

Geometry of The Shepherds of Arcadia by Nicolas Poussin

SECRETS OF THE TEMPLARS

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TEMPLAR SECRETS

In a paper I wrote called "Glimpse of the Grail" I tried to show how magic squares, triplet triangles and maze patterns all fitted into the Templar geometrical traditions, which they had inherited from very ancient times.

Now having read Brian Innes series of articles in The Unexplained concerning a mysterious area of the French countryside, I thought I would apply some of my geometrical findings to the situation and see if anything came of it.

It may be necessary for the benefit of those who have missed Henry Lincoln's TV programmes or who are not as yet subscribers to The Unexplained, to tell the story so far or rather attempt to, because it is extremely complicated. At the turn of this century, and I now quote from the Innes Introduction: "In the course of two or three years Bérenger Saunière went from being a penniless village curé to one of the richest men in the region. Within his church he raised a life sized figure of a devil." - that's putting the story's inherent shock value in a nutshell, priest - devil - riches. But how did it all happen, that's still the question.

This priest of a hill top village in the S.W of France, Rennes-le-Château, which had long ago been a regional capital, finds old manuscripts in his church, does some local excavations, goes to Paris and returns a rich man and remains one for the rest of his life. He isn't however forgetful of his duties and refurbishes his church with startling new decorations, such as a lifesize image of the gruesome demon Ashmodeus, who holds up the holy water stoup. This particular demon or devil is considered specially responsible for finding hidden treasure, and it was hidden treasure that the curé was supposed to have found somewhere in the vicinity.

The church itself is dedicated to Mary Magdalene, la Madeleine is a favourite saint in France and Saunière himself painted a representation of his patron saint on the altar table. He shows a penititent Mary kneeling at the entrance of a cave and in the distance is shown a scene of the local landscape. Telling the story backwards it could run like this: somewhere in this area is a cave, in this cave treasure is found, this treasure has a long and even fearful history, anyone finding it must spend it wisely. Wisely meaning to the glory of God and his church, while at the same time wisdom dictates relating the full story in symbol and subtil allusion for those who have eyes to see: operating to some extent as the Templars once successfully operated, and in this very district. Two of their strongholds still crown neighbouring hills.

Recently people of a speculative cast of mind have suggested that the Templars envisaged a great pentacle, several miles across which related the key points of the area and that this was part of their tradition. Curiously enough in 1928 a stone slab with a geometric pattern and enigmatic writing on it was found right in the middle of this supposed pentacle.

To move to another part of this puzzle, when the curé returned from Paris he brought with him reproductions of two pictures in the Louvre, one was of St Anthony in a cave beset by devils, the other being Poussin's "The Shepherds of Arcadia". The shepherds and a shepherdess who looks more like a pensive goddess, are grouped around a tomb and are pointing out the words engraved on it. These are: Et in Arcadia Ego, which is generally translated as: I am also in Arcady, the ego I meaning perhaps death. This phrase must have touched a chord within the curé, he had already seen it carved on a grave stone in his own cemetery, the grave of a member of the family who owned one of the Templar castles. Moreover a very similarly shaped tomb to the one in the picture was to be found and still is, beside a road in the neighbourhood.

What could be the possible connections, Poussin although a Frenchman had spent nearly all his working life in Rome. Surely he couldn't have known about this remote area. There are however tenuous links. Rome in the 17th century, for all it had burnt poor Giordano Bruno fairly recently, was seething with interest in antiquity. A Jesuit like Athanasius Kircher was allowed to investigate every branch of past knowledge, including the most esoteric, such as magic squares and dowsing; it's true he never expressed his own opinions, wisely only related those of others and so could be suitably shocked if necessary. Even Poussin's own father-in-law, the French cook of a Roman senator, had been involved in treasure hunting, to quote Innes again: "The current rumour in Rome was that some of the diggers were Goths who had come from the north in the faith of ancient tradition to seek for treasure." Rennes-le-Château had been one of the main towns of the Visigoths and the treasure Saunière sought for was supposed to have been taken by them from Rome, although for the romantically minded the original place of its provenance was the Temple at Jerusalem.

Although it is accepted that painters of Poussin's time often founded their compositions on geometry, it may be quite unreasonable to credit him with Templar or Rosicrucian insights, but it is tempting to do so. He had painted another version of the Arcadian Shepherds earlier on in his career and this picture shows no sign of geometric interest. It is stated that Cardinal Rospigliosi commissioned the second picture, did he also dictate the geometry. I should like to know if this Cardinal was a friend of Kircher or whether he had connections with the south of France.

At all events the picture accords very well with the combined sign of a pentacle and a Templar cross, stemming from the proportions of 1 and 2. That Templars cared about this 1 x 2 proportion is borne out by their familiar sign of 1 horse being ridden by 2 knights. An ancient bas-relief of this sign is to be found in the church of Rennes-le-Château. I suggest it may have been one of the secrets of the past, that two dimensional space could be developed from the proportions of 1 x 2 and returned to them again. As far as number is concerned something of the sort already happens in binary counting.

