

"If a grammar does not have recursive devices (closed loops, as in (8), in the finite state grammar) it will be prohibitively complex. If it does have recursive devices of some sort, it will produce infinitely many sentences."

-SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES
(Chomsky 1957:24)

51. NESTED OR CRISS-CROSSED DEPENDENCIES?

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INTRODUCTION:

This model of the evolution of our spirits, starting from the point of their creation or birth far away in space-time, flowing through a sequence of testing phases, and culminating in a terminal state, creates the impression that these states and phases are linearly and obligatorily sequenced. That is, the model implies that each step of the spirit metamorphosis is obligatorily sequenced in relationship to the two adjacent steps it is "between": one step is always to the 'left' and the other is always to the 'right,' one is always 'before' and the other is 'after.'

This concept of simple linear sequencing fits with our mortal conception of the flow of time as measured on our clocks and calendars, so we accept that impression along with the rest of the model. However, it is possible that there exist relationships between -or across- the various steps other than this linear sequence of relationships that appears as pearls on a strand of silk.

Within the transformational arsenal of arcana, different types of ordering relationships are postulated.^{1} We will examine some of those possibilities here. The specific ordering relationships we will comment on are:

- 1) **disjunctive**
- 2) **conjunctive**
- 3) **mirror-image**
- 4) **embedded**
- 5) **criss-crossed**
- 6) **circular**
- 7) **spiral**

We will also examine the transitions that occur between phases, seeking commonalities that might reduce to a single set of procedures, which would be termed ordinances within SMD, which, as already noted above, we claim are a merely subset of the one over-reaching endowment^{2}.

CONJUNCTION vs DISJUNCTION:

Let's start with a pair of relationships described as either "conjunctive" or "disjunctive". The first term indicates

¹ This is the most obscure chapter of them all. Few of us concern ourselves with formally describing ordering relationships. However, this is another dimension of a theory that deserves attention. We will only touch on a few of the garden-variety types, recognizing that transformationalists have written books and devoted symposia to the topic.

² This bears repetition. Elegance in a model derives from simplicity which has broad power, and is capable of capturing or accounting for a wide range of data. A single endowment, which iterates either partially or completely, between phases, is an elegant concept in this respect.

that two elements of some sort may -or in some cases must- appear together in an utterance. The simplest example of this sort of obligatory ordering is the conjunction "and". Whenever this word is used, it indicates that two things, one BEFORE it and another AFTER it, must be joined in the utterance. Noone ends a sentence with this conjunction. For example, the sentence

(1) John went to town and.

is an ill-formed^{3} sentence precisely because AND is dangling, implying that something will follow, as is the case in

(2) John went to town and bought a pound of nails.

On the other hand, the disjunctive type of relationship is one where some elements are not allowed to appear together. Either one or the other of a pair -or more- may appear, but not both. A semantic example of this type of relationship would be any pair of words which imply opposite conditions. Something cannot be hot AND cold simultaneously.^{4}

A syntactic example would be the disjunction of active and passive verb forms. No active sentence can have a passive verb form as its main verb, nor can an otherwise passive sentence have an active verb as its main verb. After considering these two relational concepts, and searching for them in this model, it becomes evident that they do have several, though limited, applications.

For example, no two steps/phases of the metamorphosis can be simultaneously, i.e. conjunctively, occupied by a spirit. The spirit can be in the PE or in PM, but it cannot occupy both concurrently. Therefore, the two states-of-being and the three testing phases are disjunctively ordered. In a similar manner, the term conjunctive seems to have a highly limited application: it appears to apply only within phases. For example, within the mortal phase, baptism and bestowal of the holy ghost are obligatorily conjunctive.^{5} If one occurs, the other must also occur.

So these terms do seem to have limited application in this

³That transformational-ese which means 'ungrammatical' or incorrect or whatever traditional term is used to denote a sentence that is somehow incorrect.

