

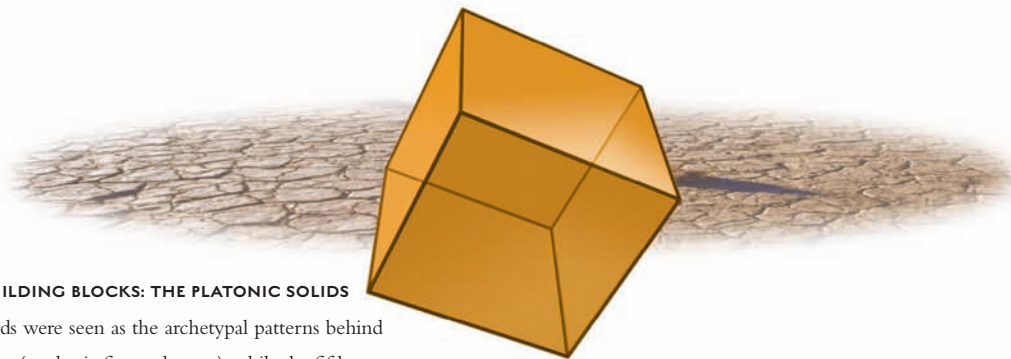
**S A C**  
**R E D**  
**G E O**  
**M E T**  
**R Y**

**ROBERT J. GILBERT**

**F**OR GOOD OR ILL, MODERN LIFE IS MARKED by our unprecedented mastery of the physical world. This mastery can take a beneficial form in harmony with nature, or more commonly it becomes a destructive force, exploiting nature without consideration of long-term damage. We have become accustomed to a steady stream of daily news reports about the human and environmental problems resulting from short-sighted applications of modern technology. Fundamental life-support systems such as the oceans and the atmosphere are quickly eroding. The stark truth is that our world is being shaped by a modern science that manipulates life's natural patterns while often lacking the contextual understanding to do so responsibly. Yet, just as our piecemeal exploitation of natural structures and patterns has created a crisis, so can a new holistic science based on natural patterns help to resolve it.

**ANCIENT KNOWLEDGE AND MODERN SCIENCE**

Sacred geometry is a relatively modern term for the study of the archetypal patterns that create everything in the material world. The name tends to carry undertones of a secret spiritual knowledge held and used by different traditions around the world, and there is good reason for this association. Throughout human history, great spiritual traditions have gathered and cultivated private knowledge of the core patterns of creation. Sacred geometry is often associated with sacred architecture, the classical work of master architects and temple builders; however, this is only the most visible aspect of this knowledge. In reality, the deeper, often hidden, teachings apply this knowledge to areas ranging from healing sciences to



**UNIVERSAL BUILDING BLOCKS: THE PLATONIC SOLIDS**  
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# In sacred geometry, the artificial metaphysics can be healed, and science of the future

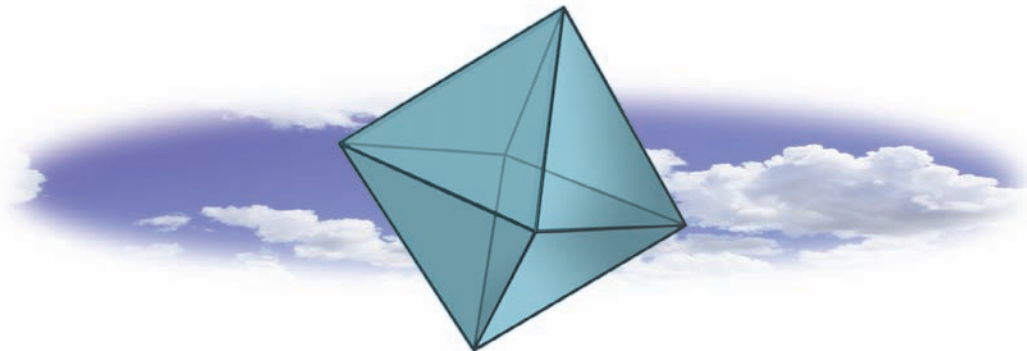
spiritual initiation. The essential concept behind all of these applications is simple: Everything has a pattern, and that pattern is the key to creating a specific effect.