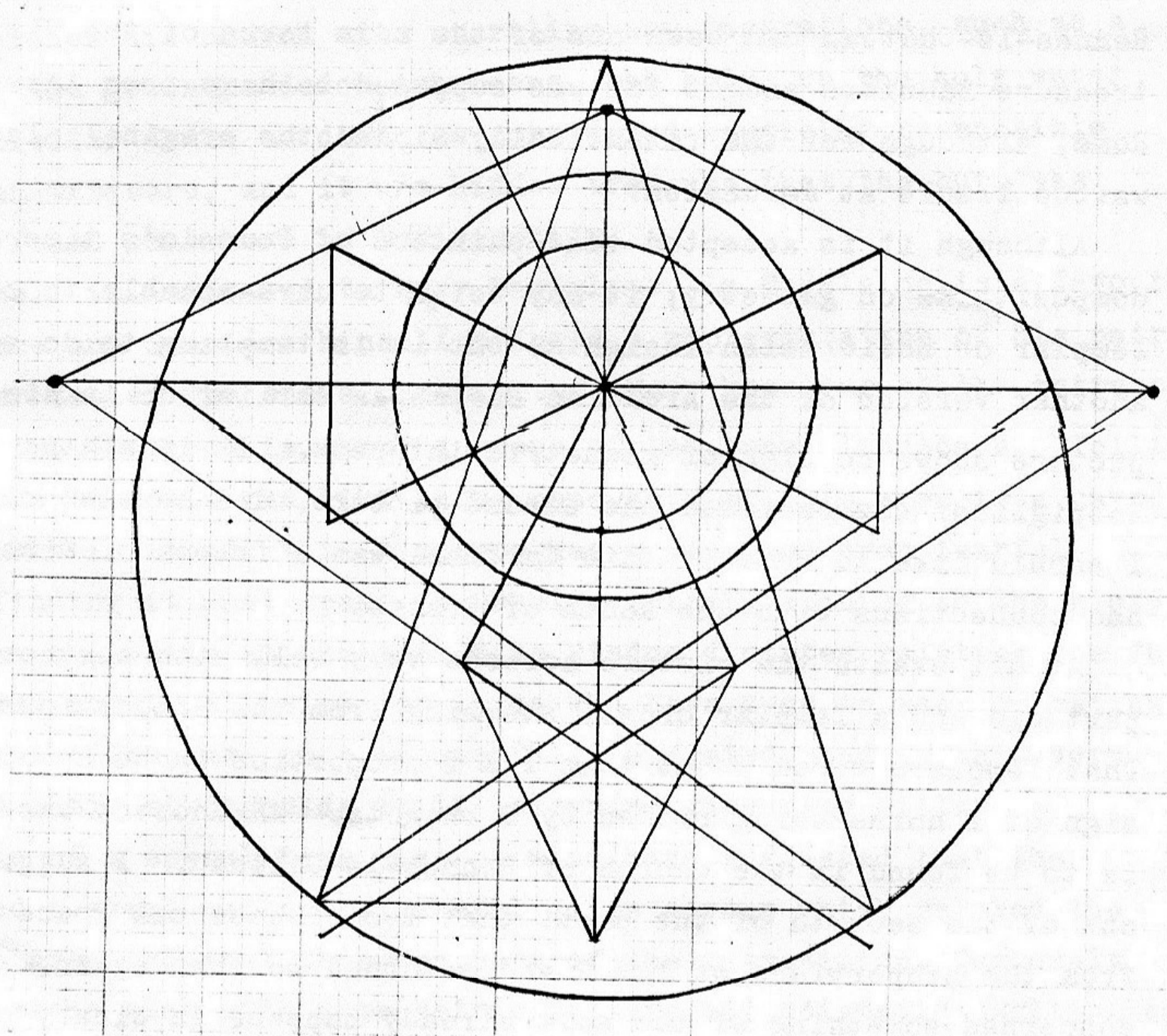
To return to Rennes-le-Château I cannot find out when the engraved stone was placed in the middle of the so called pentacle, but it does have a bearing on all the other mysteries and if it is placed in one particular direction, it would appear to indicate as an important spot just where there is already situated a cave in real fact. This much has been pointed out by Brian Innes. What has not, to my knowledge, been investigated is the combined geometry of pentacle and Templar cross of diagonals of 1 x 2 rectangles, which appears to be so well demonstrated in the picture of the Shepherds and is related to the geometry of the middle stone.

This style of geometry can be seen in other examples: one is a diagram of Dr John Dee showing us how to make a magic circle with its pentacle, this unpublished manuscript is in the British Museum. Another one is of a 17th century alchemist inscribing a diagram as large as himself if not larger, upon a wall. The roselike pentacle and cross are combined in the word Rosicrucian.

These kind of all inclusive ideas fell victim to the growing fragmentation of science, the planets were no longer supposed to be quiring cherubim, just lumps of haphazard matter. Though of late science has humbled itself a little, even associated one of its latest brain children, catastrophe theory to the curve of the Yin Yang line. Far enough eastern religious thought is considered quite respectable in some scientific circles.

In my ignorance I am attempting the grand synthesis once more, although the story as presented here may seem to be more linked to the spirit of the late Agatha Christie.

