



A SEARCH INTO THE MEANING OF THE SERVICE OF THE  
UNIVERSAL WORSHIP

**A Geometric Pusuit into its Form and Symbolism**

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The geometry of the form of the Universal Worship was spoken of and understood by Hazarat Inayat Khan, yet no document from the time of his life exists to describe, in detail, the geometric symbolism of this service.

This study was encouraged and tutored by Hidayat Inayat Khan so that all Sufis could benefit from the guidance and inspiration of Hazarat Inayat Khan regarding the form of the Universal Worship.

This paper is a personal search for meaning and should not be seen as a manual for conducting the service, which is well documented elsewhere.

Credit is due to the scholarly text, "The Sense of Unity, A Sufi Tradition in Persian Architecture" by Nader Ardalan and Laleh Bakhtiar for guidance in the areas of traditional geometry, symbolism and mathematics.

'Understanding' is an evolving process, a continual unveiling. This paper represents a certain understanding at a certain time.

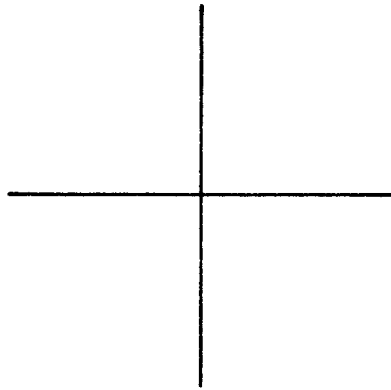
The style of the pursuit is simple, deliberately so, to allow for the greatest personal interpretation. Symbolism is a language with tremendous communication potential. I hope that some of those who read this will feel the urge to comment. I welcome this.

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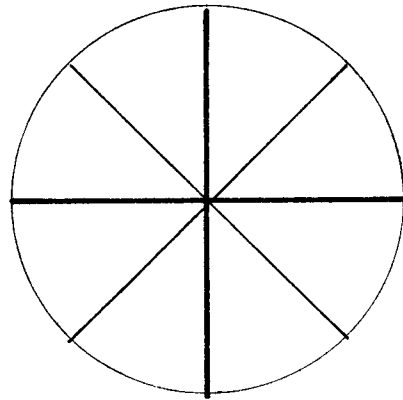


The dot is the most important of all figures,  
for every figure is the extension of the dot.  
It is the beginning. It is the One and All.

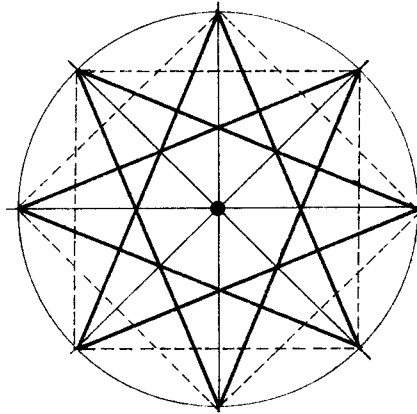


From the dot comes the line. From the line  
comes the cross.  
The vertical line represents Divine aspiration.  
The horizontal line represents material manifestation.

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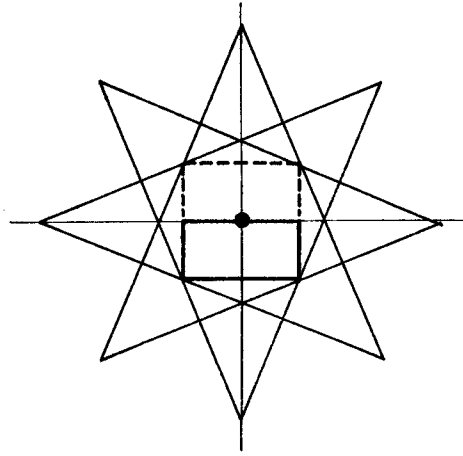


From the line and cross come the circle.  
The circle symbolizes the unity of the Divine  
and the material.  
It symbolizes motion, circular and spiral, in and out,  
the breath of life.



From the dot and circle, come the Divine geometries,  
the mandalas. The 8-pointed star is derived from two  
squares set at an angle to each other, implying revolution  
and setting this symbol into dynamic motion.  
It corresponds to the musical scale of 8 notes.  
It represents music as the universal language.

