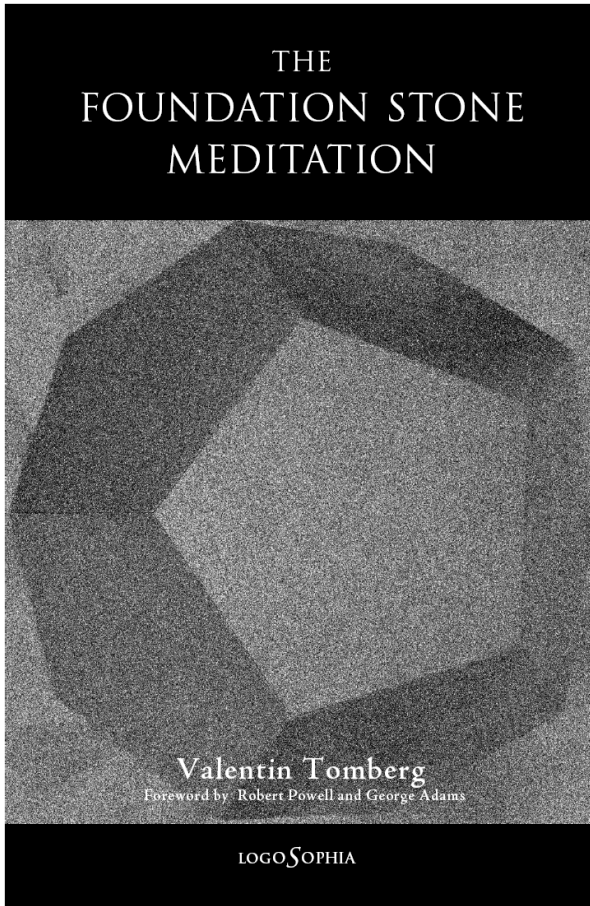


CONTENTS



Valentin Tomberg, *Studies on the Foundation Stone Meditation*, with Introductions by Robert Powell and George Adams (San Rafael: LogoSophia, 2010).

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The Path of Spiritual Knowledge	VALENTIN TOMBERG	3
Symposium: Valentin Tomberg	ROBERT POWELL	7
Perspectives inspired by the Death of Willi Sucher	CHARLES LAWRIE	10
Mevlana J. Rumi	BÜLENT AKAN	16
Sophia, the Hidden One	PHILIP MEES	23
Macau and the Feminine Divine	JAMES MORGANTE	24
Paneurythmy at Sophia's Garden	ELIZABETH WEISS	28
SOPHIA GRAIL CIRCLE		
Sophia Grail Circle Facilitators' Training	KAREN RIVERS AND ROBERT POWELL	28
Grail Circle Experiences		30
CHOREOCOSMOS NEWS		
Sophia's Sanctuary	ROBERT POWELL	31
Choreocosmos Workshops in Melbourne	SERENA SWEENEY	32
The Founding of the Sophia Community in Australia	MAGI WHISSON	33
Eurythmy as a Spiritual Path	DORIS MARIA SPITZNER	36
Choreocosmos and Eurythmy	LACQUANNA PAUL	37
Starlight	CHARLES LAWRIE	39
CHOREOCOSMOS SCHEDULE FOR NORTH AMERICA 2010		40

Valentin Tomberg, *Studies on the Foundation Stone Meditation*

In the unfolding of a true spiritual mission upon the earth, the great teachers of humanity work together. An example of working together to fulfill a spiritual mission for humanity is presented to us in this book. It is a matter in this work of a collaboration between two great spiritual teachers of humanity in the twentieth century: Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) and Valentin Tomberg (1900-1973). Rudolf Steiner's life work culminated in the 'baptismal event' for the Second Coming of Christ expressed in the Foundation Stone of Love and clothed in the words of the Foundation Stone Meditation. Valentin Tomberg, after his spiritual awakening in 1932, entered into the Mystery of Christ's Second Coming. His studies on the Foundation Stone Meditation, published in critical years of world history (1936-1939), were written just a few years after his spiritual awakening. They penetrate into the Mystery of Christ's Second Coming by offering the reader access *from within* to the Foundation Stone Meditation given to humanity by Christ through Rudolf Steiner. Every sentence of these studies – born of living experience undergone by Valentin Tomberg – leads the reader into the sublime mystery of the *spirit awakening* of humanity through Christ in our time. Understood as a manual for *enlightenment*, to be worked with meditatively over and over again, this work is one of the great treasures of humanity's spiritual literature—a priceless jewel for every spiritual seeker in our time.

—Robert Powell



The 22 Mysteries of the Christian Way

Konstantin Serebrov and Gouri Gozalov

This is an attempt to replenish the Major Arcana of Tarot with new contents: the mysteries of the New Testament given to people by Christ. It is a presentation of the Royal Path to find God within the soul, which was accomplished by thousands and thousands of Christian ascetics, who have left us the description of their spiritual experiences. Their instructions form the basis of this book.

The whole of the Arcana forms a ladder of 22 steps leading to heaven. Studying each Arcanum and mastering the practices of prayer and contemplation you climb one step higher. Prayer and exercises of contemplation purify and elevate the soul and prepare it to become a temple of the living God.

The 22 Arcana, the 22 mysteries are divided into two categories.

The first four Arcana are the contemplative mysteries, as they explain where the Path starts and where it leads to. The rest of the Arcana are the active mysteries, as they explain in which way the human being's soul can be purified and elevated.

Novice readers could read the book from the Fourth Arcanum onwards as each Arcanum contains 'Spiritual exercises' where the student can still gain benefit without having to start from the First Arcanum. The essence of the Path is faithfulness towards God and praying and contemplative exercises, which make the soul crystal-clear and full of the fire of the Holy Spirit.

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THE PATH OF SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE

Valentin Tomberg

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Translated by Robert Powell from German notes of lectures held in Amsterdam and previously unpublished in English. Footnotes and words in brackets [] added by the translator—it needs to be borne in mind that these are notes, not a complete transcription of the lectures. This is the third in a series of five lectures held in 1939/1940 which will be published in future issues of *Starlight*. The first – entitled ‘Sleep and Death’ – was published in a previous issue of *Starlight* (Pentecost 2009). The second, on the theme of life after death, was in the Advent 2009 issue. On account of the lack of published materials, few people are in a position to gauge the full significance of the Russian esotericist and Sophiologist Valentin Tomberg (1900-1973). The publication of these lectures for the first time in English is intended to help remedy this situation, to give a glimpse of the spiritual treasures living in this great individuality, who said in a private conversation in 1951 that he had held hundreds of lectures in order to forge a path through Anthroposophy to a living experience of Christ—and that he himself had traveled this path.

Spiritual world / [the realm of] Rights. Exaggeration leads to megalomania, [which] robs: “All who were before me were thieves and robbers” [John 10:8]. Duties / Exaggeration leads to persecution complex, [which] starts as an inferiority complex: flight-fear-depression.

Material world, Earth. If one lives primarily in the “horizontal”, danger threatens from left and right. Healing can enter in through shifting the focus to the vertical (devotion).

There is a consciousness—a superconscious [realm] which is higher than the normal human consciousness. The Guardian Angel belongs to the superconscious, just as the Devil belongs to the subconscious. Through an effort of consciousness one can be awake to the superconscious. If one does not make any effort of consciousness, if one is passive, the subconscious always dominates. This is the basis of Coué’s method of healing. The sentences [given] by Emile Coué have to be spoken mechanically, because it does not help if one says them with faith, love, and hope. The more passive one is, the more clearly the reality of the subconscious comes to expression. These things are studied in psychoanalysis. If one studies psychoanalytical facts, one sees that they are not without reason. For example, if one forgets something, if someone tells one lies, etc., there are reasons for this.

The subconscious is connected with evil. Each people, like every human being, has an Angel and a demon. The culture [of a people] has to do with the Archangel, the Genius of the people. Each culture is an aspect of humanity.

Outer civilization has to do with the economic life of the political state. The activity of the demon of a people creates a caricature of the Folk Spirit. Each folk, if its people are passive, can turn into a caricature of itself. It is then affirmed in the most passive part of itself. For example, Adolf Hitler’s speeches appeal systematically to:

1. Resentment concerning the treaty of Versailles
2. Fear of Bolshevism
3. Anti-Semitism
4. The will not to be alone.

There is one question for humanity and one answer [to this question]:

“What is life?”—“A school.”

“Why?”—“To tread the path.”

One finds something similar in Buddhism. However, first one has to learn. Christianity teaches: Humanity has the task to bring to realization that which Nature does not bring to realization. Nature becomes conscious in us and we have to create further. The kingdoms of Nature are beneath the human being. The ideal to strive for is the kingdom of God (regnum Dei)

—as in the Lord’s Prayer: “Thy kingdom come!” To bring this to realization—this is the task which the human being has to fulfill on Earth, following his highest ideal. This world that is not yet there is what the human being has to learn to build.

We do not learn morality from Nature. Our task is to bring morality to realization in life, to add something which Nature does not have. Earlier it was the law [the ten commandments] which set the course; now it is morality. This is the essence of being human, which is to be brought to realization. All trust in that which is already complete in the human being (instincts) is a “standing still” or even a regression. There is nothing in Nature which the human being can rely upon.

Circumstances are always influenced by the subconscious if the human being is not active. If he does not strive continually with respect to his subconscious, he succumbs to some kind of inertia which leads to a darkening of the subconscious. Thus, the human being can find himself in complete darkness. “The pinnacle of the temple” (Luke 4:11) is the superconscious. The temptation [of casting oneself from the pinnacle of the temple] of Christ Jesus in the wilderness is that of believing in the wisdom of the subconscious.

The temptation of “turning stones to bread” is that of “producing” the living and organic from the dead and material. For example, if thinking is conceived of as a mechanical process in the brain, one does precisely this. That is, one supposes that the brain produces thoughts just as the glands produce secretion. Thus, the third temptation has to do with materialism, just as the second temptation has to do with the force of moral irresponsibility, and the first temptation with the will to power.

The whole of world history reveals itself in two ways:
1) through revelations;
2) through catastrophes, as beneficent providence.

Just as in geometry there is a direct proof [of theorems], catastrophes can be a direct proof in the sense of “the exception proves the rule”. World history is not an economic process. Rather, it is something moral—founded upon the forces of faith, love, and hope. One eats in order to live;

one does not live in order to eat. It is the task of the human being to build up a moral world order alongside the natural world order.

Eastern Europe

The ideal is a new social order based on human knowledge—no dogmas (as in the West). The Eastern Church recognizes only seven Church councils, since these dogmatic formulations are not taken seriously. From the seventh to the fifteenth century [within the Eastern Church] there was nothing new created spiritually in the world. Everything was a continuation of Greek culture. However, there was a development in the East on the level of the heart. Whereas in the West philosophy (“thought culture”) was cultivated, in the East “being good” was practiced [*philokalia* in Greek means “to love the Good” and the *Philokalia*, a compilation of spiritual texts, is the primary mystical text of Eastern Christianity]. Treatises were written in the tradition of Eastern Christianity from the seventh to the nineteenth centuries concerning the way to the Good. A technique of the culture of the heart – a school with trials – was developed. [This is a matter of love.]

Central Europe

Knowledge and philosophy were striven for. However, true knowledge leads to a soul condition where the human being is inwardly secure. This is faith. Faith is certainty of knowledge. Knowledge is simply a step [on the way] toward faith.

America, the West

Here hope is the task, beholding the future in the spirit of, “Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” The petition “Hallowed be thy name” is connected with [the task of] the Middle (Central Europe). The “name” is the knowledge of that which is the center of the world. “Knowing the name” means recognizing the mystery of existence.

In the East there lives the longing to bring the kingdom to realization. This is an ideal of the soul. Instead of the ideal, a caricature took its place [Soviet communism]. Evil works through falsifying the ideal.

Also, the Middle became a caricature of itself. Instead of true faith came faith in the “great *Führer*” seeking to work through the blood line. Blood, however, has to be taught. Nothing should be learnt from the blood [line].

Substance, Force, Coincidence—regarded spiritually and morally:

Force: What does it mean when it is said that: “The world is the result of the working of forces? This is worship of the “lord of this world”. [This is the first of the three temptations in the wilderness.]

Coincidence: This word contains a representation but not a concept. By using this word one renounces thinking. Thus, it shows a form of temptation, that of “casting oneself down from the pinnacle of the temple” (temple = the head of the human being). It is the temptation of plunging into the instinctual life.

Substance: if one attributes primary significance to substance – [for example] if one says, “the thing as such,” [i.e.] this world is substance – one succumbs to the third temptation of Christ in the wilderness: the turning of stones into bread.

Everything in the world is moral.

In the religious life of today knowledge is often renounced. This is also a succumbing to the temptation of casting oneself down from the pinnacle of the temple.

The saying, “Art for art’s sake” leads to an art that is devoid of any world conception. Pure aestheticism or realism is something that does not serve anything higher but rather it speaks for itself, merely creating an effect through color, tone, etc. Essentially aestheticism for its own sake is an acknowledging of the glory of this world, a bowing down to the lord of this world.

Word, deed, death and resurrection are three stages of morality, which counter the three temptations. These are tasks for the future.

Word: The event of Pentecost bestowed the new faculty of speaking directly, i.e. to speak on the human level [reaching] into [the souls of] other human beings.

Deed: The magic of the Good—white magic.

Death and resurrection: Something will take place with the human being that will transform the physical body—the Rosicrucians speak of the Stone of the Wise. The physical body will be so transformed that the mineral [element] in it will be changed—transformed into will. [This is symbolized by] the Seal of Solomon: the lower is penetrated by the higher.

The physical world is the place for the battle but is not the result of the battle. Evil is in a hurry as it does not have much time to achieve an effect. It knows that it is allowed only a certain window of opportunity.

Wisdom is present in Nature. The Good is not present in Nature.

It is the human being’s task to call awake the will sleeping in Nature. The human being is able to redeem Nature.

Hands: the will to unite.

Feet: the will to oneness with the Earth.

Head: the will to remain connected with heaven.

Brain: the mirror for thinking—an expression of the will to remain connected with God.

Resurrection: the will freed from the frozen mineral.

We have a thinking that is frozen in dogmas. The redemption of the human being is to awaken the sleeping will.

The spiritual world has no right to intervene, if the human being does not want this. The spiritual world is powerless in relation to the lot of the individual that has been earned personally. But another human being can intervene. An example of this is Christ’s healing of the paralyzed man at the pool of Bethesda who had lain there for 38 years. Periodically an Angel touched the water [of the pool] which thus acquired healing properties [that were effective for the first person who entered the water]. However, the paralyzed man had no one to help him into the water when it had been touched. Then Christ Jesus appeared, at one and the same time replacing the Angel and helping the human being. Following Christ, thus we are also able to help other human beings.

Here it should be noted that

- 1) the paralyzed man waited;
- 2) the paralyzed man wanted to be healed.

If someone is ill but does not know it, he does not wait and does not have the need to be healed. One can then introduce him to a healthy person in order to draw his attention to his illness. If this does not help, one can pray for him.

A second example as to how a human being can relieve the lot of another person is given in the conversation between Moses and God. God [Yahweh] wants to kill the people [of Israel] because they have been unfaithful. Moses said: “Then kill me as well.” Moses stood between God and the human beings as a mediator. He had not been unfaithful. However, he was nevertheless ready to share their lot, to submit to the punishment that he had not earned. Then God [Yahweh] did not kill the people.

The counterpart to the [temptation of] transformation of stones into bread is the resurrection, the spiritualization of the material.

The physical body is an expression of streams of will which are frozen. These levels of sleeping will have to be awakened through the Word.

The Word:

1. In the Orient: flowery language.
2. Plato: true and adequate expression of thoughts—a mode of expression characterized by brevity.
3. Christ Jesus: speaking the Good—speaking directly without mediation. [Here] the Word is a real power for awakening the sleeping layers of the will.

(With the paralyzed man at the pool of Bethesda we see that he waited. This “waiting” is the highest expression of will.)