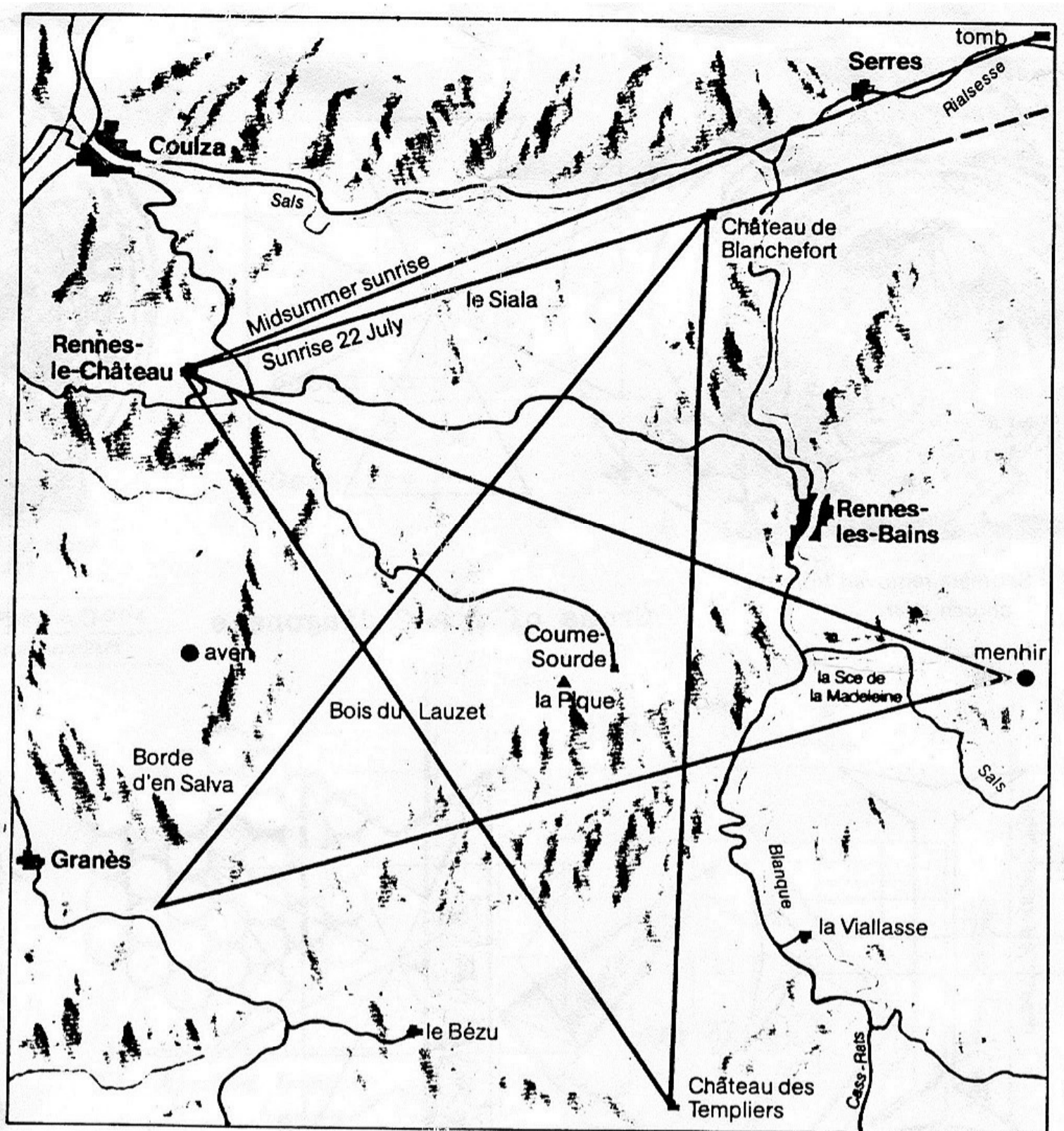
Geometry of
The Arcadian
Shepherds



Pentacle combined with Cross of 1 x 2 diagonals
Both based on large triangle & small circle of PHI

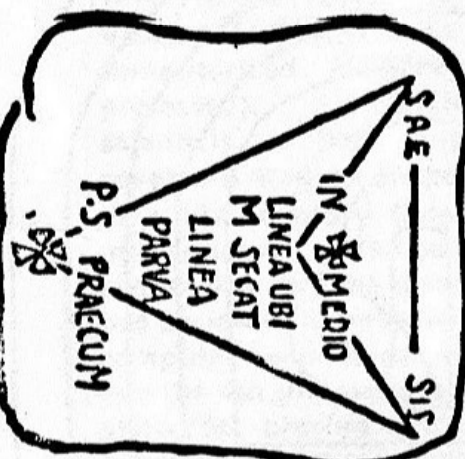
Rennes-le-Château

the great pentagram drawn across the plateau of Rennes-le-Château is based upon the positions of the church of St Mary Magdalene and the Château de Blanchefort, and the direction of sunrise on the morning of the feast day of Mary Magdalene, 22 July. At its centre is the mount of Coume-Sourde. Each point of the pentagram is marked by a building or standing stone



