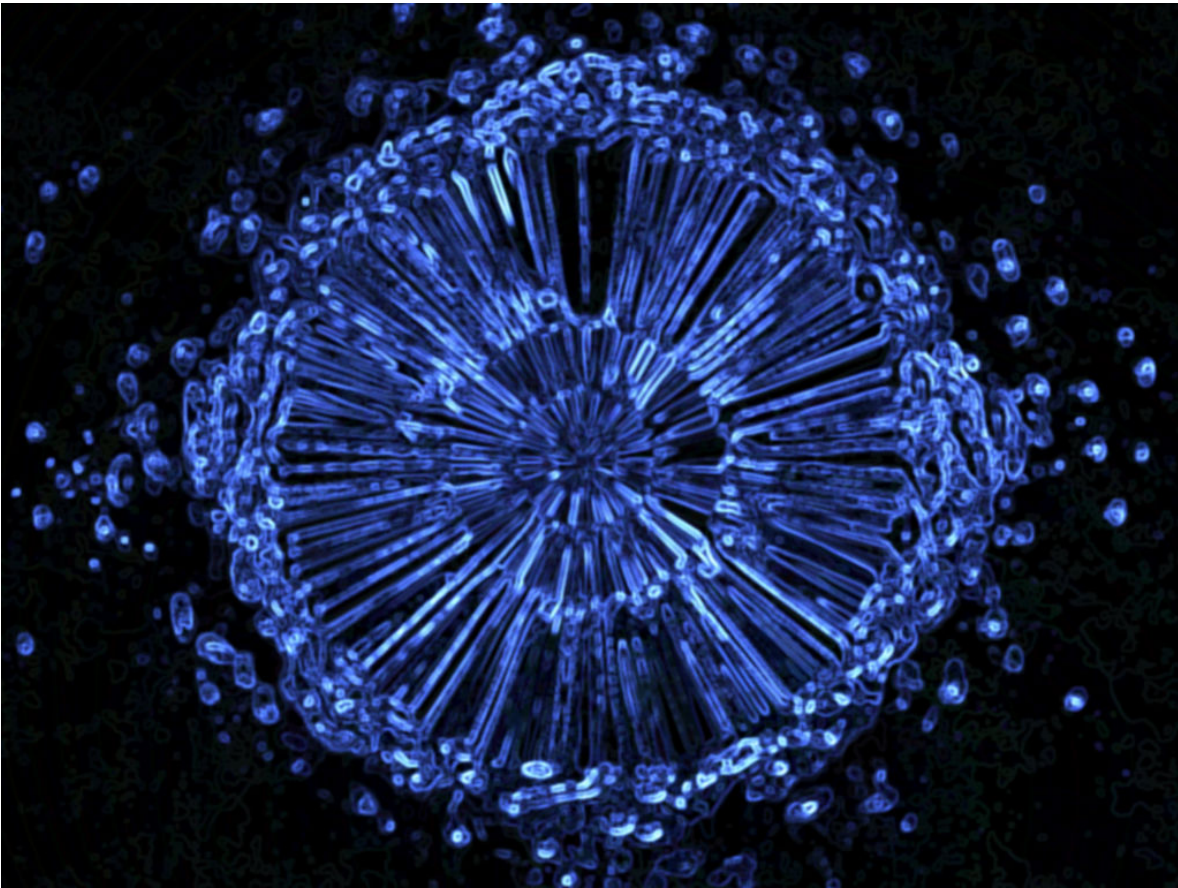


The Metaphysics of the Primal Point

by Ernesto J. Fernández

(Extract from *The Mount Carmel and the Hidden Name*)

English translation: Patricio J. Cernadas



Both in Kabala and the Islamic theory of letters, the whole alphabet is symbolically equivalent to the Perfect Man, the Prophet. The Jewish Adam Kadmon and the Islamic El-insan el-Kamil are representations of this man, an archetypical man, a mediator between Heaven and Earth who embodies all the Letters and the Divine Names, and sums up the three worlds.

