

The dodecahedron has been a source of profound interest for millennia. Like a multi-faceted crystal, its beautiful and harmonious symmetry leads our eyes and hearts to contemplate the Divine. A 2003 study, led by Jean-Pierre Luminet of the Paris Observatory, suggests that the universe is structured in the shape of a dodecahedron. Sophia's wisdom shines forth in the unveiling of this mystery!

*The dodecahedron is the image that Rudolf Steiner gave for what he called "the Foundation Stone of Love" for which he gave a meditation—a powerful individual practice, which leads to a deep and profound experience of the Foundation Stone of Love. In this sense it is a fulfillment of the 'hidden knowledge of the Grail' spoken of by Rudolf Steiner in his book *An Outline of Esoteric Science*: "The Mystery of Christ will permeate human beings' thinking, their feeling, and their will—ever increasingly as time goes on. The 'hidden knowledge of the Grail' will become manifest and grow to be a power in humanity's life, entering ever more fully into all the ways and walks of human beings."*

(Quoted from the Introduction to Valentin Tomberg's *Studies on the Foundation Stone Meditation*, San Rafael, CA: LogoSophia Press, 2010).

CONTENTS

Message from the Editor	3
The Redeemer of Chernobyl.....JENS MÜHLING	4
<i>Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality</i> – Review CHERYL MULHOLLAND	7
Overview of Publication of Material (Lecture Notes, etc.)..... ROBERT POWELL	8
Microcosm and Macrocosm..... VALENTIN TOMBERG	9
Help for Our Time..... MOLLY ROSE	13
<i>Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality</i> – Review..... MOLLY ROSE	18
Vision of the Rose of the World.....ESTELLE ISAACSON	20
Announcing a New Book by Estelle Isaacson	24
Archangel Michael: How Can We Know Him?, Part 2.....BILL TRUSIEWICZ	25
Poem: A Monument to Silence	25
Poem: Out of Silent Depths.....BILL TRUSIEWICZ	26
Dream Download	34
Wisdom-filled Choices for the Future—May 5 Conference Announcement	36
Africa Pilgrimage 2012—New Itinerary & Brochure	37
Announcing a New Book about Rilke by Daniel J. Polikoff	51
Three poems by Rilke—Translation and Commentary	52
Rilke's <i>Elegies</i> and the <i>Corpus Hermeticum</i>	55
Gratitude from the Institute for Astrosophy	58
Easter Sequence	60
Impressions of Mt. Shasta	64
Sophia Conference at Mt. Shasta—Announcement	66
CHOREOCOSMOS NEWS	
Choreocosmos Experience	67
Choreocosmos Schedule for 2012.....	68
Prayer for Elders.....MOLLY ROSE	71

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The views expressed in the articles published in *Starlight* are the sole responsibility of the authors of these articles and do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial board of *Starlight*. Some articles may have been shortened in order to be included, and some articles may have been edited with minor stylistic changes.

This is the third electronic issue of *Starlight*. The electronic issue is free, which allows us to reach many more people. If you wish to receive *Starlight* in a printed version, please send a donation of \$50 or more to the Sophia Foundation to cover the annual cost of two issues. Please include a note with your donation indicating that you are requesting printed copies of the newsletter to be sent to you. Donors will not automatically receive a printed copy of the newsletter – only upon written request.

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A Message from the Editor

On behalf of the Sophia Foundation I would like to express our gratitude to the Kalliopeia Foundation for the generous grants that we have received, which have enabled the Sophia Foundation to continue operating. Kalliopeia is doing wonderful work in the world. Their mission is to “contribute to the evolution of communities and cultures that honor the unity at the heart of life's rich diversity...to strengthen a collective recognition of the oneness of humanity.”

Kalliopeia was founded to support a cultural shift, one we are now beginning to experience, to ways of living that celebrate life's extraordinary diversity, yet are rooted in the recognition of life's sacred unity. We call the experience of the sacred interconnectedness of life ‘oneness.’ By attuning to that place of oneness within ourselves, others and the natural world, we can begin to evolve sustainable local and global systems of living based on care, equality, responsibility, and respect for all life. We seek to join with others in this work to honor our earth, its plants, creatures and peoples. (www.kalliopeia.org).