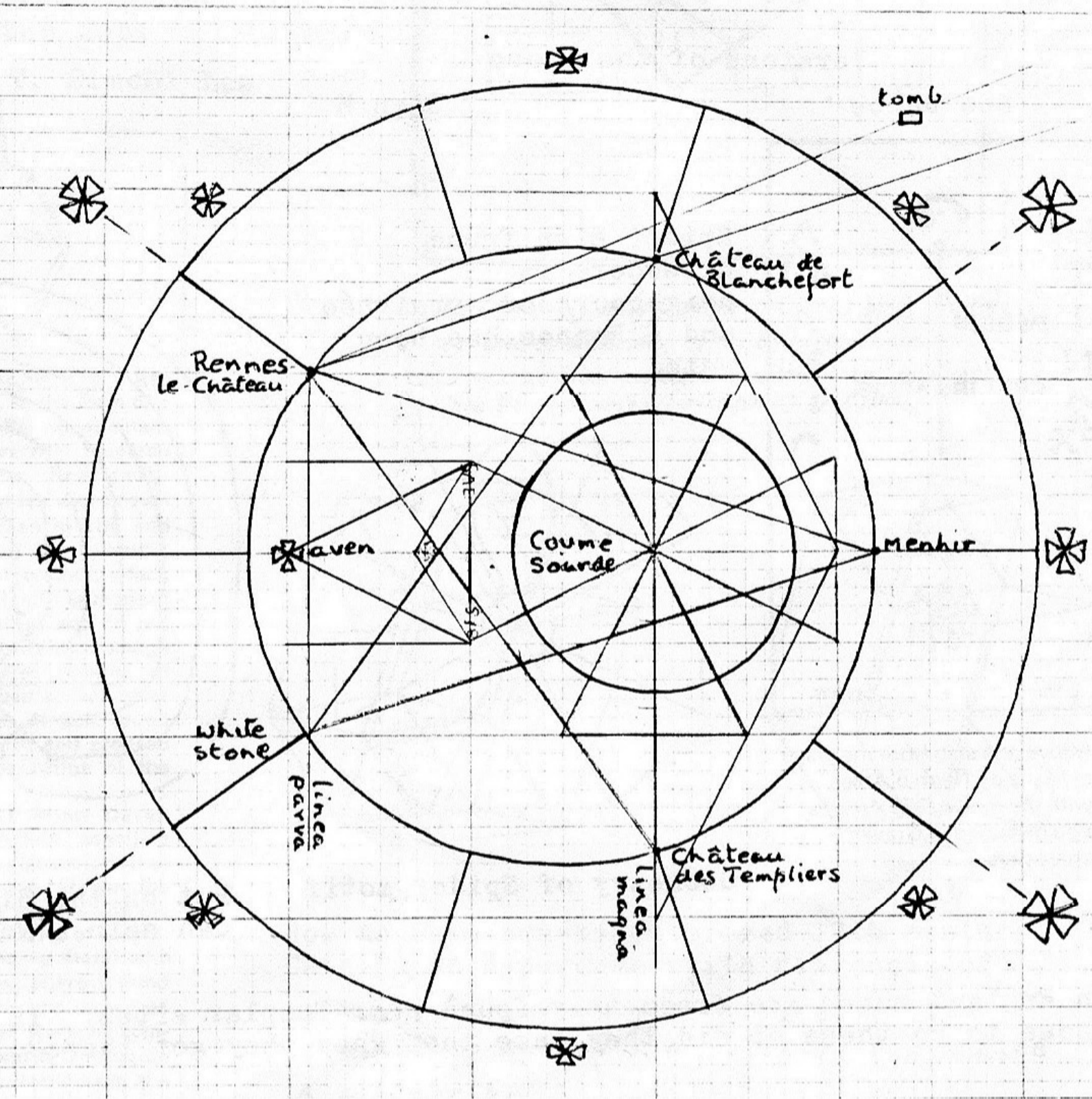
Geometry of Arcadian Shepherds turned to agree with map.

Engraved stone found at Coume-Sourde indicating cave.



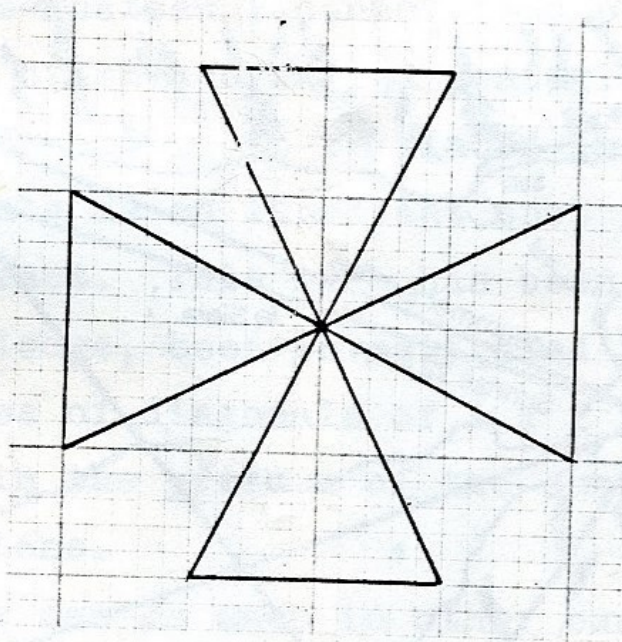
Such caves called locally "aven".