⁴However, note here that if a speaker insists on using both members of the pair in an environment where they typically appear alone, a hearer who believes the speaker knows what s/he is saying, and therefore is attempting to communicate something unusual, will then force his/her understanding to search for or create some sort of meaning that is not going to be a standard meaning. Various literary techniques actually rely on this type of abnormal relationship for their effect. HOT and COLD would be such a pair, as would SWEET and SOUR. But a contradictory pair that sets up a nearly impossible semantic condition when employed together would be CONJUNCTIVE and DISJUNCTIVE. Only a highly abnormal, convoluted condition can be imagined to enable the listener to find logic and meaning in such a pairing. Something cannot be simultaneously both of these things.

⁵The use of the term 'mandatory' illustrates that there are actually two subsets to the conjunctive set. One set requires elements to always co-occur. The other set allows elements to co-occur, but does not mandate it.

model of the metamorphosis, but they do not provide any particular insight that we didn't have already. We must look into the other types of relationships to see whether they are applicable to the phases of the metamorphosis. Chomsky borrowed from logic and, as noted above, added other types of logical relationships to transformational argot. Three of them are: mirror-image, embedded and criss-crossed relationships. Do these terms illuminate anything about this model? Let's look at each in this same order.

MIRROR-IMAGE RELATIONSHIPS:

Look at the mirror-image possibility first. This type of relationship consists of a sequence of elements that start at one point, progress sequentially to another point, at which point that same set of steps is elaborated in the reverse order it initially was presented.^{6} For example, take a sequence of three items, A, B and C. If they unfolded in that order, the chain thereby produced would be:

(3) A - B - C

Then if the midpoint of the sequence is reached right after C, then this sequence would be repeated in reverse order, so the second half of the chain would be:

(4) C - B - A

The complete mirror-image sequence generated by these three items in the two segments would be:

(5) A - B - C * C - B - A

with the asterisk denoting the center of the sequence.^{7}

⁶ The name derives from the fact that this type of sequence is created when one holds a mirror up to an utterance or picture and scans across the resulting image that consists of the 'real' item and its 'mirror-image' in the mirror.

There is a fairly common application of this concept in the world of verbal games. They are called palindromes (Greek: backward+run). Utterances are created such that they can be read from left to right or right to left with the same meaning being expressed in either case. It is remarkable just how long these creations are, running into paragraphs in some cases.

⁷ Note that there are actually two subsets of the mirror-image set. One sub-set has a null midpoint, as in ABC.CBA where the two halves are reversed and identical: ABC- and -CBA. 'C' is a member of both halves of the sequence. This entails a null point between the two sequences as the pivot or center of the sequence. We use the asterisk as the null pivot in (5) as a device to designate the turning point of the sequence.

The other sub-set has as its pivot a non-null midpoint such that a member of the sequence stands alone in that position, and is not repeated, nor found as an element in either of the mirror halves. For example, the word CIVIC has the letter 'V' as the midpoint, it thereby being a non-null pivot, with CI- on the left and

-IC on the right. 'V' is un-doubled and doesn't belong to either half.

Those schooled more deeply in these matters probably have unique names to designate the two types of mirror images.

So, one asks whether this relationship is manifested in the metamorphosis. The conclusion we reach is that it is not. There is no backwards ordering^{8} of the conditions and phases. There is no point that we know of where a spirit goes backwards into a phase already traversed, so the concept of mirror-image ordering will be discarded forthwith^{9}. That this concept doesn't apply to this model is not surprising because the metatheoretical conditions, especially the Accretion Condition, require that spirit development be progressive, assuming obedience of the spirit. As spirits move from phase to phase, their development is intended to be accretional and progressive, therefore there will never be a reversing of direction.^{10}

EMBEDDED RELATIONSHIPS:

Next, we ask if embedded, also termed 'nested', relationships exist in this model. An embedded relationship is harder to comprehend than a mirror-image one. In an embedded relationship, an entity of some sort is embedded or nested within another entity which surrounds it or holds it like a matrix. Placing a brick into a newly poured cement sidewalk illustrates this concept. The brick is thereby embedded, or nested, within the cement matrix which surrounds it. One of the salient characteristics of this sort of relationship is the fact that there may be a fair degree of autonomy between the embedded element and its matrix. It may have a minimal relationship to the supporting structure, though each part must be well-formed^{11}. But this requirement that each part must be well-formed is, nonetheless, a link between the two that manifests itself in terms of some sort of limitation on one part or the other.