Aestheticism is inwardly cold as ice. If it is not borne by the Good, it is incredibly hollow and empty. This is the technique of the first temptation, that of bowing down to the glory of this world. An appearance is created which is cold and empty.

Isaiah: The coming Messiah is without form and beauty (Isaiah 53,2).

Gospel of St. John: the [farewell] words [of Christ] in the twelfth to the seventeenth chapters—there is a remarkable style and rhythm: art is present [here] in an interiorized form.

Christ’s words never compel through logic. They appeal to inner listening. He spoke directly rather than in a roundabout way through [logical] proofs and [the presentation of] facts.

At the threshold to the spiritual world [one has] to recognize the three temptations in the wilderness. According to the Gospel of St. Luke these are:

First temptation: the transformation of stones into bread. Discernment is led along false paths. [This] leads to materialism.

Second temptation: “All this power and glory I will give to you, if you bow down to me.” [This is] the temptation of false devotion.

Third temptation: “Cast yourself down from the pinnacle of the temple...” [This is the temptation] to cast oneself down from the height of consciousness, where the human being lives in responsibility, to plunge into the subconscious. One should not experiment with the spiritual world (one must not “tempt God”).

Spiritual science heightens one’s awareness [of the three temptations and of a whole multiplicity of spiritual connections, leading to the awakening of] conscience.

Translator’s footnote: In his book *Christ and Sophia*, Valentin Tomberg indicates that the present age in which we live – the age of the consciousness soul – is to become, through the Christ Impulse, the age of the *conscience* soul. Further, he speaks of the awakening of conscience as the first sign of the reappearance of Christ. From these two indications one can begin to grasp the immense significance of conscience for our time. In the next lecture by Valentin Tomberg in this series, which will be published in the Advent 2010 issue of *Starlight*, the significance of conscience is further deepened.

SYMPOSIUM: VALENTIN TOMBERG

RUDOLF STEINER HOUSE, BERLIN, 31ST OCTOBER – 1ST NOVEMBER 2009

Robert Powell

The opening lecture on Saturday morning – *Do we need a Bodhisattva?* – was by Michael Frensch, who, on the basis of Rudolf Steiner’s spiritual science, provided a background of concepts for understanding the meaning of the term *Bodhisattva*. Michael Frensch pointed out that Rudolf Steiner had held many lectures to clarify the mission of the Bodhisattva who had incarnated as Jeshu ben Pandira, the teacher of the Essenes about 100 BC, known as the *Teacher of Righteousness*. Jeshu ben Pandira, according to Rudolf Steiner, had incarnated as the Bodhisattva-successor of Gautama Buddha. This Bodhisattva has incarnated in almost every century since then, and in about 2500 years time will become the next Buddha, known as the *Maitreya*, the Bringer of the Good. Rudolf Steiner emphasized that Jeshu ben Pandira reincarnated in the twentieth century as a great Bodhisattva individuality in order to fulfill the lofty mission of proclaiming Christ’s coming in the etheric realm, beginning around 1933. In Rudolf Steiner’s own words concerning the reincarnation of the Bodhisattva Jeshu ben Pandira in the twentieth century: “*He will be the actual herald of Christ in his etheric form*” (from a lecture about Jeshu ben Pandira held in Leipzig on November 4, 1911). On this account he is sometimes referred to as the *Bodhisattva of the twentieth century*, although it was also pointed out that there are other Bodhisattvas – altogether twelve Bodhisattvas in service of Christ – who incarnate upon the earth from time to time (perhaps also in the twentieth century, *as well as* the incarnation in the twentieth century of the Bodhisattva Jeshu ben Pandira who will become the Maitreya Buddha).

In the early part of the afternoon Trygve Olaf Lindvig held a lecture on the spiritual biography of Valentin Tomberg. He presented his view that Valentin Tomberg’s previous incarnations might possibly include the incarnation as Jeshu ben Pandira around 100 BC and also a still earlier

significant incarnation as a great teacher of the Egyptians. Toward the end of his lecture he pointed to Valentin Tomberg’s *magnum opus*, *Meditations on the Tarot: A Journey into Christian Hermeticism*, as a metamorphosis of the Tarot of the ancient Egyptians, which was known as the *Book of Hermes* (or the *Book of Thoth*, whereby Thoth = Hermes). According to Trygve Olaf Lindvig, *Meditations on the Tarot* can be seen as presenting a metamorphosis through the Christ Impulse of the earlier teaching given by Hermes to the ancient Egyptians.

Trygve Olaf Lindvig’s presentation was followed later in the afternoon by Robert Powell’s talk *Kashyapa and the Proclamation of Christ in the Etheric: The Activity of the Bodhisattva in the 20th and 21st Centuries*. Robert Powell drew attention to the following statements:

- 1) Friedrich Rittelmeyer’s own record of a conversation with Rudolf Steiner: “It was in the summer of 1921. End of July or beginning of August. The conversation came around to whether the Bodhisattva is now incarnated on the earth. Dr. Steiner said: If we live another fifteen years, we shall be able to experience something thereof.”
- 2) Walter Johannes Stein’s diary note of a conversation with Friedrich Rittelmeyer about the reincarnation of the Bodhisattva Jeshu ben Pandira in the 20th century: “Rittelmeyer said: In August 1921, Dr Steiner said concerning Jeshu ben Pandira: If we live another fifteen years, we shall be able to experience something thereof. Jeshu ben Pandira was born at the beginning of the century.”
- 3) Adolf Arenson’s remark made in a lecture held in Stuttgart, Germany on March 30, 1930 and repeated on April 28, 1930 in Dornach, Switzerland: “...concerning a supposed statement of Rudolf Steiner. To a question as to how things are with regard to the coming

Bodhisattva, Rudolf Steiner is said to have answered: The Bodhisattva was born at the beginning of the century and is looking with interest at the development of the Anthroposophical Society.”

- 4) Thomas Meyer, in his book *Die Bodhisattvafrage (The Bodhisattva Question)*, (Pegasus: Basel, 1989), indicates in footnote 114 on pages 246-247: Walter Vegelahm (1880-1959) was the stenographer who, from 1903 onward, recorded over 500 of Rudolf Steiner’s lectures, including the cycle of lectures held in Bern, Switzerland in September 1910 on *The Gospel of St Matthew*...Shortly before his death [in 1959], in Berlin in October 1958 he communicated to a visitor (among other things) the following: “It was in Bern where Rudolf Steiner spoke concerning the [20th century incarnation of the] Bodhisattva [who was incarnated about 100 BC as Jeshu ben Pandira]. The members were eager to know what Rudolf Steiner really meant as to who he is. They consulted with one another and sent a chosen representative, Günther Wagner, to ask Rudolf Steiner about this. And he received the answer: *I am not him*. Following this, on the first evening in Berlin Rudolf Steiner summarized all that had taken place in the preceding months. And he also referred to the lectures in Bern. In so doing, he broke off his description and said with an undertone in his voice, ‘By the way, I would like to add in parentheses to all those who are ever ready to come up with incarnations in their fantasy, that I – in my individuality – have nothing to do with Jeshu ben Pandira.’” This private and important communication, which was written down by the person who received it and can be regarded as trustworthy, was made available to – and was gratefully received by – the author [of this book, Thomas Meyer]. Words in brackets [] added by RP.
- 5) The statement of Keith Harris in his book *The Virgin* (Western Shores, 2009) concerning the law of esoteric brotherhood. According to this law, which holds among esotericists if an esotericist discovers something, a later esotericist will always acknowledge a

discovery or research finding made earlier by another esotericist. Applied to the Bodhisattva of the 20th century, whose task is to help lead human beings to the experience of Christ in the etheric realm, this individual in his 20th century incarnation holds the key to the *portal* opening to the experience of Christ in the etheric realm. As Keith Harris points out, recognition of the Bodhisattva, whom Keith Harris clearly identifies according to his own research (on page 11 of *The Virgin*) is of vital significance in order to find the portal leading to the Etheric Christ. (Keith Harris was one of the participants at this symposium.)

- 6) Robert Powell indicated that Rudolf Steiner laid great emphasis upon the coming of the Bodhisattva in the twentieth century and therefore it behooves us to clearly identify this individual, especially because of the great importance of encountering Christ in the etheric – this being the mission of the Bodhisattva: to help us find our way toward this encounter with Christ in his spiritual form in our time. Rudolf Steiner’s indications listed above concerning the reincarnation of the Bodhisattva Jeshu ben Pandira: birth at the beginning of the 20th century, emergence during the 1930’s probably within the context of the Anthroposophical Society – see (1), (2) and (3) above – and proclamation of Christ’s coming in the etheric realm, all together can be taken as a basis to help in the process of identification of the Bodhisattva in his 20th century incarnation.
- 7) Against the background of these indications summarized above, the extraordinary occurrence of the reproduction of two pages of Valentin Tomberg’s seven lectures held in 1938 concerning the reappearance of Christ in the etheric (published in 2006 as an Afterword to Valentin Tomberg’s *Christ and Sophia* by Steiner Books) that were ascribed to Rudolf Steiner and for years circulated within the Anthroposophical Society as the most profound revelation by Rudolf Steiner concerning the Etheric Christ is a fact belonging to the history of the Anthroposophical Movement.

Someone who received a copy of the transcription of these seven lectures made an excerpt of two pages from them. He or she typed the following heading:

About the Reappearance of Christ in the Etheric
from a lecture by Rudolf Steiner, Stockholm, 1910 –
notes given to Wilhelm Rath by his stepmother prior to her death

[This heading and the two pages from Valentin Tomberg's lectures were photocopied onto one sheet of paper (front and reverse), which was then circulated. Here is the content of these two pages:]

Let us briefly consider the steps that the Christ will take in the space available to him because of the karma of the Mystery of Golgotha for humanity—the karmic result of humanity's past behavior toward him.

I.

Humanity judged Christ: now he has the possibility of judging humanity. Judgment by Christ does not mean retribution, however, since the Christ must bring an end to the principle of retribution in the world. Christ's judgment means that he will awaken conscience; he will be able to work spatially and take steps that awaken the conscience of human beings.

II.

The first inkling of Christ's return in the etheric will be a wave of elemental feelings of conscience. Feelings of shame will seize people with elemental power. A consuming power of shame will arise in the soul, and people will not know its source. Thus we can say that Christ's appearance in the etheric will be heralded by the blushing red of human shame. People will experience an overwhelming force of disappointment in the values they have treasured as "truth" and "beauty." In a sense, people will have to reassess all the values in their souls. In the state of Kamaloka, one has to experience a re-evaluation of life's values, owing to the rays of World Conscience; now people will have to experience a re-evaluation of all their values in life, because they will experience those values through the effect of Christ, who will weave through horizontal space.

III.

Because Christ was scourged in the past, another step in space is now at his disposal karmically. Christ will not only awaken human conscience, but also inwardly touch people. Just as he received the blows of scourging, he will likewise be able to reach, touch, and move people. He will touch those who are in despair and instill comfort and courage in them. This moving touch is a consequence of the scourging, and it will cause courage to flow for a new effort of creativity. Some will say: We'll begin afresh, because everything we have created thus far will not stand up to his light. To a certain extent, the first day of creation must begin again within the human kingdom. People will not gain the courage for this out of themselves; rather, they will gain it from the inner touching that comes from the Christ as the karmic consequence of the scourging he experienced.

IV.

And because Christ was crowned with thorns in the past, he will give tasks to individuals and groups of people and show them how to serve his work. He will crown people with duties of love. We know that there are certain concepts of "duty" that exist in the world. Nevertheless, "duty" will eventually lead humankind to catastrophe, because everything evil that enters the world will, in fact, be pursued by people out of a sense of duty. When he returns in the etheric, however, Christ will assign tasks of love to people and groups, whereas the notion of "duty" – a giant with feet of clay – will fall and be shattered into a thousand fragments. Instead of duty, there will be a love for one's task.

V.

In the past, Christ had to carry the cross on which he would be crucified; now Christ will heal people's infirmities when he reappears in the etheric; there will be a healing of destinies. Those who carry their crosses will have the strength to carry them—through the healing of soul and body.

VI.

At the Mystery of Golgotha, when Christ was crucified, he said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). These words contain what he seeks to accomplish in space and what was granted to him as the karmic consequence of the crucifixion—that people might become conscious of what they do. The karmic result of the crucifixion will not be to bind human beings as though they were crucified, but to open their eyes. A new clairvoyance will be awakened through Christ, so that human beings will be able to see and know what they do. This is karmic clairvoyance—seeing karma. When people act today, they do not know the karmic consequences of that act. In the future, however, people will know what they are doing. Karmic clairvoyance is Christ's answer to the crucifixion, which took place because people did not know what they were doing. These are the karmic steps of Christ in space; their cause goes back to when he was a man and had to walk the path of suffering to which human beings had condemned him. Thus Christ changes the negative into the positive. The return of Christ in the etheric is his response to the way he was treated when he lived among humankind as a man.¹

¹ Valentin Tomberg, *Christ and Sophia. Anthroposophic Meditations on the Old Testament, New Testament, and Apocalypse* (Steiner Books: Gt. Barrington/MA, 2006), pp. 393-394.

These two pages attributed to Rudolf Steiner circulated far and wide. For many years they were read and believed to be Rudolf Steiner's words. Even Rudolf Grosse, who at the time (about 1980) was the head of the Anthroposophical Society founded by Rudolf Steiner, believed that these two pages were authentic and read them out at the culmination of a lecture he held for teachers of religion at a conference at the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland. This fact deserves to be mentioned, as it indicates the source from which Valentin Tomberg spoke—the same source as Rudolf Steiner. On Saturday evening Günter Röscher discussed these seven lectures by Valentin Tomberg. His talk was entitled *Christianity and the Idea of Sacrifice: Regarding Valentin Tomberg's lectures "The Four Sacrifices of Christ and the Appearance of Christ in the Etheric."* Günter Röscher compared the content of these seven lectures by Valentin Tomberg with the content of Rudolf Steiner's book *Occult Science—An Outline*, whereby he carefully noted some (apparent) contradictions between these two contents. What came through – without being explicitly stated in his lecture – is that Valentin Tomberg's seven lectures represent a Christianizing of the stages of evolution described by Rudolf Steiner in *Occult Science—An Outline*. In the space of this report, it has to be borne in mind

that the summary given here of the talks by the four speakers is obviously greatly abbreviated and therefore cannot possibly do their lectures justice.

The symposium continued on Sunday morning with three workshops, whereby the participants divided into three groups. The workshops were led by Günter Röscher, Trygve Olaf Lindvig, and Robert Powell. The workshops were followed by a summary of their content presented to the entire group that reconvened after the end of the workshops. In the space of this brief report, it is not possible to go into the content of the three workshops. Before closing, there was a lively discussion regarding the possible title for the next Valentin Tomberg symposium planned for the end of October 2010, again in Rudolf Steiner House in Berlin.

The text of Robert's lecture *Kashyapa and the Proclamation of Christ in the Etheric: The Activity of the Bodhisattva in the 20th and 21st Centuries* will appear in the Advent issue of the newsletter.

PERSPECTIVES INSPIRED BY THE DEATH OF WILLI SUCHER

IN CALIFORNIA IN THE EARLY HOURS OF MAY 21, 1985 - PART II

Dedicated to Novalis, the author of *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*

Charles Lawrie

Part I of this article appeared in the previous issue of *Starlight*, Advent 2009. Apologies, that owing to lay-out mistakes in Part I, it was not always possible to distinguish the author's text from quotations from others.

Of the Three Temptations of Christ Jesus in the wilderness, perhaps it is most noticeably the Third Temptation with which humanity is so keenly confronted today. As a whole, we meet the beings of the Threshold who constitute the particular characteristic forces which underlie the innate *English-speaking* soul-disposition when this becomes conscious of itself at the Threshold (Rudolf Steiner, December 8, 1918)—the forces of death, disease and destruction.