The Sophia Foundation shares these values and is honored to be working in collaboration with the Kalliopeia Foundation. Karen and I wish to express many thanks and much appreciation to Kalliopeia for their help and support! – Robert

Would you like to volunteer to manage a Sophia Foundation Facebook page, “Friends of Sophia,” on an ongoing basis? We are in need of help. If you are interested, please contact Jen Press, administrator of the Sophia Foundation

email: sophia@sophiafoundation.org

Would you like to volunteer to manage an Internet forum on behalf of the Sophia Foundation to facilitate exchange between participants prior to and after workshops? If you are interested, please contact Jen Press, administrator of the Sophia Foundation

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The Redeemer of Chernobyl

Herewith some excerpts from this remarkable article by Jens Mühling, published originally under the title “Der Erlöser von Tschernobyl” in the German online magazine Der Tagesspiegel on Easter Sunday, April 24, 2011 and republished, again in Der Tagesspiegel, on March 14, 2012. In 2011 both the Western and the Orthodox celebration of Easter Sunday fell on April 24. Translator (from the German) unknown — words in brackets [] added by Robert Powell. Whoever did this translation is evidently German-speaking with a good command of the English language. However, there are some “Germanisms” in the translation, which have been left as in the online document—

<http://srd.lima-city.de/Documents/TheRedeemerofChernobyl.htm>

His great-grandfather was a priest; his grandfather was a priest, too. Nikolai Yakushin became one only after the catastrophe. Now, his church stands in the middle of the prohibited area. The history of a resurrection.

. . . years ago [1986], a pair of dividers was stuck into a map. In a circling manner, it cut off 4300 square kilometers of world from the world. Concentric rings of barbed wire segment the no-man’s-land: the 30-km zone, the 10-km zone, the power plant zone. In the middle is a coffin. Buried under thousands of tons of ferroconcrete: reactor block IV. It sustained damage on April 26, 1986, at 1.23 a.m.—accident cause: human failure.

The Geiger counter supplies a different segmentation. A random one. Sometimes, it squeaks hysterically, sometimes, it whines quietly, no pattern to find. There are nearly quiet places next to the reactor, and others, far-away ones, making the counter shrill.

But the most enigmatic place lies a few kilometers to the south of the reactor on the River Pripyat, between the first and the second ring of barbwire, in the town that gave its name to the reactor. The town of Chernobyl would be inconspicuous, if there wasn’t the church. St. Ilia Church juts 40 meters into the Ukrainian winter sky. When one enters it, the Geiger counter falls silent. “It is God’s house,” Father Nikolai says. “The radiation cannot come in here.” And that’s only one of many miracles.

. . . The townlet of Chernobyl, Chornobyl in Ukrainian, is old, very old by local standards.... Here, in Chornobyl, time had come to its end now [in 1986], just as it had been proclaimed in the Revelation: *“The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters. The name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter.”* This was written by John [in the book of Revelation], chapter 8, verses 10 and 11. Wormwood is in Ukrainian: Chornobyl.

. . . Nikolai Yakushin had been resettled to Kiev together with his family. From time to time, he returned to his home town, then standing in front of the church, crying. The metal dome of the belfry had become unfastened, it was squealing in the wind. The walls were crumbling. Wild boars had churned up the churchyard, the grave crosses jugged out of the abased earth. One day, Nikolai could not stand it anymore. He positioned himself in front of the residence of the Bishop of Kiev,

and did not budge before the presbyters listened to him. The church of my fathers is decaying, he said. The church is in need of a priest. The superiors meditated. One month later, they sent for Nikolai. We were looking for somebody, they said, but we could not find anyone. Nobody wants to go there. Empathize with the situation of the priests—you, too, would not be willing to be sent into the Zone. So it happened that Nikolai Yakushin became Father Nikolai.

Ten years have passed since then. For some time his old life overlapped with his new one. An engineer knows how to renovate a house, even a house of God. Father Nikolai built scaffolding. He roped himself up, and before he climbed on the church's roof, he crossed himself. He repaired the dome himself. He renovated the walls and replaced the windows; he pulled up weeds, and repainted the hands of the pale Christ...on the ceiling, a picture of the suffering Christ [that] was fading; He had His hands spread over the grains....

