NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN;

FINE ART PRINTMAKING;

The Squared Circle;

A Christian, Nazi, and Personal Symbol.

by

Conor Byrne

Submitted to the Faculty of History of Art and Design and Complementary Studies in Candidacy for the Degree of Fine Art Printmaking

1994

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List of Plates

INTRODUCTION

The squared circle is a basic pattern which manifests itself in many ways; the crucifix and the swastika are just two.

It is a deep rooted archetypal motif and finds expression in many religious beliefs from many very different cultures.

It is a sign however that can be manipulated in order to exploit the deep seated energy that it can tap within us.

Through understanding the symbol and how it relates to us on an individual basis and through understanding the nature and dynamics of groups, we can see the strength of movements that gather under this symbol.

Through understanding the symbol and how it relates to us on an individual basis we can see how to take power away from organised movements and how the individual must assume personal responsibility.

1.1

The Squaring of the Circle;
Forms and Manifestations.

To help us form an idea of both the simplicity and complexity fo the squared circle and to gauge its natural occurrence as a central image of the emerging consciousness of man, we need only to travel north of Dublin.

Bru na Boinne or Newgrange is accepted as being a thousand years older than the great pyramids of Egypt, putting it at an age of approximately five thousand years old, and is constructed in alignment to the sun.

The sun, on its cycle defines the cardinal directions. At equinox, when night and day are equal, the sun will rise due east and set due west anywhere in the world. It will rise to its highest point in the sky at midday and define south. On any day of the year a line from north to south will bisect the angle of the rising and setting positions.

The major engraved kerbstones around Newgrange are aligned with the solstices; the highest and lowest points of the sun in the sky, defining the year.

In principle the rising and setting positions of the sun at the solstices are equidistant from the cardinal directions which form a cross dividing space into four quarters. The sun also generates time and the four quarters of the year. The cross and circle represent the sun as circle which generates the cross of the quarters of time.

Newgrange is an elaborate expression of this concept.

Known in ancient times as Bru na Boinne it is connected with the god Dagda and the conception of Oenges, whose mother is Boond, this union is as a result

of Dagda's possession of the Bru and involves magic. It has been suggested that Dagda is a sun-god, and Newgrange is the home of his son.

The mount is also associated with the birth and mystical finding of Cuchulainn. The mound is aligned to accept the rising sun on the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year, when the sun begins its yearly cycle again. This event was the major feast of the neolithic calender signifying the rebirth of the sun and therefore the continuance of life in the coming year.

In ancient religion the end of the equinox was celebrated by the presentation of a young child to worshippers, symbolising birth and marking the rebirth of the sun's cycle. This festival took place at the end of the solstice, around the 25th of December.

It appears that the catholic church chose to celebrate the birthday of Jesus on this feast day in order to transfer the direction of the heathen from the sun to him who was called the Son of God, because the Gospels make no mention of the birthday of Jesus. Linking these mythological hero figures or gods to the sun's cycle; the birthday of the sun and the birthday of the saviour, can give us some indication of the lengthy evolution of our beliefs and customs.

Another connection between the pagans and Christians is the nimbus or halo, frequently used in the depiction of sacred personalities. It originally was a sun symbol and was used in ancient Greece around the head of Helios, the sun god. The sun disc and worship of the sun passed from Pagan belief to Christian in the form of an emblem of divinity and the image of light being an attribute of a god.

The theme of the hero / saviour, his connection to the cycle of the sun, its death and rebirth, is expressed also by the ancient prolific custom of sacrifice. In certain cultures the king must be sacrificed in order to ensure the rebirth of nature and continuance of life. Direct sun worship has survived at least into the beginning of this century. In his book, "The Golden Bough", J. G. Frazer describes the beliefs of a race inhabiting the islands between western New Guinea and northern Australia.

They regard the sun as the male principle by whom the earth or female principle is fertilised. Once a year at the beginning of their rainy season, Mr Sun comes down into a sacred fig tree, and "to facilitate his descent a ladder with seven rings is considerately placed at his disposal," "and the mystic union of the sun and the earth is dramatically represented in public,..., by the real union of the sexes under the tree". The object of the festival is to ensure good food production for the coming year.

In other religious creation beliefs the squared circle plays a central role.

In India, the god Brahma, standing on a huge thousand petaled lotus turned his eyes to the four points of the compass. This fourfold survey from the circle of the lotus was a preliminary orientation or taking of bearings, before beginning work on creation. Similarly, Buddha, at the moment of his birth stepped onto an eight rayed lotus flower that rose from the earth. From this he gazed in the eight directions and also upward and downward, making ten directions.

Tibetan Buddhism uses the squared circle in the form of a mandala, they are used as ritual instruments of meditation. Because of their structure they are supposed to narrow down the psychic field of vision and restrict it to the centre.

The goal of the meditative process for the yogi, is an inner awareness of the deity. Through contemplation, using the mandala he can achieve a recognition of himself as God and is described as returning into the universal totality of the divine state. Alchemists, in their search to create gold from base materials, an allegorical quest to discover the wholeness of man, used as a central symbol of their search the "quadratura circuli".

In Mecca, the central point of Islam, pilgrims walk around the square building associated with their god. This results in a huge human circle turning around a cube. Similarly, followers of Islam, in their daily prayers will face Mecca, thereby forming a worldwide circle around the sacred cubric structure in Mecca.

The ancient Greek churches were constructed on the principle of the quartered circle and the cathedrals of the Catholic church also embody this principle.

It also appears in the planning of cities. One classical account is the founding of Rome as described by Plutarch. He describes how first a mundus, (meaning cosmos) was established as the centre. From this point a boundary was described by a plough, which was lifted over the points where gates would e constructed in the city walls. Although Rome is classically described as "urbs quadrata"; the square city, one theory suggests that this contradiction implies a circular city divided into four quarters by four main arteries. Another theory suggests it is a symbolic representation of the mathematically insoluble problem of squaring the circle.

Plutarch, in his description of Romulus founding a circular Rome, already describes the city as "Roma Quadrata", illustrating Rome as being both a square and a circle.

The foundation of the city was laid down by the Etruscans "as in the mysteries", as a secret rite. Another example of a mandala city plan is Washington D.C.

The important principle at work here is the occurrence of an archetype; the imposition of an ordered harmony, a society with an central binding point of balance, or a god.

Jungian interpretation of these myths, which lie behind actual beliefs and physical manifestations, suggests that the spatial orientation may be regarded as symbolic of the human need for psychic orientation.

Jung describes four functions of consciousness; thought, feeling, intuition and sensational. These functions enable the individual to perceive and try to comprehend his world. The god's fourfold survey of the universe symbolises the necessary integration of these four functions that man must achieve to become whole.

The hero and the symbol of the sun embody this challenge, and connect profoundly with the minds of people.

A person in the role of hero will be considered on a level close to a god.

1.2

The Squaring of the Circle;
Its Function as Archetype.

> "Such things cannot be thought up but must grow again from the forgotten depths if they are to express the deepest insights of consciousness and the loftiest intuitions of the spirit, thus amalgamating the uniqueness of present day consciousness with the age old past of humanity;" - Carl Jung.

As Jung suggests these topics do seem to connect the modern mind with antiquity. Occurrences of this nature cannot reasonably be explained in terms of migrating peoples, it seems much more likely that these recurring images do indeed spring from a common inherited instinct or collective subconscious. Jung called these common images or motifs archetypes.

To better understand these ideas we need to examine how a symbol functions. An image can become a symbol when we attach to it a meaning beyond its immediate and obvious composition. It has a wider unconscious aspect that is never fully explained or understood, nor can it be, for to be fully explained it would need to be completely rational and logical.

Because there are many things beyond the grasp of the human mind, we resort to symbols to represent concepts that we cannot define or fully understand. This is one reason why religions use symbolic language and images. But this conscious use of symbols is only one aspect of a psychological fact of great importance, man also produces symbols unconsciously and spontaneously, in the form of dreams.

This fact illustrates what an integral part of our psyche relates to the symbol. Our subconscious communicates with us, our consciousness through the use of symbols in dreams. Therefore the opposite should also be true; that consciously utilised symbols can contact some part of our subconscious minds,

perhaps also bypassing rational thought, and appealing directly to emotion or instinct. The effect of this subliminal communication, more often than not, is used for persuasion purposes and we are surrounded by examples of this in our daily lives.

Many scientists and philosophers deny the existence of the subconscious, arguing that it implies the existence of two personalities within the same individual. This seems to be quite true of modern man and is illustrated in global terms in the split between developed and underdeveloped nations.

Freud, in the early days of psychological research made the simple but important observation that if a dreamer is encouraged to go on talking about his dream images and the thoughts that these prompt in his mind, he will eventually reveal the unconscious cause of his problems.