The crosses and their placing is taken from a manuscript of Dr John Dee: "How to make thy Cyrcle wyth hys Pentacle."





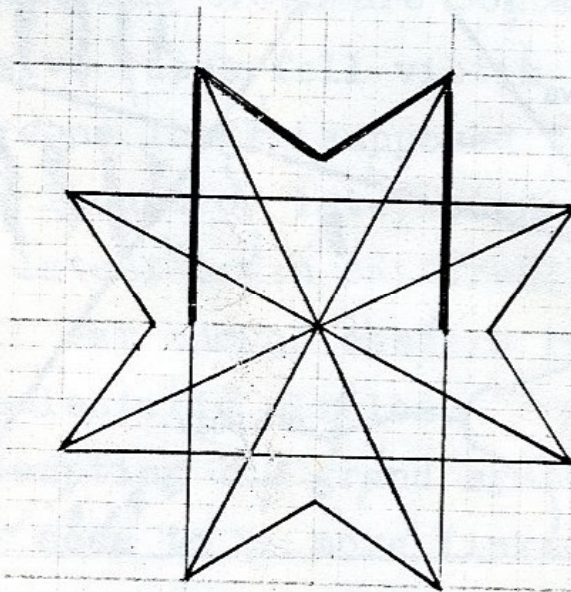
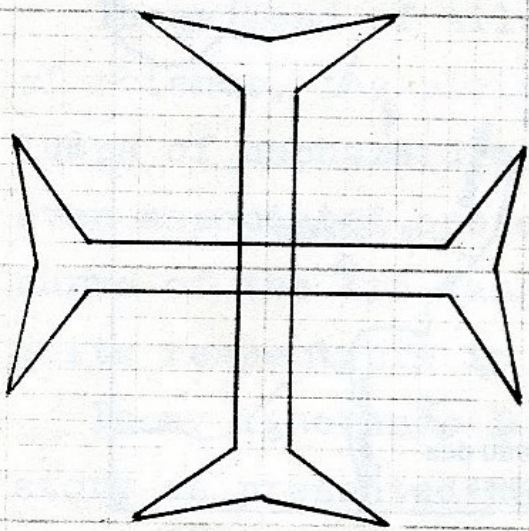
the slab, Saunière removed from the church altar.



Cross of 1 x 2 diagonals



a Templar seal.
Compare the two men on one horse with the figures on the slab

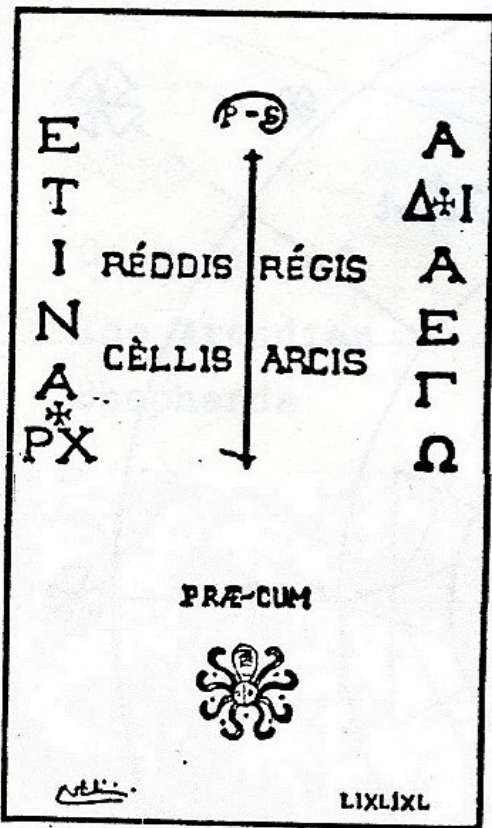
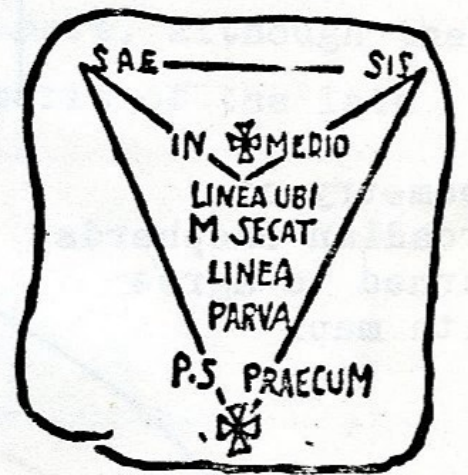


Below: the engraved stone slab discovered on Coume-Sourde in 1928. It very clearly bears the essentials of a pentagram, the abbreviation P.S. Praecum - which appears to be part of the sign of the Prieuré de Sion - and the cryptic message: 'In the middle of the line where M cuts the lesser line'