When everything was finished, Father Nikolai put a large icon on the altar wall. The icon came from Kiev. One of the clean-up operators that had crawled through the melting power plant after the accident had it painted. One night, the Redeemer had appeared to the man in a dream. The Redeemer was walking on a cloud, the cloud was hovering over the power station, and a star called Wormwood fell from heaven. The dead and the survivors of the Zone gathered in His light. Father Nikolai wandered through half the Ukraine with the icon, from the Black Sea, along the River Dnepr, up to Chernobyl. The apostle of the Slavs, Andrew, once went the same way. The icon worked miracles. It helped people, and, out of gratitude, people helped Father Nikolai. By means of the rubles thrown into his bag while he was underway, he renovated this church at home.

After the church building had been finished, people came. First, they came out of curiosity, Father Nikolai said, not because they were believing. Old people came, who had returned into the Zone to live in the abandoned villages—people that did not believe in radiation or that were too old to be afraid of death. Watchmen came, who had been stationed at the zonal borders. Nuclear workers came to maintain the destroyed power station.

... In the Zone, Father Nikolai said, there are no non-believers. Some say that life outside the Zone was more dangerous than inside it. Many emigrants suffer from diseases scientists do not have names for. Stress, the doctors say, migrational stress, Chernobyl stress. Many have died of this stress, of heart diseases, lung diseases, blood diseases, head diseases. We, however, Father Nikolai says, we here in the Zone are of good health, God the Almighty be praised. The elderly in the abandoned villages die, but they die of old age, not of diseases.

But withal, they even drink the water. The water of the river flowing past the power station. We bless it, Father Nikolai says, and then we drink it. He makes a cross over the icy band of the snowy Pripyat river, in the name of the Father, he whispers, of the Son, of the Holy Spirit. One must believe, Father Nikolai says. Nothing will happen to those who believe.

Today, on Resurrection Day, Father Nikolai will be singing the Orthodox Easter Liturgy. Christ is risen from the dead. By death He conquered Death, and to those in the graves He granted life. Throughout the whole night, until dawn, Father Nikolai will be standing in front of the icon,

calling: Christ is risen! A thin, but audible choir will answer him: Truly he is risen! Two days later, on April 26 [2011] at 1.23 in the morning, Father Nikolai will be ringing the mourning bell in the churchyard, which he does every year. 25 times the bell shall sound throughout the Zone, one for every past year [since 1986].

The scientists say that 20,000 years must pass before people will be able to return into the Zone. When the bell will have fallen silent, there will be only 19,975 years remaining.

COMMENT BY ROBERT:

The message conveyed in this report—expressed in a different form—is essentially the same as the message of my book *Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality*. The message of the report is that “Nothing will happen to those who believe,” and the message of the book is that there is protection offered *to those who actively undertake to unite with Christ*. However, a major difference is that in the description of the practices outlined in the book *Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality*—practices to be undertaken actively—**each person** is the “church” into which Christ is invited to be present—every day, if possible. And, as a resonance from the core practice of *putting on the resurrection body*, ideally He is held in a living way in consciousness every hour of the day.

Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality

Awakening the Soul through Modern Etheric Movement

Robert Powell

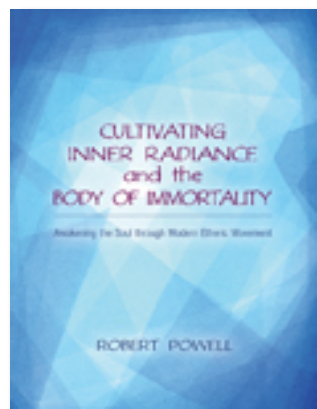
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Book Review

Cheryl Mulholland

2012 is the 100th anniversary of the birth of eurythmy. Eurythmy came into the world through Rudolf Steiner simultaneous to the building of the first Goetheanum and his proclamation of Christ's descent into the etheric aura of the earth. Over the last 100 years, eurythmy has developed as a performing art, and as therapeutic and pedagogical practices. Now in 2012 a new vista of eurythmy is being realized—eurythmy can become a path to Christ in the etheric realm.