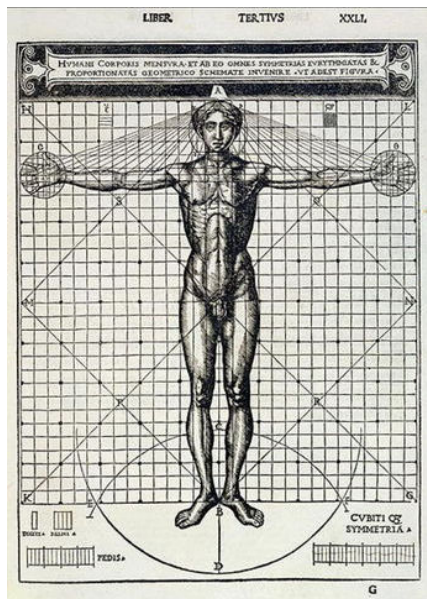
Abdu'l-Bahá, revealed:

“However, since the beginning without beginning and the end without end there has always been a Perfect Apparition. The man we refer to is nobody but the Perfect Man, not just any man”¹.

The Prophet par excellence is *Homo ad circulum* and *Homo ad quadratum*, and he himself is the archetypal measure which all the beings replicate as it is implicit in its condition of being.

Jorge L. Borges has claimed that:

“In the Middle Ages the kabalists collected the Book of Splendor declaring that the ten emanations or Sefiroth, whose source is the ineffable divinity, can be conceived upon the species of a tree or a man; the Primordial Man, the Adam Kadmon. If God is in everything, then everything is in the man, who is his terrestrial reflection. Thus, Swedenborg and the Kabala arrive at the concept of microcosm: the man as a mirror or compendium of the universe”².



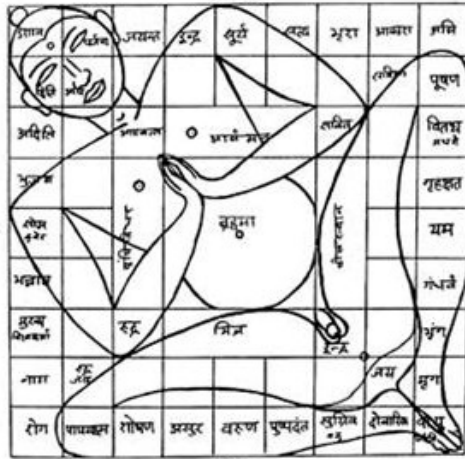
The Vitruvian Man by Cesariano



Rabano Mauro - Christ and the letters

¹Abdu'l-Baha, *Contestación a Unas Preguntas*, (http://bahairesearch.com/spanish/Bahai/Abdu'l-Baha/Contestaci%C3%B3n_a_Unas_Preguntas.aspx) (Translation by PJC)

² Jorge Luis Borges, *Prólogos, con un prólogo de prólogos*, pág. 161, Torres Agüero Editor, Argentina, 1977. (Translation by PJC)



Vastu Purusha Mandala



Adam Kadmon

The Perfect Man within the circle, which stands for Heaven, and the square, which stands for the Man, determine the measurement of time (Calendar) and space (Temple and Sacred Geography).

The Prophet or the Saints are the points of destination for the pilgrimage, a ritual act representing the return to the origin; for example, in the Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela, Christ is the Homo Ad Quadratum.

The Báb, “*the Nuqtiyiulá*” or “*the Primal Point*”, “*the Point from which all the Creation derives*”, “*the one that establishes the measure assigned to each and everything*”³ is the cane for measuring the temple, states Abdu'l-Bahá: “*This cane is the Perfect Man*”.⁴

It is the Aurean man, the founder of original Time and Space. The point around which the world and the center of Creation revolve.

³ Selección de Escritos del Báb. Compilado por el Departamento de Investigación de la Casa Universal de Justicia. (http://bahai-library.com/bab_seleccion_escritos) (Translation: PJC)

⁴ Abdu'l-Baha, *Contestación a Unas Preguntas*, (http://bahairesearch.com/spanish/Bahai/Abdu'l-Baha/Contestaci%C3%B3n_a_Unas_Preguntas.aspx) (Translation: PJC)

Considered as the origin of all reality, the Point has equivalent representations in varied symbolic systems.