From America resounds the 1984 Christmas message of Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger – even his name points us to the star-mage of old – ‘The Star Wars System is the only thing that offers any real hope to the world’ (December 23, 1984). This is a colossal caricature, instigated from sub-nature, of the true task of modern Western humanity, which is to develop *Cosmogony*, as a conscious process of world-metamorphosis through human evolution. Weinberger is as entirely sold to the ideal of the all-powerful machine as Sir Clive Sinclair, whose underlying idea is to promote silicon in place of carbon as the substance of the future, and spawn a generation of machines which will take over eventually from human beings. Yet these are the heroes of the present Anglo-American political and business administrations.

The Devil: ‘If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread’. And Jesus answered him, saying: ‘It is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.’

*...But in the deepening silence
There grows and ripens
What Man speaks to the Stars.
To be aware of the speaking
Can become Strength for Spirit-Man.
(Rudolf Steiner, December 25, 1922)*

Willi Sucher gave his life in the service of ‘speaking to the stars’. He knew how to do this, because he learned how Christ Himself did it. See, for example, his *Cosmic Christianity—an Outline*, which elaborates aspects of Rudolf Steiner's *The Spiritual Guidance of Mankind* in detail.

He knew how to do it, and destiny took him further to the appointed meetings.

In 1961, Helen and Willi Sucher went to live in America, and set up home in California. Through this move he came into connection with a fact of deeply moving significance. Willi was not one to accept Rudolf Steiner's research at face value alone. He applied methods of careful examination to the birth and death-charts of the individualities whom Rudolf Steiner spoke of in his ‘Karmic Relationships’ lectures in order to see if they could be verified before an objective astronomy and astrology. Hence he could

say, as he so often did, that while one can never arrive at the knowledge of specific re-incarnations by means of astronomical and astrological understanding, one can gain perspectives with which to test and evaluate specific intuitions. He was always very careful to respect human and cosmic freedom in this realm. But he was also prepared to share the results of his research where it had a wider significance, to awaken consciousness and responsibility.

At an Astrosophy Conference at Hawkwood College in England in the 1970's he showed us a little how he had become aware in America that the consequences of Sir Isaac Newton's world-outlook in the 17th century led on, as Rudolf Steiner had suggested, to a laming of soul-faculties in the direction of mental retardation in the 20th century. This understanding, conscientiously tested, was surely one of the deepest karmic experiences which arose in consequence of Willi and Helen Sucher's move to California.

To meet with the consequences of the classic *mechanical cosmology* of 'modern' physics – personally – was a karmic event of deep human significance. It points us to the mystery of the Mathematical-Astronomical Section of the School for Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum this century—which has received such apparent hammer-blows of destiny: Lili Vreede excluded from her proper working-sphere; Willi Sucher driven West; Louis Locher-Ernst taken from us through a mountain accident in 1962, and with him a capacity to include a whole spectrum of Pythagorean-Platonic, yes Orphic spirits, who find relatively little recognition or scope (within the Anthroposophical Society) still today. (Although it is their task to enliven it further.)

It was thanks to Dr. George Unger in 1978 (who can only regard himself as a friendly caretaker of the Astronomical part of the Section) that Willi Sucher was welcomed back into the 'embrace' of the Mathematical-Astronomical Section at the Goetheanum in 1978. But his work has still to be recognized and furthered at large.

Recognition for this work will flow when it is realized that the renewal of star-wisdom is not a personal concern, but an imperative of the Age.

'The question concerning the etheric cosmos demands the exercise of supreme spiritual efforts,' said Rudolf Steiner on October 1st 1922: 'A man must unfold thought to its highest potency if he is to penetrate the mysteries of the cosmos. In the lecture yesterday I told you that the way is opened up by study of Goethe's conception of plant-metamorphosis, but that this must pass on to the mighty metamorphosis which leads over from one earthly life to the next.'

And he placed this before us in the context of a lecture concerning the world-historical Division of the East and West. (Years before in Budapest, in his 1909 lectures on the East in the light of the West, Rudolf Steiner had said that if the West persists in regarding the infusion of spiritual knowledge into public activity as a fantastic, impractical dream, then in the end the East would make war on the West.)

I shall never forget the way Dr. Francis Vadekethala, an Indian Catholic theologian writing a comparative study of Sankara and Paul Tillich, raised his voice from the back of a Dominican schoolroom in Oxford in 1973 and asked Willi Sucher, who had just given a wonderful succinct lecture, spiritually continuous with Rudolf Steiner's lecture of August 22, 1922 in Oxford ('The Cosmic Origin of the Human Form') if he could please give further clarification to the statement that the 'Head is condensed metamorphosis of limb-system of previous incarnation'? Something lit up in the soul of the East. And Willi Sucher was able to answer him, showing even pictorially on the blackboard how we incarnate as limb-man towards the head-formation of a future incarnation.

Nor shall I ever forget the humble and purely human way Willi Sucher waived any fee or travelling expense for this lecture he gave in Oxford.

Willi Sucher's earthly life falls into three clear stages. Until the age of 35 he worked in Germany and in Central Europe. Then, for 23 years he lived and worked in the British Isles. The last 24 years of his life were spent, with some visits back to both scenes of his former work, though always with new initiative, on the West coast of North America. That West coast one may say, which looks East.

Writing as John Seeker for *The Modern Mystic and Monthly Science Review* in August 1938 – 'Thoughts on the Future of Astrology' – he said:

'A time is now approaching when it will be the task of a new Astrology to evoke in man himself strong spirituality—spirituality which will alone be able to fill with sustenance and substance the empty 'moulds', the hollow 'forms' of his horoscope. Therefore the time for 'casting horoscopes' is really past. It will no longer do to ask what is the influence of the Moon's or of the Sun's position at one's birth, or the like. Maybe in one case or another we shall still get answers in this way, but the answers will not have sustaining force. On the contrary, they will take away from man. Yet it is altogether different if we ask this other question: What the position of the Sun or Moon or other planet at or before our birth *requires* of us by way of independent, self-made earthly deeds and sentiments and thoughts. Unlimited would be the scope of an Astrology tending to this kind of self-education. And this alone would lift man up to his true cosmic station.'

This is the Parsifal-question of our age.

John Seeker continued:

'It goes without saying that this change of heart and mind would in time give rise to quite other institutions, even in the physical world, than have grown up today around Astrology. Yet the very first step is to give birth to a fundamentally different outlook within one's own being.'

'Quite other institutions ...' On April 4, 1980 I wrote to Mr. Sucher to ask if he could write an article concerning Nuclear Energy from the viewpoints of Astrosophy. In his reply he confided:

'I am sorry that I have to disappoint you. But I have so much on my hands, continually, that I am just unable to develop details of matters. If this Cosmology / Astrosophy had developed into something near College-nature it might be, by now, a different matter. But during the 50 years of work in this field, I am still, to a high degree, standing and battling alone.'

The unrealized impulse towards a 'College' lived in Willi Sucher as a deep heartfelt question. Was this associated with the destiny of the leadership of the Mathematical-Astronomical Section since 1935? Was it associated with the depths of karma? Can it touch us still today?

It is certainly true that just because Willi experienced so intensely the loneliness of the spiritual pioneer, he could be such a companion in spirit. What did his constant geocentric and heliocentric commentaries in his Star-Letters really mean to us, his grateful readers, except that here was a spiritual scientist who was beginning to answer the Copernican world outlook? And when he withdrew from this form of communication how painfully we felt our emptiness, although he was really challenging us to awaken our starry potential.

After a lifetime studying the life and particularly the so mysterious death of Rudolf Steiner, Willi Sucher came to a number of extraordinarily penetrating perspectives. To the question: why did Rudolf Steiner die at such a premature moment in terms of the evolution of the Anthroposophical Society this century – a moment which so deeply affected other members of the infant Vorstand for instance – he came to feel that one element may have been Rudolf Steiner's resolve to give the others more chance to stand on their own feet. But to the question: to what did Rudolf Steiner address our attention in a cosmic sense by dying at the moment when the planetary constellations stood just as they were on March 30, 1925 in the morning—he had very clear suggestions. These arose from adopting the method

of ‘progressing’ the planetary positions in terms of the differing ‘years’ or time-scales involved in the different planetary spheres. ‘One year in the spiritual world,’ Rudolf Steiner once said, ‘is equal to 30 years in our time.’ (He could also have said: In the spiritual world, Saturn’s is the predominant world-rhythm.)

Willi Sucher saw that Rudolf Steiner at his death looked clearly and implicitly victoriously into the specific moments at the end of the 20th Century and the beginning of the 21st, when the incarnation of ‘Anti-Christ’ will come fully to a head. He warned and admonished us, via the planetary positions at his death, as a cosmic servant of Micha-el, to pursue through to the end, the impulse for the victory of Christ-filled humanity in the Third Temptation of the Twentieth Century.

Willi Sucher was a great pupil of Rudolf Steiner, mightily filled with the impulse of Micha-el Christ, and he was called to fulfill in his way the mission of the Grail this century.

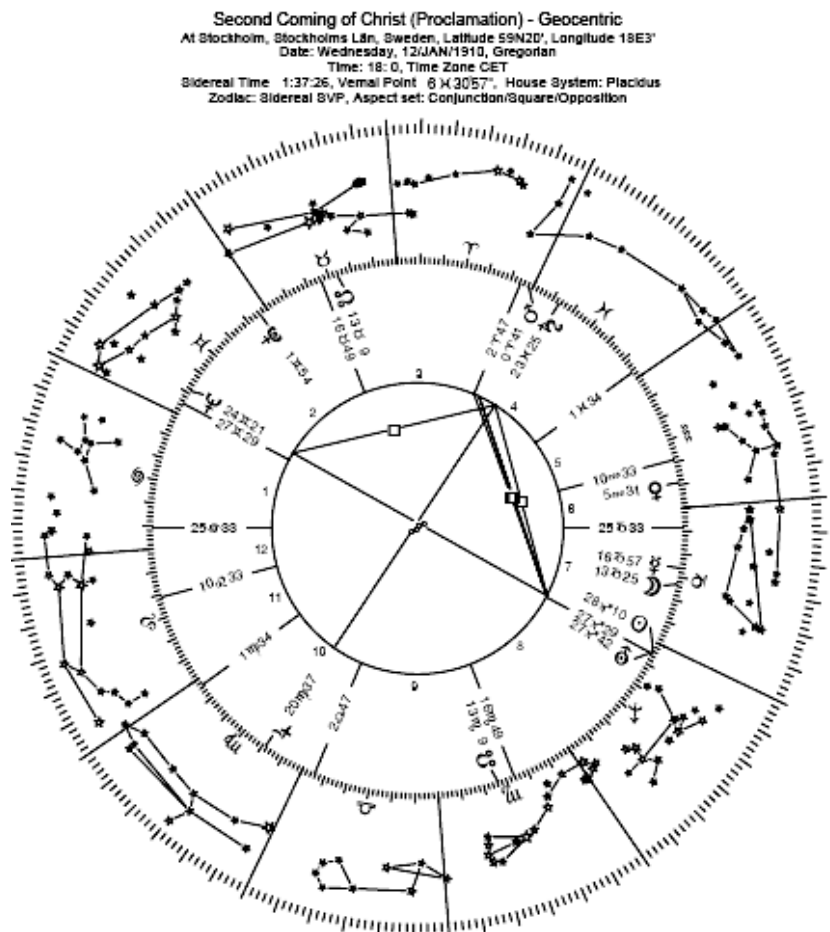
Again and again he would stress to us how the view of a Klingsor-perspective astrology might say, with some scorn, ‘Look at the Crucifixion on Calvary – look at the planets at that hour – it was a *fait accompli* that it ended in failure, in the death of a God ...’

But he could point humbly and surely to a different view, which sees the planetary positions of the three years and of the Mystery of Golgotha itself as portals to freely-elected cosmic redemption, cosmic resurrection, cosmic renewal ... inaugurated from and for the Earth.

When Rudolf Steiner came to Stockholm in January 1910, he was met by a leading member of the theosophical branch there: ‘You can’t lecture today,’ he was told. ‘There is a great cross in the heavens ... a terrible configuration of squares and oppositions.’ Here spoke the old fatalistic astrology.

There was a cross in the heavens, a majestic cross all round the earth, involving the constellations of the Twins and the Archer, of the Virgin and the Fishes (see star chart). But this was the moment in world-history when the living proclamation of the approaching Second Coming sounded in humanity, for this was what Rudolf Steiner described as he stood at the rostrum that evening, January 12, 1910, a little after 5.30 p.m.

Hazel Straker, whose work so strengthened Willi Sucher in later years (‘It is always a glorious time when she comes out here for a visit,’ he wrote to me in 1982), has confided to us that the seven-year-old Willi Sucher underwent ‘a deep experience during Easter 1910’, which was a source for all he shared with us, and it is very much, concerning the true nature of the Second Coming.



In a talk given by Willi Sucher during the Holy Nights in England in early January 1951 – reported faithfully by Heather Farr, and unrevised – he spoke with perhaps particular fullness concerning the Etheric Christ in relation to the zodiac. Here is an extract:

‘It was in 1910 that Rudolf Steiner first spoke of the Second Coming of Christ (in Christ’s own words ‘They shall see the Son of Man coming in the Clouds in great power and glory’) as approximately 1933-37. And it is an awe-inspiring truth that since that great moment our Earth has rested in the Etheric Sheath of the *living* Gospel, containing the great Imaginations of Christ’s Life.

‘You all know how traditional Christianity suffers, and how it wanes fast within humanity, and that we live at a time of utmost Christian crisis. Into this has come the new revelation of Christ. It is something we cannot behold with our physical senses, but only by etheric means. Men in ancient times possessed an universal dreamy clairvoyance, for the etheric body was outside man so that he might communicate with the spiritual realm. It was not controlled by the self. But this etheric body has become gradually incarnated into and gripped by the physical body, and through this process the human being has learnt self-consciousness. Thus by Roman times men were much more abstract in thought, because of their inability to perceive the spiritual realm of the etheric.

‘But in our time the opposite is gradually taking place, like a natural event; this is something that must happen to everyone in the long run, and the etheric must gradually loosen again and rise and be able to behold the spiritual world of the etheric, and this great Divine Aura around the earth, and will behold two facts:

1. That this Earth has become the Star of Christ.
2. That this Christ Earth will be able to clothe Himself with the sheath of the Archetypal Eternal Gospel surrounding the Earth, and that this is the Second Coming.

‘Christ now resting in the garment of Ether will be able to clothe Himself and will appear as a *present reality*, as the Healer, and the Comforter, and the Sun Spirit. And people will be able to perceive this Etheric Christ. Maybe He will enter a room where several people battle to find the truth—or come to one who is alone and in despair, as the great Comforter and Healer, because He is no longer bound to one Body, as in Palestine, but can manifest in many places because of this faculty of the etheric world for communication.

‘But the present grave situation is that the loosening of the ether body which is necessary for man to behold Christ, is withheld for a time. This is the great challenge of the age. Events have taken place, but whether man perceives them is a different matter. Deliberate forces wish to hold back this evolution of man and very subtly. Sometimes it is via nutrition (the manufacture and consumption of artificial food fastens the etheric to the physical body). By education, which hardens the human being by its intellectual nature, so that the etheric cannot loosen.¹ And also by *fear*. This fear is a creeping monster, and is our greatest danger. Shocks can be beneficial and contribute to the loosening, but a slow, creeping fear – which is often artificially induced – (by every facet of the ‘media’ — CL) can only be overcome by the will and by absolute honesty and truth. You have all of you experienced utter fear at times, by which the etheric body is gradually contracted and withdrawn. It is essential for us to remember that the adversary uses such means to prevent the necessary loosening of the etheric body.

‘This puts upon humanity a grave responsibility, that we be *conscious* of the adversary—for it is one thing the opposition cannot tolerate, the exposing of their intentions.

1 Now we understand why the whole thrust of the computer industry turns so powerfully on children, likewise the video industry today—CL.

‘One thing to be cultivated is watchfulness, and to distinguish the subtle and tortuous falsehoods of the adversary in the realm of the ‘taken for granted.’² It is absolutely essential that we cut through all confusion to absolute clear thinking about these things.

