

***Pilgrimage to the Grand Canyon and Journey to Turkey***  
**Robert Powell**

This issue of *Starlight* contains reports on the 2010 pilgrimage of the Sophia Foundation to the Grand Canyon and also descriptions of the 2009 journey to sacred sites in Turkey. The Turkey trip was for three language groups – English, German, Italian – and was organized in the German-speaking world by the treasurer of the Institute for Astrosophy to support the Astrogeographia research that has emerged since the Sophia Foundation pilgrimage to Egypt. From its inception the Sophia



Foundation was intended as a means of serving to link the various individuals and Sophia communities in North America. Now that the Sophia Foundation has grown and comprises a spiritual family spread across various continents of the world, more than ever there is a need for this linking to take place. Obviously it is impossible for everyone to participate in everything. Because some in the Sophia community live in remote areas, often with next-to-no contact with anyone else from our spiritual family, for them – and also for many others – it is a blessing to read in *Starlight* about the activities going on in different places around the world within our Sophia community. At the same time, though, for some, in reading these descriptions, a sense of having “missed out” may arise. This sense can be transformed into one of *inner participation* on a spiritual and moral level by focusing upon the overlighting goal and ideal of such pilgrimages and journeys. And the same applies with regard to the workshops, always bearing in mind that everyone in the Sophia community is united in Sophia, so that – like cells in an organism – individuals *participate in the whole* by (1) becoming aware that they are part of the whole, and (2) becoming aware of the activity of others within the greater organism of the Sophia community.

In the case of the pilgrimage to the Grand Canyon from May 1-17, 2010, which was a *journey to the heart of the Mother*, it was an opportunity on the part of some within the Sophia community to express their love for the Mother – for Nature and for Sophia. Ideally these “some” – 21 in all – who went on this journey participated as representatives of the Sophia community as a whole. Holding this in mind, it is possible for *all* in the Sophia community to feel a connection with this pilgrimage. Also, when we consider the timing of this trip, a moral dimension arises, which comes to light by way of juxtaposing the Sophia event (in this case the pilgrimage) and the world: What was taking place in the world at that time as the Sophia Foundation pilgrimage to the Grand Canyon was taking place?

The BP Deepwater Horizon oil disaster took place on April 20, 2010 just ten days prior to our departure for the Grand Canyon, and has been continuing – in some form or other – since then. Against this background, the expression of our love for the Mother in an active way – on this journey to the heart of the Mother – was from a higher perspective a “calling” to respond to the oil catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico. Admittedly it was only a small response (this pilgrimage just happened to coincide with the oil spill, and was certainly not planned in this way), yet it was a response sounding out homeopathically into the Earth’s organism now under siege through what Daniel Andreev refers to in his great work *Rose of the World* as the “machine assault upon Nature.”

As is evident from the communication of Etherium published in this issue of *Starlight*, Nature and the elemental beings are suffering. They need our loving kindness and attention, as do all the kingdoms of Nature – especially right now. There are signs that the animal kingdom is becoming increasingly troubled by what humanity is doing to the Earth at the present time through the machine assault upon Nature driven by greed. In the communication from Etherium, an apocalyptic dimension to the oil catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico is intimated. This will undoubtedly become more and more evident in the course of time. As the communication of the Christianized elemental being known as Etherium indicates, there is deep despair among the elemental beings of the Gulf region. Our Sophia work – and particularly the pilgrimage which was a direct and active expression of our solidarity with Nature and the elemental beings – can be a sign of hope to Nature and the elemental beings, if we take them *lovingly and with gratitude* into our consciousness.

One striking example of a conscious outreach to Nature and the elemental beings on the pilgrimage was the occasion when the *Liturgy to the Earth* was celebrated, which for some was a high point – to participate in such a celebration in the midst of the most spectacular natural beauty and in close proximity to the Elements, in particular the Element of Earth in the extraordinary formations of the surrounding towering cliffs, and the Element of Water in the powerful rushing water of the Colorado River. These Elements, and the elemental beings associated with them, were omnipresent throughout the journey along the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon, giving ample opportunity for each participant to express gratitude to the elemental beings and the kingdoms of Nature.

There would be much more to say about this – for example, about the positive significance of the Choreocosmos work for the elemental beings – but this will have to wait for another occasion to be written down. Readers of the June 12, 2009 report of a *Choreocosmos experience* published in the previous issue of *Starlight* (Spring 2010) will recall the extraordinary response of a “jubilant elemental being” to a Choreocosmos workshop taking place then. The same can be said of the positive

significance of the Sophia Grail Circle celebrations for Nature and the elemental beings – not to mention for human beings, present or not present, on the earth or in spiritual realms.