In honor of the 100th anniversary of the birth of eurythmy, Dr. Robert Powell has published a new book- *Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality*. Dr. Powell's book describes eurythmy as a sacred path. The book includes practical exercises which he calls- The *Inner Radiance Sequence*. The sequence is a spiritual practice comprised of eurythmy exercises that emphasize the cosmic and universal dimension—and the 'Christ dimension'—of eurythmy.

Eurythmy is the universal language of the etheric realm—born from the Divine Word—from Christ. Dr. Powell cites Rudolf Steiner's statue, the 'Representative of Humanity', as one example of Christ 'speaking' through the gesture-language of eurythmy. Many more examples can be found in classical art. As Rudolf Steiner predicted, people in our time are beginning to have experiences of Christ in the etheric realm. Judith von Halle is one such person. She (and others) often describe Christ appearing in a eurythmy gesture, and 'speaking' through the gesture. The gesture is experienced as an emanation of great cosmic force- a flow of love-permeated etheric substance.

Dr. Powell explains that when eurythmy gestures are done in a sacred manner, we are speaking the language of Christ in the etheric realm. Through practicing eurythmy as devotional sacred movement, we can experience the radiance of the etheric Christ as an instreaming of grace—of love-permeated etheric substance. The *Inner Radiance Sequence* is a practice of aligning oneself with the glorious Resurrection body of Christ in the etheric realm. With profound humility, Dr. Powell explains that the *Inner Radiance Sequence* is an inspiration from Christ to serve the ultimate goal of our conscious spiritual evolution—to spiritualize our physical, astral, and etheric sheaths into higher members of Manas, Buddhi and Atma. This work of transformation is undertaken

consciously as a co-creative work with Christ and the spiritual hierarchies. Through the insights of Dr. Powell we can understand the role of eurythmy in this unfolding work.

The *Inner Radiance* Sequence has a further important implication as a protection against the negative influences modern technology is unleashing in the environment. These influences increasingly weaken and harden our life forces. This is an encounter with Ahriman and the great crisis of our time to which Rudolf Steiner alluded in his last address. It is through the power of the regenerative life-forces of Christ that we will overcome this trial. Practicing sacred gestures in alignment with the etheric Christ as offered through the *Inner Radiance* Sequence provides an antidote to the anti-life stream of Ahriman, whose forces work against the Divine Plan. Christ has assured us: "I will be with you always, until the end of time." Yet, we are free sovereign beings. We must choose to partake of what He offers, and co-participate with Him in unfolding the plan of Divine Creation.

* * * * *

See also the review by Molly Rose on page 18.

Overview of Publication of Material (Lecture Notes, etc.) by Valentin Tomberg

Regular readers of *Starlight* will know that the opening pages of this newsletter are usually dedicated to the publication of material by Valentin Tomberg that has not yet been published in English translation; in some cases, it has not been published before at all. With the Pentecost 2009 issue of *Starlight* the publication began of a series of lectures given by Valentin Tomberg in Amsterdam in the fall of the year 1939. (This set of lectures is *Series A*.) These lectures were delivered by Valentin Tomberg as an *introductory course*, introducing fundamental ideas of esotericism across a broad spectrum. In terms of Valentin Tomberg's biography, with hindsight it is possible to speak of these lectures as introductory to the *Lord's Prayer Course*, which he gave in Amsterdam shortly after – during the war years – from June 1940 to February 1943. *Series A* is not the only set of lectures that can be regarded as introducing the *Lord's Prayer Course*. However, before considering *Series B*, here with some background to *Series A*.

It has to be borne in mind that these lecture notes were given to me by Valentin Tomberg's student and friend, Eva Cliteur (Amsterdam), who was present at the Tuesday evening lectures – or, at least, at several of them. (It is not known if she was present at all of the lectures in this series.) Her notes indicate that she was present on these Tuesdays: October 17, October 31, November 14, November 28, December 12, and December 19, 1939. World War II had begun on September 1 of that year, so in the autumn of 1939 tensions were running high, and because of war raging in much of Europe, life in the Netherlands was becoming more and more difficult. Eva Cliteur was not a stenographer; her notes from these Tuesday evening lectures are fragmentary. On this account they have been compiled together into a set of four. These four (comprising lecture notes from six lectures) were published in the preceding four issues of *Starlight*.