The Supreme Point in the Hebraic Kabala, the Bindu Point in the Hinduism and the Islamic Primal Point (as conceived by the Iman Ali: “I am the Point”) stand for the same Point, also contemplated by Dante in his view of Paradise: “The point of the axis on which the first wheel rotates... Heaven and Nature rely on this point”⁵.

The symbology of the point as an atom of the geometric is parallel with the Seed or the mustard grain from that parable in the Gospel, vegetable atom; in the Hindu Seminal Drop, human atom; in the Letter or Sacred syllable, atoms from the word and the sound. The underlying idea is identical because the whole is seminally within the origin.



Yantra, seed - Primordial sound

Letter Ba and diacritic point

Augustine masterly states that: “All the parts that will eventually become a tree are contained in the seed without division and at the same time. Thus the universe must be conceived”⁶.

Abdu'l-Bahá expresses the same concept:

“Like a seed in which a tree is contained in latent state and then becomes a full-grown tree, the growth and development of all beings is gradual. Thus is the divine universal order and the natural system”⁷.

⁵ Dante, *Divina Comedia, Paraíso*, XIII, 11 y XXVIII, 41 (Translation: PJC)

⁶ San Agustín, *De Genesi ad litteram*, I, 2, 6 (English translation: PJC)

⁷ Abdu'l-Baha, *Contestación a Unas Preguntas*, (http://bahairesearch.com/spanish/Bahai/Abdu'l-Baha/Contestaci%C3%B3n_a_Unas_Preguntas.aspx) (English translation: PJC)

In the XVI century Kepler thought out a cosmic theory of the point:

*“The man’s natural soul is no bigger than a point. Here is the form and the character of the whole Heaven latent and engraved”.*⁸

Giordano Bruno put forward a similar conception:

*“A point becomes a line as it shifts away from being a point; a line becomes a surface as it shifts away from its being a line; a surface becomes a body as it shifts away from its being a surface...”.*⁹

The text above is notably similar to the following by Leonardo Da Vinci:

*“(…) we know that the line borders with the point and that there is nothing that could be smaller. Thence the point is the first principle for geometry, and that there is no such thing in Nature or on the human mind that should be the principle of the point. (...) The point is the first principle of the science of painting; it is followed by the line, the surface and the body which is wrapped by the surface”*¹⁰.

The philosophy of Leibniz, in which the mathematic thought plays an important role, formulates a metaphysics of the “unextended points” or monads. The monad is a formal atom, a dynamic, immaterial point; God creates the monads in “successive shinings” which mirror the Universe, carrying the universal order self-engraved. The links of the mobile points frame the time-space field of the phenomena. According to Leibniz, space and time come from the same divine ontology as a transcendental bottom.

The symbology of the system of the monads is congruent with the archetypal pattern of The City of God and its metaphysics of light. Leibniz claims in his *Discourse on Metaphysics*:

⁸ Giordano Bruno, *Sobre el infinito universo y los mundos*, Pág. 29, Hyspamérica Ediciones, Argentina, 1984. (English translation: PJC)

⁹ Giordano Bruno, *Sobre el infinito universo y los mundos*, Pág. 29, Hyspamérica Ediciones, Argentina, 1984. (English Translation: PJC)

¹⁰Leonardo da Vinci, *Tratado de la pintura*, Pág. 17 – 18, Distal, Buenos Aires, 2010. (English Translation: PJC)

“God is the sun and the light of the souls (...) Jesus Christ has unveiled the mystery and admirable laws of Kingdom of Heaven for the man (...) that perfect republic of the spirits which deserve the title of City of God (...)”¹¹.

Conrad-Martius has observed that:

“Leibniz attempted to harmonize the phenomonic world of the continuity with the metaphysical world of the discreet monads. With respect to this, Einstein made constructive attempts to deal with the blend of the time-space continuum of the world with its foundations (the quantified singularities) with a unique formula”¹².