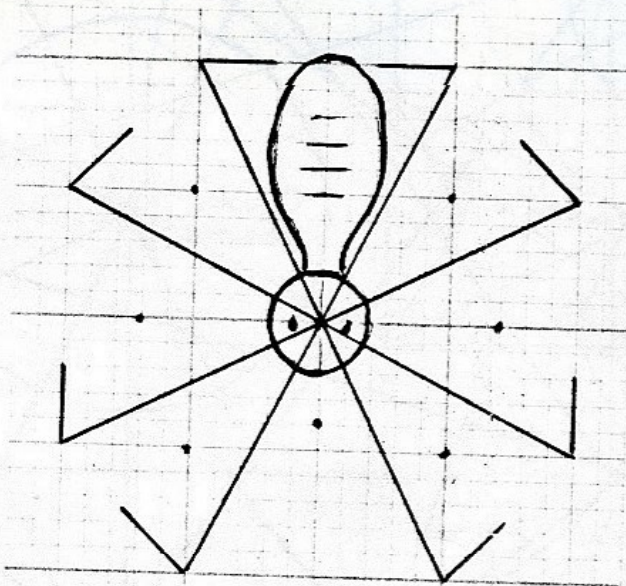
Versions of the Cross

see below

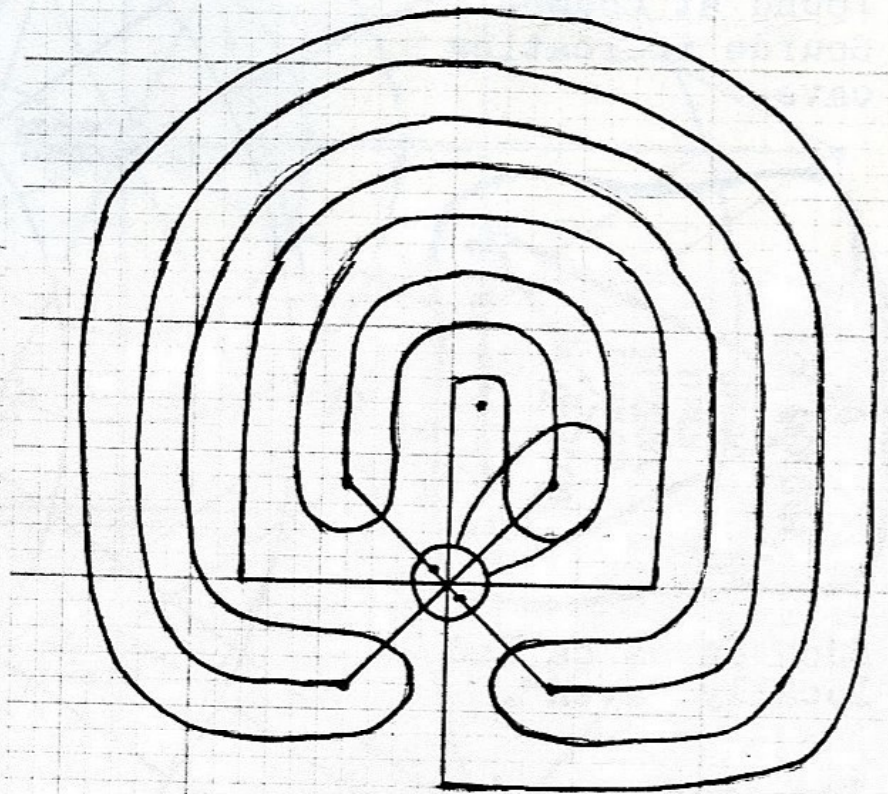
Sign M



Spider sign found elsewhere in neighbourhood. Araignée and à Rennes has been noted.



Geometry of Spider motif



Put on the diagonal the Spider can spin a Maze.

Above: the slab from the grave of Marie de Negri d'Ables, with the motto *Et in Arcadia Ego* inscribed in Greek characters

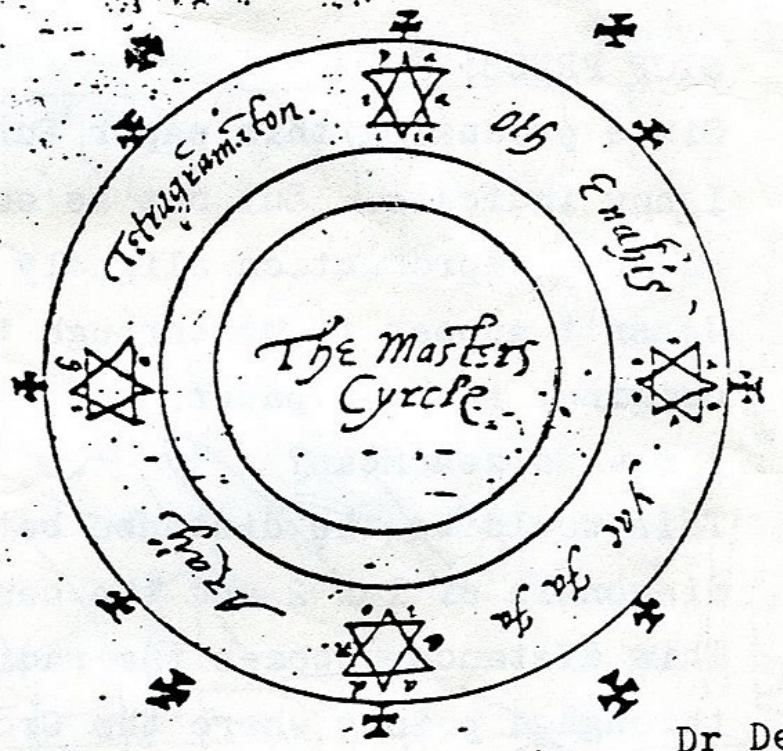
In England mazes are frequently found near Templar sites. Is that why they chose to go there or did they make them when they got there?