For example, in the sentence,

(6) Mary, who had brown hair, was Tommy's sister.

the clause "who had brown hair" is embedded within the main sentence,

⁸ Even the interrupted development of spirits who suicide or those who earn Avitchi Hell is precisely that: interrupted. (See Chapter 33 OBESITY, ALCOHOLISM AND SUICIDE for details about this matter.) No backwards development or regression in abilities is described in the sketchy SMD canon, nor does the concept seem to fit into SMD in general. Whatever the traits they have acquired up to that point will probably be retained, though further development is apparently curtailed.

⁹ Hindu and Buddhist reincarnation could be this type of process for those individuals whose karma worsened, thereby causing them to be reborn in a lower life form on their return.

¹⁰ Breaks in development are not intended, although they occur. Backsliding, etc. occurs often, but accretion of positive experiences is nonetheless the basic predisposition and purpose of the metamorphosis and the post-metamorphic state.

¹¹ Well-formed is transformational jargon that means 'grammatical' in a general sense. It applies to the three domains: semantic, morphological and syntactic.

(7) Mary was Tommy's sister.

True, in (6), there is an obvious semantic link between the two elements. But to illustrate the basic semantic independence of the two elements of this complex sentence, a different clause could be embedded in (6) to produce:

(8) Mary, the time of day being three pm, was Tommy's sister.

This sentence is also well-formed, but the meaning is different. Obviously there is no mandatory semantic link between the matrix, i.e. (7), and the embedded sentence. But there remains the subtle syntactic link between the two which controls the form of the embedded sentence, actually turning it into a dependant clause. It doesn't even look like a sentence.^{12}

To a non-specialist, there may not appear to be any syntactical linking between the two parts of (8). But there is a basic requirement for this compound sentence to be considered well-formed from a syntactic point of view. The embedded sentence must have its main verb modified from the form it would possess if it were a free-standing sentence, as in,

(9) The time of day is/was three pm.

But it is possible to have two sentences conjoined such that they each contains a main verb. But this is only possible when they are in fact conjoined in the usual manner, as by a coordinating conjunction like "and". In this type of utterance, there is no embedding, rather there is coordinating, which is simply a linking together of elements into a long string, each element being otherwise independent of the other. Converting (8) into a coordinated string yields,

(10) Mary was Tommy's sister, and the time of day was 3pm.

In this admittedly peculiar sounding, but nonetheless well-formed sentence, in which the second sentence is a *non sequitur*, there is not a semantic link between the two sentence. The two are semantically independent. And both are well-formed, complete, active sentences.

So we ask, are there embedded relationships of this type in this model of the POS? The answer probably must be offered on two levels. If we refer to cross-phase or global cross-metamorphosis relationships, then it appears that there is probably no significant embedding of phases or relationships.

¹² This is an over-simplification at a deeper syntactic level because the structure of the embedded clause is in fact dictated by its position within another sentence. (See 11) below for another example.) That is to say, if the underlying sentence from which this clause is derived were standing alone, it would itself be a complete sentence: Mary has brown hair. So there is a syntactic correlation between the matrix and the embedded element.