Conrad-Martius observes some antecedents to this conception in the Arabian Scholasticism of the VIII Century.

Goethe’s Essential Point, the Vegetal World and the Typus in the Animal world, also respond to the idea of the Primal Point.

The Law of the Sphereness from the pedagogical theory by Friedrich Froebel considers the point or the seed as the fundamental element:

“The principle of transformation of the substance in itself is the effort originally spherical of the force which tends to develop equally and spontaneously from a point”¹³.

The Omega Point of the theologian and paleontologist Teilhard de Chardin is a modern version of the mythic ancestor.

The Omega Point, transcendental and pre-existent to the Universe, represents the highest degree in the evolution of the conscience and its final goal. Is the “beacon” of human destiny, *“critical point of human maturing, on*

¹¹ G. W. Leibniz , *Discurso de Metafísica*, Pags , 66 y 83 , Editorial Aguilar, Argentina, 1955.
(English Translation: PJC)

¹² Conrad-Martius, *El tiempo*, Pág. 251, Revista de occidente, Madrid, 1958. (English Translation: PJC)

¹³ Federico Froebel, *La educación del hombre* , traducida del alemán por J. Abelardo Nuñez, VII-Biblioteca Virtual Cervantes

((<http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/servlet/SirveObras/01593852435695944102257/index.htm>)

(English translation: PJC)

the one hand, and the point of Parousia (the second triumphal return of Christ) the climax of the Christian horizon at the end of times”¹⁴.

In the field of the Profound Psychology, Carl Gustav Jung presents his theory of the Central Point or *Self*:

“It is a central point of an enigmatic nature fully developed... The beginnings of our psychological life seem to come out of this point easily, and all the ultimate and highest goals also seem to emerge out of it”¹⁵.

In his analysis of the archetypal structures of the religious mind, Mircea Eliade has outlined what can be considered an Ontology of the Point. According to this Romanian historian, the religious event operates on the assumption that there is a difference between the sacred space and the profane one, both generated from a primal point:

“The manifestation of the sacred creates the world ontologically. (...) The hierophany unravels an absolute fixed point, a centre. (...) The discovery or projection of a fixed point –the centre- is equivalent to the creation of the world.”¹⁶.

Modern art also presents theories of the Primal Point. Paul Klee conceived a metaphysics based on the manifestation of the point as unfolding energy like a seed growing in the soil.

In his *Second Surrealist Manifesto*, André Bretón speculates on the existence of the Point:

“Everything induces me to believe that there is a certain spiritual point from which life and death, the real and the imaginary, the past and the future, what we can communicate and what is not possible to communicate, the high and the low, cease to be perceived in contradictory terms.”¹⁷.

¹⁴ Claude Tresmontant, *Introducción al pensamiento de Teilhard de Chardin* , Pág. 64, Taurus, España, 1960. (English Translation: PJC)

¹⁵JolanJacobi, *La psicología de C. G. Jung*, Pag.168, Espasa Calpe, Madrid , 1947 (English Translation: PJC)

¹⁶ Mircea Eliade, *Ocultismo, Brujería y Modas Culturales*, pág. 110, Editorial Marymar, Argentina, 1977. (English translation by PJC)

¹⁷ André Breton, *Manifiestos del surrealismo*, pág.153 Editorial Guadarrama, Madrid, 1969. (English Translation by PJC)

The structure of *Magic Mountain* by Thomas Mann and that of *The Aleph* (“point in space in which all the points are contained”) by Jorge Luis Borges set an example of the presence of his archetype in contemporary literature.

Georges Bataille y Alain Badiou, two contemporary philosophers of different intellectual background, also pondered on this subject.

In “*The inward experience*” Bataille claims that:

“I observe a point in front of me and I fathom it is the geometric point of all existing things and all units, all separation and all angst, all unsatisfied desires and all possible deaths.

As I stick to that point, a profound love towards everything in the point sweeps me over until I reject being alive due to anything but what is over there, that point which is life and death of a beloved one and has the brilliance of a waterfall”¹⁸.