With the second issue of *Starlight* in the year 2011, the second lecture in *Series B* of Valentin Tomberg's lectures, held on Thursday evenings during the early months of 1940, was published. Now, in this first issue of the year 2012, the third lecture in *Series B* is being published: *Macrocosm (the Spiritual Hierarchies) and Microcosm the Human Being*. As with the *Series A* lectures, these notes of the *Series B* lectures are published in English translation for the first time. The initial lecture notes in this series, from the lecture given by Valentin Tomberg on February 15, 1940, were published in the Easter 2011 issue of *Starlight*, and now this issue contains the notes from his lecture held on March 14, 1940. Like the *Series A* lectures, these lecture notes belonging to *Series B* can also be regarded as comprising a further introduction to the Lord's Prayer Course (available as study material from the Sophia Foundation).

Macrocosm (the Spiritual Hierarchies) and Microcosm (the Human Being)

Valentin Tomberg

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 lectures (*Series B*) held in the early months of 1940. The first lecture—entitled *The Human Being as a Trinity of Body, Soul, and Spirit*, held in Amsterdam on February 15, 1940—was published in the Easter 2011 issue of *Starlight*. The second lecture, *Soul Life*, held in Amsterdam on February 29, 1940, was published in the Advent issue. The third lecture was held on March 14, 1940. Further lectures in *Series B* will be published in the coming issues of *Starlight*. 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 spiritual 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.



The *body* has a threefold past. We also have a threefold future (*spirit*) and a threefold present (*soul*). Spirit is only in seed form, not yet developed.

A child that is unable to walk is carried. At one time also humanity was carried.

Science says that at one time fire was discovered. But could humankind have existed at all in the world of dinosaurs? If there had not been a kind of "super intelligence" which led human beings, humanity would have long disappeared from the earth. During the childhood of humanity there

was thus a “grown up” leadership—heroes, gods, demi gods, who taught human beings from above—of which legends of all peoples and nations speak.

Angels, Archangels, and Archai “filled out” for human beings that which would have been empty if they had not been there.

In the future, spirit self (*manas*) should be developed. As long as this is not there, the [Guardian] Angel is necessary. The Angel represents the task of spirit self (*manas*).

Conscience

[Conscience is] a voice which has a morally orienting and guiding impulse. The human being is often in conflict with his conscience—against his convictions.

Angel (Greek: *Angelos*)

With an Angel, the ear + larynx + hands are a single organ; hence an organ for:

the ear—listening;

the larynx—speaking;

the hands—watching over [in the sense of fulfilling the task of being a Guardian Angel].

Archangel (*Archangelos*) = Folk Spirit

[The Archangel] represents the pure moral-spiritual stream of conscience. Human beings of various [different] physical lines of heredity can belong to *one* Folk Spirit. That means: [it] is *not* the blood which unites, but the spiritual. The Archangel represents the task of life spirit (*buddhi*). As long as *buddhi* is not yet developed, the Archangel is necessary.

Archai (Time Spirits, Spirits of Personality, Primal Forces, Primal Beginnings)

[The Archai are] beings who guide the whole of humanity for a certain epoch [of time]—for example, the Graeco-Latin period or the Middle Ages. A time such as this is characterized in that it has a certain style. The Archai affect the awakening of the soul for world matters [world affairs]. The Archai span around 2400 years.

Exusiai (Spirits of Form, Elohim, Powers)

In nature substances are not formless, not amorphous, but *formed*. Form—forms endure, even if the substance flows, becomes remodeled. Everything having form is connected with the Spirits of Form (Exusiai or Elohim).

Dynamis (Spirits of Movement, Might)

Behind the form there is a *force* (growing, breathing, etc.). Everything that is gifted with movement has to do with the Spirits of Movement, the Dynamis.

