are often hidden from view, buried within overt storylines filled with a cast of characters and a variety of situations. A detailed understanding of every level of meaning is difficult to achieve without considerable time and effort and assistance from those who know it well.
4. An important aspect of each mythology and tradition is effaced in the geometry used by cultures to express important concepts associated with space, time, and relationships between both the physical and metaphysical universes.

In Part I pictographic symbols having one dimension (the point), two dimensions (lines, curves, and the circle, such as the Sacred Hoop of Native American lifeways), and three dimensions (spheres) are introduced with particular attention to the circle and the sphere. Part II presents examples of both circular and spherical symbolism from various spiritual traditions (Vedic, Sumerian, Celtic, Egyptian, Jewish, Christian, Mayan, and Lakota), as well as Freemasonry and magic.

In Part III, I introduce a specific polyhedral form, the disdyakis dodecahedron, as the archetype from which many other religious symbols may be derived, including the World Tree. Projecting the image of the disdyakis dodecahedron onto the surface of a sphere, we find nine great circles in perfect symmetry. I call this structure a *disdyakis dodecasphere*. Based on the work of R. Buckminster Fuller, I describe the physical and energy characteristics of that structure, a symmetry that reflects the basic physical and spatial characteristics of not only the five Platonic solids of sacred geometry, but also Fuller's cuboctahedron

(vector equilibrium). This leads to an understanding of the fundamental nature of the disdyakis dodecasphere, its subdivisions within space, and the application of those subdivisions (such as the creation of the Sacred Hoop in two dimensions and the two fundamental shapes in space) within both sacred and mundane frameworks. I then build upon this information with descriptions of complex geometrical configurations that have long religious histories around the world. These include the Seed of Life, the Flower of Life, and the Tree of Life, as well as my discovery of the relationship between the disdyakis dodecasphere and the geometrical structure of the Otz Chiim, the Tree of Life at the esoteric heart of Kabbalah within Jewish mysticism. This previously undocumented finding may have significance regarding the source of the Otz Chiim as an evolutionary step beyond the Tree of Life as understood by ancient Egyptians.

Part IV concerns the relationship between humans, Earth, the cosmos, and time, the fourth dimension. Part V reviews the role of the shaman, the impact of hallucinogens on knowledge gained through shamanic journeys, and the meaning of the Sacred Sphere as it relates to my own journey through life.

In writing this book I have attempted to provide relevant details sufficient to support the thesis. However, space on the page is necessarily too limited to provide all of the information I would prefer to share, and I urge you to pursue further information. I have included a selected bibliography in the hope that you will seek out more on this topic. It is always difficult to communicate without some measure of subjectivity. I apologize if my personal fascination with the relationships between human cultures, engineering, and the earth sciences gets in the way of what I intend to be an objective review of the facts and an impartial presentation of the results and conclusions of my studies. My hope is that you will find this work entertaining and worth some measure of consideration. After all, it is not only about our past, but our present and future as well.

Hierology (Greek: *hieros*, “holy”; *logos*, “word” or “reason”) is the study of sacred ideas or sacredness, particularly as it relates to religious or spiritual truths found in many cultural traditions or belief systems, usually encompassing sources beyond Western philosophy or religion. This book highlights the importance of a specific yet previously unrecognized structure—the Sacred Sphere—within the context of hierology. The sources of much of the information presented in the first part of

this book include a breadth of historical records, not the least of which are ancient sacred texts (hierographs), sacred engravings (hieroglyphs), and cuneiform script imprinted on clay tablets dated to as early as 3000 BCE. Just as important, however, are cultural artifacts from the Paleolithic Era, the architecture of ancient and indigenous societies, and recent records including biographies, ethnographies, and photographic records of pictographic symbols from around the world. Within this mix there are questions, contemplations, assertions, and conclusions that can only come from a curious mind and an open heart.

People have recognized certain fundamental, sacred concepts for thousands of years, concepts symbolized by the circle as a common proxy for the sphere. This finding may be surprising and a thorn in the side of some in the academic community. Nonetheless, a universal and eternal understanding of sacred relationships appears bound to a unique spherical geometry, implying that there may be a cosmic consciousness within us that allows us, through the use of symbols, to communicate the universal cyclicity of birth, life, death, and rebirth to those whom will listen. This is a cord binding our past to our present and future. This is the sacred nature of the sphere.

Mitakuye Oyasin (“We are all related.”)