For Badiou, Mathematics is the only science that can formulate a consistent ontology, a discourse on how it is what it is. In “*Logic for the Worlds*”, he resorts to Group Theory in order to build a logic for the appearance based on what he himself calls “*Theory of the Points*”. Badiou formulates a Platonism concerning the multiple, which bears a striking resemblance to the fore mentioned metaphysics of the point, although it has no longer a religious bias.

This philosopher claims:

“According to Two, a point is a possible destination in the world” (...)
“Any point that duplicates the infinite concentrates the appearance of something true somewhere in the world. The points manage the topology of the appearance of the truthful”¹⁹.

While analyzing the temple in the painting *La Baignade*, by Hubert Robert, and the city of Brasilia, he explains the concepts that could be applied to the Temple of Báb and the Acropolis of Mount Carmel:

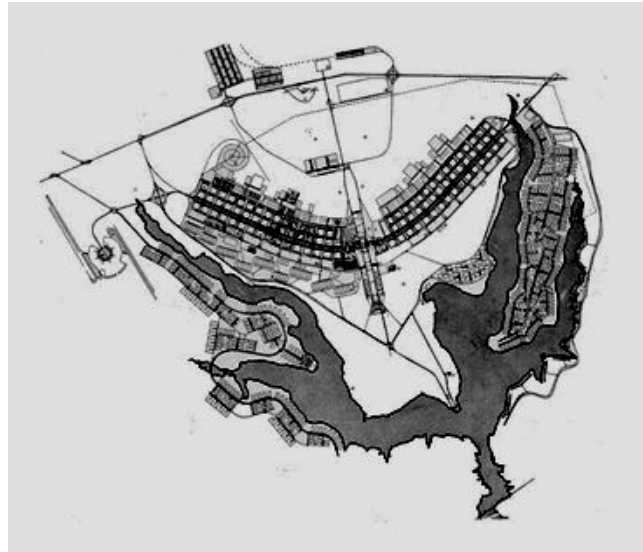
¹⁸ George Bataille, *La experiencia interior*, Pág. 130, Editorial Taurus, España, 1981 (English translation: PJC)

¹⁹ Alain Badiou, *Lógicas de los mundos*. Pág. 452, Manantial. Bs. As, 2008. (English Translation: PJC)

“When I tried to get around at night with eyes wide open, the bird perched on the dried ground, the lunar lagoons, the buildings designed after Niemeyer, everything conveyed the idea that the fragments of Brasilia had welcomed me to the birth of a new world.”²⁰



La Baignade - Hubert Robert



Brasilia plan

The analysis of the battles and the rebellions tackled by the French philosopher may be also applied to the structures of the points in the Babis disputes and fortifications that imply –in my opinion- an Ontological Mathematic.

Oddly enough, the archetype of the fortress is in the origin of the speculation by Da Vinci and the Algebraic Groups named after him (Leonardo Groups) and also in the beginning of the *Descriptive Geometry* by Gaspard Monge, the designer of the fortifications. His disciple Poncelet wrote *Projective Geometry* and *Principle of Invariance*, the core of the Mathematical Theory of Groups while he was imprisoned in Saratoff.

²⁰ Alain Badiou, *Lógicas de los mundos*. Pág. 457, Bordes Manantial. Bs. As, 2008. (English Translation: PJC)

Since “*the science borne out of Art has proved to be an art*”²¹, the archetypical constructions of Tabarsi, Zanyan and Nayriz may refer to a mysticism that could prove to be a science; its designers and martyrs may address their Lord with eternal algebraic structures.

The fore mentioned theories bear some resemblance to the Hindu metaphysical conception named Indra Web in which each stitch on the web reflects the totality. This idea has a modern formulation in the Implied Order by the quantum physicist David Böhm.

A Metaphysics of the Point is also implied in the current cosmological theory of the Big Bang that is supposed to have caused the universe in a primal point or Singularity, from which Time and Space derive.