Kyriotetes (Spirits of Wisdom, Dominions, Lords)

Great Wisdom underlies form and movement. Everything that the human being discovers is already somehow present in nature. (Paper—wasps nests; parachutes—dandelions; Leonardo da Vinci

studied the flights of birds and designed an airplane [in rudimentary form].) Nature is permeated by an incredible wisdom. Everything wise, also [even] rational economics, is connected with the Spirits of Wisdom.

The Spirits of Form determine the forms of the planets: Earth, Mercury, etc. The sphere is the perfect form. Every planet is formed by such a Spirit [of Form], Thus, the individual planets are also beings. The inner movement of the planets is an expression of the Spirits of Movement. It is the same for the wisdom [of the planets] and the Spirits of Wisdom.

The physical body of the world—Spirits of Form (Exusiai).

The life body of the world—Spirits of Movement (Dynamis).

The soul body of the world—Spirits of Wisdom (Kyriotetes).

Thus we arrive at the age-old thought: that the human being, as the microcosm (small world), is in the image of the macrocosm (great world).

If we take note of the human being, it can be said that the human being has:

7. Spirit Human (*atma*)

6. Life Spirit (*buddhi*)

5. Spirit Self (*manas*)

4. I

3. Astral body (soul body)

2. Etheric body (life body, body of formative forces)

1. Physical body

The planets have their soul life.

Spirits of Will = Thrones

They represent the cause as to why a planet moves (sentient soul of the world).

(To speak of “inertia”—[meaning a] persisting lethargic condition—this is not inertia, which is simply a word. One does not know inertia [but rather] one knows of the will or lack of it!)

The whole system of planetary movement comprises order. *The fourth order* is effected by:

Spirits of Harmony = Cherubim

(Mind soul of the world).

The fifth (highest) order is that of the Spirits of Love = Seraphim who connect individual solar systems with one another in harmony (consciousness soul of the world).

Above the hierarchies is the Holy Trinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The highest in the human being is Spirit Human [*atma*]. The highest in the world is the Father.

Spirit Human [*atma*]
—Father

Life Spirit [*buddhi*]
—Son

Spirit Self [*manas*]
—Holy Spirit

(above the [spiritual] hierarchies)

Since each hierarchy is threefold, we have a ninefoldness in the world. In the nine Beatitudes, we see the nine members of the human being.

In the Book of Genesis is written: “And God said: Let us make the human being in our image and likeness” (Genesis 1:26). Ninefoldness is deeply rooted in the world itself. Through the human being one can understand the world and vice versa. The human being and the world mirror one another.

Anthroposophy means “Wisdom of the human being,” because the human being is the key to the great world. *Quod est superior, est sicut quod est inferior*. [“That which is above is like to that which is below.”]

Nine is not the perfect number, but twelve.

A Time Spirit spans 2400 years. This is divided into seven time periods of 300 years.

In Ancient Israel Michael was the Folk Spirit. Then he ascended and now he is the Spirit of the Age [Time Spirit]. On the other hand there are Folk Souls, active in legends, etc. They are ascending—beyond Guardian Angels. However, they are not yet Folk Spirits (not Archangels). Everywhere there are transitions. In their consciousness, geniuses are on the angelic level.

Nervousness [is caused by] spirit that is not assimilated—a knocking of the spiritual world on closed doors.

Apocalypse: Human beings close themselves off, and blessing becomes a curse.

Materialism: [A] preference for giving up thinking—[out of] inner convenience.

Translator’s footnote: In his article “The Spiritual Hierarchies” in *Starlight*, vol. 8, no. 2 (Fall 2008), Valentin Tomberg gave many more indications concerning the profound significance of the spiritual hierarchies and their activity in our time. The next lecture belonging to Series B, held on March 28, 1940, will be published in English translation in the next issue of *Starlight*. The last lecture was held on May 9, 1940, on the eve of the German invasion of the Netherlands. With the Nazi invasion of Holland on May 10, 1940, there were no further lectures. These public lectures were discontinued. However, a small group of people continued to meet privately with Valentin Tomberg in Amsterdam on a weekly basis during the war years to focus on the esoteric dimension of the Lord’s Prayer. An English translation of Valentin Tomberg’s esoteric *Lord’s Prayer Course* is available in installments from the Sophia Foundation. Within the *Lord’s Prayer Course* the deeper significance of the themes addressed in these lectures is explored in depth as part of the *School of Christ* for our time.

