

Time Stands Still: New Light on Megalithic Science

By Keith Critchlow, 1979, revised 2007

Foreword

- Geometry – the art of the ‘ever true.’
- All science depends upon Number
- Represented by *khalix*, small stone spheres or pebbles
 - Became *calcis*, root of the word calculation.
- The ‘always true’ sciences – universal value in all cultures throughout all time
 - Arithmetic
 - Geometry
 - Harmonics or *musike*
 - Astronomy

The Human Mind and Timeless Truths

- The mind perceives lines and rhythms
 - Perceives cosmic rhythms
- To be human is to have intelligible access to timeless truths
 - Therefore, to be human is to have access to the Divine Mind
 - Timelessness = soul
- The intelligible precedes and informs the sensible
- Spirit informs matter

Neolithic Remains and Human Nature

- Ancient people had an appreciation of the primary value of geometry
- Humanness seeks truth through objectivity
- Ancient peoples:
 - Complex language
 - Number and arithmetic
 - Practice of geometry
 - Commitment to invisible or spiritual reality
- The Great Triad
 - Heavenly or transcendental
 - Earthly or bodily
 - Human or intelligibility in which we participate

En arche en ho logos

(In the beginning was the word)

- Creation myths transmit our roots and the original meaning of existence
- Timeless truths and values each society deems vital
- Megaliths are mute creations in stone that pose the question of what it really means to be human
- A society without a metaphysical or spiritual dimension fails to achieve wholeness
 - We cannot survive without symbolic / mythological meanings
 - If we don't acknowledge our participation in the heavenly, we lose our wholeness, i.e., the fact that by our very nature, we unite the earthly and the heavenly
- Scientia vs. Sapientia
 - Scientia – worldly, empirical, uncertain
 - Sapientia – heavenly, archetypal, absolute
 - Modern relativistic philosophy allows equal status to relative opinions in the search for certainty

Stone Circles

- Stone Circles as Temples
 - Used Pythagorean triangles a millennium before Pythagoras
 - Right triangles
 - Number theory and sexagesimal expansion
 - Balance between intuitive and logical
 - Both temple and observatory
- Stone Circles and Shamanism
 - How could pre-literate and pre-numerate societies be capable of such mathematical activity

Enigma of the Megaliths

- We suffer a loss of dignity and self-confidence when we take a mechanistic, logical view of humanity
- Affects the 'wisdom structure' of the community
- To seek unity of material and spiritual IS human
- The unity of the heavenly and earthly is the very thing seen in the megalithic monuments
- Relate the individual to the cosmic scheme of things
- These human monuments bear the quality of timelessness
- Archaic human need to combat chaos and meaninglessness

Symbols

- Truth that permeates spiritual, intellectual, emotive and perceptive responses
- Humankind's concern and need for symbols is an essential part of his humanity
 - The sphere of human depth psychology
- Divinity in stones found in many cultures
 - Ancestors inhabit stones
 - Preparation of sacred ground for temple building
 - A great irony has to be at the center, i.e., that stones should be the repository of life
 - Easter Island
 - Inhabitory spirits
 - If there is meaning, which there must be, it must be found in the stone because it must endure forever.

Axis Mundi: How Do you describe an eternal truth that intersects everything?

- A vertical point
- Where an axis of null dimension intersects everything and yet it goes up and down forever
- The Ground of Being
- Opening to the transcendental
- The vertical pointer or ontological axis
- Smoke hold above the altar fire

Archetype and Myth

- The question of our reason for being is the oldest and most basic of recorded myth structures
- The archetypal image is ultimately based on the same ground as the world and so it becomes the dwelling place of the gods and thereby regenerates the world
- Theosophical doctrines stating the underlying metaphysical principle that knowledge and being are ultimately one and through intellection, the cosmos gains its existence
- Contemplation of the divine preserves the cosmos

Stone circles are sacred temples

- Temple comes from the Ancient Greek *temnos* (to cut off a sacred area)
- Sacred space for the contemplation of existence and ultimate causes
- Opening to the transcendental – the center of the circle is an opening to the transcendental
- Geometric contemplation as a *temenos* or temple space
- Around the central axis of a stone circle, a protective circle is built, sheltered from the surrounding chaos
- The temples embody the archetypes and in turn help to stabilize the world – gain a greater understanding of their own position and role in the scheme of things

The Transcendental Axis of the Cosmos is represented by:

- World mountain
- Ziggurat
- Universal column
- Maypole
- Shaman's pole
- Omphalos
- Sacred hearth
- Altar
- Axis
- Eye of Heaven
- Pole Star
- Smoke Hole
- Eye of Heaven
- Transcendental axis of the cosmos

Trinity symbolism describes our condition of participation in two worlds

- Heaven, Earth, and Man - Image of three interlocking circles is both symbolic and descriptive
- Upper world, our world, underworld
- Gods, society, ancestors
- Ideas/pure being, human consciousness, entropy and disorder

The Neolithic Mind

- In many myths, there is a recurrent theme of the gift of knowledge coming from the gods
- A standing stone – the vertical position denotes a change in metaphysical being and points heavenward to the realm of the gods
- Much use of ellipses and egg shapes as well as circles (e.g., Long Meg and her daughters)

Significant Number

- 7 and 9 are often seen as sacred numbers
 - Seven planets
 - 28 days in the lunar cycle
- Recur in the mythology of many cultures
- 3 – Ygdrassil – Tree of Life
- Simple regular polygons have been used by all philosophic and religious systems to represent facets of unity
- Incommensurable or transcendental numbers are related to proportional ratios – of the same symbolic order as squaring the circle – rationalizing the irrational, unifying the paradox
 - Proportional systems have harmonic growth characteristics

Weaving and use of cords in geometry

- Weaving as applied mathematics – typically the achievement of womenfolk
- Knotted cords – the cord takes on a variety of mythological forms
 - Knotted rope 3:4:5 triangle
 - Construction of a heptagon using a knotted cord

Wisdom and geometry

- Modern science is concerned with exterior phenomena. Ancient wisdom insisted that knowledge was valid only when it led to unification and self-realization of the person concerned.
- Wisdom demands that a thing be true, good and beautiful together

Templates and Breastplates

- Development of rhombic figures from the enneagon (2/6, 2/7, 2/9)
 - Bush Barrow rhombic breastplate – connected with the significant number 9
 - Breastplates have been found based on 6 and 9 sided figures
 - Breastplate associated with wearing the truth upon the heart
 - Solomon's proverb: Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart (Proverbs 3:3)
 - Exodus 34:3 – 12 sacred stones you wear over your heart, “the breastplate of judgment”
 - Inner mathematics of the Bible

Prehistoric Solid Geometry

- “Raise the stone and there thou shalt find me.” – Gospel according to Thomas
- Carved stone spheres a millennium before Plato’s solids
- Plato expressed his cosmology in geometric symbolism in the Timaeus
 - 3 basic triangles are required to fabricate the 5 Platonic solids: the half-square, the half-equilateral triangle and 1/10 of a pentagon
 - The supernal principles of these shapes are known to Divinity and those those who are in friendship with Divinity
 - The 30/60/90 triangle is the most beautiful –
 - Necessary in making the tetrahedron, the symbol of fire
 - Also the basis of the octahedron, symbol of air
 - Icosahedron - symbol of water
 - 90/45/45 is needed to make up the cube, the symbolic body of the earth
 - 90/54/36 needed to make a dodecahedron symbolizing the heavens or whole
 - Composite symmetry of the icosahedron and dodecahedron

Planets as Timekeepers

- The cyclical nature of time made us enquire into the nature of the universe
- We are at the center of the experience – geometry of relationship of Earth to planets was of paramount importance
- G.H. Mees – levels of consciousness corresponding with the elements
 - Earth – physical senses
 - Water – animistic / emotive
 - Air – mental / intellectual
 - Fire – inspirational / spirit
- Each world penetrates the next
 - Earth-water
 - Earth-air
 - Earth-fire
 - Water-air
 - Water-fire
 - Air-fire

Conclusions

- Heaven and earth are in peaceful co-existence in man
- As moderns, we have alienated ourselves from metaphysical realities
 - Systematic banalization of the world
- To the ancient megalithic communities, the ultimate reality was of a symbolic and religious nature
- Mircea Eliade – function of symbolism is to reveal underlying realities – the world pattern is the real or the sacred
- Moon is a great example of a meaningful archetype
 - Rhythms
 - Time and becoming
 - Waters
 - Plant growth
 - Women
 - Death/resurrection
 - Human destiny
 - Weaver's craft
- Megaliths are proto-temples pointing heavenward, symbolically directing mankind's attention to a metaphysical source of existence
- Plato: “look to the revolutions of intelligence in the heavens and use their untroubled courses, to guide the troubled revolutions in our own understanding.”