‘Both the Gospels and the Acts say that ‘No man but the Father knoweth the hour’ of the Second Coming. No man can know when his whole bodily organisation will be sufficiently developed to have this experience of these majestic and ever-present and comforting events, in which our Earth is now embedded.

‘Christ said that He ‘would come like a thief in the night’, and that one must be ready and watchful, or one might miss it. It is up to the human being to prepare thoroughly for the moment, but only Divine grace knows when to open our eyes...’

We shall end this working-paper, addressed to friends, with these words of Willi Sucher:

‘I would like to end on a personal note. I came from Europe some years ago, and it was like coming to a new world. For the British Isles presented to me a great Imagination. Many of my continental friends have had this same experience. I realize now that it was the grand heritage of Celtic Christianity which rested in the background of the British nation, and most certainly I believe in the great task and mission of the British Isles, which is to bring to new birth Cosmic Christianity, and carry it into the dark world.’

—Charles Lawrie, Michaelmas 1985

See also Robert Powell’s article on Willi Sucher in the new *Journal for Star Wisdom*. The *Journal for Star Wisdom* is intended as a help to all people interested in the new star wisdom of astrosophy. It includes a calendar comprising an ephemeris page for each month of the year.

The editorial board (William Bento, Brian Gray, Robert Powell, Robert Schiappacasse, David Tresemer) of the *Journal for Star Wisdom*, members of the StarFire research group, acknowledge their debt to the pioneer of the new star wisdom of astrosophy, Willi Sucher (1902-1985), who from 1965 to 1972 published his research findings in a regularly appearing *Star Journal*.

Journal for Star Wisdom 2010

Robert Powell	<i>In Memory of Willi Sucher (1902-1985)</i>
David Tresemer	<i>Sun on the Galactic Center</i>
Ellen Schalk	<i>Kyot and the Stellar Script of Parsifal</i>
David Tresemer, with Robert Schiappacasse and William Bento	<i>Signature of Jupiter in the Events of Christ Jesus’ Life</i>
William Bento	<i>Contemplations on the Jupiter/Uranus conjunction</i>
Robert Powell	<i>World Pentecost</i>
William Bento, David Tresemer, Claudia McLaren Lainsion, and Sally Nurney	<i>Astrosophical Commentaries: January – December 2010</i>

The *Journal for Star Wisdom 2010* is available through the website of the Sophia Foundation of North America: www.sophiafoundation.org

2 One of the main areas of the ‘taken for granted’ today is the subtle sense of one’s own cleverness one may feel, and indeed with others, when deciding to do or not to do something because it represents a ‘saving’, in the interests of ‘economy’. The underlying motive is almost never free, but a mode of habit which conceals one’s own reluctance to make the necessary effort to see and do what is really required—CL.

MEVLANA J. RUMI

A CHRIST-CONSCIOUS MYSTIC FROM 13TH CENTURY ANATOLIA

Bülent Akan

Bülent Akan is a Turkish anthroposophist (of whom there are very few), who accompanied our group on a tour of Turkey during the first part of October 2009. Bülent Akan has a website (in Turkish) with various articles of interest. For example, he has written an article about the Second Coming of Christ. He was prompted to write this article when he noticed how poorly informed the Turkish community is about the Second Coming and, under the influence of Islamic beliefs, how much they are influenced by Dan Brown's *Da Vinci Code*. His aim in writing the article and having it made available on the Internet is to give a deeper perspective about the identity of Jesus Christ, and to explain that Dan Brown's book does not convey the truth. He has also made a deep study of Rumi. The following article about Rumi is the text of a lecture held by Bülent Akan in Konya, Turkey, during our tour of Turkey. Reports about the tour *The Eternal Feminine: A Journey in Turkey with Robert Powell from October 1-11, 2009* will appear in the next issue of the newsletter.

—Robert Powell

The Sufi mystic and poet Mevlana J. Rumi was born in 1207, in Balkh-Horasan, now within the borders of Afghanistan. His father – a well-known learned man of his time – had to leave Balkh because of political reasons and the approaching Mongol invasion. When Rumi and his family arrived in Anatolia, the sultan of the Seljuk Turks, Aladdin Keykubat, invited them to live in Konya (formerly 'Iconium').

In Mevlana's work, one does not find detailed remarks about Jesus Christ or Christianity, but looking at his close relationship with the Christian population living in Konya, it becomes apparent that he did not adhere to any rigid religious belief in his mind and heart. Rather, if we consider his invitation; "Whoever you are, whatever you believe in, come, whether you are an idolater, or a worshipper of fire (a Mecusi), come", we may say that his actual religious understanding was based more on 'brotherhood and love of humankind'. When we bear in mind that he was living among Muslim folk and that such a statement was uttered in the 13th century when Islam's power was strongly felt, it would not be wrong to suggest that Mevlana was an enigmatic mystic of his time.

Initially, Mevlana's religious training was based on traditional Islamic teachings and had later

merged with the Sufi tradition—tasavvuf (which carried influences from Indian teachings). The Sufi Order in Konya and the renowned whirling dance of the Dervishes (Sema) was inspired by him. Mevlana had made further research and had also studied the works of the Greek philosophers, the Old Testament and the New Testament. His unprejudiced research on the Gospels made him more receptive to certain esoteric secrets surrounding Christ Jesus. Because of this reason, it is not surprising to notice that there was 'love of God' (*) and 'love of humanity' at the centre of his deeper spiritual understanding and teaching.

(*) Due to influences which flowed into Sufism from the Oriental teachings, 'love of God' was somewhat intermingled with 'surrender to God' and was directed towards the ultimate aim of merging with God after the complete 'annihilation of the self', e.g. in Bhakti Yoga – which is the Yoga of divine love and surrender – the yogi dissolves his personality in deep devotion and love of God. His goal is to bring about the complete cessation of the self and to achieve union with the divine self of Brahma. In one of his verses, Rumi says: "My God, am I the one who is seeking You, or are You the one seeking me? As long as I keep on being 'me' and not leave my 'self' behind (get rid of my 'self') shame

on me, in that case I keep on being someone else and You are someone else.” After 737 years, the essence of Rumi’s understanding is still valid among the present day Sufis (and Sufi teachings).

There was so much to say if I didn’t have to hide Your secrets. I would have told so much that our leading brothers (Sufi brothers) and even the ones not so advanced, would have known how I feel deep within me, they would have understood.

We can see that he would have liked to share his understanding (the profound mystery about Christ Jesus) with everybody. But the rule that ‘esoteric information’ had to be kept as a secret and not openly disclosed to the public was also valid for Mevlana (besides, at those times the prevalent circumstances were not favourable to reveal such a secret). Therefore he could not talk freely about the Christ Mystery, and apparently, he was not happy with this restriction.

We could perhaps imagine and feel the dilemma he was facing; on the one hand he was living among Islamic folk and knew very well their frame of belief, and on the other hand he had gradually become conscious of the sublime ‘Christ Being’ and developed a deep spiritual love for Him. Upon hearing him mentioning ‘love of God’, people around him thought what he meant by ‘love of God’ was ‘love of Allah’ (and even now in the present time, everybody is under this impression). But his ‘love of God’ was actually ‘love of Christ’. [In his verses, he did not refer to Him as Christ but as Jesus or Messiah, as the Greek name ‘Hristos’ – which was used by the Christians living in Anatolia – would have been too obvious, besides, the name “Christ” is not mentioned in the Koran, only the names ‘Jesus’ and ‘Messiah’ exist.]

Since – at the present time – it would not be easy for Muslims to comprehend and accept the reality pertaining to Christ Jesus (for it does not seem to fully agree with their religious belief), this was also the same in the 13th century. Therefore, it was not possible for Rumi to reveal this profound truth at his time. He knew with certainty that any attempt would be futile and that he would have to suffer serious consequences if he did reveal it.

In the following three verses he draws attention to the fact that he can not speak freely or disclose anything.

—Hush for a while; if it was permitted, I would have disclosed a secret which nobody has told even to our pure-hearted brothers. (Brothers of the Sufi Order.)

*—It is such a pity that I can not say it. I am afraid to talk about it because **the sword of the sheria** (the Islamic law) is drawn out and is shining over my head.*

—The door of ‘explanation’ is closed. Therefore from now on say: “to be silent is better from our point of view, it is more appropriate.”

—From that day onwards, my friend () and I made a pledge to keep silent and bowed our heads down in helplessness.*

(*) The name of the friend mentioned here is: ‘Shemsi Tebrizi’. He was the one who had disclosed many secrets about the Christ Mystery.

Nevertheless, what Mevlana had learned about ‘Christ Jesus’ was so overwhelming that he could not help touching upon this secret in some of his verses. But rather than giving lengthy explanations about the content of this ‘mystery’, we can see that he sometimes used symbols, metaphors, gave some hints and made allusions.

Although he sometimes used the name “Jesus” or “Messiah” – being a poet with rich imagination – he had also coined and used certain other names when he referred to Him. Perhaps, this also provided some protection against a probable attack which could have come from his surroundings.

These are the names he coined:

The Morning Breeze / Sovereign / Sovereign of Sovereigns / Beauty / Beloved One.

Other than these, when referring to the Christ Being, he sometimes used, the “Word”. Whereas in the 13th century, the esoteric meaning of the “Word” was known among the Christian mystics, it was probably not so widely known among the adherents of Islam.

Since we are used to hearing Anthroposophical spiritual truths in detail, upon hearing his verses for the first time, we may think that his words

are not conveying much. But it would do him more justice if we would consider, firstly, that Mevlana had to conceal the actual meanings, and often made allusions and sometimes spoke metaphorically. (From this, we may deduce that he knew more than he was able to disclose openly). And secondly, he was born in an Islamic region at the beginning of the 13th century. This was the era of the 4th Post-Atlantean civilization—the epoch of Greek and Roman civilization. As Rudolf Steiner had often mentioned, during this stage of evolution, the ‘Intellectual Soul’ (or Mind Soul) was still developing. The development of the Consciousness Soul was to follow later. If we take this fact into consideration, it will become apparent that we cannot expect to hear from Mevlana very detailed Anthroposophical revelations as we are used to hearing from Rudolf Steiner and Valentin Tomberg. Therefore, we may say that these factors had an influence on Mevlana’s choice of words and how he expressed himself.

Here are some of the verses from Mevlana’s book *Divan-i Kebir*, where he touches upon certain secrets connected to the Christ Mystery:

—*When one leaves all the colours behind and enters the earthenware (earthen pot) of Jesus, God’s colour shall appear (show itself). From then onwards, God can do what He Wills (From then onwards God’s Will shall manifest).*

Rumi is pointing at the connection between ‘Jesus’ (Christ) and the ‘Divine Spiritual’ and goes on explaining that ‘as one leaves (*) one’s ordinary/ worldly personality (formed by diverse influences flowing from the material world) behind, and allows one’s soul to become imbued by Jesus (Christ), Divine Spiritual qualities (God’s colour) will be achieved and, as a consequence, God’s Will shall be able to manifest.

(*) Although Rumi has expressed this in the context of the ‘Sufi teachings’ (which are based on total annihilation of the self), from an Anthroposophical point of view, it would be more correct if this statement would be understood “as one’s sentient soul is transformed” rather than “*as one leaves it behind*”.

—*Bring manna from the sky like the Messiah, and make the humans give up the ordinary bread and soup.*

In this verse, Rumi draws attention to the fact that Christ (the Messiah) is a bringer of spiritual food —‘manna’. And that, one ought to place more emphasis on taking in spiritual truths coming from the Spiritual World, and not just live on ordinary food which belongs to the physical plane.

In the following verses, Mevlana refers to the incident – which takes place in all four Gospels – where Jesus asked the Apostles to bring Him a donkey to ride on, when they were near Jerusalem. It seems that initially Rumi had some difficulty understanding why a lofty Spiritual Being who came from Divine Spheres did not ride on a horse (which was known to be more suitable for a person of royal origin) but rode on a donkey. But in the next verse, we can see that he has acquired the understanding that this Spiritual Being had to become a ‘human being’ and He rode a donkey out of His profound modesty (also, so that the scriptures would be fulfilled).

—*My Sovereign, why did you ride on a donkey? You are the Sovereign of Sovereigns. A donkey’s back is not worthy of you, riding horses is worthy of you.*

—*Jesus rode on a donkey because of His modesty. Otherwise, would the ‘Dawn Breeze’ ride on a donkey. (*)*

(*) These two verses and the others presented in this article actually don’t follow each other in this sequence in Rumi’s book.

In the next verse, it is apparent that Mevlana was not very tolerant with persons who were disturbed by the fact that Jesus (Christ) had once walked upon this earth, and that His presence was still felt. Rumi did not hesitate to show his disapproval towards the ones who did not have any sympathy or respect for Him. He surely knew that it could not be expected from Muslims to venerate Jesus as much as they venerated the prophet Mohammed, for Jesus was not the prophet of Muslim religion. But since Jesus was acknowledged in several Koranic verses as a chosen prophet of God, and as ‘*the one who is allowed to come close to God*’, Rumi must have thought that at least some degree of

respect should be shown. [Of course, this does not mean to say that all Muslims had antipathies towards Jesus in Mevlana's time, since a majority must have been cognisant of the fact that He was acknowledged and revered as the prophet of Christianity in the Koran. But there must have been some exceptions which prompted Rumi to write such a verse].

—*May a hundred dogs piss on the beard of the ill-willed ignorant one who is jealous of Jesus and is in a bad state because of His presence.*

—*Who is He? Who is this who came from God and has entered the circle of human beings? He is the Light of God who came from God.*

In this verse, Rumi draws attention to 'His' identity, and underlines the fact that He came from the Divine Spiritual Spheres. He also indicates Christ's entry into the physical world (His Advent), and that He had once lived among human beings. We can see that he had no doubts about the identity of this Divine Being, and where He came from.

In the next verse, Rumi indicates the extraordinary qualities (reflected in the miracles) of this Divine Being by saying that, "He is capable of reviving the dead and opening the eyes of anyone born blind." He also draws attention to the fact that more endeavour is necessary to be able to progress spiritually and be worthy of receiving such blessings from this Divine Healer.

—*Dear friends, make more progress and more effort. Such a Healer has come to the world that he is able to revive the dead and open the eyes of anyone born blind.*

In the following verse, Mevlana's initial words express certain spiritual truths almost in an Anthroposophical way. "Oh, the One who bestows eternal life" reminds us of the fine spiritual ether—'The Word', which is even finer than the 'sound ether'. This ether is the source of life; it is vibrant, weaving life. The Christ Being, who came from this region, brought this cosmic power with Him. (This fact was stated in the Gospel when He uttered: "I am the Resurrection and the Life" and "I am The Way, the Truth and the Life"). The way Rumi mentions 'eternal life' also reminds us of Christ's 'promise of eternal life'.

—*Oh, the One who bestows eternal life, oh the One who bestows endless grace, you have indeed provided us a strong trench against the arrow of death.*

It is indeed through His love and endless grace that humanity received the necessary help which will save them from this earthly grave. In his "Studies of the New Testament" Tomberg explains death's power on Earth: "But the karma of Earth is Death. Death is the only reality to be found in that which is purely earthly. In the fields of Death is everything sown, and, at first it is Death who reaps it all. He who really knows this can not feel otherwise than that the Earth is one great grave." Rumi, speaking metaphorically, points to the fact that it was the Christ Being who had brought the necessary impulse and the spiritual power (*a strong trench*) to protect and save humankind from the 'arrow of death'—which is the inevitable consequence of diverse Ahrimanic influences.

—*When 'the door' was totally closed and locked, that most exalted Sovereign came, wearing the human body as a garment.*

In this verse, Mevlana draws attention to the situation of humanity on Earth at the era when the Christ Being (*Most Exalted Sovereign*) entered the physical world. As Steiner and Tomberg have often indicated, at the epoch when the Christ Being incarnated, humankind's connection with the Divine Spiritual World was totally severed and the door was closed. We may say that Rumi's choice of words, "wearing the human body as a garment" to express how Christ made an appearance in the physical world is quite impressive, as concepts like incarnation or reincarnation were not known or accepted as spiritual facts in those times.