Each phase stands alone. But on the level of the function or relationship of phases to each other, it may well be that there is embedding of phases. For example, in the broadest sense, the entire sequence of **pre-existence/mortality/post-mortality** could be viewed as being embedded, or nested, in the larger grouping of pre- to post-conditions: **INTELLIGENCE-TO-IMMORTALITY**. However, it is believed here that this question can only be answered with the knowledge that will be available after we leave the metamorphosis, so we will leave the question open for the present.

But for the present work, nesting is judged to be insignificant. We conclude this is so because the metatheory, through both the Linear Sequencing Condition and the Accretion Condition, logically excludes significant embedding as part of the metamorphosis. Cross phase relationships appear to be merely some type of sequencing, with a sort of coordinating conjunction at the cross-phase junctures.^{13}

CRISS-CROSSED RELATIONSHIPS:

This type of relationship is the hardest of the five to understand. The basic relationship involved here is one where there are several elements in a sequence such that there are linkages or relationships between two or more non-adjacent members of the sequence.

As an example, take this fairly complex sentence:

(11) The boy, who was named John, and who was 17 years old, wanted to be a linguist.

Linkages in this example exist between "The boy" and:

(12) who was named John

(13) and who was 17 years old

(14) wanted to be a linguist

But the semantic linkage that exists between the subject, THE BOY of (11) and the clauses (13) and (14) crosses over the intervening element (12). And since the linkage actually is bi-directional between the members of each pairs, the relationships is termed criss-cross.

But note that there is also a syntactic criss-cross relationship in these pairs. This is shown by the singular form of the verb in (12) and (13), which number is dictated by the number of the subject of the main sentence, which would be,

¹³ But it is not possible for the phases to be out of order, so the linear sequencing condition also entails a required order of the conditions and phases.

(15) The boy wanted to be a linguist.

This illustrates the criss-crossing relationship both semantically and syntactically.^{14}

So, do such relationships exist in this model of the POS? We believe that they do in some circumstances. The most obvious example would be the relationship that exists between the status assigned to a spirit in post-mortality and his performance in the PE. That relationship, which obviously takes mortal performance into account, crosses over mortal performance to pick up the performance in the pre-existence. Together these two sets of evidence which will determine the status granted in post-mortality. The crossing over of mortality to retrieve PE data is criss-crossing. But other than this sort of fairly trivial application of this ordering relationship, it offers little insight into cross-phase relationships.

CIRCULAR RELATIONSHIPS:

So far then, none of the five logical relationships has really offered any insight into the inter-relationships of the various phases of the metamorphosis. While searching further for a possible type of relationship that may provide some sort of additional insight into the phases and conditions of this model, we can consider that of a circle, which is not part of transformational grammar. This ordering relationship promises to provide more insight into the linkages between the phases of the metamorphosis.

In this model, the circle can be viewed in either of two ways: it can either be one grand circle starting with the birth of the spirit, extending through all the testing phases and ending at the point of resurrection, where celestial-qualified beings will then repeat the circle through their own creations.^{15} Or, the circle image can be used to represent each of the testing phases, in which case, the metamorphosis would consist of three smaller circles which lead a spirit from birth to the resurrection. But there is an important twist to this second application of the circle analogy: each iteration of

¹⁴ You have all run into this sort of neat syntax in nursery rhymes. Remember "This is the house the Jack built"?

This is the house that Jack build.
 This is the dog that lived in the house that Jack built.
 This is the dog that worried that cat that lived in the house that Jack built.
 This is the dog that worried the cat that ate the rat that lived in the house that Jack built.

The thing runs to great length and is an example of criss-crossed relationships.