The physicist Paul Davis observed that:

*“A singularity or point represents the fundamental condition of the science related to its being unknowable (...) Some cosmologists believe that the universe came from a pure singularity. If this is true, a singularity would be a gate between the natural and the supernatural.”*²²

A possible speculation about the Primal Point -may God forgive me- is the following:

Metaphysically, each reality has its gate, its *Báb*, its place of manifestation. The *Báb*, the Primal Point or Singularity would be the generator of structure of points encompassing a “Primordial Unity” or *Vahid*, which is composed of 19 elements multiplying by themselves and rendering 361 elements of the *Kull-i-Shay* (All Things), the generating matrix of all beings and realities.

In my opinion, the structure of the Greatest Name, or, to render it more appropriately, its structural appearance, should be considered a metaphysical system which is invariable throughout its manifestations; not a determined being, but an ontological determination of every being. The 19 letters or points

²¹ Morris Kline, *Gaither's Dictionary of Scientific Quotations*; Pág. 895, edited by Carl C. Gaither, Alma E. Cavazos-Gaither, 2012.

²² Paul Davis, *Dios y la Nueva Física*, Pág. 67, Biblioteca Científica Salvat , Barcelona ,1944 (English translation: PJC)

would intertwine into a mobile and also constant weaving of relations, an archetypical atom of all manifested realities.

Various statements from Táhirih, Báb and Bahá'u'lláh seem to suggest something similar to a mobile structure:

Táhirih refers to the Bahá Point as revolving; the Báb speaks about itself: *“a ring on a hand belonging to someone whom God will manifest –let Glory be bestowed on Thy Name – He makes it revolve the way it pleases Him, for the sake of what pleases Him and through it pleases Him.”*²³.

Bahá'u'lláh describes the Báb as: *“The Point upon which the realities of the Prophets and the Heralds revolve”*²⁴ and *“The Primordial Point from which all things created have derived”*²⁵

Rumi seems to allude to a similar structure:

*“Rise, oh Day, the atoms dance, the lost souls dance in ecstasy, heavens dance due to this Being (...) I have revolved with the nine fathers in each heaven. For years I have revolved with the stars”*²⁶.

Niels Bohr had a dream in which he contemplated a sun made of gas in flames around which small planets revolve sizzling. His design of the atom may be considered a visionary experience of a similar nature.

Bahá'u'lláh alludes to the process of Creation with the movement of the Point which generates Lines:

*“You should know that God -May He be praised and glorified- drew a line, divided it longitudinally in two sections, and made the universe after revolving one upon the other. The line, however, is only formed from the point when it is moved. Please, understand this meaning”*²⁷.

²³ *Selección de los Escritos del Báb* http://bahai-library.com/bab_seleccion_escritos&chapter=all (English translation: PJC)

²⁴ Casa Universal de Justicia, *Siglo de la Luz* (http://bahai-library.com/cuj_siglo_luz) (English translation: PJC)

²⁵ *Ibíd.*

²⁶ Jean Chevalier –Alain Gheerbrant, *Diccionario de Símbolos*, Pág.304, Ed. Herder, Barcelona, 1999.(English translation: PJC)

²⁷ Unpublished table, English translation by Keven Brown.

The Metaphysics of the Point implies a cosmology, an ontology and a logic of the manifestation. Whatever is manifested proceeds from the point and the duality which demands its manifestation cosmically, logically or ontologically.

Although brief, this reference to Báb illustrates the homologies among different dominions. The archetypical man may be rendered equivalent to the symbolism of time and space (Sacred Geography), and also to the structures of numerical domain. To this respect, Jean Chevalier claims that:

“(...) Apart from being a compendium of the macrocosm, the temple is also the image of the microcosm: it is the world and the man at the same time. The body is the temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor 6, 19); conversely, the temple is the body of the Divine Person: the body of Christ extended on the cruciform plan of the church whose altar represents the heart. He would speak about the temple of his body ` (Jn 2,21); Purusha’s body dismembered after his descent to the Embodiment according to Hindu tradition ”²⁸.

²⁸ Jean Chevalier –Alain Gheerbrant, *Diccionario de Símbolos*, Pág. 824, Ed. Herder, Barcelona, 1999. (English translation: PJC)