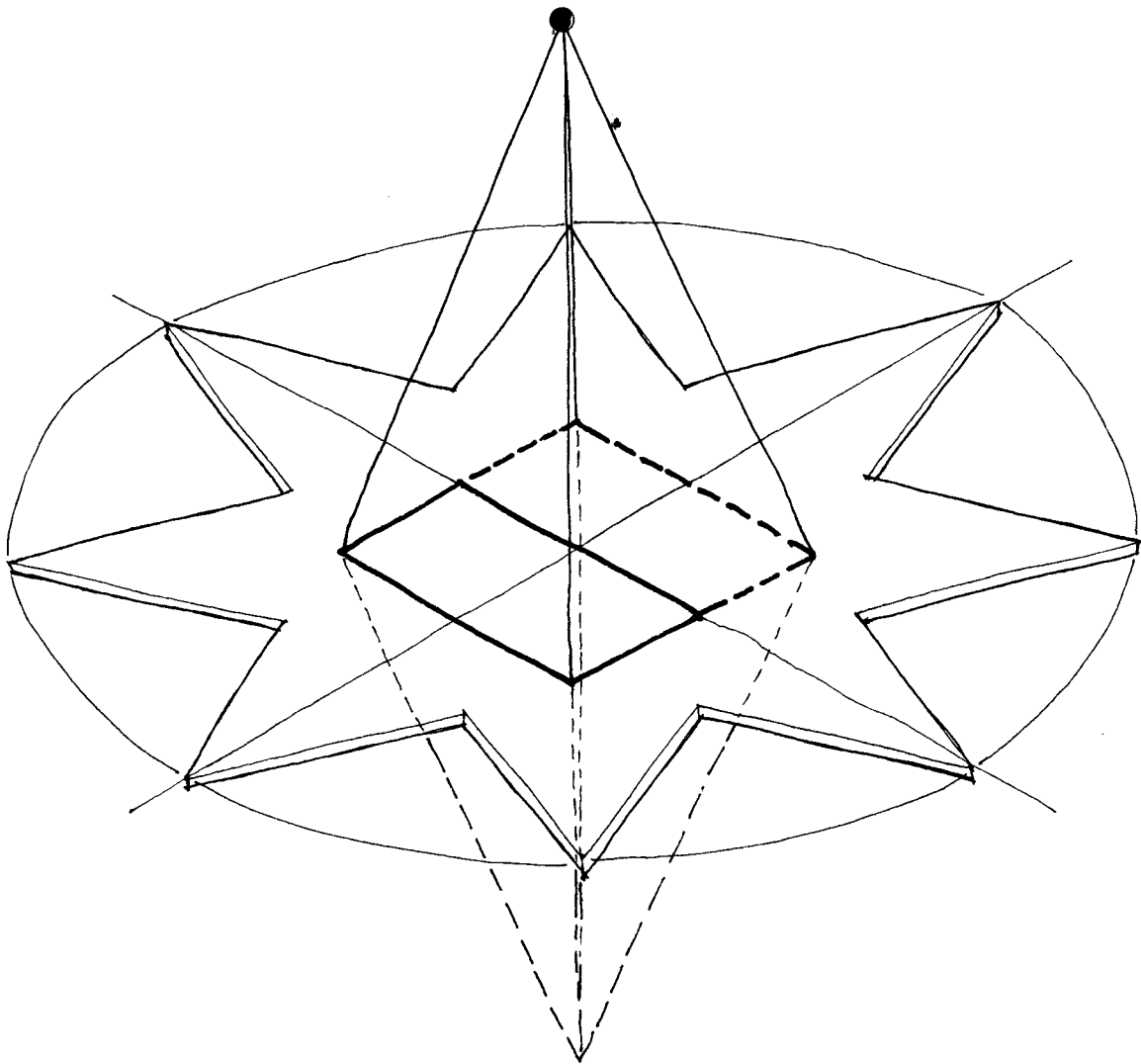
The mandala is a 'vehicle' on which the ceremony of the  
Universal Worship can travel to its destination.



Inside the 8-pointed star can be found a square,  
representing the altar of the Universal Worship.