The journey to sacred sites in Turkey was not a Sophia Foundation pilgrimage. Rather, it was the result of a private initiative on the part of Bernt and Jane Rossiwall. Thirty-five people participated in this “Astrogeographical journey” (see the contribution by Lacquanna Paul and Uberta Sebregondi regarding the use of this term). The overlighting goal and ideal to be seen here is that of aligning heaven and earth. At this time when – through modern technology – the Earth is being cut off from the cosmos (just think of all the satellites orbiting around the Earth every day), it is all the more important that groups and individuals consciously strive to uphold the *vertical axis* between the Earth and the heavens. The new science of Astrogeographia is a direct expression of the Sophianic axiom taught by Hermes in ancient Egypt, “As above, so below.” This same axiom is enunciated in the Lord’s Prayer: “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven.” The journey to sacred sites in Turkey was a deed fulfilled by a small group of people, conscious of the connection of these sites to the upper three brightest stars in the constellation of Orion. It was a deed, however, which rays out into the Earth’s organism homeopathically at this time when an “iron spider’s web” is being spun by all the satellites orbiting around the Earth. The Earth and the heavens mirror one another; this is the message of Astrogeographia. And the journey to sacred sites in Turkey proclaimed this message to the world – however, in a modest way, “from behind the scenes,” out of the glare of the media. For the beings of the spiritual world looking down upon the deeds and activities of human beings, it is not a matter of numbers. From a higher perspective, a spiritual happening on Earth is an event for the spiritual world, regardless of whether 20 people or thousands of people take part. It is the *quality* of the deed or event which counts as far as the spiritual world is concerned. The angels take up that which is sown upon the Earth by human beings acting in service to the Spirit and allow this to ray out further, taking effect far and wide. That which streams up to the spiritual world from a small group of people truly dedicated to serving the Spirit can stream forth as a great light in spiritual realms, and then be reflected back to receptive human beings on Earth, thus having a powerful impact.

Grasping the overlighting goal and ideal of the journey to sacred sites in Turkey and of the pilgrimage to the Grand Canyon can give the reader of the following reports a new relationship to the contents, which are offered as a source of inspiration to all.



*Pilgrims to Turkey*

*Journey into the Grand Canyon  
and the Heart of the Mother*

Molly Rose

Great rocks  
stand  
like silent sentinels  
over the land,  
monuments  
to a timeless Being  
through which  
the waters of Life  
flow—  
quietly,  
moving deeply,  
gently lapping  
the cloistered  
canyon walls.

Soon  
playful sylphs and undines  
quicken the water  
with their dance,  
chuckling among  
the rocks and boulders,  
their effervescent ripples  
carrying us joyfully  
downstream.

Then we hear  
a thunderous roar  
and round the bend  
see white water  
boiling ahead  
as we ready ourselves  
for the next thrill, chill,  
and possible spill.

But first  
we linger a moment  
in the calm, smooth tongue  
of glazed water,  
which gathers speed,  
and then,  
gently,  
we slip over the edge  
and plunge into  
the raging rapids  
below.

We crest over  
impossible waves  
and plunge down,  
again and again.  
More waves  
slam into us  
with such force  
that we emerge  
from this elemental baptism  
newly re-born,  
glad to be alive.

Below the rapids,  
one by one,  
our boats pull over  
and wait  
till all are safely through.  
We exchange high fives  
and excited shouts  
which echo around us  
and are swallowed  
by the water and granite walls.

Paddles and oars dip  
as we silently move on,  
one by one,  
through the slow majesty  
of Earth's time,  
storied in layered heights  
above us.

We beach and explore  
caverns and hidden grottos  
and behold in silence  
the awesome beauty,  
before joining in song,  
Her weeping— streaming,  
and joyful ecstasy  
pouring into pools,  
and womb-like hearts  
within the Mother.

In all of this  
we are guided  
by Wise Ones,  
midwives  
whose memory and mastery  
of the ways  
of this watery world  
of sand and stone  
and currents and flow  
make our journey  
safer and more comfortable  
than ever before  
imagined.

We are grateful  
for *all* our guides  
and the Guardian Presence  
of kindly, luminous Beings  
to whom we offer our  
thanks.  
We sing and dance,  
as the Ancestors before us,  
a ceremony honoring  
the Mother  
and the Elements  
with which She birthed  
this Wonder of a World,  
Her labor of Love.