—*He made His appearance via Mary, but as a matter of fact that Divine Light which pulled up Jesus to the sky has arrived.*

It can be seen that Mevlana has made a distinction between the earthly part and the Divine Part of 'Jesus Christ'. According to him, Mary's contribution was the physical body of Jesus, which provided a vehicle for the Divine Spiritual Part – Christ – to accomplish His Earthly mission. Actually, when he mentions the 'Divine Light' (which has arrived)

he is actually indicating Christ's Advent. As far as Rumi had comprehended, it was this Divine Light which had pulled Jesus (which was the earthly part) up to the Spiritual World. But, by saying "*which pulled up Jesus to the sky*", Rumi does not mean the physical body of Jesus: he is referring to the Ascension of the resurrected and totally transformed Jesus (Christ).

—(Referring to the Exousiai—the Elohim) **He** himself has 'no form' but **He** is engaged in making forms. (Addressing himself) *My soul, you are not able to give up being identified with your form—your physical shape, because you are not of His kind.*

Apparently, Rumi also knew that the Christ Being came from the ranks of the Exousiai—"the Elohim", and is indicating that this Spiritual Being is a creator from the Divine Spiritual World. When he mentions that 'he is not able to give up his earthly form because he is identified with it', he is actually referring to his struggle of annihilating 'the self', which is identified with the material world. (It is a known fact that he also used to fast to achieve this.)

—(Addressing himself) *My dear soul, don't lose your hope, Hope has appeared. The Hope of all the souls has come from the Spiritual World.*

Rumi is trying to underline the fact that this lofty Spiritual Being (Christ) is the only 'Hope' of all humankind.

—*Oh, the chronic illness and suffering, thank goodness that the remedy has come. Oh, the closed and locked up door, open up, the key has arrived.*

In their lectures, Steiner and Tomberg have often explained that 'illness' and 'death' gradually set into the physical body of humankind since the 'fall from heaven'. As humanity got more entangled in the nets of the material world, the possibility of illness settled more permanently into the hardened physical body. Therefore, the necessary compensation (the 'remedy') which would bring about restoration and enable man to regain his health (and to be victorious over death) had to come from the Divine Spiritual World. We can see that Mevlana was cognizant of the consequences of the 'fall', and what the 'remedy' was for this chronic

illness and suffering of humanity. Apparently, he also knew that this happened because the door of the Spiritual World was totally closed and that the Christ Being was 'the key' who could reopen this door.

In the next three verses we can see that Mevlana had a profound understanding of the 'Word'.

—*Be silent—think that the 'Word' comes from the non-physical realm.* (The Divine Spiritual Spheres)

—*When the 'Word' lifts up its veil and shows its self, then you will see that the 'Word' is a manifestation of God.*

—*If the 'Word' comes from God's Wisdom, it does the spiritual processes of the Divine. But if it comes from us human beings, it causes quarrels and wars.*

—*If you want to reach the 'holy sky' (the spiritual realm) converse with Jesus, otherwise don't try to climb up the 'green dome'.*

Symbolically used, "*the green dome*" means 'the dome of a mosque'. At those times, the domes of the mosques were painted green or covered with green ornamental tiles. So, the symbolical meaning of "climbing up the green dome to reach the holy sky" is; 'to do the formal Islamic religious practices and prayers so that one gets closer to Allah's heaven' (the heaven which is described in the Koran). Rumi is actually saying: 'If you want to reach the spiritual realm, your formal religious practices won't get you too far. To be able to achieve this, one must get to know Jesus (Christ) and have a relationship with Him.'

—*There was reconciliation between the Angels and the human beings when the Messiah had risen to the spiritual realm.*

In present-day Islam, there is a controversy about the death of Jesus Christ on a cross. Some – referring to a verse (*) in the Koran – believe that He actually did not die on the cross, and that someone else – who resembled Him – was crucified in His place. And some believe that He was crucified. In this verse we can see that Mevlana had no doubts about the Crucifixion: besides, he even knew about His Resurrection and its deeper meaning. After the 'fall', humanity had gradually lost its connection

with the Divine Spiritual World. Rumi indicates that this connection was re-established when the Risen One ascended to the Spiritual World (to the Father).

(*) Surah—4 (Nisa) verse 157

<http://muslim-canada.org/picthallquran.pfd>

—*You are such an ‘infinite Sun’ that every minute particle of yours reveals something of the ‘Word’. Are you the Light of God’s Person or are you yourself God? I don’t know.*

We cannot be sure if Rumi’s likening of Christ to the ‘Sun’ was uttered knowingly. Nevertheless, whether he chose these words knowingly or not, they convey the truth about Christ as the ‘Sun Being’, His connection with the ‘Word’ and where He came from. Apparently, the rest of this verse is self-explanatory.

—(Addressing himself) *Tell this to your foolish eye; Although you have received so much grace from ‘the Beloved’, why do you still behold the ways of the ordinary folk; Why do you still keep turning around Ahriman?*

Apparently, Mevlana was also cognizant of Ahriman’s capacity to lure man into forming a strong identification with the material world and divert his attention from the ‘spiritual’. However, when we study his other verses where he mentions ‘the devil’, we can see that he actually does not differentiate between Lucifer and Ahriman and their different cosmic missions. It seems that Rumi has conceived a single devil figure (in which Lucifer and Ahriman blended into one devil), who is a tempter, and at the same time can influence man’s ‘will’ to do evil. Rumi is saying: ‘he shouldn’t be diverted by Ahriman, for he has received much grace from the ‘Beloved One’ (Christ), and that he should actually focus on these blessings. And speaking metaphorically, he says that his awareness is diverted because of the foolishness of his eyes, i.e. the eyes perceive ‘things’ of the material world, but they foolishly ‘desire’ what they see. According to Rumi, this is the way of the ordinary (unconscious) folk. Looking at the Sufi teachings, it can be seen that he undoubtedly knew about the ‘sentient soul’ and

its role. (What corresponds to the ‘sentient soul’ in the Sufi teachings/Tasavvuf is called ‘nefs’). His expression, “keep turning around Ahriman” may have been inspired upon seeing the moth attracted to the light of a lantern and keep turning around it. As the moth does this quite unconsciously, man is also attracted by the illusory material world set-up created by Ahriman.

In another verse, he is certain that Jesus (Christ) has the power to oppose the devil.

“*Where is ‘Jesus’ to draw a dagger against the devil who has done much evil?*”

—*Oh, folk of Moses, we also got lost in the desert like you, how did you manage to find the way and got saved? Don’t hide it; tell us, so that we also know.*

Mevlana had arranged this verse in a question form, but it seems very probable that at the same time he knew the answer. It was the ‘Christ Being’ who guided the Hebrews when they got lost in the desert. They had followed a column of cloud which showed them the way. At that time Christ was approaching the Earth sphere: for that reason, He had only showed Himself in the elements.

Scattered among his work, there are many other verses where Mevlana referred to Jesus Christ and touches upon different aspects. The ones presented in this article may give us a clue about what was hidden deep inside the soul of this Sufi mystic and poet of the 13th century, and also show that his comprehension of the Christ Mystery was running somewhat parallel to Anthroposophical wisdom.

When Rumi passed away in 1273, people from every religion – Muslims, Christians, and Jews – joined in at his funeral which lasted several hours. Such a big gathering of varied faiths could be witnessed because during his lifetime he was neither prejudiced nor discriminative in his approach towards people. His heart was open to everyone with ‘brotherly love’.

Delving into Rumi’s profound insight into the Christ Being, one can only wish that in a future incarnation of his, Rumi will be able to behold the *Beloved One* in the etheric.

SOPHIA, THE HIDDEN ONE

Many people struggle with the question: How do you describe Sophia? For years I have tried different answers to this question but I never found them adequate. The reason is, I believe, that in our language, which reflects our current frame of mind and consciousness, we always want to create precise definitions of things so that we can distinguish one thing from another. We need this approach in order to deal with the physical world around us. But in the spiritual world things are not so easy to distinguish, partly because there are no things there, only beings, and these beings are constantly moving and interpenetrating each other. Our normal thinking capacity and language don't deal with that very well. Sophia is one of those beings. How can we understand her?

Sophia is the name of a spiritual being, but in our language we have translated this name into the intellectual concept of wisdom. Now, I defy anyone to come up with a definition of the concept of wisdom that does justice to every aspect of wisdom we intuitively know to be part of it. Yet we all know what wisdom is. How come we can't describe it, let alone define it?

We can't describe wisdom in our language because it is always hiding. Wisdom is never a thing we can look at and describe. It is an integral, hidden part of every creature and every thing in the world, and without it nothing and no one would be able to exist. But when we want to describe wisdom we always end up describing someone's words or actions and we may then be tempted to say: that is wisdom! It isn't, for we described words and actions, not wisdom. The reason that we called them wise is that they were filled with wisdom which, however, by itself is not visible. It doesn't even live in the actions but in the being performing the actions. Think of the spider making its web—the incredible feat of the work of this little animal that knows exactly how to make such an intricate structure: action from a wisdom-filled being. Think of the Camp David

Accords between President Sadat of Egypt and Premier Begin of Israel brokered by President Carter in 1978: action by wisdom-filled persons. Wisdom always hides in the background.

When I think about wisdom I find that my understanding of it is always in terms of other concepts, never direct. I experience a wise person as someone who not only knows much, but understands, has insight, has patience, shows love and interest, and other characteristics that show awareness and openness to people and things. And most of all, no single one of these qualities seems to be predominating—the person radiates harmony. Interestingly, all these qualities, I find, are just as hard to describe or define as wisdom itself. They are, one could say, background qualities, but we all know them.

Sophia, therefore, is always in the background; we never see her face to face. We cannot know her like we can know our next-door neighbor. Yet, we all know her. We all know when she is present, when she works through the words or deeds of a person, even of ourselves. Have we not all surprised ourselves by saying something that proved to be exactly right and helpful to someone else, but we did not know where that came from? Wisdom will surprise us because we are not used to working with hidden forces that are in us; we always want to see and control things. And being able to define something gives us a sense of power over it. Sophia, wisdom, however, is not a thing but a living spiritual being and defies definition.

So, I have stopped wanting to describe Sophia in precise terms. I am content to seek her by inviting her to be part of me to the extent I am able to offer her a habitation in me. For we must seek her, otherwise she cannot find a place in us. I know there is no way in which she will ever harm me, so I try to be open to her inspiration, whether conscious or hidden.

Philip Mees, December 2009

MACAU AND THE FEMININE DIVINE

James Morgante

The Chinese city of Macau, located on the coast of Southern China's Guangdong Province across the water from Hong Kong, is China's gaming or gambling center; and the attendant vice of prostitution is also rampant. Amidst such cultural malaise, however, Macau is uniquely destined to have become the representative of a renewed and ecumenical appreciation of the Feminine Divine.

Macau's relationship to the Feminine Divine is threefold. As a former Portuguese colony, Christianity is an important part of Macau's cultural heritage, and several of Macau's Christian churches are dedicated to Mary. But before Christianity's arrival, the veneration of both the indigenous Daoist goddess *A-Ma* (or *Mazu*) and the Buddhist goddess *Kun Iam* (or *Guanyin*) was already firmly established.

The name Macau actually means the place or port of *A-Ma* (mother or grandmother), a Daoist sea goddess. According to legend, *A-Ma* was once a poor girl (named Lin Moniang) from Fujian province, who was born in 960 CE. Stories abound about her miraculous powers and as well as her efforts to save those at sea. According to one story, she was on her way from Fujian province to the city of Canton (present-day Guangzhou) when a storm blew up, destroying all boats except the one on which she traveled. It landed in Macau. Upon disembarking, she was seen walking up a hill; but then she disappeared, only to subsequently reappear as a goddess. Upon the spot a temple was erected in her honor, the famous *A-Ma Temple* that stands today and is one of Macau's most important historical and religious attractions.

A-Ma continues to be revered and honored as a protectress for those at sea. But the identity of this once historical young woman become a sea goddess has undergone over time an astonishing, step by step transformation within the Daoist religion.

In the 11th century, she was first regarded as a minor and regional spirit. It was not until the 12th century that she became officially recognized as a sea deity. In the 12th century, she was also honored with the titles "Princess of Supernatural Favour" and "Protector of the Empire and the Brilliantly Outstanding Heavenly Princess." In the 13th century she became "ennobled" as *Tian Fei*, Celestial Concubine.¹ This last designation requires some explanation.

According to Christina Miu Bing Cheng, the Daoist divine hierarchy is divided into three parts: Heaven or Emperor, Earth or Empress, and Spirit or Spirits of the Waters — female Spirits who are concubines of the Emperor.² By becoming Celestial Concubine, the girl Lin Moniang, or *A-Ma*, had thus been raised into the realm of Daoism's divine trinity itself.

And yet her identity continued to transform itself even further. In the 15th century she received the title "Holy Mother of Heaven Above." And in the 17th century she was known as the "Heavenly Sainly Mother," and subsequently became "canonized" as "Empress of Heaven" or *Tian Hou* (also *Tin Hau*).³

1 Christina Miu Bing Cheng, "The Harmonization of Buddhism and Daoism in Macao's Lian Feng Miao (The Lotus Peak Temple)," *Review of Culture*, International Edition 5, January 2003, p. 30; Wikipedia, "Mazu," [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mazu_\(goddess\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mazu_(goddess)), 1/23/2010.

2 Christina Miu Bing Cheng, p. 30.

3 Christina Miu Bing Cheng, p. 30.

What can one say in the face of such transformations, especially when compared with those of Mary in the West, who similarly started as an historical woman and became known, among other titles, as “Queen of Heaven” and “Star of the Sea?”

In addition to the famous A-Ma Temple at Barra Point, there are three other temples in Macau dedicated to A-Ma as *Tin Hau* or the Heavenly Empress — two in the village of Coloane and one in the village of Taipa.



*A-Ma Cultural Village
Entrance*

But certainly the most important development in the continuing reverence of A-Ma is the recent construction of an A-Ma Cultural Village and Statue in Coloane. Funded by devout Daoists dedicated to A-Ma, the cultural village contains prayer halls, monks’ quarters and accommodation for up to 100 pilgrims. The crown jewel of the village is the nearby white marble A-Ma statue on a hill towering

19.99 meters high (to commemorate the Portuguese handover of Macau to China in 1999), which overlooks the city of Macau across the bay. Both the cultural village and statue pay witness to the fact that devotion to A-Ma is not just a relic from the past but a vibrant part of the present.



A-Ma Statue

The other indigenous expression of devotion to the Feminine Divine in Macau is devotion to Buddhism’s *Guanyin*, or *Kun Iam* as she is known in Macau. In fact, the A-Ma Temple at Barra Point has a shrine dedicated to Kun Iam.

What is a Buddhist goddess doing in a Daoist temple? There are at least two good explanations. One is the religious syncretism or combination of different beliefs (specifically Buddhism, Confucianism and Daoism) that is understood to be an essential feature of Chinese religious life since the 14th century.⁴ The other is the close identity between *Kun Iam/Guanyin* and *A-Ma/Mazu*. Both, for example, are honored for the role they play in giving aid to seafarers and also for promoting childbirth.⁵ And yet the identification goes even further.

According to legend, the parents of Lin Moniang (the girl who became A-Ma) prayed to Kun Iam for a son but got a daughter instead. This daughter was herself devoted to Kun Iam; and some Buddhists believe that A-Ma is one of Kun Iam’s many incarnations.⁶ Thus just as Kun Iam or Guanyin appears in Daoists temples, so too does A-Ma appear in Buddhist temples.

In addition to Kun Iam’s shrine in the A-Ma Temple, there is also a Kun Iam Temple itself in Macau and halls dedicated her in other temples. Especially noteworthy, however, regarding the reverence paid to Kun Iam is the recently constructed Kun Iam Ecumenical Center and monument.