This simple yet effective method might also help us find some reason in our social behaviour if we examine the symbols of our culture. Through analysis of individual dreamers, both Jung and Freud found symbols occurring that could not be derived from the personal experience of the patient. Freud called these elements "archaic remnants" - mental forms whose presence could not be explained by anything in the individual's own life and which seemed to be inbuilt, inherited shapes of the human mind.

Jung attempts to explain this phenomenon in evolutionary terms. He argues that just as the human being has developed and evolved over a period of time and still retains basic forms and patterns, in common with animals, so our minds have gone through a similar process but also can contain basic patterns. He describes this as the "biological, prehistoric, and unconscious development

of the mind in archaic man, whose psyche was still close to that of the animal".

He calls these motifs or patterns "archetypes", and describes them as "representations of a motif - representations that can vary a great deal in detail without losing their basic pattern".

He likens them to the instinct of birds to build nests and ants to form colonies. Though he differentiates between instinct and archetype this;

> "What we properly call instincts are physiological urges and are perceived by the senses. But at the same time they manifest themselves in fantasies and often reveal their presence only by symbolic images. These manifestations are what I call the archetypes. They are without known origin and they reproduce themselves in any time or in any part of the world - even where transmission by direct descent or "cross-fertilisation" through migration must be ruled out".

One such motif is that of the hero and rescuer, who although he has been devoured by a monster appears again in a miraculous way having overcome whatever it was that swallowed him.

The hero myth is of prime importance to our understanding of the squared circle. As we have seen the cross and circle is connected to the sun and its yearly cycle of death and rebirth. It is also connected to the myth of the hero; a good example is the crucifixion of Jesus Christ; his death on the cross is a symbol for his followers of a rebirth, an eternal life. This theme is expressed in 1 Corinthians xv:22;

> "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive".

This theme was harnessed and expressed in a deliberate, exploitative manner by the Nazis. Hitler was known as "The Saviour" and he developed, the image of hero and redeeming warrior leading Germany into a new life.

The hero myth in psychological terms reflects each stage of the evolution of the human personality. The hero literally serves as a role model and describes the development of the human mind from infancy to maturity. A native American tribe provide an excellent diagram of the myth in their traditional hero story.

It has four clear stages going from the earliest and least developed part of life, to a socialised being, to a being with great power and finally to a stage where he has so much power he can destroy himself and his world. Sacrifice or death of the hero becomes necessary to stop his unbridled power and pride. In the American Indian myth the hero at the final stages realises this situation of danger and submits. He decides not to use his power so that the world he lives in can continue to survive.

This pattern reflects that of the sun on its yearly cycle. They are also connected by the idea of wholeness, the sun is an ancient symbol of this state, the hero, an ancient role model for achieving it.

We have seen many examples of the squared circle and its connections to religious beliefs of wholeness, death and rebirth. Research into dreams can help us to understand the functional meaning of this symbol and also its central role in religious imagery.

It has been found that a mandala may occur in a dream to an individual in a condition of psychic dissociation or disorientation. Examples are young

children whose parents are breaking up, or adults, who, as the result of a neurosis and its treatment are confronted with the problem of opposites in human nature and are consequently disorientated or schizophrenics whose view of the world has become distorted.

Jung suggests that in such cases, the imposition of a circular image with a centre can compensate the disorder and confusion that can arise in the psyche. If we remember the earlier four functions of the consciousness of the mind; thought, feeling, intuition and sensation, we can see how such an image could be helpful in relating contradictory elements of human nature to the centre and finding a balance between them. The spontaneous appearance of images of this kind can be seen as an attempt by human nature at self-healing which springs from an instinctive impulse. He describes this squaring of the circle as the "archetype of wholeness".

He further explains that the squaring of the circle is a demonstration of the centrepoint of personality;

> "a point within the psyche to which everything is related, by which everything is arranged and which is itself a source of energy. The energy of the central point is manifested in the almost irresistible urge and compulsion to become what one is, just as every organism is driven to assume the form that is characteristic of its nature, no matter what the circumstances. This centre is not felt or thought of as the ego but, as the self."
>
> "Although the centre is represented by an innermost point, it is surrounded by a periphery containing everything that belongs to the self - the paired opposites that make up the total personality. This totality comprises consciousness first of all, then the personal

unconscious, and finally an indefinitely large segment of the collective unconscious whose archetypes are common to all mankind".

In India the self is described as a "conglomerate soul", the Tibetan Buddhist believes that, through unifying his polarities, finding his centre, he re-unites with God.

From the time of Plato the circle has been accepted as a symbol of the soul or psyche, the square can represent earthbound logic or the functioning of consciousness.

The squared circle could be described as a target helping to focus our mind on the centre or source of our universe, the centre of ourselves, which if one believes it so, comes from, is, and always will be part of God.

1.3

The squaring of the circle;

A Catholic symbol.

This "archetype of wholeness", or "quarternity of the one" is the schema for images of God. Early Christian representations of God showed him flanked by the four evangelists, this echoes the Egyptian God Horus and his four signs, both groups of four are depicted as three animals and one human. This ratio of three to one occurs regularly within this theme, it was of importance to the Alchemists and may have some connection with the Christian idea of a trinity.

The crucifixion also does not conform to the definitions of a mandala but, does, if considered in symbolic terms, convey the same message. Jesus nailed to a cross is an explicitly painful demonstration of the circle, as soul or spirit, being definitely connected to the cross, representing human consciousness and the reality of this world.

It is perhaps this highly charged image of suffering that followers of this faith can identify with. If they can externalise their pain and suffering in this world and identify with the image of Jesus, they can find hope and comfort in his demonstration of passing through this life, death, and finding a new existence on the other side.

Although the crucifixion conforms to the ancient pattern of the squared circle, it was the physical act of crucifying Jesus that is responsible for embedding deeply the symbol in the minds of people over the last two thousand years.

It also reinforces the ancient beliefs of the necessary submission of the hero or god. Bru na Boinne is a reminder that even the sun, god of that world, went through death in order to be reborn.

There is an interesting legend connecting the cross to which Jesus was nailed, to the original tree of life.

It says that Adam, expelled from the garden of Eden, begged for a seed of the tree of life. Although it contradicts the narrative of the bible the legend tells that the request was granted. The tree that sprang from the seed was held in great humour and its wood was preserved in Solomon's temple. The Queen of Sheba told the great king that He who should hereafter one day be slain upon that tree would by his death cause the destruction of Jerusalem.

Solomon therefore, missing the obvious idea of having it burnt to ashes, had it removed and deeply buried in the earth. The pool of Siloam sprang from it, and owed its healing virtues to it. When the hour of the crucifixion drew near, the trunk floated to the surface, and as it seemed a useful piece of timber, was drawn out of the water and used to form the cross.

It is a legend, however improbable, that makes a connection between the sign of the death of Jesus and the symbol of the start of life on this earth. In the history of the Catholic church the crucifixion was not always a central image. It was not used by the early church until about the fifth century. Before this time it was not considered an encouraging image for converting people to the faith. Although one theory suggests that from the end of the first century the followers of Christ in Rome would cross themselves in order to identify and recognise each other amongst the pagans.

It was during the middle ages that the church developed from a small persecuted community into a powerful organisation. At the end of the first millenium, when the opinion existed that the world would end, the Barbarians dominance had been defeated, and the age of chivalry was dawning, the Catholic church was the major power in Europe, greater than the kings or emperors.

In the year 1095, Pope Urban II, expressed his attitude of power when he claimed to be "spiritual leader over the whole world".

He called upon the Knights of Europe, who were, at that time, engaged in feudal patterns of jousting and war, to repent. He described them as "vultures (who) smell fetid corpses, so do you sense battle from afar and rush to it, eagerly". He urged them to become soldiers of Christ and fight to free the Holy places of Christendom from the control of other peoples.

> "Under Jesus Christ, our leader, may you struggle for your Jerusalem, in Christian battle-line, most invincible line, struggle that you may assail and drive out the Turks, more execrable than the Jebusites, who are in this land, and may you deem it a beautiful thing to die for Christ in that city in which he died for us".

The western knights were faced with a choice of staying in a Europe of war, disease and famine, or embark on an honourable crusade of righteous war with the blessings of the church and the promise of redemption and the hope of plunder.

Once they had taken the vow to go on th crusade they adopted the cross as their sign by order of Pope Uran II. So began hundreds of years of warfare, with its accounts of massacres and atrocities, its sufferings of disease, exposure, ignorance of foreign lands, sieges, battles and destruction.

It's an era remembered romantically as the hero's quest for the holy grail, and the heroic sacrifice in the name of the faith. The crusades were however an era of war caused by an arrogant self-righteousness, driven by religious

energy,and instigated by a person claiming to be spiritual leader over the whole world.