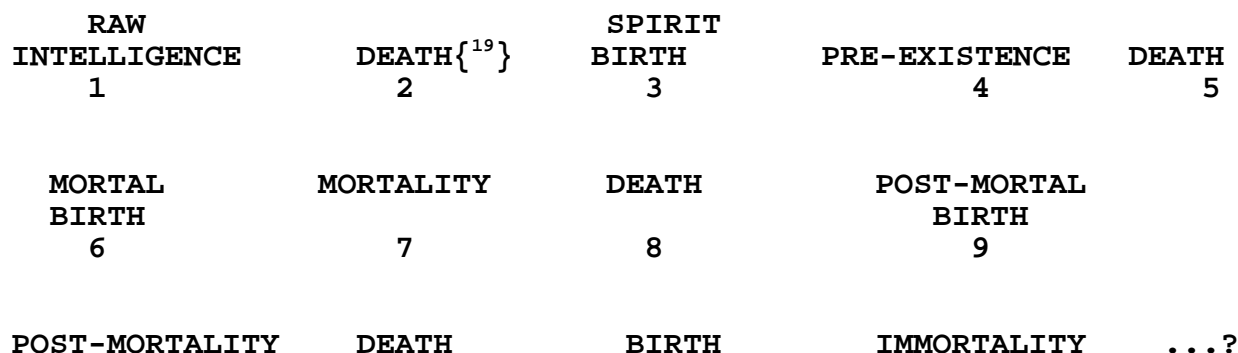
¹⁵ The interesting question here is: what about the non-celestial beings? Do they somehow complete a circle? What does this do to the circle model, or how does the circle model account for them?

the circle must not be flat, like a coin is when it lies flat on a surface. Rather the circle described by each phase probably should be viewed as a sort of inclined plane that gradually ascends upward. This then leads us to the image of a slinky or spiral, not a flat circle^{16}.

For the moment, the significance of this circle image, one which has been applied in various ways to man's progression, is that it illustrates several characteristics of the metamorphosis. Taking the entire metamorphosis into account, the circle concept can show that the metamorphosis is a complete process, starting and culminating at one point.^{17} But at level of each phase, the circle image may show that the various phases are actually identical to each other in some significant ways.^{18} Each phase may consist of identical elements, starting with the entrance into and exit from each phase. And these elements may be a uniform set of ordinances that merely reapply.

METAMORPHIC SEQUENCE:

Let's show schematically the sequencing of these steps and then apply the circle metaphor. To start with, imagine the following information as being one long straight line:



¹⁶ There is another possible 'shape' possible in this regards. Instead of postulating a spiral as the proper sequencing of the three active phases, one could invoke the image of a sphere. Is not a sphere a set of circles of the same diameter, rotated around a common locus? So might we not view the cycle/circle of the three phases as being segments of the surface of a sphere? Obviously, there must be more than three circles to comprise a complete sphere, but there is merit to the sphere concept because it implies a type of unity that is absent in the image of a slinky that 'starts' at a point and ends at another. (We will explore this in greater detail and amend this article as appropriate.)

¹⁷ The problem for this concept is the fact that it seems illogical that the starting point of a sequence should also be its ending point.

¹⁸ But it is noted that the application of the circle image to the entire metamorphosis or only to individual phases therefor are not mutually exclusive concepts. The circle concept may apply at BOTH levels in a 3rd dimensional way, there simply being different meanings derivable from each perspective.

¹⁹ Problem: we haven't a clue about whether there is any type of death that occurs to/in intelligence when it is transformed into spirits. However, we will take a strong position here in defense of symmetry and postulate the analogue of death. This will preserve our concept of a cycle of an ordinance complex.

	(JUDGMENT)	(RESURRECTION)		
10	11	12	13	??

Figure 1.

These items are numbered 1 through 13 to denote their linear sequencing. This chain summarizes the states we go through, starting with the Intelligence State and ending up in Immortality. Examination of these elements reveals what appears to be a small pattern of 3 items that repeats:

- (a) a state-of-being or a phase condition
(items 1, 4, 7 and 10)
- (b) a death
(items 2, 5, 8 and 11)
- (c) a birth
(items 3, 6, 9 and 12)

Figure 2.