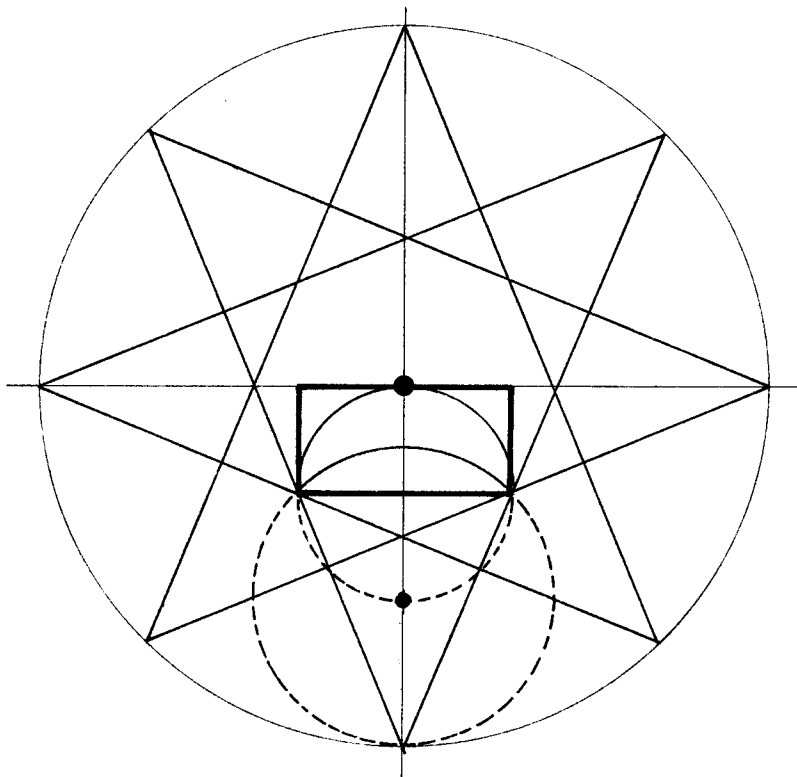
The vertical and horizontal lines bisect the square,  
symbolizing the known and unknown, the seen and the  
unseen.

The centre of the square, the dot, represents the Divine  
at the centre of all things.



When projected into the third dimension, The dot (Divine Source) is located above the square (the altar). Joining the dot to the corners of the square creates a pyramid. The square plane represents man. The pyramid represents the relationship between God and man. The dotted back half of the square represents the unseen and the bottom pyramid, a reflection of the one above, represents the unknown.

A crystal has been formed encompassing all aspects of the Divine and material. This crystal represents the power of transformation. It transforms single white light to the spectrum and vice versa. Thus it is the symbol by which we can understand the One in All and All in One.



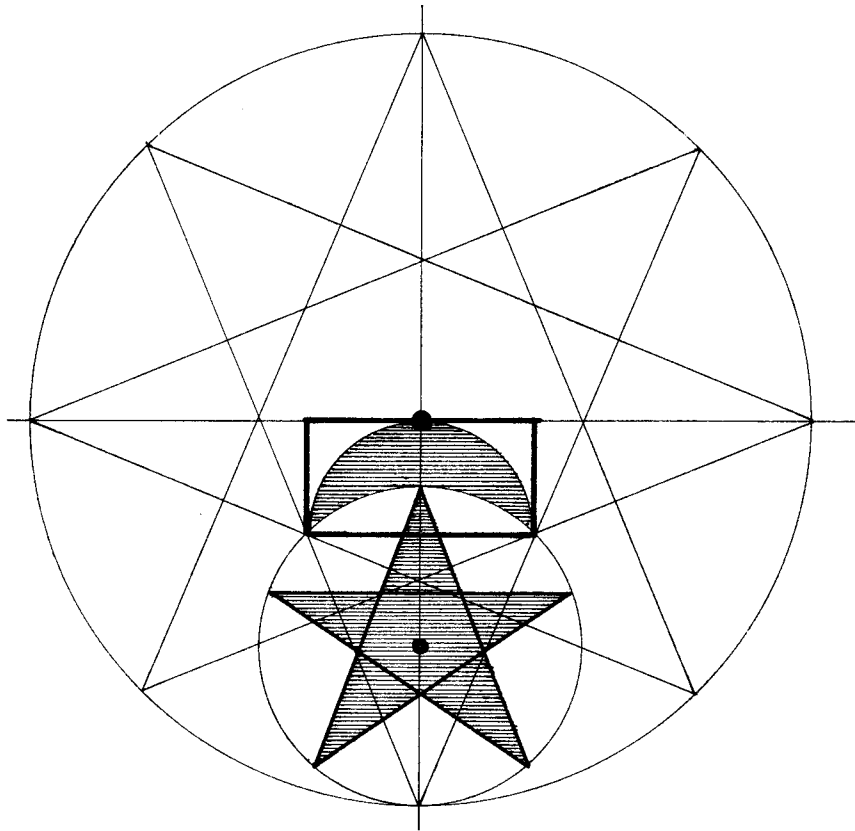
The altar for the Universal Worship is the half square at the centre of the mandala.