The brainchild of the Portuguese architect and artist Christina Rocha Leira, the Kun Iam Ecumenical Center “aspires to be a point of convergence open to all cultures and beliefs, and especially those predominating in this region of the planet: Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism.”⁷

4 Christina Miu Bing Cheng, p. 27.

5 Christina Miu Bing Cheng, p. 31.

6 Wikipedia, “Mazu,” [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mazu_\(goddess\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mazu_(goddess)), 1/23/2010.

7 Christina Rocha Leira, *CEKI, Centro Ecumenico Kun Iam, Kun Iam Ecumenical Centre*, ISBN 972-97049-4-5, Macau, 1999, p. 27.



Kun Iam Ecumenical Center

Like the A-Ma Cultural Village and statue built by Daoists to commemorate the return of Macau to China in 1999, the Kun Iam Ecumenical Center was created as a gift from Portugal at the turnover, in honor of Chinese indigenous religious culture.

Who is this *Kun Iam / Guanyin*? As indicated, she is closely related, if not identical, with the Daoist goddess *A-Ma / Mazu*. But she is also linked to the ancient Chinese goddess the *Queen Mother of the West*, whose origin predates organized Taoism.⁸

In the Buddhist tradition itself, Guanyin is understood as the Chinese name for the Indian Bodhisattva *Avalokitesvara*, the Lord who gazes down upon the world with compassion. But while the Indian Bodhisattva is male, Guanyin is female. This metamorphosis represents a fascinating chapter in the history of religion and one that – surprisingly – relates to Christianity and Mary.

The figure of Guanyin appeared in China as early as the 1st century CE. However, it was not until the ninth century that she began to appear as a female, allegedly due to the influence of the figure of Mary brought to China many centuries earlier by the Nestorians.⁹

Martin Palmer and Jay Ramsey note that the appearance of this female Guanyin in China represented something revolutionary:

The Chinese took basic ideas surrounding a male deity, albeit an androgynous one with “feminine” attributes such as compassion, and turned this around to make the deity female. They created entirely new forms of statues unlike anything which had previously been seen in China (for the statues of the Queen Mother of the West are severe and distant), remarkable for their depiction of a gentle, feminine deity. Such revolutionary developments do not drop from the sky! They emerge from interaction with models which supply ideas and stimulus. It is clear that one of the stimuli in the emergence of Kuan Yin’s images was the encounter with statues or paintings of Mary.

....
When the Chinese artists and porcelain makers of Fukien saw these, they immediately recognized their Kuan Yin and began to make models of her which were almost identical to the Spanish and Portuguese Madonna statues. This form of model [the white porcelain Kuan Yin] is the most popular image of Kuan Yin to this day.¹⁰



Queen Mother of the West

Christina Rocha Leira, the architect of the Kun Iam Ecumenical Center, is certainly aware of these correspondences and influences. Her “statue of ‘Kun Iam for the Third Millennium’ ... gains its ⁸ Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guanyin>, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen_Mother_of_the_West, 1/23/2010.

⁹ Christina Rocha Leira, p. 53.

¹⁰ Martin Palmer and Jay Ramsey with Man Ho Kwok, *Kuan Yin, Myths and Prophecies of the Chinese Goddess of Compassion*, London & San Francisco: Thorsons, 1995, pp. 22-25. See also page 38.

inspiration from both Eastern and Western styles”.¹¹ And yet the focus of the center is to pay homage first and foremost to the Eastern tradition. Towards this end, the center hosts and sponsors various activities such as concerts, exhibitions and conferences, as well as religious and philosophical research and publication.¹²

The influence of Mary on a female Guanyin as well as the feminine characteristics of Guanyin images point directly to the third strand of Macau’s relationship to the Feminine Divine — that of Christianity itself.

Priests were among the first Portuguese settlers who came to Macau in the middle of the 16th century, and Macau was expected to become a Christian stronghold. The first buildings included churches, which were dedicated to the Mother of God and named after well-known saints. Of the sixteen extant Catholic churches in Macau, five are named for Our Lady with various appellations; and the famous ruin of St. Paul’s Church was originally called the Church of Our Mother of God. In addition, the Holy House of Mercy, which echoes Kun Iam’s role as a source of mercy and compassion, was established in 1569 by the first bishop of Macau and continues today to be an important source of social welfare.

As mentioned, Macau was expected to become a Christian bastion; and it seems fair to say that devotion to Mary was meant to replace devotion to A-Ma and Kun Iam. But as witnessed by the recent tributes to A-Ma and Kun Iam in the form of impressive monuments which have quickly become landmarks, Christianity “failed to replace or erase the Buddhist and Daoist faiths.”¹³

Such a comment seems to characterize the fate of the Christian missionary impulse in general. But those who are familiar with Father Thomas Schipflinger’s book *Sophia-Maria* will appreciate the irony in trying to replace Daoism’s *Heavenly Empress* with Christianity’s *Queen of Heaven*, or Buddhism’s *Goddess of Mercy and Compassion* with *Our Lady of Sorrows* — Sophia, Divine Wisdom, takes up her abode in different places amongst many peoples using different names.¹⁴

It is a tribute to Macau’s Sino-Portuguese identity that devotion to A-Ma, Kun Iam and Mary all continue to this day. Due to the Chinese syncretistic spirit, it seems conceivable that one day an altar to Mary might appear in a Daoist or Buddhist temple. One can only hopefully imagine that some day an altar to A-Ma or Kun Iam may also appear in a Christian church.



Kun Iam Ecumenical Center

¹¹ Christina Rocha Leira, p. 53.

¹² Christina Rocha Leira, p. 286.

¹³ Christina Miu Bing Cheng, p. 27.

¹⁴ A brochure for the Kun Iam Ecumenical Center states: “Over time it is with individual preference that Kun Iam will take on many forms.”



On an intensely hot June 2009 morning in Sebastopol, California, thanks to the devotion of violinist Milka Kraveva and 18 others who came from far and near to participate, Paneurythmy arrived at the Nature Temple at Sophia's Garden and Healing Arts Center. The garden and temple are the inspired creation and labor of love of Monique Brullard. So inspired were they that 24 participants returned to do Paneurythmy at Sophia's Garden Nature Temple again on Saturday, April 11, 2010.

Paneurythmy (pictured here as danced high in the Rila Mountains of Bulgaria) is a sacred dance form given by Peter Deunov (Beinsa Douno) as spiritual practice for his community of disciples in Sofia, Bulgaria, in the 1930s. The Paneurythmy -- a method by which human beings harmonize their movements, thoughts, feelings and voices to link heaven and earth -- and the Nature Temple -- a sacred site both ancient and modern and a natural amplifier -- were made for each other, with the consequence that even though only five of the people present had danced previously, the form was transmitted with no instruction and very little difficulty, and everyone emerged from the temple full of joy.



For more information:

<http://Sophiasgardenherbs.com>

<http://www.Paneurythmy.org>

<http://www.everabooks.com>

SOPHIA GRAIL CIRCLE

GRAIL CIRCLE FACILITATORS' TRAINING

AT THE BARN, PETALUMA, CALIFORNIA — ON MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND IN MAY EACH YEAR

Karen Rivers and Robert Powell

The Sophia Grail Circle is a community centered in cultivating an ever-greater awareness of and relationship to the spiritual world in truth and moral integrity—and the striving to embody these qualities in daily life.

The Sophia Grail Circle, inspired by the seeds of wisdom planted by the great teachers of humanity, is working to form a spiritual community united ever more deeply in Christ and Sophia, in preparation for the culture of the Aquarian Age, also known as Philadelphia, an era of brotherly and sisterly love. This will be the Age of Sophia, in which the flowering of the Rose of the World will take place. The work of the Sophia Grail Circle grows out of the Grail tradition, which is a resurrection of an ancient wisdom tradition.

The Sophia Grail Circle Training is led by Karen Rivers and Robert Powell. The training is designed to prepare a group of people to become celebrants of the Sophia Grail Circle. The introductory gathering was held in 2006. It is possible for newcomers to enter into the training and take up the work, which requires attending the annual trainings and home study between the May meetings.

The Sophia Grail Circle has evolved with respect to the development of Sophianic liturgy since the founding of the Sophia Foundation on New Year's Eve, 1994/1995. At the present point in time there are several Sophia Grail Circle celebrations, some of which are listed below as an overview:

- the Sophia celebration
- the meditation on the Seven Seals from the Book of Revelations
- the meditation on the Nine Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount
- the meditation on the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac
- the Peace service
- the Mystical Marriage celebration
- the Foundation Stone meditation given by Rudolf Steiner at Christmas 1923
- the Liturgy to the Earth
- the Ascent through the Planetary Spheres ("Jacob's Ladder")

These celebrations are an expression of the liturgical impulse of the Sophia Grail Circle at this time of Christ's Second Coming in conjunction with the Descent of Divine Sophia from heavenly heights as the bearer of the Holy Grail. They are intended to open human hearts to receive the Grail. The endeavor is the cultivation of a spiritual schooling in the light of Sophia, forming a Sophia community and finding strength in uniting with the central Grail Mystery that Divine Sophia is bearing down from spiritual heights on Her path of approach to the Earth as the Rose of the World. The Sophia Grail Training is dedicated to preparation for Sophia's coming, training people as Sophia Grail Circle celebrants to establish centers for Sophia's activity in the world.

The Sophia Grail Circle Training prepares individuals to be celebrants of the Sophia Grail Circle (Level 1) and an advanced training (Level 2). It is designed for individuals who feel their life and work is centered on a sacred commitment most fully expressed through service to Christ and Sophia, through the Sophia Grail Circle. Length of study, courses taken, and process of graduation is formed on an individualized basis. All students also participate in on-going Contemplative/Meditative Study. This training especially benefits those who:

- 1) Plan to use their ability to found or guide a Sophia community, become spiritual educators, or teach in spiritual settings.
- 2) Are seeking to integrate their spiritual skills from the Grail Training into a current profession, such as physicians, educators, holistic health practitioners, business and political leaders, and social service providers.
- 3) Intend to use their training for care work in such fields as hospital and prison chaplaincies, campus ministry, hospice and bereavement centers, AIDS clinics, care for the elderly, and other forms of social ministry.

Aside from those participants whose endeavor is to become celebrants, the Grail Training is also open to participants as a path toward deepening into Sophia's wisdom. All who are dedicated to Sophia – seeking Sophia's mysteries as they are coming to expression in our time – are warmly welcome.

For further information contact:

Karen Rivers: Tel: 415-662-2147 Email: karen@karenrivers.info

TUESDAY EVENING, JUNE 9, 2009

Sophia Grail Circle: Zodiac Meditation

Experiences of Carol Carlson

I sat in silent contemplation, eyes shut, listening to the short pieces of music and the beautiful readings on each sign. I read Leo, compassion, ruler of the heart and blood. I noticed that my chakras were not opening and tingling, as they had for our Grail Circle meditation on the Beatitudes on Monday morning. I felt this evening was not as holy, or moving, as the Beatitudes meditation had been. It felt a little flat. I was grateful to be able to contemplate the signs of the Zodiac, though.

And then the final piece of music was played. The opening chord sent me into heaven. My crown chakra burst open – it felt as if I had a crown on that was stretching up to heaven. It felt as if the whole top of my head was being pulled heavenward – my heart opened – pounding and tingling: my face contorted in tears, or the wish for tears. In deep, darkened meditation, I felt and saw the distant presence of Mary, Mary-Sophia. I saw an image of the traditional Madonna figure almost as a silhouette – small, standing, wearing the veil, but colored in a dark gray, with a tinge of blue-gray around the edges of her. There was a shimmer of a light-filled crown on her head. I searched for her face, but could not see it. My experience was more about the feeling of her presence. She was powerful, and so profound – a pure magnificence. The power of her presence was a bit painful and explosive to me, but also so kind and beneficent. I have never felt such a strong, power-filled essence. And a depth, a pondering depth, silent, still, yet immensely alive. These words came to me:

I bow to thee,
Mary-Sophia.
Thy silent presence, power-filled,
Waits patiently –
Formidable,
Kind. Who are you?

SATURDAY EVENING, JUNE 13, 2009

Sophia Grail Circle: The Seven Seals

Since the Tuesday evening Grail Circle, when in meditation, the whole top of my head feels a softer, constant pressure. The feeling of being pulled up is also softer. Last night, at the end of the Grail Circle on the Seven Seals, I felt something new and wonderful: I felt that my whole body was lifted upwards in a kind of white light that I could not actually see. I felt happy, ecstatic, and so grateful to Mary-Sophia. I spent these moments in ecstatic gratitude.

JUNE 12, 2009

Anonymous

After the Beatitudes Celebration I had a vision, and I usually do not have visions...

Outside, in back of Kelly's Barn, in the back area of the garden and parking lot I saw, in my inner vision, the following visage;

A jubilant elemental being of crystalline aquamarine color, its form flowing and rounded and ever moving, gathered up the spiritual outpouring from our celebration and moved it in a eurythmic "R" form inside the earth, just below the surface. This being circled this spiritual substance which was glistening white and aquamarine, through the earth and up above the surface over and over again, forming a sort of glowing flower-like form growing larger in each direction, above and below. Then I noticed a whole host of these beings, circling this substance up and around, inside the earth and above the earth, forming more and more petals of this flower. It began to build now, like a fountaining flower, higher and higher. Up and up and up it went and as it did the joy in it was growing brighter and fuller, my heart followed it in its progression and I felt as though it would burst. As the flower-fountain went up, the air around it began to change – first a lavender hue filled the sky around it, then peach-yellow, to glistening clear yellow to the clearest

turquoise blue. At this point the flower-fountain form was taller than the tallest houses and trees in the neighborhood and it began to crest and change color at the top to a crystalline sparkling white, flowing even higher. The whole form was humming with these creatures full of love and joy and exuberance. This form stopped growing upwards but the beings kept circulating the beautiful aquamarine blue energy in the earth, up, around and upwards where it would then cascade lightly down on the sides and begin again. Inside the earth, where these beings also circulated this energy, you could see it clear out and brighten large swaths of earth's interior this had gotten stuck and dark. The earth was singing along with these creatures as she was filled and blessed with

the dance and movement of the aquamarine blue energy. At this point my heart was full to burst with joy and awe as I followed their movements. This dance continued for quite some time, moving my being with its movement and my heart responding with more and more love, joy and reverence.

I did not have a chance to record my experiences until Friday evening before the lecture. I had just finished writing these experiences down when shortly after, Marcia began to play a piece of music to open the evening. I was astounded! The music she played followed the movement of the flower fountain I had beheld earlier that day and that I had been just reliving! That piece of music was Beethoven's Piano Sonata #3 in C major, opus 2 #3.

CHOREOCOSMOS NEWS

This part of the newsletter is devoted to bringing news of the Choreocosmos School of Cosmic and Sacred Dance. For information concerning the 2009 Choreocosmos workshops in Europe and North America, please contact the administrative office of the Sophia Foundation, or see the Events Calendar on the Sophia Foundation web site: www.sophiafoundation.org. See also the overview of the 2010 workshops given on the following pages of this issue of *Starlight*.

SOPHIA'S SANCTUARY

On the weekend of February 26-28, 2010 there was a Choreocosmos workshop on the Foundation Stone of Love at the newly dedicated Sophia's Sanctuary in Sebastopol, California. (The dedication had taken place on January 2, 2010.) Sophia's Sanctuary is a wonderful, large sacred space that has been created for Sophia and Choreocosmos events, as well as for the Embodied Life training of Russell Delman, and it is also intended as a space for uplifting cultural events. Lovingly conceived of and created by Linda and Russell Delman, Sophia's Sanctuary is a very blessed and special place. It was an ideal venue to house the Choreocosmos work on the Foundation Stone of Love. The weekend started with a public lecture on Friday evening on *Astrogeographia—Correspondences between Stars and Significant Locations on Planet Earth*. The culmination of the weekend was a twofold Sophia Grail Circle celebration of the Foundation Stone of Love: the first on Saturday evening and the second on Sunday morning. These celebrations coincided with the cosmic birthdays of Rudolf Steiner and Valentin Tomberg, who were both born with the Sun at $14\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ Aquarius, which was the exact position of the Sun on Saturday evening. The power and majesty of celebrating the Foundation Stone of Love at this special time was considerably enhanced by the sacred space of Sophia's Sanctuary in which these two celebrations took place. The Angels rejoiced! It was a truly blessed occasion for all, and a heartfelt expression of gratitude poured out toward Linda and Russell for their dedication and sacrifice in the creation of Sophia's Sanctuary.