From a holistic perspective, what we can call sacred geometry is in fact humanity's legacy of pattern knowledge from all our forebears. At every scale of existence, from the subatomic to the galactic, the same key patterns bring all things into existence. It is a remarkable historical fact that many of these same patterns (including shapes, forms, proportions, and rhythms) have been well known for centuries, but within a much more holistic context than today. They are part of nature's toolbox for effecting change and expressing itself. To give several simple examples: Nature uses the circle and the sphere as the primal container for energy and consciousness; it uses the vortex form to circulate and transmit energy and consciousness from one location to another; it uses the five perfect divisions of the sphere (popularly called the Platonic Solids) as the basis for diverse forms of matter. Tragically, the importance and potential of this pattern knowledge is only dimly perceived by science today. This is partly due to specialization, where scientists only learn their one subject area such as chemistry and know very little about similar patterns found by other disciplines such as physics. It is also partly due to modern science's institutionalized dismissal of any "meta-physical" holistic connections among phenomena, which become visible at higher levels of analysis.

Central to the development of a new context-rich holistic science is the knowledge of interconnected natural patterns. Only by understanding the complete pattern, or structure, of a natural process can we responsibly seek to use or modify that process. From this perspective, sacred geometry becomes an essential foundation for creating a more balanced future, in the same way that the new biology and new cosmology are evolving the paradigm in their respective fields. In sacred geometry, a new holistic science of patterns and their interconnections unifies the knowledge of structures and processes discovered in modern scientific fields with the knowledge gathered over millennia by great world traditions, and studies the patterns common to them all. In sacred geometry, the artificial split between physics and metaphysics can be healed, and the foundations for a new healing science of the future can be established.

## LEARNING THE ALPHABET OF CREATION

Just as children must learn to read, write, and speak a language in order to function in the world, so too at our current stage of human evolution must we learn to read, write, and speak the pattern language of creation. As children learn to read one letter at a time, so can we learn to read the "book of nature" one shape or pattern at a time. And as children learn to connect letters



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together to form meaning through words, sentences, and entire books, so can we learn to read how nature unites multiple patterns to create all beings, structures, and processes of the world.

The patterns of creation range from the very simple to the complex. The most important patterns can be found at every scale of creation, from the micro to the macro, with each pattern's function becoming obvious to repeated observation. An example of a very simple form is the one that many spiritual traditions call the "first letter" of the alphabet of creation: the sphere.

The sphere is the perfect uniform boundary around a central point, represented in two dimensions by the classic spiritual symbol of the circle with a point in the center. From cells of the body to planets, nature uses the sphere as the primal container of energy and consciousness. In classical sacred geometry, the master builders (also known as the Masters of the Compass) saw the rotation of the drafting compass around a central point as a ritual re-creation of the world's origin, creating the first boundary between inside and outside on which to erect temples and other forms of sacred architecture. In more arcane applications, multiple spiritual traditions teach their initiates to build energetic spheres around themselves for protection or to create and send out an energetic sphere with particular qualities for various shamanic purposes.

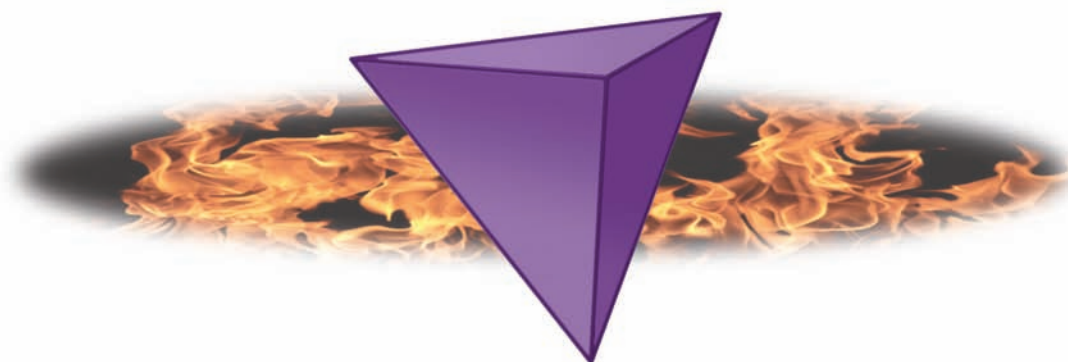
From the simple sphere, many other important patterns emerge. There are exactly five "perfect" ways to divide a