Help for Our Time

Molly Rose

A Spirit-quake of great magnitude is
Sending out tremors: even now
Ripples are being felt throughout
The cosmos!

· · ·
New energy from on high penetrates
the Earth,
quicken the heart while sifting
weeds of old growth.

Nan Merrill,
Lumen Christi...Holy Wisdom

We live in critical times. What we do and the choices we make are vitally important, not only for ourselves, but for the whole of humanity and the being of the planet. There is pain, loss, and suffering, in our personal lives, among our friends, and in the world at large. It is often hard to know how to respond, as the challenges are complex with many interwoven strands. Whether in the foreground or the background of consciousness, anxiety at some level is an ever-present companion.

It feels overwhelming at times and I am certainly not immune to various strategies to ward off depression and despair, including psychic numbing, or getting caught up in work-a-holism, and obsessive Internet researching – as much as I can bear. The small positive acts I *can* manage seem woefully inadequate or even futile.

I recognize myself in the stages outlined in “*The Waking Up Syndrome*” (by Sarah Anne Edwards and Linda Buzzell in book *Ecotherapy*,¹ a collection of essays by various authors, published by the Sierra Club). There is disbelief or not *wanting* to believe, in the **Denial** stage, and as evidence mounts, the **Semiconsciousness** of growing awareness with attendant anxiety. Then comes the **Awakening**, when experience or catalyzing events brings the problem full-blown into consciousness.

“It won’t let us turn away and the force of it makes “waking up” incredibly painful Our physiological and emotional threat responses can take many forms. Some of us become obsessive newswatchers, documentary filmgoers, Internet compulsives, or book readers, needing to know more and more about what’s really happening.” (p. 125)

Others may revert to more subtle forms of denial, a “crisis honeymoon” of constructive adjustments, but “*this initial glow may begin to wear off as people realize the enormity and depth of the changes that are necessary and even inevitable.*” Some may begin to suffer depression, anxiety, and panic attacks, while others throw themselves obsessively into salvational activity, or even see new business or political opportunities in the crisis. (p.126)

¹ Linda Buzzell and Craig Chalquist, editors, *Ecotherapy, Healing with Nature in Mind*, Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, CA, 2009.

In the next stage, **Shock**, there is *“a profound but unavoidable feeling of isolation and disconnection. We now inhabit a reality we can no longer ignore, but it’s one that few others seem to notice.... How do we relate to a world that’s no longer real to us, but is still business as usual to most?”* The **Despair** stage follows with powerlessness and guilt, as well as grief and sorrow, but unlike a onetime loss that one learns to accept, this is more like the process of accepting a chronic degenerative illness. (p. 126-127)

In the **Empowerment** stage we accept our limitations in the face of the challenges, and discover what Howard Kunstler calls the “intelligent response”, or *“seeking and taking whatever creative, constructive action will best sustain those aspects of life that are most important to us.”* (p.128)

The authors end with both a warning and encouragement: *“At times we may backslide into paralyzing despair and may need occasional furloughs from the fray for mental and emotional refreshment– but taking positive steps is, ultimately, the best way to maintain optimism.”* (p. 129)

Deep down, I think we know we can’t do this alone. I believe humanity as a whole needs to undertake a 12-step approach: admit that our way of life has become unmanageable, believe that *“a power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity”*, and turn our will over to God– *“Thy will, not my will, be done”*– (steps 1-3) and then proceed to undertake a path of purification, prayer, meditation and conscious contact with the divine, that can lead to a spiritual awakening, and striving to live by these principles (steps 7-12).

This is the essential spiritual journey. We are led through our pain and suffering– or perhaps through a spontaneous experience of awakening or unity– to seek and follow a spiritual path or program of development.

In my own journey I have often felt lost and alone in the wilderness, as if I was hacking my way cross country. Again and again, as health challenges and life conditions threaten to overwhelm me, I am forced to dig down for inner, spiritual resources of endurance, courage, and persistence and the *“strength to get up and try again, one day at a time”*. Fortunately, at critical times I’ve come across guidance or, sometimes even a path, which has helped me find my way for a while.