This war, against a highly civilised and developed culture, was carried out under the sign of the cross.

In the sixteenth century the cross was believed to be a "terror to evil spirits, that they, having been driven from thence (a church) may be terrified when they see the Sign of the Cross and may not presume to enter there again; secondly as a mark of triumph, for crosses be the banners of Christ, the signs of his triumph".

The crucifix has been described as the most materialised of the symbols of the cross, but, according to Edward Hulme, it "often develops into a mere representation of acute physical suffering, that, whatever aid to faith it may be to some who gaze upon it, is dishonouring to the Saviour in its repulsive dwelling upon one side alone, and that the least of His great sacrifice. The agony of the cross was not the smart of bodily pain, but the burden of the sins of the whole race of mankind".

This expresses the Catholic belief that Christ, on dying, made sacrifice to atone for the sins of mankind, thereby opening the way to an eternal life. this is basically the same goal and message of most other major religious beliefs. That through the cycle of life and death, each person will return to a life with God. Whether it is expressed as the submission and sacrifice of the hero, which in psychoanalytical terms is a model for individual growth in consciousness leading to a state of harmony, or as the practice of contemplating a mandala and through finding a psychic balance, becoming aware of a connection with God.

However some religious organisations claim to be the only guardians of the one true faith. This attitude establishes a right side and a wrong side.

This attitude has been consistently adopted by the Catholic church and is manifested not only by the crusades, but also by the church's missionary work. The Vatican Council in 1870 repeated the claim of Urban II when they declared themselves "the Supreme Power of governing the Universal Church". Today young Christian soldiers are initiated into the structure of belief at an early age, as were young boys admitted to the Knighthood in feudal times, without much comprehension of what is actually happening, and without much choice.

We can trace the evolution of our global situation today through the attitudes of history. It is sad to find we have not evolved a long way. In the Islamic world at present there is a belief held by some that the crusades are continuing. It manifests today in a form termed "cultural colonialism", or imperialism. In most underdeveloped countries, where Islam is a very strong religion, they see western influences and attitudes of commerce and government as an undermining of their culture and identify, and see it as a very strong, dangerous force that is difficult to resist. In other places, such as Israel and Palestine, the crusading attitude is much more strongly defined and expressed.

1.4

The Squaring of the Circle;
a Symbol of the Nazis.

"The fact that an ignominious fanatic placed a swastika on his battle flag is insufficient reason for ignoring this symbol's historic significance" - Henry Dreyfuss.

Not only is it insufficient reason for ignoring it, I would think it is a very good reason for investigating it. For Hitler may have been a murderous fanatic, but he was also a master craftsman at what he did; leading a nation of people, as though he had a ring in each individual nose of every single follower of his movement, and he was very skillful in tapping into people's emotions, hopes and fears.

Far from deserving to be ignored Hitler's reign of horror, and the symbol of that, should be understood as fully as we can in order to learn how such a state of affairs can arise, and maybe the next time we will be better equipped to deal with it.

As we have seen symbols can connect deeply with our minds and can signify our most profound and unquestionable beliefs. On a level such as this, the level of emotions, feelings, and instinct the rational mind is possibly left at a loss. Sometimes it can seem as though people really can set their rational intelligence aside and be ruled by their emotions, or by someone who controls their emotions.

In an article entitled "Symbol of the Century; the swastika", Steven Heller argues that the most sacred and ancient of symbols, "with meanings indelibly etched into the collective psyche are not unutterable since they can be manipulated for purposes having nothing to do with original intent". He believes that the swastika, originally a symbol of good fortune, today represents "evil so unfathomable that its usage as anything other than a trademark of hate is inconceivable.

It is true that since the horror enacted under the sign of the swastika, it is now accepted as a symbol of the utmost evil. But if we consider the earlier application of the squared circle to enforce a balance on the polarities of human nature we can see that this extreme hatred is indeed a part of human nature and is therefore part of that circle of human emotions. For the National Socialist rank and file members the swastika was originally one of hope and freedom and although it did not impose a balance on their extreme attitudes it did primarily represent the movement and the direction of a new Utopian state for the German people, happy, healthy, pure and righteous. In effect it offered them a chance of rebirth from their perceived state of defeat, shame and humiliation.

The people of the Weimar Republic were described as "praying not only for their daily bread but also for their daily illusions".

The swastika, also referred to as a sunwheel gets its name from the Sanskrit word "swastika", meaning well-being, good fortune, and luck, and resembles the Indian mystic figure "svastikaya", a "sign of benediction".

In 1920 Hitler adopted it as the emblem of the National Socialist Workers Party, and refashioned it to maximise its inherent power.

The "Hakenkreuz" (hooked cross), swastika, or Jylfot, has been found in excavated prehistoric dwellings in America. During the nineteenth century it was used by native American tribes on blankets, ceramics and in healing rituals where it was believed to help restore psychic balance within a person. It can also be found in Buddhist, Hindu, Greek, Roman Catholic and Pagan symbology.

During the nineteenth century cultural historians fanatically researched the swastika eager to establish ancient Aryan origins for it, in order to represent nationalist theories. One historian argued that it was a common religious symbol for all Germanic peoples in the Near East.

It was believed that this Aryan race were light-skinned, barbarian people who, became civilised as they migrated from the north eastward into India and Persia and westward into Greece and the Roman Empire, bringing with them the swastika. They are considered by some to have ultimately spread the sign into China and Japan.

Whether these beliefs are actually true is unprovable now, and Jung's idea that these motifs occur in different cultures because they are archetypal seems more probable. The Germanic people do, however, have a deep rooted connection with this hooked cross motif, or sun wheel.

At the time of the midsummer solstice, when the sun is at its highest point, there was a fire festival celebrated all over Europe in ancient times. In Bavaria the custom existed up to the middle of the nineteenth century. According to a mediaeval writer,the three great features of the midsummer celebration were the bonfires, the processions with torches around the fields, and the custom of rolling a wheel. At lower Konz, a village on a hill over the Moselle river, to celebrate the midsummer festival and mark the descending path of the sun now that it has reached its highest point, there was a custom which strongly evokes the idea of a swastika as a revolving cross or sun wheel.

At nightfall, the whole male population gathered on the top of Stromberg Hill, the females at a spring halfway down the hill. On the summit was a huge wheel encased in straw that had been donated by all the villagers. The wheel

was set alight and two youths ran with it, holding it by the axle, down the hill to plunge it into the Moselle. The rest of the men lit torches and the women "raised cries of joy" as it passed. The belief was that if the fiery wheel was extinguished by the river, a good harvest would be had and all the neighbouring vineyards would pay a tax to the village. If they neglected to perform the ceremony they believed that "the cattle would be attacked by giddiness and convulsions and would dance in their stalls". One of the first German "Volkish" (people's) movement periodicals from 1897 included a swastika on the cover. By 1910 other German Nationalist groups had laid claim to it. Those who wished to demonstrate their commitment to Volkish beliefs, including a belief in Ayran supremacy, displayed the symbol proudly.

By 1914 when Germany and the rest of the world were at war the swastika as nationalist emblem was already well known. The symbol had been adopted by the "Wondervogel", a militarist youth movement, many of whose members became army officers. With German's defeat in 1918 many veterans, believing that Jesus, communists and republicans had not only betrayed them but had profited from it, banded together into paramilitary groups known as Freikorps or Stalhelm (Steel Helmets) to wage war on those they believed to be the traitors.

The most famous of these was the Erhandt Brigade which in 1919 participated in the "liberation" of Munich from the communists and whose members wore the Hakenkrauz on their steel helmets, marking the first time the swastika was associated with right wing opposition to the Weimar Republic.