sphere into three-dimensional forms, so that each division has the exact same shape and angle. We associate the knowledge of the five perfect forms with the ancient Greeks, and so we term them the Platonic Solids. (In reality, these forms were known in the area of present-day Scotland at least 1,000 years before the Greeks taught them, according to archaeological evidence. Such evidence of ancient forms is found all over the Earth.)

The Greeks taught that these five solids were the core patterns of physical creation. Four of the solids were seen as the archetypal patterns behind the four elements (earth, air, fire, and water), while the fifth was held to be the pattern behind the life force itself, the Greeks' ether. This fifth solid, the dodecahedron, was in fact kept a closely guarded secret in the Greek school of Pythagoras; they feared that this pattern could cause tremendous destruction if misused.

With these ancient concepts in mind, it is remarkable to observe how contemporary empirical research has discovered these same forms. Just as the Greek spiritual teachings asserted 2,500 years ago, modern science has also found these five forms to be fundamental building blocks of the physical world. Look at illustrations in a textbook such as Linus Pauling's *General Chemistry*, and you will see empirical evidence of these forms at the root of physical substance.

Even more remarkable are models found in modern physics. Robert Moon, the late physics professor emeritus



at the University of Chicago, developed a model of the entire Periodic Table of Elements showing the Platonic Solids as the pattern of the neutrons and protons in the nucleus of each element. Given that the Greeks taught that these forms held the patterns of creation of the physical world, it is quite significant to find the same forms now appearing in physics as the possible basis of the Periodic Table of Elements, which is modern science's list of all the substances that literally make up the physical world. Furthermore, it could be said that the essence of creation is geometry: Change the number of the parts of the atom, and its resulting configured shape changes as alchemically a different element arises.

## DECODING THE DODECAHEDRON

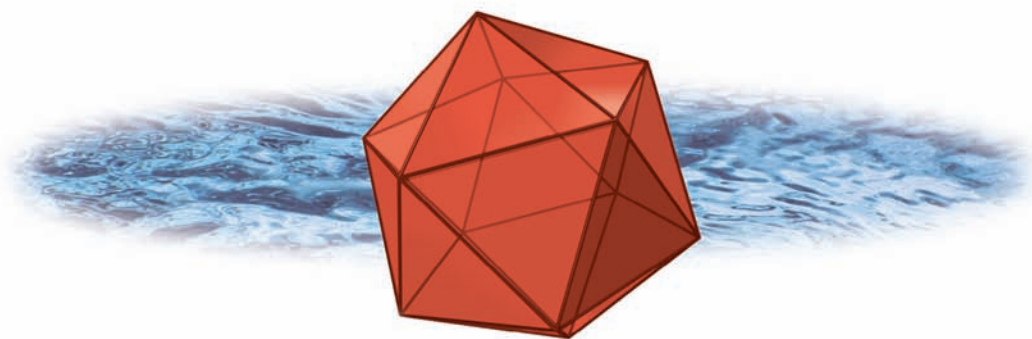
The most intriguing of all the Platonic Solids is the fifth one, the dodecahedron. Only hints of this pattern's existence were given publicly, as in Plato's famous statement that the Earth when seen from above appears like a "twelve-sided leather ball." Amazingly, modern Russian scientific research has discovered that there is indeed a dodecahedral pattern to the Earth's crust, as hinted by Plato. (See "Is the Earth a Large Crystal?" in *Khimiya i Zhizn [Chemistry and Life]*, December 1973.)