Intense sun and heat,  
cold, wind, water,  
sand, and stone  
bring hardship and glory  
which knits us together,  
and we find shelter  
in each other  
and warmth  
in the holy, soul weaving  
into which we collect  
the nectar  
of our experience.

There arises within  
a natural harmony  
with nature's flow-  
full, rounded chords  
of response  
to the rich, deep tones  
within the stone.

And there,  
in the dark and deepening  
Silence,  
we offer spirit-imbued,  
heart-felt  
songs and prayers,  
speaking back to the Stars  
a concordance of harmony,  
linking together  
Heaven and Earth  
in a Heart of Love  
where Honey is made.

Inevitably,  
our journey takes us back out  
into the once familiar,  
now strange,  
world,  
where the doings of men  
loom large-  
threatening  
to obliterate  
the grand landscape  
which has birthed us  
into a new life.

We are changed.  
How- I cannot say-  
only,  
that we carry the pollen  
of our experience  
out into the world  
and will leave traces  
wherever we go.

Whoever has been  
to the Heart of the Mother  
will not forget  
the golden glow,  
the honeyed  
warmth and sweetness  
Remembering,  
in gratitude,  
we can find our way  
back Home,  
not only through  
vaulted canyon walls,  
but through  
Her ever-present,  
Eternal Heart  
where we have always been,  
we, in Her,  
and She,  
in us.



*Joanne and Molly*



## **Many Nights** Andrew Elliott

Many nights I receive  
a great gift,  
a reorienting to a place closer to Home.  
Often, in the wake of morning,  
I leave the gift unopened  
and then forget  
that it was ever given.  
Today, near dawn,  
it opens itself.  
A tender sadness,  
a hint of Your fragrance  
has become my world.  
Home is not far; loved ones await.  
But now Your sun rises  
into my landscape.  
I smile again  
knowing we have work to do,  
lighting the lamps,  
calling You  
into blossom  
into blessing.  
Thank you.



*Andrew*

## *Reflections on the Pilgrimage to the Grand Canyon*

Jackie Sohn

As a child, I read every book I could find about ecology and the environment. I read with fascinated horror about the rotting carcasses of dead fish piling up on the polluted shores of Lake Erie, the traffic policemen in Tokyo who had to take oxygen breaks due to the quality of air being so poor, and the growing mountains of accumulating garbage in our landfills. I was incredulous that the world had descended to such a pitiful state. I would fervently pray and dream of enormous filters for our lakes, oceans, air and ground which would clean all the impurities and restore the earth's environment back to its pristine state. I always knew that a major purpose of this lifetime is to fulfill my promise to help heal planet Earth. I considered pursuing a career in the environmental sciences but chose to work in a healing profession instead because it seemed to me that if I really wanted to help our planet then the most effective way was to help heal people since the source of the Earth's troubles is misuse of its resources by humanity. It is a *feng shui* principle that a healthy mind, body and emotional life is reflected in a clean, organized and harmonious environment and vice versa. The outer environment is a reflection of the inner landscape. As people heal their imbalances in their thinking, feeling and will lives, they will clean up their environment as pollution becomes incongruent with their healthier state.

Once I found out that a local recycling center had opened up (in New York City, late 1960's), I became the only child in the neighborhood (to my mother's embarrassment) who picked up used cans and bottles from the streets on my way to and from school every day. Twenty years later, when I moved to San Francisco in the same month that the blue bin recycling program started there, I knew I was moving in the right direction.

Now, more than forty years since my childhood visions of technological salvation for planet Earth, my prayers were answered this May 2010 during the Sophia Foundation Pilgrimage to the Grand Canyon. Similarly to my response earlier in life when I realized that the obvious methods of saving the environment such as becoming an activist do not truly address the root of the problem, the response I received to my prayers was not anything I could have imagined previously, but is of a sublime nature working on an essential level of being. Back in the midst of civilized life, the details of our delightful communion with Nature are fading, but what is growing is my increasing awareness through appreciation and gratitude of the profound vastness of the wisdom and kindness of the spiritual beings who have been and are still guiding humanity, especially through the trials we are currently undergoing.