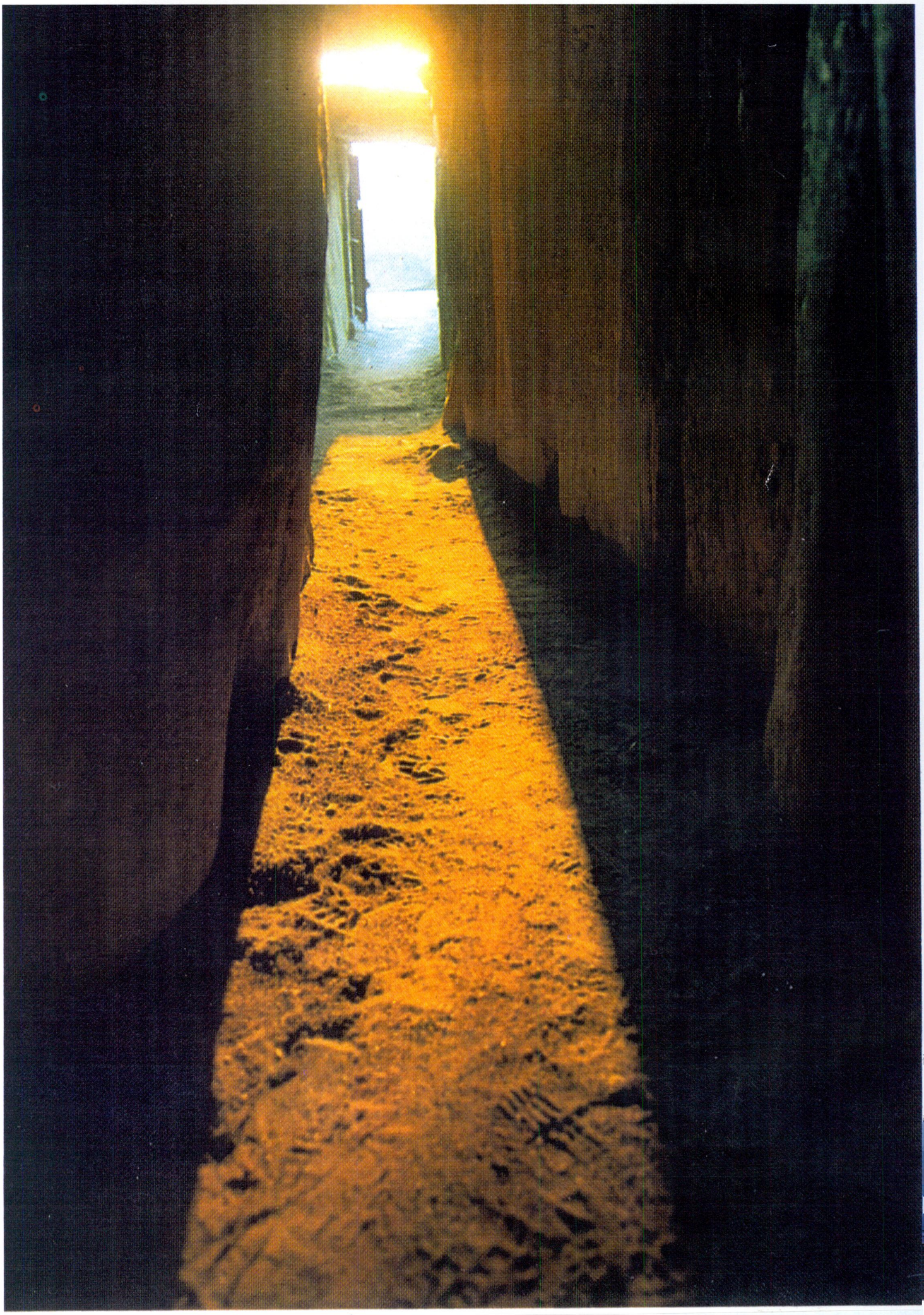
For Hitler the swastika was an obvious symbol which was already recognised as a nationalist identification. He explained his attitude towards the need for a symbol in Mein Kampf;

"The lack of such symbols, had not only disadvantages for the moment but was unbearable for the future. The disadvantages were above all that the party members lacked every outward sign of their belonging together, while for the future it was unbearable to lack an emblem that had the character of a symbol of the movement and that as such could be put up in opposition to the Internationale" (Communists).

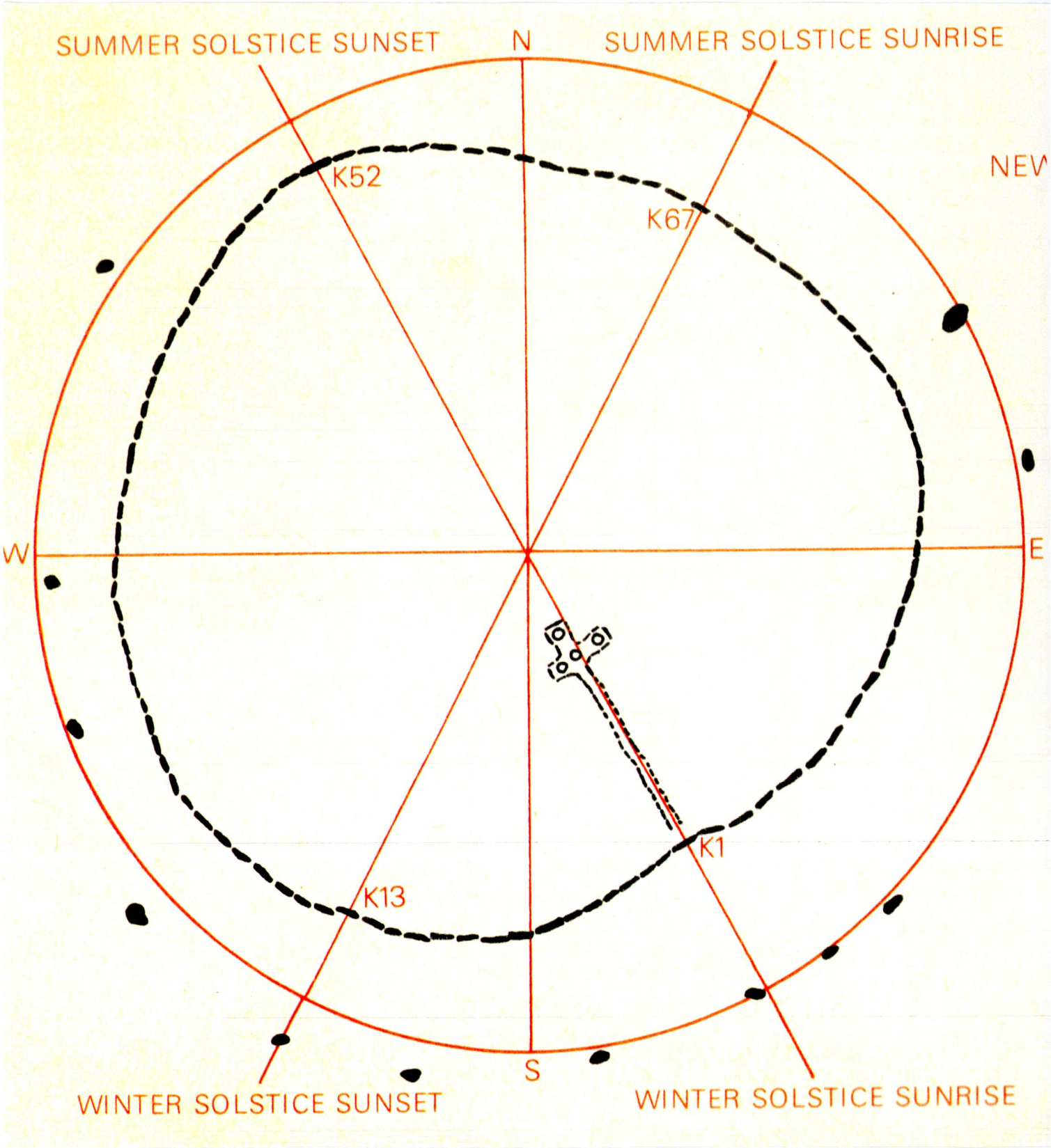
"In hundreds of thousands of cases an effective emblem can give the first impetus for the interest in a movement".

Hitler's identity system was a brilliant graphics program. He succeeded in transmuting an ancient symbol that had historical significance into one even more indelible. He and Goebbels, his "Minister for Enlightenment", had complete mastery fo the design and propaganda process.

Goebbels remarked that if you wanted the people's dedication and belief you had to reach into their hearts, connect with their central core of feeling and then you could lead them. Hitler declared, "As National Socialists we see our program in our flag".



(1) Sun entering Newgrange on Winter Solstice.