There are other appearances of this hidden dodecahedron pattern in modern science. In Professor Moon's model of the Periodic Table, the protons in the nucleus arrange themselves in concentric forms that have the shapes of the Platonic Solids. The final form, which holds the others within it, is the dodecahedron, and it is completed

at element 46, palladium. Palladium is well known in chemical engineering as a catalyst, a substance that creates certain transformations when it is present that do not occur in its absence.

Empirical research shows additional possible connections when seen from a wider perspective. *New Scientist* magazine recently published findings from researchers at the University of Pennsylvania who have developed a method to break down lethal chemical compounds (such as nerve gas) by adding palladium to their chemical process. Adding palladium transmutes the lethal chemicals into safe substances. However, the researchers admitted to not fully understanding why palladium has this catalytic effect. With Moon's model of the Periodic Table showing the link between palladium and the dodecahedron, we are reminded again of the Greek idea that the dodecahedron is the pattern of pure life energy—and thus a basis of practical alchemy.

To give just one more empirical example related to the dodecahedron: Moon showed that the last natural element on the Periodic Table (uranium, element 92) was based on the form of two connected dodecahedra being torn apart, a rupture creating toxic nuclear radiation (all man-made elements of the Periodic Table, from element 93 on, emanate potentially lethal radiation). If Moon is correct, modern nuclear weapons and nuclear waste are directly related to manipulations affecting the core pattern of the dodecahedron—even if scientists weren't aware of the connection. In this we are reminded why the ancient Greeks kept the form of the dodecahedron hidden, on the grounds that this pattern could create destructive effects if misused.



## A NEW INCLUSIVE SCIENCE

The preceding observations and comments represent just the tip of the rationale for, and possible use of, a new sacred geometry. There is much more that can and should be added to give a full picture of what this field could contain, such as the following:

**PATTERNS IN CONSCIOUSNESS** Most classical traditions see the forces of nature as being conscious, which means we have the potential to directly communicate with them. In fact, one possible root of our modern term “nature” is the old Egyptian term *neter*, which signifies a conscious power of nature that interacts with human beings. (Neter is usually translated as “god” or “goddess,” but those terms obscure its original meaning.) Some modern physicists believe that consciousness is the foundation of our world, as convincingly described in Amit Goswami’s excellent book *The Self-Aware Universe* (Tarcher, 1995). These patterns of consciousness would thus embrace patterns observed in both ancient teachings and modern science. The Laws of Nature then become the expression of a consciousness inherent in our world, rather than the blind clockwork processes posited by reductionist science. The anomalous abilities of shamans of native traditions to control and affect natural forces (such as weather patterns), observed and recorded for decades by anthropologists and other observers, become understandable when seen from this perspective.

Patterns of consciousness are also fundamental to human evolution and self-development. For example, all human beings go through stages of increasing self-awareness of their own psychological and emotional patterns.

In many cases, we are victims of these patterns until we recognize them and act to change them.

**PATTERNS IN TIME** In space, nature’s letters of creation are shapes; in time, they are rhythms. These rhythms range from the circadian rhythms that govern human life activity to the great cycles of time discussed and observed by major traditions around the world, such as the cycle of four yuga ages in India or the Precession of the Equinox phenomenon that gives us our zodiacal ages, such as the Age of Aquarius.

**HONORING TRADITIONAL SCIENCE** In sacred geometry, traditional sciences such as Chinese medicine can take their place as complementary partners to modern quantitative science, offering invaluable pattern insights. Indeed, we may come to the point of seeing each of the different classical traditions around our planet as holding a unique perspective that is essential to a new holistic paradigm.

Today, with widespread talk of a clash of civilizations, combined with increasing conflicts between different religions and cultures, this larger context for understanding and integrating every tradition’s perspective can help lead to dialogue and mutual respect. The core patterns of nature are a basis for all true spirituality, as well as for science, and provide common ground for healing the fragmentation that is crippling our world. 🌍

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