As we traversed down the Colorado River, we learned and practiced an expansion of the Morning Meditation with eurythmy to include the elemental beings and kingdoms of Nature. This activity provides a means through which we as human beings can begin to step into our role as the fourth kingdom to be the mediators and connecting link between the spiritual world and the kingdoms of Nature, thereby helping to redeem Nature. This practice develops the fifth ether, the moral ether, which only humanity can engender. (The elemental beings live and work in the first four ethers: the gnomes indwell the life ether and convey this ether to the roots of trees and plants; the undines live in the tone ether and carry this ether into the stems, branches, and leaves; the sylphs are at home in the

light ether and bring this ether to the flowering processes in Nature; and the salamanders are to be found in the warmth ether and imbue Nature's seeding processes with this ether.)

We started each morning at sunrise with the Salutation to the Sun, connecting the inner sun in our hearts to the outer Sun, acknowledging the Sun as the source of all light, love and life on planet Earth as well as being the home of the Christ being who is filled with peace. We then practiced the Morning Meditation.

### **Salutation to the Sun**

I see the Sun,  
The Sun beholds me.  
I revere the Sun,  
The Sun greets me.  
I unite myself with the Sun,  
The Sun blesses me with Light, Love and Life.

The power of the Sun is immeasurably strengthening.  
Through the Sun's power,  
one can pass through all trials and remain peaceful.  
Through the power of the Sun,  
one can endure to an extraordinary degree.  
The Sun bestows great power.



### **Morning Meditation in relation to the hierarchies, the elemental beings and the kingdoms of Nature (Summary version)**

In purest outpoured light shimmers the Godhead of the world.  
In purest love toward all that lives radiates the Godhead of my soul.  
I rest within the Godhead of the world.  
I shall find myself within the Godhead of the world.

#### **(Moon - Root Chakra)**

I receive the light, love, life and peace of the Angels.  
I shine light upon the gnomes.  
I radiate love toward the gnomes.  
I stream life toward the gnomes.  
I breathe peace upon the gnomes.

#### **(Venus - Sacral Chakra)**

I receive the light, love, life and peace of the Archangels.  
I shine light upon the undines.  
I radiate love toward the undines.  
I stream life toward the undines.  
I breathe peace upon the undines.

(Mercury - Solar Plexus Chakra)

I receive the light, love, life and peace of the Archai.

I shine light upon the sylphs.

I radiate love toward the sylphs.

I stream life toward the sylphs.

I breathe peace upon the sylphs.

(Sun - Heart Chakra)

I receive the light, love, life and peace of the Exusiai, Dynamis & Kyriotetes.

I shine light upon humanity.

I radiate love toward humanity.

I stream life toward humanity.

I breathe peace upon humanity.

(Mars - Throat Chakra)

I receive the light, love, life and peace of the Thrones.

I shine light upon the animal kingdom.

I radiate love toward the animal kingdom.

I stream life toward the animal kingdom.

I breathe peace upon the animal kingdom.

(Jupiter - Brow Chakra)

I receive the light, love, life and peace of the Cherubim.

I shine light upon the plant kingdom.

I radiate love toward the plant kingdom.

I stream life toward the plant kingdom.

I breathe peace upon the plant kingdom.

(Saturn - Crown Chakra)

I receive the light, love, life and peace of the Seraphim.

I shine light upon the mineral kingdom.

I radiate love toward the mineral kingdom.

I stream life toward the mineral kingdom.

I breathe peace upon the mineral kingdom.

I made it my practice to apply each of the seven levels of this Morning Meditation as I encountered each of the elemental beings and kingdoms of Nature every day as we progressed through the Grand Canyon. Beholding Vulcan's Anvil, an enormous sacred rock heralding the approach to the formidable Lava Falls (Mile 180), I received the light, love, life and peace of the Angels into my Moon chakra and blessed the gnomes. Simultaneously enjoying the sheer exhilaration of riding the white water rapids and receiving the light, love, life and peace of the Archangels into my Venus chakra, I showered those to the undines. (An additional blessing bestowed to the undines was reciting the Lord's Prayer while going through the rapids leaving an etheric imprint of the prayer to benefit all who follow.) Admiring the majestic wing-span of the great blue heron and remembering how much sylphs love birds, I received the light, love, life and peace of the Archai into my solar plexus chakra

and connected with the sylphs. With deep thankfulness to the sunlight which appeared when we were shivering from the cold, as well as to our metabolism which fuels the fire that warms our bodies, I received the light, love, life and peace of the Exusiai, Dynamis and Kyriotetes into my heart chakra and shared with the salamanders. Contemplating our good fortune with the six gifted individuals who were chosen to be our river guides, appreciating them for who they are and knowing that we could not have accomplished this journey without their knowledge, help and skills, I received the light, love, life and peace of the Exusiai, Dynamis, Kyriotetes into my heart chakra and radiated out to all of humanity.