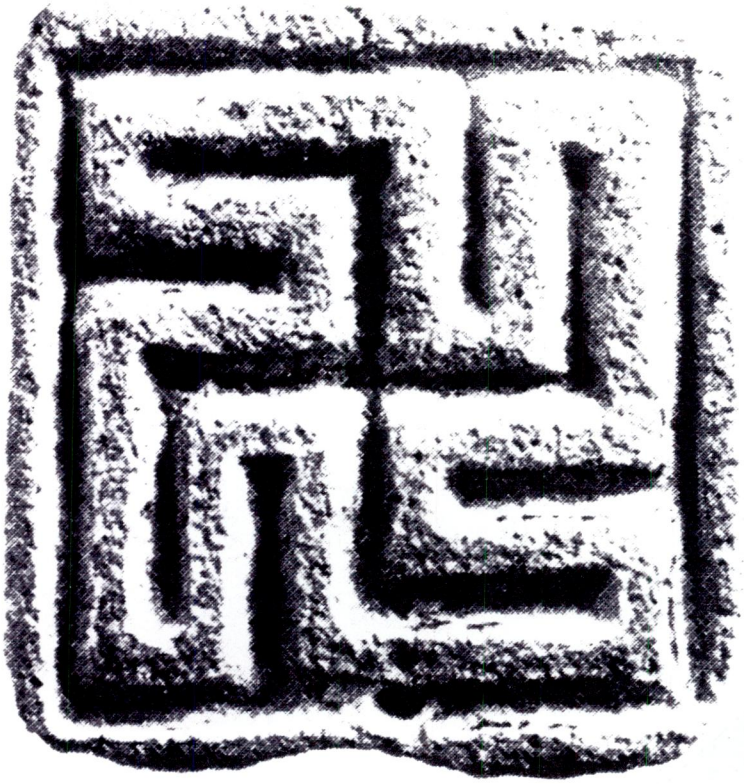


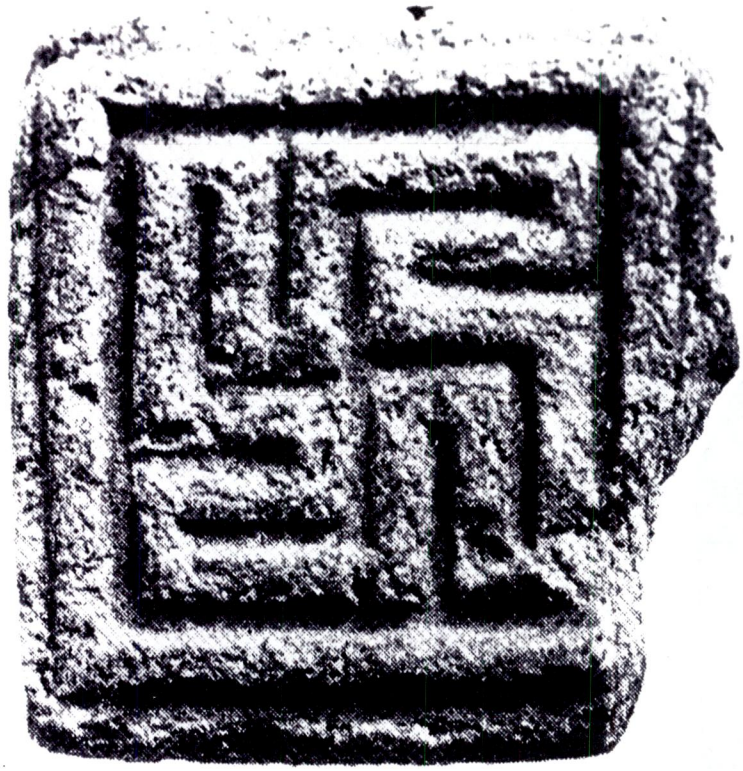
(2) Alignment of Newgrange in relation to the solstices and the cardinal directions.

(3) Stone calender of the Aztecs.

176. *The sun determined circular habitations and the orientation of buildings, such as the Roman town of Bram in France, founded in* AD *333.*

(4) Roman town, A.D. 333.





(5) Swastikas, Indus Valley, (c. 2500 B.C.)

(6) Tree of Life crucifix, San Clemente, Rome.

2.1

The nature of groups;

Formation.

The squared circle, whether it is expressed as the crucifixion or as a simple cross and circle, on the roof of a church or on church literature, or whether it is expressed as a swastika on a Nazi flag, black in a white circle surrounded by red, is a sign of identification. It is the signal of a group and its central role was appreciated by Hitler and was used by early Catholics in Rome, probably out of a need for discretion and trust.

Not only is it a badge or mark of a group, it embodies the beliefs upon which the group is founded. It does so simply and immediately, and because of the meanings attached to it, it becomes a very powerful sign.

But is this symbol so powerful that it can touch to such a strong extent the souls of the group's followers, and make them adhere faithfully to the group, thus binding the group into a powerful organisation or is it merely an outward sign, although expressing profound beliefs, of more definite and less mysterious bonding influences.

It may be both of these, but to understand how the symbol functions as an emblem for a group, we need to understand more clearly the structure and working of a groups. This may help us to understand how a symbol which should be aid for meditation or a target for psychic concentration can be hijacked and turned into a loop that the well-trained will jump through on command.

In studying the motivation for affiliation C. A. Hill suggests that people form groups to fulfil basic psychological needs. Social groups may be the source of a wide variety of rewards such as approval and social support. People may receive affection, information or help to reduce stress in fearful situations. Groups also allow people to perform better certain tasks, and reach certain

goals; the goal of survival of the species by facilitating the groups defence and reproduction. In a study of personal and group psychology Diane Mackie and George Goethals identified three main groups goals. Utilitarian goals relate to needs of the group for money, achievement and influence. Knowledge goals relate to information and a shared consensus about reality. Social identity means approval obtained by being a member of a group.

These needs are basic but if a group of people share a common belief and wish to pursue it in the face of oppression, the need for the group is strengthened and the idea of life without the group is less possible. A group of people or a nation in a situation of confusion or humiliation will readily accept a group solution, especially if presented impressively and plays on emotions.

"One is well minded to understand Holy Writ when one hates oneself"
- Pascal. J. Brown argues that "a rising mass movement has attractions not by reason of its doctrine alone, but because it can cure their frustrations by freeing them from their ineffectual selves and submerging them in a closely knit and confident corporate whole".

2.2

The Nature of Groups; Development.

A 1961 study by James Stoner comparing individual and group decisions has found that a group formed with a common opinion or belief will develop a more extreme direction of risk along any dimension of belief or attitude. This "group polarization" is explained on the assumption that people seek to be more extreme than others in a positive direction. Such positions allow people to maintain a favourable self-image in the sense of viewing themselves as unique or "one-up" on others. This tendency is reinforced in our society which motivates people to stand out from the crowd.

Members of a group will hear arguments in favour of the group position that they had not heard before. They are unlikely to encounter many counter arguments and with only their common knowledge to share, will most likely agree with the group persective rather than try to consider alternatives.

A strong directive leadership will increase this tendancy. This phenomenon has been called "groupthink". Its symptoms have been listed as:

illusion of vulnerability,
collective rationalisation,
belief in group morality,
stereotyping of out-groups,
direct pressure on dissenters,
self censorship,
illusion of unanimity,
"Mindguards" (leader and strong of group).

Directive leadership, group homogeneity, and insulation from other views are the primary factors involved in bad decision making. Members of groups may go along with that decision of the group while harbouring personal doubts. These ideas of groupthink and group polarisation are consistent with the behaviour of cult religions and extreme political groups, other less offensive groups such as business and governmental also suffer these tendencies.

Members of cults are often described as brainwashed, fanatical or devoted. These mysterious terms can be better understood as the result of effective persuasion techniques. These follow basic propaganda tactics, but in the case of cults these tactics are applied in a systematic and complete manner, more than we are accustomed to in everyday persuasive sales tactics.

Seven "proven effective" tactics for creating and maintaining a cult have been suggested by Aronson and Pratleonis in their study of propaganda techniques..

Step 1: Create your own social reality, by eliminating all sources of information except that provided by the cult. Boundaries between group members and non members must be established and maintained. Group members can be taught self-censorship by labelling everything that is not "of the cult" as "of the devil". A cult's view of the world promotes paranoia of the outside and a private language of clichés such as "bourgeois mentality", "krishna consciousness", "of the world" and "in the lord", quickly helps define things as good or evil.

Step 2: Create a Granfalloon.

Otherwise known as the minimum group paradigm, it is an emotionally powerful persuasive technique.

First identified by British social psychologist Henri Tajfel, it is a phenomenon whereby complete strangers are turned into groups using trivial criteria. He found that although his research subjects (people) were total strangers, they acted as if those who shared their meaningless label were very close to them.

First, the knowledge of being in a group helps to make sense of the world. The differences between the group and outside groups are exaggerated while similarities between members are emphasised, in the security of being one of a kind. A result of this is that groups in the outside world are simplified and can result in racist terms, tom, gerry, gook, knacker, or nigger.

Derogatory abstractions are easily abused. Secondly, as a social group can offer self-esteem and pride, the members will defend the group and adopt its symbolic rituals and beliefs.

Herein lies the secret of the persuasiveness of the granfalloon, as it provides a way of making sense of the world and as self esteem becomes linked to the group, the member has a strong motivation to defend the group and adopt its customs.

Hitler was able to create a strong German identity, playing on a common Aryan heritage and emphasising a Jewish and communist threat. Once such identities become established, the right and moral course of action is apparent.

Granfalloons can be manipulated to get us to buy unwanted products, vote for unqualified people and to hate innocent people. If the techniques are successful, the idea of life without the group is impossible.