This pattern is repeated four times and ends in immortality, item 13, which may be the first member of a fifth iteration of the cycle.^{20} But the pattern doesn't show up well in either Figure 1 or Figure 2, so let's re-display those elements in a different tabular form:

A.) [INTELLIGENCE	DEATH	BIRTH]
1	2	3
B.) [PRE-EXISTENCE	DEATH	BIRTH]
4	5	6
C.) [MORTALITY	DEATH	BIRTH]
7	8	9
D.) [POST-MORTALITY	DEATH	BIRTH]
10	11	12
E.)	IMMORTALITY

²⁰ This sequence leads one to ask if there isn't in fact a possibility of some sort of repetition of this pattern through eternity for celestials as gods rise from levels of godhoodness to the next, etc.?! Most peculiar thought, but SMD does allow for some sort of progression for Gods, at least in terms of the number of creations. The problem would be the idea of death+birth which doesn't seem possible so we'll dismiss the idea.



Figure 3.

Consideration of lines A - D in this figure shows that the unique element of each iteration is the left member of the set, the state-of-being or phase.

But the [death+birth]^{21} elements are constant, so we speculate that they are perhaps comparable across phases.^{22} We say this because death and birth must be priesthood mediated processes, and within the framework of this model, it is assumed that there will be uniformity between comparable ordinances, regardless of the precise point in the metamorphosis they are applied to spirits. We speculate that this is true because we believe the Parsimony Principle is true. In this case, the Parsimony Principle would argue for a simple, elegant algorithm which would be applied at the juncture between phases, whenever the conditions for its application were satisfied.

To return to the sequencing of the stages of the metamorphosis, we noted above that one is not allowed to skip from B to D or C to E, etc. All steps must be gone through in this precise order (at least so far as we know). The steps cannot be traversed in any backward fashion. And in a similar vein, as far as we know, all spirits must go through all of the steps, if they are to complete the metamorphosis. The only variation allowed in how different spirits move through the phases is in the amount of "time" spent in each and in the precise point in eternity when each phase is entered and exited. For example, Adam entered phase C much 'earlier'^{23} than we did, but that is irrelevant in terms of our testing. And while Adam has finished his Phase C, and we are still in our Phase C, there are spirits who still haven't even left Phase B. And it appears that there spirits who have even gone through a resurrection so they have passed onward.

²¹ Remember that death and birth at the end of post-mortality is believed to be the judgment and resurrection.

²² A fascinating parallel to this concept comes from Joseph Campbell in his television series, TRANSFORMATION OF MYTHS THROUGH TIME, specifically in the edition WHERE PEOPLE LIVED LEGENDS. In referring to the work of WB Yeats, A VISION, he utilized a diagram which Yeats had borrowed from an alchemical work of the 16th century. This diagram was an illustration of the phases of the moon and he used it to demonstrate the phases of a person's life. The period of the first 8 days of the moon cycle was the first phase, at the end of which an individual "died" and gave up babyhood/childhood things and moved into puberty. Then the second phase ended around day 15 when puberty ended and was replaced by adulthood, and so on.

The point here is that this concept of phases, described by Yeats and repeated by Campbell, is essentially the same as the concept here of 'testing' phases which form the basis of the active segment of the metamorphosis. And equally importantly, according to Campbell and Yeats, the transition between phases is always a [death+birth]. That is precisely what was 'discovered' in the early drafts of this work.

As noted above, the three testing phases represent childhood, puberty and adulthood for our spirits, and we cross the boundaries by a mythical process that appears to those who remain behind to be a death, the mirror image of which appears to be birth to those who await us in the next phase when we appear.

²³ I wish we had a more precise term to use here because time isn't the issue. It is some other sort of dimension.

DEATH+BIRTH ORDINANCES:

Look closer for a moment at the ordinance complex that moves us from phase to phase. We can find honorable support for this concept from none other than Hugh Nibley who also noted that there was such a process. He put it this way:

"...Every birth requires a gestation period, whether it is our birth into this world from a pre-existent state or our birth into the next after leaving this one."