New Scientist
Review



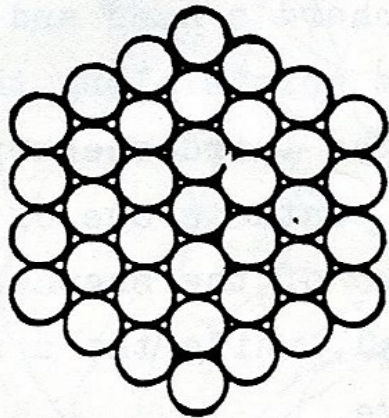
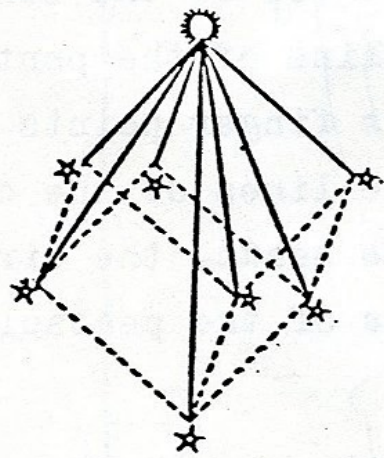
Alchemy and geometry had close associations (1617).

Based on
1 x 2
Geometry



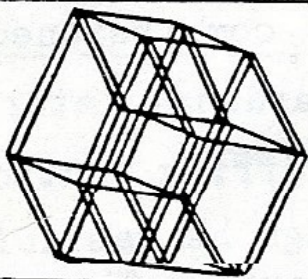
Dr Dee

Alchemy: the philosopher's stone
by Allison Coudert



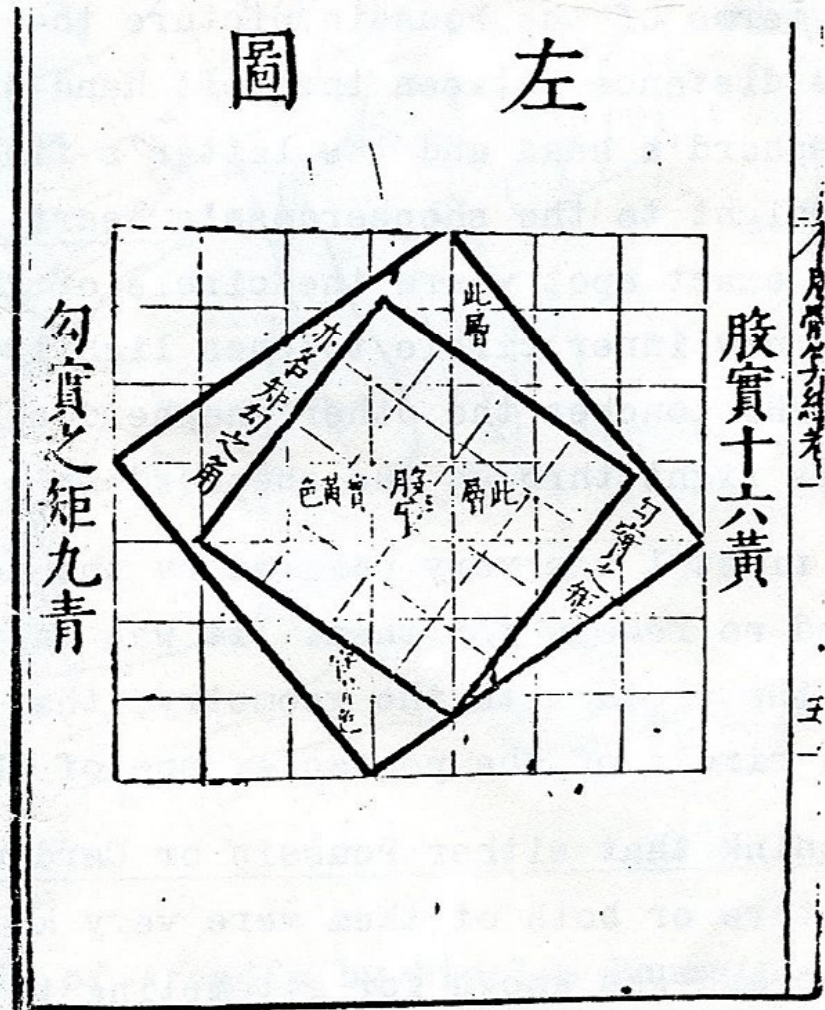
Metacube of 37 points, each
The Apostolic Gnosis.
2368.