Step 3: Establish a spiral of escalating commitment.

After making an initial commitment, increasingly demanding commitments will often be done in order not to destroy one's self image by reversing on the initial commitment.

Step 4: Establish the leader's credibility.

It is hard to disobey "the Son of God" or at least someone "blessed", this person should be followed and identified with.

Step 5: Send members out to convert.

Apart from the obvious advantage of recruiting new members, proselytizing ensures that members are constantly engaged in self-sell or self-persuasion.

Step 6: Eliminate "undesirable" thoughts.

Beliefs can be safeguarded by teaching taboos; that certain thoughts are evil. Members thereby learn to censor themselves.

Step 7: Fixate members' vision on a phantom.

A promised land to be won by devotion to the group, working for the cause, can establish hope, which is a powerful motivator of human behaviour - by providing a sense of purpose and mission.

Contemporary religious cults can provide us with an image of group control and behaviour in very definite terms.

Their techniques of persuasion are tactics that are used by other propagandists, cults just use them in a more thorough and complete manner. By examining

them we can understand the operation, control and success of groups that shape our society.

The Catholic Church and the Nazis are two organisations that have had a large influence on our modern consciousness. The cults' persuasive techniques may have touched us all through one group or another.

2.3

The Nature of Groups;

Control.

The structure of most social groups, whether religious cults or political parties are usually by nature, "totalitarian", that is they are led and controlled by one person. Hitler, in a speech to his party senators, proclaimed:
"the party must construct the pyramid of its leadership in accord with the model of the church", and that this pyramid must "rise above the tiers of the Kreisleiter and Gauleiter to the body of senators and finally to the leader - Pope".

Although he despised the doctrines of the Catholic Church, he regarded it as a good model for the National Socialists because of their long run of power despite many historical upheavals.

From the tip of the organisational pyramid and immense power is controlled and there exists the danger that the person occupying the position is somehow considered close to a god, and is therefore granted access, and is custodian of, the one and only truth. Hitler, during the Nuremberg rallies claimed that he took his orders from God. The Pope claims to be infallible on matters of moral and spiritual belief, for the followers of the church.

Both organisations could fit quite comfortably into our preceding description of cult persuasion.

Hitler described in "Mein Kampf" the role of propaganda;

> "Its effect for the most part must be aimed at the emotions and only to a very limited degree at the so called intellect",

> "effective propaganda must be limited to a very few points and must harp on these slogans until the last member of the public understands what you want him to understand by your slogan".

> "As soon as our own propaganda admits so much as a glimmer of right on the other side, the foundation of doubt in our own right had been laid".

Around the same time as Hitler's rise to power in Germany, scientists such as Einstein, Heisenberg and Max Born were proposing such ideas as the theory of relativity and the uncertainty principle, which led to the recognition that there is no absolutely fixed point of reference, and that human knowledge is limited. Kurt Lewin, a social psychologist, developed a theory stating that an individual's psychological disposition influences his or her view of the world, and with exploration of different worldwide cultures and beliefs it is increasingly difficult to say which is the "best" or "right" belief.

Both Lewin and Hitler developed their attitudes fighting for Germany in World War One.

The Catholic church have expressed their presumed monopoly of truth in many ways; the recent papal ban on contraception or the work of the missionaries in all parts of the world. One illuminating example is the trial of Galileo Galilei, the scientist. At the start of the seventeenth century when the church was reacting to the formation of the Protestant church, anyone who was not in aggreement with their teaching was decided to be a heretic.

Galileo, was called before the Congregation of the Holy Office, presided over by Pope Urban VIII, acting as the Holy Roman and Universal Inquisition. He was forced to swear and promise;

> "to abandon the false opinion that the sun is the centre of the world and immovable, and that the earth is not the centre of the world, and moves".

> "for this cause I have been pronounced by the Holy Office to be vehemently suspected of heresy, that is to say, of having ... believed ... that the earth is not the centre and moves."

This "Congregation" was created for the propagation of the faith, which is where we get our modern world of propaganda. Goebbels, a master of this craft, and described as the man who created Hitler declared;

> "Objectivity has nothing in common with propaganda, and propaganda has nothing in common with the truth!"

Hitler remarked;

> "Our propaganda is the spiritual revolution of the people".

He also declared that in propaganda,

> "the most important thing is to paint your contrasts in black and white".

He did this when describing the Nazi flag;

> "the red reflects the socialist, the white the nationalist ideas of the movement, the (black) swastika symbolises the mission of the struggle for the victory of Aryan man and simultaneously the victory of the idea of creative work which has always been anti-semitic and will remain anti-semitic for ever more".

The presumption of truth is funny now in the case of the Galileo trial but is far from funny in the case of Hitler.

Goebbels described Hitler addressing the nation as though Germany had been transferred into a house of God, he said;

> "this was religion in the deepest and most mystical sense of the word".

Hitler believed that Catholicism was a religion for slaves and mocked ideas of a life after death. He believed that such immortality that man could achieve was in the race and history. He described himself as a "religious man although not in the usual sense of the word".

Christmas was celebrated in Nazi Germany though without mention of Christ. Hitler was instead called the saviour. This view of the world gave rise to the cult of the leader.

Although they can begin an extremely different premises, all totalitarian ideologies finally converge on the cult of the leader, Fuhrer, Duce, Chairman, Pope, as the measure of all spiritual values. We can observe how these leaders can be exalted and imagine how an individual can be swept along by a leader's mass movement. Whether he is a crusading knight to free a "sacred place" from a different people, or a young Nazi feeling the power of a sea of swastikas, marching to establish an Aryan supremacy in the world, or simply the "god-fearing" Christian living within the confines of the church's teaching, they are people forming a mass movement. They are lending their individual energy to the general momentum of the group and supporting the ultimate power of their leader.

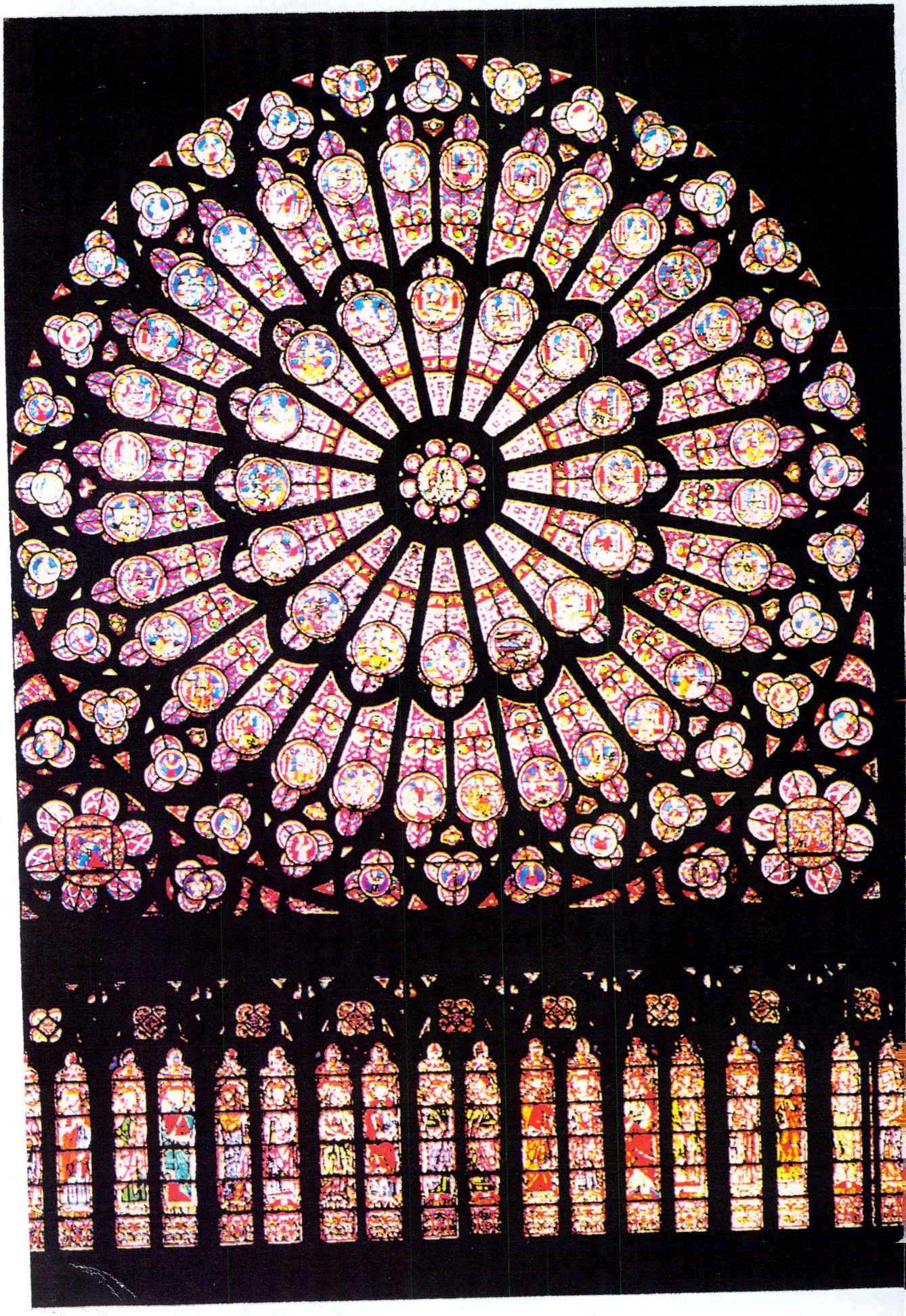
Frustrated people want to suffer and sacrifice themselves to the cause, hence they respond, not to promises of an easy victory, as Churchill understood and Chamberlain did not, but to promises of "blood, sweat and tears".