**-JOSEPH SMITH PAPYRUS
(Hugh Nibley 1976:173)
(You can trust THIS citation!)**

His emphasis is actually on gestation periods, not [death+birth], but we can take advantage of this statement. He refers specifically to birth as the process that moves us into the next phase. And, almost by definition, at least within the type of framework under discussion where spirits move between a set of phases, birth into the succeeding phase can only occur after a death in the prior one has occurred.^{24} So we garner support from him for this concept.

Birth and death are intimately related, neither occurring alone.^{25} During mortality, we tend to view the two processes as being opposite for the obvious reason that we come in by birth at one end of our life span, and we exit by the other. Obviously they are 'opposites'. But we also often note that mothers are close to death in bearing children. By this statement, we usually mean that they personally are exposed to death. But in this model they are not only close to their own death due to the major risk of the child-birthing technology prescribed for mortality, but they are also 'adjacent' in some real sense to the death of the spirit they are prepared to receive.^{26} They are vessels prepared to receive a deceased party who died in premortality as a precondition to making the trip into

²⁴The sole exception is probably the "birth" of our spirits from intelligence. That process may not be preceded by -or entail- a death. One may argue that rather than birth at that point, there is 'creation', but we are not sure that is more than a semantic game. Alternatively, one could argue that birth and death are in fact a single complex of ordinances, some of which apply while others don't, depending on the state of the entity undergoing the process. But even this doesn't seem to apply to the birth/creation of spirits from intelligence. It is a different process. Isn't it?

²⁵In the FitzGibbon biography of Dylan Thomas, the author states that Dylan tied these two processes together in his poetry:

"Finally, there is what might be loosely called a Freudian synthesis in his poems between the death-wish and the urge to procreate, expressed now through one set of images, now another, often through several sets simultaneously: death and life cease to be antitheses, but are the yin and yang of one great, mysterious process...Such, in crude oversimplification, was Dylan Thomas's principal contribution to English poetry.

(FitzGibbon 1987:100-1)

His conception is not far different than that described here.

²⁶We will leave the issue alone of when precisely this death of the PE spirit occurs during mortal gestation. It is a significant issue, however.

mortality. Death serves as the entryway into the birth process which is the entryway into the next phase, and the only way to get from phase to phase is to go through this sequence.^{27}

SPIRAL LOOP AND PRIESTHOOD:

So [death+birth] is a repetitive characteristic of this model, it being the technology for moving between phases across the metamorphosis. Since this ordinance complex does recur, it is not unreasonable to use the concept of spiral loops to symbolize each of the testing phases. This makes the

[STATE-OF-BEING+DEATH+BIRTH]

sequence a type of simple Turing machine, with perhaps only a few decision nodes with iterative loops that would allow the process to replicate itself.^{28} But in this model, the process appears to be delimited to a specific number of iterations around those nodes.

There is another item which appears to be perhaps an example of a circular, cross-phase ordinance. This is the endowment discussed above. We believe that included in this endowment is the birth ordinance, which is applied each time a spirit enters a succeeding phase. This means that there is probably only one long endowment^{29}, or that there is one endowment which is repeated at each cross-phase junction. This is because a spirit will pass through all stages of the endowment -meaning each stage of the endowment that is revealed to and applied to spirits during each of its phases- and at the point when it earns final glory with the Father, the spirit will be given the authority to personally apply the ordinances to new intelligence and resulting spirits. Then this circular endowment goes through various iterations as the spirits progress from one cycle to another.

CONCLUSION:

²⁷ There are a few cases where individuals have allegedly been promised that they will not taste of the death from mortality, but it is believed here that this is probably more figurative language than substantive, because death obviously must occur in some fashion at some point for the transition between phases to occur. The difference for these individuals must be in the manner of dying. However, we are not sure what death really means.