The perfect or New Creation
symbolized by the Cube
F. Bligh Bond & T. Simcox Lea

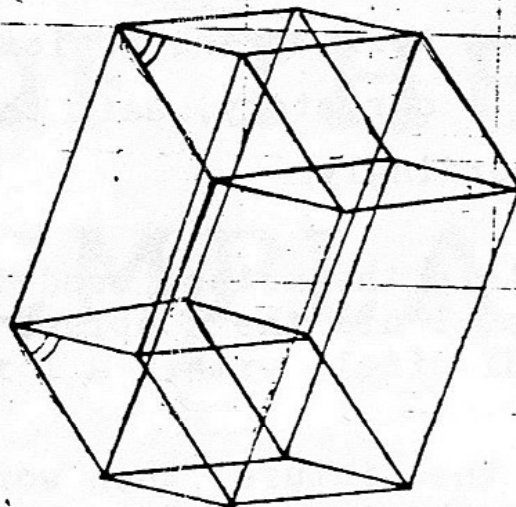


MATHEMATICAL BLUEPRINTS REVEAL 4TH DIMENSION... in the form of a computerized HYPERCUBE (trademark protected). Brown University research scientists, to their surprise, have rediscovered a magical shape which was known to a 13th century Catalonian mystic and numerologist. Members of the scientific community say the ancient symbol, which has accidentally revealed itself via modern computer technology, enables one to see into the 4th dimension. At first, the image appeared blurred and after months of experimentation and the use of two color coded, overlapping images it was found that the symbol aligned with and aroused the rods and cones in the retina of the human eye.

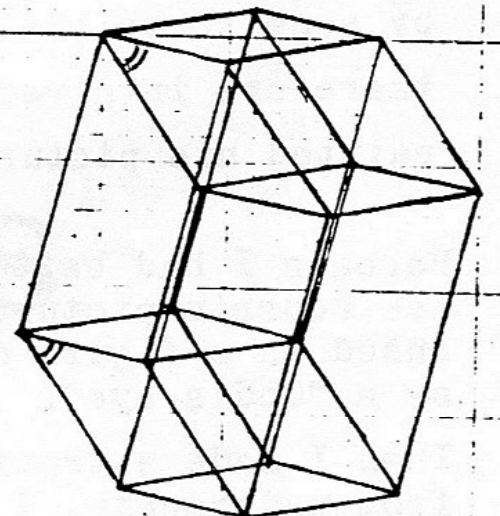
The research team at Mind Development, Inc. applying various sensitive bio-feedback equipment, discovered that when one focused on the Hypercube certain psychic powers were released by the percipient while in altered states of awareness. These included bending metal with the power of released mind energy, mind projection, mental telepathy and improved intuitional states. Pioneer work in computer stimulation of the Fourth Dimension was done at Bell Laboratories during the 1950's.



This extremely early example of Chinese block printing was used in vindication of the Pythagorean theorem. Chinese tradition associates it with the mathematician Chou Pei, probably a contemporary of Pythagoras.



a



b

How to make non-computerized 13th century Catalonian Hypercubes with diagonals of

- a) 7 x 1 5 x 1 6 x 4 12 x 4
 - b) 6 x 1 5 x 1 6 x 4 12 x 3 rectangles
- $\Delta = \frac{1}{8}$ angle

STOP PRESS!

Since producing this paper further combinations have been noticed, which I now indicate. But not as correctly on the front cover as I would like, because reproduction slightly distorts proportions, so that the new circle doesn't appear to go through the points as exactly as it does on the original squared paper.

A new Golden Mean?

This would be the distance between the centre of the Cross made by the diagonals of 1 x 2 and the centre of the Pentacle.

This distance becomes the radius of the third circle which appears to go through 4 points where the Cross and Pentacle combine.

Is this proportion dear to nature's heart?

In terms of the Poussin picture the important new Golden Mean is marked by the distance between the left hand shepherd's hand and the top of the senior shepherd's head and the latter's finger points along the line of the pentacle straight to the shepherdess's heart. The third shepherd's finger points to the exact spot where the circle of PHI contacts one of the lines of the cross. The new inner circle touches lightly two of the shepherd's heads, the circle of PHI touches the other shepherd's head, while the circle of the pentacle goes right through the shepherdess's eye.

At first I was very puzzled by the meaning of the shepherd's staves, I could find no reason for them. It was only after I had fitted the traced design of the picture to the geometry, that I noticed all three of them touched the circle of the pentacle, one of them at both ends.

I think that either Poussin or Cardinal Rospigliosi who commissioned the picture or both of them were very knowledgeable. The cardinal later became Pope and was known for attempting to bring harmony to warring factions. There is a letter in which Poussin declares that although he was influenced by Leonardo Vinci, yet his whole work depended upon Alberti. This Alberti was the first great geometer of the Renaissance.

In a recent British TV interview M. Plantard de St Claire, who is considered by some to be the rightful heir to the ancient kings of France and is therefore involved in this our story, said that Poussin was an initiate and painted his pictures accordingly.

Perhaps I had better explain the method used to determine the geometry of the Poussin picture. First I did the combined geometry of a cross and pentacle based on a figure of a PHI circle within a 1 x 2 diamond, known in early times as a "God's Eye".

Then I made a tracing of the picture, then working on a transparent board lit from underneath, I fitted the two together with the result shown. My squared paper is in inches and it must be that the reproduction was also fortunately worked in inches.

The markings of the squared paper are not shown on the traced picture because of the visual confusion, but it can be represented thus.