—Robert Powell

CHOREOCOSMOS WORKSHOPS 2009–2010 IN MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Serena Sweeney

Over the past several years, we have been exploring the Festivals at the Michael Centre in Melbourne, and especially their significance in the Southern Hemisphere. Our celebration of the Christmas period starts early on Christmas Eve—Adam and Eve’s Day, with a reading of the Passion Play and carols followed by a community breakfast. The celebration continues that evening with the first of the thirteen Holy Night readings and meditations and ends with another community breakfast on Epiphany morning.

The last Christmas period became a time of increased richness as the Choreocosmos workshops and several Grail Circle celebrations took place over this period.

This was the second year that Robert Powell had been here and over the previous twelve months a small group practiced the Zodiac dances and prayers each week. This time, we learnt the dances of the planets and the Foundation Stone Meditation in the Sacred Dance of Eurythmy. During the last week we started the workshops early each morning to learn the Morning Meditation in Eurythmy.

On the evening of the 3rd January 2010, the last day of the Foundation Stone workshop, the Founding of the Sophia Community in Australia took place.

After days of workshop we gathered at night for the Holy Night meditation, often followed by a Grail Circle celebration including The Seven Seals, the Zodiac Celebration, and Jacob’s Ladder. One Grail Circle took place with thunder and lightning outside.

It was a time of such richness – the inspiration and wisdom of Robert – a daily meeting with friends – forming new friendships with those who came from other states – days of early mornings , late nights – moving chairs, setting up rooms, teas and suppers with everybody helping when needed – evenings of silks gleaming in candlelight as Marcia played or words were spoken – the glow of tealights scattered over the floor on the night of Jacob’s Ladder which was also the last of the Thirteen Holy Nights – the gift of the music through Marcus, our visitors Marcia and Jim, and local musicians who performed at the Christmas Concert on the Sunday before Christmas – looking at the stars with Robert on a balmy summer’s evening before going home – learning the dances of the planets, especially the dance of the Sun to the music of ‘Jesu Joy of Man’s Desiring’ which brought a lump to the throat of several of us – the beauty of the Movement Room with the view of gum trees moving outside in the summer sunshine – and always the presence of Robert and Lacquanna.

They have left us with a young Sophia Community. A group of about twenty practice in Melbourne each Monday and other groups have started around Australia. The presence of Sophia felt very near during this time and this presence has stayed as we have resumed busy lives in so many different places. When asked about the workshops, all I can say is, ”It was the best time.”

THE FOUNDING OF THE SOPHIA COMMUNITY IN AUSTRALIA
JANUARY 3RD 2010
THE MICHAEL CENTRE, WARRANWOOD, VICTORIA

Magi Whisson



During the Sophia Meditation on January 1st, 2010, (prior to the evening of the Founding of the Sophia Community in Australia) there was placed behind each person a light/lamp. With the placing of the lights/lamps there was a sacred, grace-filled presence—but there was also something more. There was a noticeable and unusual distance between the back of the person and the lamp. The quality held within this space was that of darkness, mystery and gravity: space yet unmet. There was also a sense that with the acceptance of each light/lamp came due responsibility—service asked. (Note: the following day, Robert Powell spoke of Spirit now entering from the back and from the south.)

During the Foundation Stone Meditation (as part of the Founding of the Sophia Community in Australia) the sense was that each person

was being prepared, being ‘made sacred’. As we proceeded with our Foundation Stone Meditation through eurythmy, prayer, and Word, there was a mirroring evoked on Higher Spiritual Planes. I do not have the words or understanding to be able to give any adequate description to this. At best, I could say it involved the use of SOUND ‘prior’ to words). This energy then, with the equivalent of bursts of thunder and lightning, surged towards the sacred site of Uluru (Ayer’s Rock), where it was received by the Aboriginal elders before spreading afar.

Within the inner earth there was the releasing of charges of golden light, moving like fireflies in a dark night. Elementals were dancing in delight at the happening. My sense was that these charges of “gold” held potencies of life that humanity has yet to discover.

The next day Robert Powell spoke about Mars, in connection with the throat chakra as the lotus flower of the Word, indicating that the Sword spoken of in the Book of Revelation is that of Christ wielding the Word – the Word that can be used for the Good or against evil – and is thus a two-edged Sword: the Sword of the Word. This I find most significant.

With the fourth verse of the Foundation Stone meditation there appeared, in a domed sphere, a spiritual being of magnanimous beauty and splendour. Again, words are so insufficient to express this. What fixed my attention was the white light at the centre of this being. It was of such intensity and was so deep and vast. I traveled into it until I had to withdraw as the brightness of the light became too piercing and was “too fast”

for my sensibilities. There were other soft colours beyond this white light that were an expression of this being (Christ?).

Then beyond this being in yet a wider arch was an even vaster being. I have no words to describe this. The image was so subtle that one could say, to all intents and purposes, that it was invisible. However, it was most definitely there.

I am writing this some thirty hours after the experience. I still experience the qualities that were evoked around and within me. They are qualities of: tenderheartedness, awe, reverence, all-encompassing mercy, surrounding protection, steadfastness—qualities belonging to She Who is to come. I call her Sophia, the Divine Mother.

EURYTHMY AS A SPIRITUAL PATH

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE MELBOURNE CHOREOCOSMOS WORKSHOPS 2009/2010

Doris Maria Spitzner

“It changed my life!”—these words from Lynne Klugman rang in my ears when I participated in the first Choreocosmos workshop with Robert Powell in January 2009. After six days of intensive eurythmy based on the zodiac signs plus the accompanying lectures I started to feel too: this is a life-changing experience!

I thought I already enjoyed quite a rich spiritual life: being a member of the Anthroposophical Society, the School of Spiritual Science, attending several study groups, listening to lectures by invited guest speakers, and celebrating the festivals; all this in addition to my home studies, readings, and meditations.

So, when I read the announcement and saw the flyers for the workshop, there were some inner

reservations at first: Do I need this? Is it real Eurythmy, real Anthroposophy? Cosmic and sacred dance, the Divine Feminine...it all sounded quite strange to me.

But during the workshop my doubts quickly dissolved: I found in Robert Powell not only a true Anthroposophist and Eurythmist, but also an honest scientist and a real servant of Christ.

So why was it different compared to other very good lectures and workshops I had attended in the past?

For me it was as if I was entering a familiar house, but there were doors I hadn't seen before, open doors, leading me into new rooms. New views appeared, new insights, new possibilities of

experiences. Even the space I had known before was illuminated, became clearer and more colourful. The workshop was life changing because it was life giving!

There were two aspects I found to be the most powerful ones: The activation of my will through Eurythmy movements and the immense love and energy bond that was created between us as quite a large group of like-minded people. This “harmony of feeling”, which Rudolf Steiner so often mentioned, built the vessel into which higher spiritual beings could enter. Of course, the presence of Robert Powell was a big help for us but we didn’t become dependent on him. After the workshop, out of our own free will and wish, we formed a group and met regularly to practise, exchange our thoughts and feelings, and deepen the work we had done with Robert.

Other people, who couldn’t attend the workshop, joined us and we felt with joy how much we grew together as a real community, in the spirit of Anthropos-Sophia.

At the end of 2009 Robert returned and I decided to do the zodiac workshop again. It was by no means a mere repeat; I was able to go even deeper into the experience, and in his lectures Robert presented a wealth of new information and insights.

This was followed in January 2010 by the workshop on the Foundation Stone meditation and then the workshop on the planets. I was fortunate enough to be able to attend both.

Every day of the workshop comprised a morning Eurythmy session, followed by a lecture where we could also ask questions. The afternoon was structured the same. For me, being an observer of Eurythmy for most of my life, either in the audience or at the piano, it was pure joy to do it myself now. For each of the 12 zodiac signs and the 7 classical planets there was a certain form, which we danced in a circle, accompanied by the appropriate eurythmy gestures and sounds given by Rudolf Steiner. For each of the zodiac dances the corresponding verse from the Twelve Moods by Rudolf Steiner was recited before we started. Robert used rich imagery and cosmic

correspondences to support our movements. He showed us the connection between the chakras and the planetary gestures, and encouraged us to imagine the corresponding colours. Through the repetition of the planetary and zodiacal forms and gestures in the circle, I often entered into a meditative state where I started to feel a deeper spiritual connection with each zodiacal sign and planet. Ever and again Robert made us aware of the fact that with these movements we enter the etheric realm and thereby we can connect with the being of Christ and Sophia. In addition to the work with the zodiac and the planets, we did movements to sacred prayers and texts. Robert told us that his very first Choreocosmos workshop focused on sacred dance, moving prayers to Eurythmy forms and gestures. I found the sacred dances most powerful, providing a lot of inspiration for my work at home. For all the dances (cosmic and sacred) a most wonderful dimension was added by the thoughtfully selected classical music played by two great pianists: Marcus Cox and Marcia Burchard (Marcia being a guest from the USA). Through this our hearts and souls were deeply touched and moved, and it didn’t matter so much if the form we danced sometimes wasn’t perfect: the music lifted us into higher realms. Robert, as a great teacher – balanced, warm, human, humble, yet with inner strength – never put any pressure on us. If we didn’t understand something initially, it was patiently repeated, and he gave us time to learn.

In his lectures Robert brought various aspects of Anthroposophy into connection with one another—Christology, astrosophical star wisdom, cosmology, world evolution, and so on.

He used star wisdom in relation to cosmic events (past, present, and future) and gave insights not only into world history but also was able to draw a clear picture of current events and problems, including the appearance of the antichrist, global warming, the significance of 11 September 2001 and the ensuing wars, and the dangers of technology—at the same time, though, opening up positive perspectives for the future. In his scientific work Robert is a dedicated seeker for the truth, which we need if we are not to be helpless

in an ahrimanic world aiming at global rulership perpetrated through lies and deception. He gives us hope and offers us help, showing us the tools we need in order to go through these dark times. One of them is the Choreocosmos work, connecting with the etheric, connecting to Christ, the counterforce to all the evil that may come toward us. And on this path we can also find our way to Sophia, the Divine Feminine counterpart to Christ. Moreover, through Christ and Sophia we are able to find a relationship to the Father-God and the Mother-God, our long-forgotten Earth Mother, who is waiting in the depths of the earth for our call to be able to participate with us in creating a sustainable future.

The Choreocosmos work is a new initiative having its roots clearly in Anthroposophy and Eurythmy. New initiatives are so important to keep Anthroposophy alive, that it does not become rigid, dogmatic, or crystallised. Rudolf Steiner stated in the third volume of his Karmic Relationships lectures (Complete Works vol. 237): “This is indeed written in the karma of every single anthroposophist: Be a person of initiative...”

This work shows a path toward transformation of our soul to become a microcosmic replica of the forces of the Divine Sophia. Therefore Robert dedicates his work to Sophia. Having founded the Sophia Foundation in North America in 1994 and having given workshops in Europe for more than thirty years, he has now founded – with our collaboration here in this land – the Sophia Community in Australia.

With this a triangle connecting three continents is formed, of which the southern point – Australia – will play an important role in the future.

Robert understands his work as representing eurythmy as a spiritual path, a path to the Spirit through movement, which gives eurythmy – normally considered as a performing art – a new focus. He also emphasizes the importance of community building, whereby a space can be created for spiritual beings to connect with us in our activity.

In his lecture *The Influence of Spiritual Beings on Man* (Complete Works vol. 102), Rudolf Steiner says: “It will lie in the souls of human beings themselves whether or not they give as many as possible of such higher souls (third hierarchy) the opportunity of descending to man” and “The more that associations are formed, where feelings of fellowship are developed with complete freedom, the more exalted beings will descend.”

I found that the Choreocosmos workshops and lectures nurtured my whole being: through the lectures and books, the thinking (spirit); through the prayers and the music, the feeling (soul); and through the movement, the will (body).

For me the newly founded Sophia Community in Australia is like a new study group that enriches and enlivens my spiritual life and with this gives me strength to meet the outside world with courage, confidence, and joy.

I thank Lynne Klugman that she was inspired to bring Robert Powell to us here in Australia. And I thank Robert Powell and his wife Lacquanna for coming and sharing their work with such love and dedication.

CHOREOCOSMOS AND EURYTHMY

Choreocosmos is a development arising from eurythmy, a development that focuses primarily on the cosmic aspects of eurythmy. Eurythmy, a word taken from the Greek, meaning beautiful harmonious movement, came into being through the inspiration of Rudolf Steiner and was originally intended as an art form capable of returning movement to the realm of the sacred and as a path toward furthering the development of the human being. Following upon this original intention, eurythmy is the basis for the forms and gestures practiced in the Choreocosmos School of Cosmic and Sacred Dance, and its affiliates, such as the East Coast School of ChoreoCosmos. In particular, the planetary forms that are used are standard forms given by Rudolf Steiner for eurythmy. Choreocosmos, which means ‘cosmic dance,’ encompasses both cosmic and sacred dance. Through the beauty and grace of eurythmic gestures and forms, Sacred dance enables participants to fully embody the great prayers and sacred texts of humanity. Cosmic dance is focused on bringing an experience through movement of the four elements (Fire, Air, Water, Earth), the seven planets (Saturn, Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus), the twelve signs of the zodiac, and the seven planets in the twelve signs of the zodiac (a cycle of 84 cosmic dances). Trained eurythmists are among the number of graduates of the Choreocosmos School as well as lay people who have mastered the gestures and forms and wish to bring Choreocosmos and Sacred Dance as a community building activity for their own communities. It is always a great blessing to have trained eurythmists amongst the participants as this helps toward carrying the eurythmic quality of the gestures and forms. Quite often eurythmists express an appreciation for the outreach potential of this work which has at its heart not so much the perfection of an artistic endeavor performed for the public, but rather a communal dance oriented toward the spiritual world.

Because of the communal intention which serves as an inspiring source for this work, Choreocosmos, as a eurythmic impulse, has the potential to reach out to large numbers of people, inviting people of all ages and ability to join in the dance and to experience the joy of eurythmy. Eurythmists that have been drawn to participate in this work are attracted to this reaching out/communal aspect and some have said that through having discovered choreocosmos, they have found an engaging way of introducing eurythmy to the general public. One eurythmist indicated that for him cosmic dance is ‘pure eurythmy’ since the eurythmy gestures are practiced within the context of the sounding presence and wisdom of the cosmos as the shaping, informing force streaming throughout creation—evident in nature and in particular to the miracle of the human form and physiology. Practiced over time, one is able to deepen into the gestures and to experience the internal and external etheric streamings that are activated by the gestures and movement forms. This can lead to a profoundly transformative experience of the sublime wisdom and creative power inherent in the eurythmy gestures communicated by Rudolf Steiner—given as a gift to humanity toward furthering the development of the human being and as a counterbalance to the challenges and fragmentation which have become evident through humanity’s interface with the modern technological world.

The approach to the teaching of the cosmic gestures performed in choreocosmos therefore has the intention to connect the participant with a living experience of the etheric world within and around them, as an informing source toward right action in the world. From this perspective, the goal of the practice is to lead one toward a sense of reverence and appreciation for the living fabric of wisdom that weaves throughout the cosmos—cosmos coming from the Greek word for order, by implication including the ordered, sense

perceptible creation. This can lead one toward a sense of responsibility as a cosmic citizen of the greater whole of creation.