Smiling at the large velveteen ears of the mule deer and the graceful nimbleness of the bighorn sheep, I received the light, love, life and peace of the Thrones into my Mars chakra and blessed the animal kingdom. Delighted with the delicate fronds of maidenhair fern alongside the vivacious scarlet monkey-flowers at Elves Chasm (Mile 116.6), I received the light, love, life and peace of the Cherubim into my brow chakra and shared with the plant kingdom. Marveling at the shiny black metamorphic rock, Vishnu schist, with dikes of glorious pink Zoroastrian granite running through it, I received the light, love, life and peace of the Seraphim into my Saturn chakra and bestowed these gifts to the mineral kingdom.

Upon hearing the news at the end of our journey, that our latest man-made environmental fiasco, the recent oil spill, had reached an all-time crisis high – threatening the entire Atlantic coast – I breathed deeply and was even more grateful for our meditative practices. Far from being an idyllic nature retreat, I learned inner techniques to be more equipped to help with what is currently happening in the world. The miracle filters of my childhood dreams have yet to be installed in our oceans but the



gift I received during this pilgrimage through the Grand Canyon to the heart of the Divine Mother is a far more powerful and valuable, though subtle, means of working on an elemental level to begin the process of restoring Nature back to its pure state before the Fall.



## *You are as Pollen*

**Andrew Elliott**



Those of us who received the great gift of journeying as pilgrims into the heart of the Mother, into the Grand Canyon, were met at each turn of the river with both the profound majesty of the canyon and the intimate beauty of life everywhere present.

Whispering just beneath rich sensory beauty was the mystery of Time. As we rowed and paddled the passionate Colorado River, massive layers of canyon wall revealed epochs measured in hundreds of millions of years. Only in a few places did we see evidence of human habitation.



*The birthing rock*

In one such place, known as “the birthing rock” for its naturally carved red rock chair and its panoply of petroglyphs, we sat in reverent silence, listening for echoes of the wisdom of the place.

As I offered a silent prayer to those ancestors to whom this site was sacred, an immediate reply came to me. I was told that we who had come here, in reverence and in service to the Mother, must now become the guardians of this sacred beauty. We must be born on the winds, like sacred pollen, taking back to our communities this message of protection. It was as if, in this

sanctuary of Time, the linear dimension of time had dissolved. Perhaps for an open and reverential heart, Time can yield its secrets.

This afternoon, still glowing with the benediction of the canyon, I came across this poem. It is by American writer and poet, Terry Tempest Williams, from her book *Red: Passion and Patience in the Desert*. Mrs. Williams lives in the redrock desert of southern Utah, short miles from where our pilgrimage began. She writes:

The eyes of the future are looking back at us  
and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time.  
They are kneeling with hands clasped  
that we might act with restraint,  
that we might leave room for the life that is destined to come.

To protect what is wild  
is to protect what is gentle.

Perhaps the wildness we fear is the pause between our own heartbeats,  
the silent space that says we live only by grace.

Wilderness lives by this same grace.

Wild mercy is in our hands.

May we be as pollen.

*Balance*  
**Betsyann Gallagher**

In the beginning ours was not the most harmonious relationship.  
The wind blew her everywhere, baptizing us in her glory.  
She was in our eyes, our clothes, our food and even our sleeping gear.  
She gave new meaning to the Sandman's visits.

Walking up to Thunder River, hearing  
the reverberation of the boulders, tumbling and tossing  
in the current so strong, helped us to imagine  
how she was so finely sculpted  
and formed, from the cliffs so grand.

After a long morning of being splashed and  
drenched with the cold river water,  
we climbed ashore shivering, teeth chattering  
and proceeded to take off all our wet clothes.  
Her warmth beckoned and with gratitude  
we lay down and basked in her heat.  
Ah, the luscious sand, her soft  
silky texture caressed and warmed our bodies  
offering a new perspective on this once harsh host.



As we journeyed deeper into the river gorged canyon  
we became more familiar with her,  
we shared her space and breathed her beauty.  
Just like her we were tossed and tumbled,  
shaped and refined, by all the elements,  
on our pilgrimage to the Mother.  
Wholeheartedly we offer our gratitude  
to the Grand Canyon and its glorious sand.