On the surface of the altar is located a crescent moon shape, symbolizing both the receptacle and the reflection.

It is within this crescent that the candles representing the world religions are placed. The candle representing the Divine Light is located at the back of the altar under the symbolic dot.

The crescent moon is created by the intersection of two circles relating to the geometry of the square and the circle of the mandala.

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As the service of the Universal Worship proceeds, the pyramid over the altar becomes more solid, the unity of God and man closer to realization.

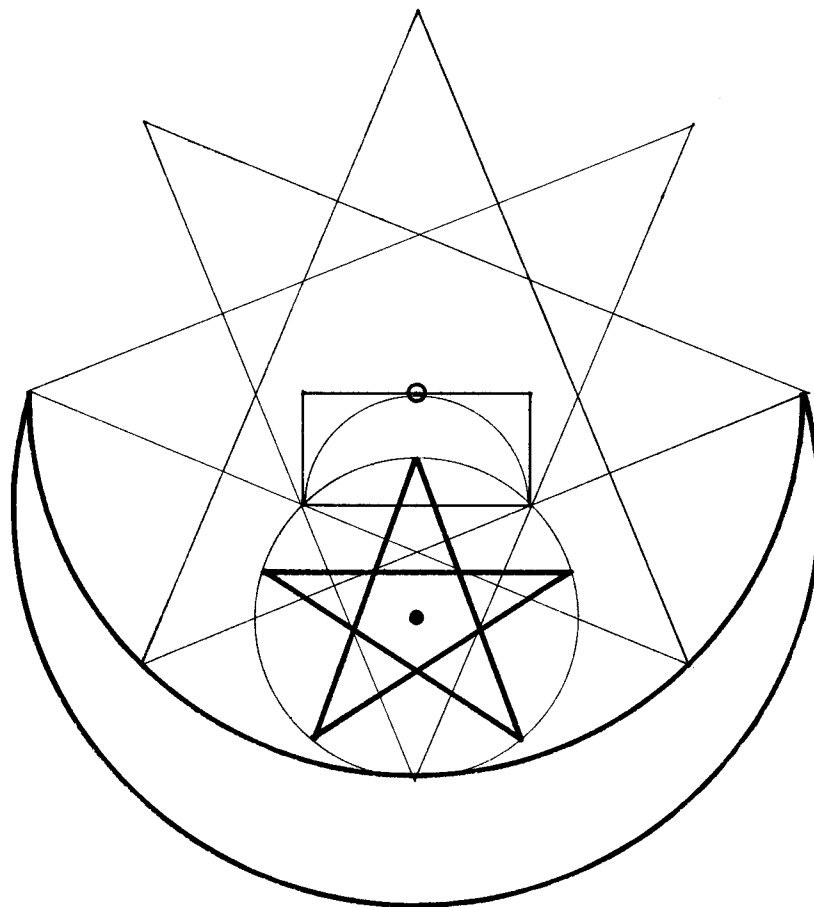
In front of the altar, described by the inner circle of the crescent, is a 5-star mandala, the symbol of illumination and the symbol of man.

As the pyramid becomes more solid, the centre point of the 5-point star, the heart of man, becomes a receptor point for the energy of the divine realization. See next page .

This point of reception is the location of the blessing at the culmination of the service. The star, symbolizing man with outstretched arms, also represents the blessing.

The solidification of the pyramid over the altar coincides with the giving of the blessing - the instantaneous link between man and God.





A large crescent shape is formed using the mandala circle as the inside circle of the crescent. In the service of the Universal Worship, the crescent represents those who are attending, the receivers of the Divine illumination, as represented by the 5-pointed star, the point of the blessing as transmitted by an attending cherag.

The cherag giving the blessing is the messenger of the time, representing the heart of man in direct contact with the Divine.

Hence the symbol of the star in the crescent moon, when understood how derived, is a significant symbol of the Universal Worship. The practice of all religions as one has the power of Divine realization.

The Universal Worship is one such form and to the Sufi, is a symbol of Sufism itself.

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