Eurythmists who participate in the Choreocosmos School with the intention of bringing the cosmic and sacred dance forms to their own communities graduate ‘fast track,’ as they already know the principles of eurythmy. However, not all participants desire to teach, rather they enjoy the communal activity of simply participating. Participants include both eurythmists and non-eurythmists alike, and the school is open to the community at large, all age groups and ability ranges are welcome. For non-eurythmists who do wish to teach and have communities who are open to learning the dance forms, it is a matter of not only mastering the subject, but also of developing a profound appreciation for eurythmy and a distinct level of aptitude in their own etheric movement as well as the ability to teach the eurythmy forms and gestures for the various cosmic dances. These are the pre-requisites for graduation on a teaching level from the Choreocosmos School.

Robert Powell, the founder and inspiring source for the curriculum of the Choreocosmos School, is not only a eurythmist but also a curative eurythmist (eurythmy therapist). As a deeply committed Anthroposophist, Robert has been a member of the First Class since 1974. He is affiliated with three sections of the School of Spiritual Science: the mathematical-astronomical section (Robert has a Masters degree in mathematics and a PhD in the history of astronomy); the medical section (as a curative eurythmist); and the performing arts section (as a graduate of one of the four year trainings in artistic eurythmy in Dornach, Switzerland).

The founding of the Choreocosmos School of Cosmic and Sacred Dance in the year 2000 came about in response to what Robert has described as a ‘destiny calling.’ Initially, it was a matter of responding to requests coming from participants who had been working together with Robert for a long time to do such a training. Although Robert has always maintained that it would be best if participants were first to do a full eurythmy

training before doing the training offered by the Choreocosmos School, it became more and more evident that for most people this is not possible due to varying life circumstances, family commitments, etc.

However, often it has happened that participants have been so taken with eurythmy that they choose to take up the traditional eurythmy training having been directly inspired to do so on account of their participation in the Choreocosmos events and workshops. The Choreocosmos School has as a founding principle the impulse to promote eurythmy in the world, as is evident from the fact that various participants have gone on to do full eurythmy trainings as a result of their encounter with choreocosmos.

Through eurythmy there is the opportunity to work with the great creative forces that weave in the etheric garment of the earth. As an example, let us consider the Moon gesture in eurythmy:

In forming the eurythmy gesture for the Moon, the arms open out and circle around in a gathering gesture, then come together with wrists crossed and hands lightly clenched in a downward gesture, bringing expression to the human being’s connection to the Earth. Then follows a momentary still point. The holding of the Moon gesture (giving expression to the interval of the still point) can be experienced both in relation to the root chakra and as a ‘taking hold’ of the creative lunar forces streaming down through the legs and feet, bringing the human being into connection with the Earth. The Moon gesture mirrors the Moon’s gift of reflection, describing a ‘stilling’ of the waters (necessary for true reflection) and a ‘reining in’ of the emotional waters of the astral life. This is a coming to rest in the depths of one’s being, feeling deeply connected to one’s soul purpose toward the Earth. (Lacquanna Paul & Robert Powell, *Cosmic Dances of the Planets*, Sophia Foundation Press, 2007, page 46)

As can be experienced in a very profound way,

eurythmy is a gift, through Rudolf Steiner, to the world—a gift leading one into a living connection with the etheric realm. If the eurythmy gestures are performed with purity of intention to express love and gratitude toward the earth and the spiritual world, there can arise a co-creative sense of connection to the etheric world that then moves in response to the call of love — perhaps this could be described as a prayerful level of ‘sacred magic.’ This is the goal of sacred dance, to gradually develop the faculty of sacred magic in service of the great guiding beings of existence.

Another important aspect relating to choreocosmos is the carefully chosen music, drawn from the tradition of classical music. The music of the great composers has come into existence by way of inspiration through the harmony of the spheres, and this is reflected in their musical compositions. By moving to such music inspired by the cosmic

harmonies, the soul breathes in resonance with cosmic realms, and is lifted toward an experience of the music of the spheres. The music works to lift the soul toward the macrocosmic matrix of creation, elevating the soul life and invigorating the life of will. Through feeling the music, the human being becomes permeated by that which is streaming in from the cosmos—Divine Love. This streaming in of divine love works deeply into the human organism, transforming it even unto the depths of the physical body.

As Rudolf Steiner indicated, eurythmy offers a path of training the will, one that is suitable for modern human beings. Such a training as that offered by the Choreocosmos School, although not a full eurythmy training, works toward the great goal of training the will, learning to align one’s will with the beings of the spiritual hierarchies and beyond, to the great guiding beings of evolution.

To find out more about the Choreocosmos School, visit the following website:

www.sophiafoundation.org.

This article, the result of a collaboration between several people, was submitted to the newsletter by Lacquanna Paul, who did the final editing of the article.

Lacquanna Paul (email: astrosophia@t-online.de) is a graduate of the Choreocosmos School of Cosmic and Sacred Dance. Together with Robert Powell, she has co-authored *Cosmic Dances of the Planets*, *Cosmic Dances of the Zodiac*, *The Prayer Sequence in Sacred Dance*, and *The Foundation Stone Meditation in the Sacred Dance of Eurythmy*.

Starlight

*Starlight shines continually
Though we cannot see it in the sun.
Starlight surrounds the earth
And each night wraps a hemisphere in con-solation...
For the stars are suns, the sun’s a star...
Each star a portal for the light to shelter
As in the eyes, the gaze –
The sheltering gaze of starlight surrounds the earth...
Inter-crossing in-sight
Sparkles in the light upon these waves –
The hills are drenched in starlight...*

*Even the moon shows her amazement to the stars
And with the blue veil of the earth
Wipes off her tears... Tears for the long, cold
Barren ordeal of distance... Courageous moon,
Holding your station that the distant waves
May surge upon more shores, and tell
The eloquent ripples how the loving rhythms
Of the stars bathe us eternally in their womb of hope.*

—Charles Lawrie

CHOREOCOSMOS

SCHOOL OF COSMIC AND SACRED DANCE SCHEDULE 2010

For German language information visit the Choreocosmos
website: www.choreocosmos.info
Choreocosmos School of Cosmic and Sacred Dance

- June 8-10, 2010 “Mary Magdalene and the Ensouling of the World” (Sophia Grail Circle)
A 2-day workshop in Salt Lake City with Robert Powell. Choreocosmos: Cosmic Dance—Planets in Signs of the Zodiac (Sophia Grail Circle)
At the Episcopal Church Center of Utah, 75 South 200 East, Salt Lake City, UT 84111.
Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard.
Contact: Heidi Lazerson: Tel: 801-221-7094. E-mail: stargateunion@hotmail.com
- June 11-13, 2010 “Mary Magdalene and the Ensouling of the World” (Sophia Grail Circle)
A weekend workshop with Robert Powell. Choreocosmos: Cosmic Dance—Planets in Signs of the Zodiac
At Kelly’s Barn, Boulder, Colorado. Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard.
Contact: Cheryl Mulholland. Tel: 303-516-0606 E-mail: kinterra@gmail.com
- June 14-18, 2010 “Cosmic Dances of the Seven Seals of the Apocalypse” (Sophia Grail Circle)
A 5-day workshop with Robert Powell. Choreocosmos: Cosmic Dance — Planets in Signs of the Zodiac
At the StarHouse, Boulder, Colorado. Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard.
Contact: Cheryl Mulholland. Tel: 303-516-0606 E-mail: kinterra@gmail.com
- June 18-20, 2010 “Humanity Crossing the Threshold: Sophia and World Pentecost”
Annual conference of the Sophia Foundation of North America (Sacred Dance and Sophia Grail Circle)
Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard.
At the Santa Sabina retreat center, San Rafael, California.
Information and registration: contact the Sophia Foundation of North America
- June 20-22, 2010 Annual Board Meeting of the Sophia Foundation of North America
At the Santa Sabina retreat center, San Rafael, California.
The meeting is open to board members, advisory board members, and guests.
- June 23-25, 2010 “Awakening to the Divine Feminine: Mary Magdalene and the Virgin Mary”
A 2-day workshop with Robert Powell. Choreocosmos: Cosmic Dances of the Planets
Location to be announced. Musical accompaniment with pianist Wolfgang Wortberg.
Contact: Kathy Fraser, 2418 Otis Street, Olympia, Washington 98501. Tel: 360-359-5053
Email: kathleenmarie@earthlink.net
- June 25-27, 2010 “The Zodiac and World Evolution in the Light of Divine Sophia”
A weekend workshop with Robert Powell. Choreocosmos: Cosmic Dances of the Zodiac (Sophia Grail Circle)
At the Waldorf School, Seattle, Washington. Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard.
Contact: Katherine Hitchcock: Tel: 206-851-1588 E-mail PowellSeattleWorkshop@comcast.net

- June 28–July 2, 2010 “Cosmic Dances of the Seven Seals of the Apocalypse” (Sophia Grail Circle)
 A 5-day workshop with Robert Powell Choreocosmos: Cosmic Dance—Planets in Signs of the Zodiac
 At the Waldorf School, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Musical accompaniment with pianist
 Marcia Burchard.
 Contact: Randall Scott, 152 West 15th Street, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7M 1R5
 Tel: 604-988-8424/604-988-4600 E-mail: RosaMundi@shaw.ca
- July 2-4, 2010 “Humanity Crossing the Threshold: Sophia and World Pentecost”
 A weekend workshop with Robert Powell. Choreocosmos: Cosmic and Sacred Dance (with Sophia
 Grail Circle)
 At the Waldorf School, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Musical accompaniment with pianist
 Marcia Burchard.
 Contact: Randall Scott, 152 West 15th Street, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7M 1R5
 Tel: 604-988-8424/604-988-4600 E-mail: RosaMundi@shaw.ca
- July 5-9, 2010 “Cosmic Dances of the Nine Beatitudes” (Sophia Grail Circle)
 A 5-day workshop with Robert Powell. Choreocosmos: Cosmic Dance—Planets in Signs of the Zodiac
 Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard.
 At the Eugene Mennonite Church, 3590 West 18th Ave, Eugene, Oregon
 Contact: Deborah Aikens or Renee Taylor: Tel: 541-343-0536, Email: deborah@renewinglife.com
 NW Center for Health Promotion, 90 East 27th Avenue, Suite A, Eugene, Oregon 97405
- July 9-11, 2010 “Humanity Crossing the Threshold: Sophia and World Pentecost”
 A weekend workshop with Robert Powell. Choreocosmos: Cosmic and Sacred Dance (Sophia Grail
 Circle)
 Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard.
 At the Eugene Mennonite Church, 3590 West 18th Ave, Eugene, Oregon
 Contact: Deborah Aikens or Renee Taylor: Tel: 541-343-0536, Email: deborah@renewinglife.com
 NW Center for Health Promotion, 90 East 27th Avenue, Suite A, Eugene, Oregon 97405
- July 12-16, 2010 “Hymn to the Divine Feminine: Cosmic Dances of the Sophia Celebration”
 A 5-day workshop with Robert Powell Choreocosmos: Planets in Signs (Sophia Grail Circle)
 At the Barn, near Petaluma, California. Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia
 Burchard, with singing led by Karen Rivers.
 Registration: contact the Sophia Foundation of North America.
 Information: Karen Rivers: Tel: 415-662-2147 E-mail: karen@karenrivers.info
- July 19-22, 2010 Annual Sophia Meeting of the Sophia Institute, Fetzer Institute, and the Sophia
 Foundation of North America at the Stillheart, Woodside, California.
 The meeting is by invitation only.
- July 23-25, 2010 “Sophia and the Spiritual Hierarchies”
 A weekend workshop with Robert Powell. Choreocosmos: Cosmic Dance—Planets in Signs (Sophia
 Grail Circle)
 Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard.
 Contact: Kelly Calegar, 18 Haycox Court, Durham, NC 27713
 Tel: 919-361-0691 Email: kcalegar@earthlink.net

July 26-30, 2010 “Cosmic Dances of the Seven Planets in Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces: The Path of Cosmic Initiation”

A 5-day workshop with Robert Powell. Choreocosmos: Cosmic Dance—Planets in Signs (Sophia Grail Circle)

Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard.

Contact: Kelly Calegar, 18 Haycox Court, Durham, NC 27713

Tel: 919-361-0691 Email: kcalegar@earthlink.net

August 15-22, 2010 “The Tree of Life and the Foundation Stone of Love”

Musical accompaniment by violinist Daniela Rossi. Choreocosmos: Sacred Dance (Sophia Grail Circle)

One week Sophia workshop at Sant’ Antonio—accommodation at the Casa Santa Elisabetta d’Ungheria in Assisi, Italy.

Arrival on August 15 for dinner; departure on August 22 after breakfast. (English/German with Italian translation) Information: Uberta Sebregondi, Tel: +39-06-86904627 / +39-335-6749935

E-mail: usebregondi@gmail.com

August 22-29, 2010 “Attuning to the Stars: Star Gazing as a Spiritual Path”

Musical accompaniment by violinist Daniela Rossi. Choreocosmos: Cosmic & Sacred Dance (Sophia Grail Circle)

One week Sophia workshop in Italy at Podere Campopiano, Tatti, near Sienna—accommodation at the retreat center Podere Campopiano.

Arrival on August 22 for dinner; departure on August 29 after breakfast. (English/German with Italian translation) Information: Uberta Sebregondi, Tel: +39-06-86904627 / +39-335-6749935 E-mail: usebregondi@gmail.com

August 30-September 5, 2010 “Choreocosmos: International Week” in Roncegno near Trient, Italy.

“Cosmic Dances of the Seven Seals of the Apocalypse: Facing the Challenges of the Times”

in the anthroposophical spa hotel “Casa di Salute - Raphael”

9th graduation of the Choreocosmos School (English/German with Italian translation).

Arrival on August 30 for dinner; departure on September 5 after breakfast.

Information: Sally Ellis-Jones, Tel: +39-0461-724893 / +39-3482-106251 E-mail: sellisjones@yahoo.com

September 17-19, 2010 “Cosmic Dance of Eurythmy: Divine Sophia and the Zodiac”

Weekend workshop with Robert Powell in Überlingen (Bodensee/Lake Constance), Germany (German)

Information and registration: Gudrun Gundersen,

Kapellenweg 2, 88696 Owingen. Tel: +49-7551-9495293 Email: gudrun.gundersen@gmx.net

October 22-24, 2010 “Cosmic Dances of the Four Elements in Eurythmy: Liturgy to the Earth”

Weekend workshop with Robert Powell in Pforzheim, Germany (German)

Information and registration: Hanna Dalhöfer, Vogelsangstrasse 68, 75173 Pforzheim.

Tel: +49-7231-23792

November 12-14, 2010 “Cosmic Dance of Eurythmy: Sophia and the Spiritual Hierarchies”

Weekend workshop with Robert Powell in Trier, Germany (German)

Information and registration: Gisela Storto-Lanfer,

Am Irscherhof 35, 54294 Trier. Tel: +49-651-34053



Starlight, the newsletter of the Sophia Foundation, appears twice a year—in May and December. If you are intending to send a contribution to the next issue, please do so by the end of September 2010.

Administrative Office
525 Gough St. #103
San Francisco, CA 94102, USA

Telephone/Fax 415-522-1150
Email: sophia@sophiafoundation.org
Website: www.sophiafoundation.org
Administrator: Jennifer Press

Reports on the Sophia Foundation May *Pilgrimage to the Grand Canyon: A Journey through Time to the Divine Mother* will appear in the next issue of *Starlight*.

*Mistress Earth! To thee I bent my brow
And through thy fragrant veil
I felt the flame of a kindred heart,
I heard the trembling of cosmic life.
The grace of the shining heavens descended
In noonday beams of burning splendor,
And both the free-flowing river and the forest of many noises
Brought their melodious welcome to the quiet light.
And in clear sacrament I see again combined
The earthly soul and the unearthly light.
And, through the fire of love, the suffering
Of everyday life is borne away like fleeting smoke.*

Vladimir Solovyov, May 1886

The Religious Poetry of Vladimir Solovyov, translated by Boris Jakim and Laury Magnus
San Rafael, California, Semantron Press, 2008, p.30