Having submerged their hated individuality in the crowd they cling on to certitude for dear life, even to the extent of giving up their own lives to demonstrate to others their role of defender of the holy cause.

This "holy cause" when directed against an exterior idea from the group, such as the heathens, the Jews, the devil, Islam, or whatever, it becomes an unholy, ferocious wind that sweeps the minds of its victims into madness.

The group project their insecurities onto an external entity. It is in this respect that the squared circle can become, simultaneously a flag of righteousness, a target aimed at the "enemy" and a black hole of unconsciousness into which the faithful will enthusiastically leap, upon command.

(7) "Germany Lives" 1930s, K. Stauber.



(8) Rose Window of Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris.

3.

The Squaring of the Circle;

The Urge to Become What One is.

The squared circle, as we have seen, is a powerful sign which connects deeply with our psyche.

When Freud talked about movements of mental energy from one image to another, he was talking about how we endow and attribute meanings to the objects we perceive and construct images of; and that is what psychoanalysis has discovered - that human beings think, imagine and dream in metaphor, seeing similarities between their own bodies and activities on the one hand and objects and processes perceived in the outside world on the other.

This corresponds with what the sixteenth century alchemists understood as the "filius macroscosmi", that the self or centre of being is an indissoluble substance, "a One and Indivisible that can not be reduced by anything else and is at the same time a Universal".

Charles Rycroft in his essay on Symbolism, Imagination and Biological Destiny, argues that the most important discovery of psychoanalysis is that man is a symbolising animal who constructs on the foundation of his elemental bodily experiences a network of images which embraces and orders all his perceptions of the outside world. He believes that this network or construction of the network is what we call imagination.

This idea of representing the outside world in relation to the internal world is reinforced by the squared circle; in certain cultures it represents the cycle of the sun and the Sun-god and in others it represents the orientation of human consciousness, and the centre of the soul which is believed to be the connection with God.

The object of Indian Yoga is to experience and realise this "self". Jung called the process that leads to this experience the "process of individuation". He believed that if we perserveringly and consistently follow the way of natural development, we arrive at the experience of the self, and at the state of being simply, what one is.

The way to this goal is described as being toilsome and not for all to travel.

"Est longissima via", according to the alchemists. Jung believed we are still at the beginning of a development whose origins lie in late antiquity. He described the work of modern psychologists are carrying on the work begun by the alchemists.

They had their own form of Indian Yoga but it was kept secret for fear of heresy.

Their aims were the same as the Indian or Tibetan spiritualists, following a path to the central experience of the self. This experience is not an intellectual possibility but a "vital happening which brings about a fundamental transformation of personality". It is obvious, in our society, that this experience, as the alchemists realised, is only available to the few "electis". In this respect an organisation such as the Catholic church or other religious structure, plays a valuable role in providing a psychic framework for the consciousness of modern m,an.

For example, Carl Jung has suggested that aboriginal peoples, if they lose contact with their tribal rituals and traditional beliefs, usually through the missionary work of the white man, lose contact with their psychic inheritance

and become "uprooted" and disorientated, and so become vulnerable to psychosis or madness.

With the present dwindling power of the Catholic Church, more and more it fails to connect with modern thoughts, the only remaining power in western Europe which can regulate moral standards and impose order on society is the state. At the moment we are witness to the development of the superstate. An interesting coincidence is the symbol of our European state; the circle formed by twelve golden stars. As Jung pointed out the welfare state is a very fine thing from one point of view, but from another is a doubtful blessing, as it robs people of their individual responsibility and turns them into infants and sheep, it could be argued that this, is the same effect as religion.

In psychological forms when an aspect of human nature is denied such as the human possibility of being wrong it is pushed into the unconscious where it can gather strength, and with great pressure, break through into the conscious world and take over.

This has the result that the believers fall victim to the very thing they set out to defeat. In our modern technological society the temper of the development of consciousness through science has been too rapid and has left the unconscious too far behind. Jung argues, forcing it into a defensive position which expresses itself in a universal will to destruction. This state is currently driving us to destroy the earth which supports us. Jung draws the conclusion that these global problems cannot be solved collectively because the masses are not changed unless the individual changes. At the same time, even the best looking solution cannot be forced upon him, since it is a good solution only when it is combined with a natural process of development. It is

therefore a hopeless undertaking to state everything on collective recipes, and procedures.

The bettering of a general ill begins with the individual, and then only when he makes himself and not others responsible.

The squared circle, the symbol of order or the archetype of wholeness connects with the psyche of the individual and of a society and relates to the need for a balanced existence.

As an instrument of meditation or concentration it is supposed to aid realisation of an inner harmony.

As a sign it expresses the idea of a central point of security to which relates the surrounding world complete with all its extremities and polarities of human nature.

CONCLUSION

"Alterius non sit, qui suus esse potest"

(That man no other shall own, who to himself belongs alone)

The sun's cycle and its power was at one time worshipped as a god, we have seen how this belief with its symbols and customs has been built upon by Christianity. Instead of changing customs and symbols they adapted them to the newer beliefs.

We have seen how the squared circle has been connected to the sun, to sun gods and to many religious creation myths.

Considering its origins and connections it is not surprising to learn that it; the squared circle symbol, is considered by Carl Jung to be an archetype. This is, it is considered to be symbol that connects with the very base of our human minds.

Jung proposed that we have all evolved in consciousness since we evolved from the animal kingdom. These archetypes are elements of the human psyche that are common to all the human race. It is for this reason that certain symbols or motifs can appear in different cultures at different times but with similar functions and power.

The use of the cross and the circle by the Catholic church and the use by the Nazis of the swastika is such an occurrence. These two organisations have played a major role in shaping our conscious, or unconscious, minds, of today.

I do not wish to suggest that they are similar organisations, that is a matter for personal opinion. I have wanted to show however that this symbol is a very powerful one and these two groups are examples of that.

Also groups are a common human phenomenon providing shelter, support and confidence. They are also source of insulation of ideas and extremity of opinion.

With an understanding of group development we can see how an idea that formed the basis of group can be lost to the evolution of the group itself, or put another way, how a person attracted to a group because of its basic claims or ideas can be picked up and caught in a series of psychological traps which have nothing to do with the original idea but are involved with the existence and organisation of the group.

We have also seen to what horrific ends groups can arrive, in the case of certain cult groups or the Nazis. Even in the case of the Catholic Church we can see how it has no really rational communication with its followers. They are told they cannot use condoms in this world infected by A.I.D.S. and are told instead to have faith and follow its teachings.

People in these groups surrender their individual power and responsibility to the group, they hand over control of the direction of their lives to an organised structure. When this structure is controlled by another person, who is naturally prone to the same illnesses and insecurities as the rest of us, this seems a highly risky situation. But we have also seen that once a person has affiliated to a group their sense of identity and destiny is now that of the group's, to question the group would be to undermine the foundations of their own existence. They have been able to make sense of the world through the group and without it they would be faced with confusion and loss of basic beliefs and values.