²⁸ Turing machines, theoretical computers that are not liable to malfunctioning and possessing unlimited amount of information storage space, are fascinating parts of automata theory, and logic and recursive function theory. They were considered at one point to determine whether they could be (used to produce) theoretical models capable of producing human language. In addition to their storage capacity, perhaps their greatest promise lay in their ability to deal with recursive functions, which are so characteristic of creative human languages. But in spite of their elegance and power, Turing machines unfortunately failed in this endeavor. Human language is too creative and unpredictable.

²⁹ Within SMD, the word "endowment" has a specific meaning. It generally refers to the set of ordinances which are performed in an LDS temple. Each person goes there to receive these rites which are central to the theology, and to the future success of the individual. Never in this author's experience has the term been used to refer to anything in the other phases of our metamorphosis.

This limited usage is probably not intended to mean anything at all because SMD focuses exclusively on mortality, thereby unintentionally creating the impression that the only testing and critical behaviors are those experienced on this earth. The concept of a long endowment is just not a consideration because SMD doesn't even acknowledge, in more than a cryptic manner, that testing occurs in the PE, and omits it entirely in references to post-mortality

The beauty of the spiral -or even the simple circle- concept, then, is that it shows relationships between phases that are not otherwise apparent. This concept may provide a person who is aware of these births and deaths a greater sense of understanding of their role in the metamorphosis than they would otherwise have.^{30} This is particularly true if one views the death+birth process as an analogue of the resurrection which we believe here to be its archetype. The transition from one phase to another becomes a grand experience^{31} then, with much more meaning and value than the basic idea of death and birth, as mortals comprehend it, conveys.

The last point to make about this STATE+PROCESS loop is that it is mediated through the priesthood. Above it was noted that there is probably one grand endowment that applies to our spirit across all testing phases, with the segment applicable to each phase being applied during that phase. Here, I would amend that concept a bit to suggest that there may in fact be only one simple endowment that simply repeats itself at the appropriate time during each phase. Death and birth would just be a part of that complex of ordinances which would prepare spirits for leaving and entering phases.^{32}

³⁰ It is interesting to note Grof's perception of this type of [death-birth] theme based on reports of his patients. In a section entitled THE DEATH-REBIRTH EXPERIENCE, he says:

"The experiential pattern [ed. that is being experienced by these patients] is related to the third clinical stage of delivery. The agonizing process of the birth struggle culminates, the propulsion through the birth canal is completed and is followed by explosive relief and relaxation. After the umbilical cord is cut physical separation from the mother has been completed, and the child starts its new existence as an anatomically independent individual.

The death-rebirth experience represents the termination and resolution of the death-rebirth struggle. Suffering and agony culminate in an experience of total annihilation on all levels - physical, emotional, intellectual, moral, and transcendental. This is usually referred to as an 'ego death'; it seems to involve instantaneous destruction of all the previous reference points of the individual. The experience of total annihilation is often followed by visions of blinding white or golden light and a sense of liberating decompression and expansion. The universe is perceived as indescribably beautiful and radiant; individuals feel cleansed and purged, and talk about redemption, salvation, or union with God." (1977:51)

His reference here is the death-from-the-PE-into-birth-into-mortality iteration of this cycle. We suspect that the impact of all iterations will be essentially the same. Note how devastating it is to the individual - ego death must be a horrible experience. Yet note the paradoxical consequence for those who weather this transformation: liberation and communion with God. The whole plan was set up this way, and somehow the devastation experienced by our spirits at death/birth is essential to our metamorphosis.

³¹ A 50'ish friend of mine who died last year stated it well. He said, alluding to many American's mania for finding thrilling adventures and experiences, that dying is the greatest adventure of all. How true! I can't wait for my turn.

³² If this concept is true, then there is a conspicuous absence of birth/death references in the LDS canon. Perhaps this omission is intentional, the reasoning being that such information is of little value to a struggling mortal who can hardly obey the simple commandments, let alone meditate about the things of eternity. Which have no relevance to how we serve each other down here.