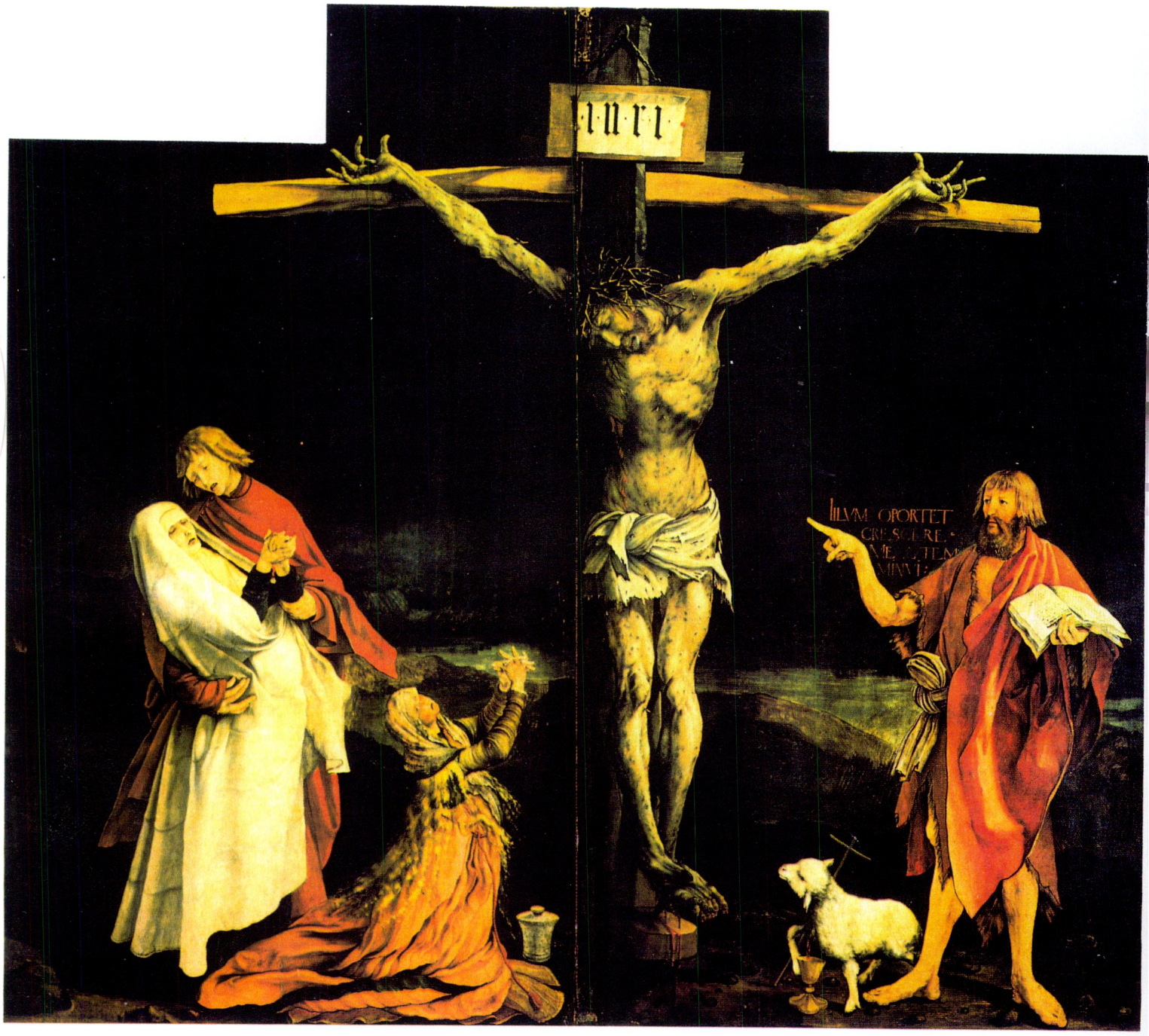
The squared circle, or archetype of wholeness is a sign that Jung has found appears in dreams to compensate for despair or confusion.

This can help us to understand how the Germans of the confused and humiliated Weimar Republic would follow a symbol of great order. Also why Catholics for thousands of years have put their faith in a sign of order and a promise of rebirth into a peaceful place, when they are confronted by the confusion of the world and human nature. This is of course a gross simplification of the success of these groups but they do have this one major element in common; they use the squared circle symbol; the symbol of balance and wholeness, and then promise to help their followers find this state of existence.

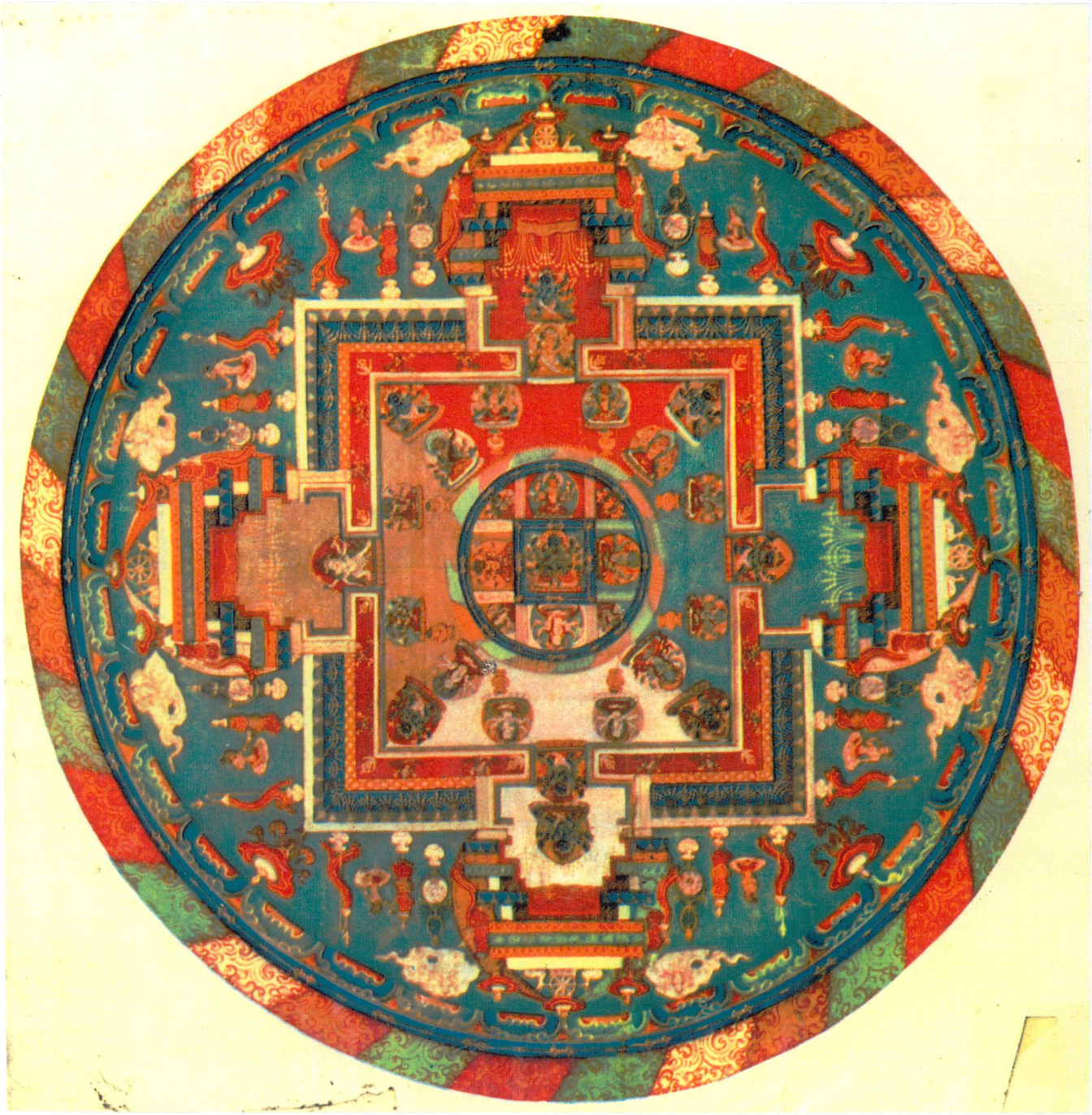
Our planet at this time is well divided and confused, we strive forward technologically, we amalgamate our economic security while all the time looking over our shoulders at the third world and the disappearing forests and animals.

As Jung suggested group solutions cannot work because a solution cannot be imposed on an individual. A solution can only be successful when it is personally understood and accepted.; Therefore any remedy for society's ills must start with the individual.

It is here that the squared circle has an important function, it is a symbol of balance, it relates the globe of human activity to the centre, all our polarities and extremities are related to us, this symbol expresses a stage of harmony. When applied to the individual, as it can be applied to the sun and its cycle, it is a plan of a balanced, secure and independent existence.



(9) Crucifixion, Grunnewald.



(10) Buddhist Mandala.

(11) Mandala by a patient of Carl Jung.

Shri Kalachakra Mandala

Kalachakra Sand Mandala Painted by the Monks from Namgyal Monastery at the American Museum of Natural History, New York city from; Journey through Wheel of Time: The Kalachakra Sand Mandala.

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Printed by Archana, N. D. Ph.: 463-1992, 462-8485.

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