I found through the Sophia Foundation, a path that has served me for the past 14 years– the path of Christ and Sophia– in the Sacred Marriage of Love and Wisdom. This path has offered many resources for inner strength as well as sustenance: choreocosmos and sacred dance, meditations and prayers, study materials, teachings, beautiful and profound celebrations of sacred mysteries, and most recently the profound practice of cultivating inner radiance. (See co-founder Robert Powell’s new book, *Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality*).² This last practice, which Robert Powell calls *“putting on the resurrection body”*, brings to mind a phrase from Nan Merrill: *“Don we now our spiritual apparel...”*

² Robert Powell, *Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality, Awakening the Soul through Modern Etheric Movement*, Lindisfarne Books, Great Barrington, MA 2012.

My purpose in writing now is to introduce Nan Merrill's poetic work, which complements that of the Sophia Foundation, and which I've found to be a valuable spiritual resource, not only in navigating these troubled times and keeping our boats afloat, but also in supporting us in becoming active participants "*in the healing and harmonizing of our blue-green jewel: planet earth.*"

* * *

Below, are excerpts from Merrill's *Lumen Christi...Holy Wisdom*³ (now unfortunately out of print, though available in the used market).

Light-bearers are needed in every walk
of life as dark forces ply
their crafty trade.
.
.
.
.
Breathe in the pure Light of truth
while you may;
a vessel of Light still shines
even when cracked or broken.

When the call comes, blessed are those
Who respond without fear;
Love is the helping hand sent
to guide each soul,
to heal wounds of the heart. (p. 103)

Be not concerned that your gift
may seem so small;
your grain of sand may become
the pearl. (p. 29)

Nan Merrill writes of her life in the preface to *Lumen Christi...Holy Wisdom*, "*The tapestry of my life—like most lives—has been woven with dark strands of pain and loss intermingled with pastels of peace and harmony, earth tones of groundedness and strength, and the bright primary colors that bring joy to life and the energy to serve.*"

Her own journey of awakening and being led by the spirit to Love, Silence, and Christ and Sophia, included an 8-year period of facing her fears with a counselor who supported her inner growth and wholeness, a process which released greater energy for service and love. This is an instructive reminder that soul work, or what some have called "descent" work or "shadow" work, is necessary to healthy development and spiritual ascent, while it also helps develop humility and

³ Nan C. Merrill, *Lumen Christi...Holy Wisdom, Journey to Awakening*, Continuum International Publishing Group, New York, NY, 2002.

compassion. “Kneel down and ascend!” Merrill writes, (p. 71). “Weep not, nor grow weary...Progress is assured as you confront the fears” (p. 47). She encourages us “to die to all that veils our deepest truth whether intellectually, emotionally, physically, or spiritually.” (p. 71). “Tears are nourishment that well up in loving hearts healing and awakening the soul to Love.” (p. 79)

I came to *Lumen Christi ... Holy Wisdom*, only after finding strength and comfort with Merrill’s beautiful *Psalms for Prayer, an Invitation to Wholeness* ⁴ (still in print as the 10th Anniversary edition). With this true labor of love, I experienced the “Loving Companion Presence” addressed throughout the psalms variously as *Beloved, Loving Presence, Eternal Listener, Friend, Divine Presence, Heart of Love, Divine Guest, Holy One, and Gracious Mender of Souls*.

This may give you a sense of why Cynthia Bourgeault calls Nan Merrill the “Rumi of the Christian faith”, and writes that her “intimate heart-knowledge of God....radiates from each page of her poetry, awakening the same confidence in the reader.” This is precisely what *Psalms for Praying* did for me, thus preparing me for receiving *Lumen Christi ... Holy Wisdom* with an open heart.

From previous work with singing the divine offices (in Gregorian chant), I have become aware of the treasures collected in the psalms. The language in the Hebrew scripture reflect the condition of the Israelites in brutal, patriarchal times– fighting for survival among hostile groups– a society Merrill describes as “based on fear and guilt, projecting evil and sin onto outer enemies”– the language of kings, enemies, armies fighting, and vanquishing foes. Yet through all this Merrill hears in the psalms the cries and yearnings of the soul, along with songs of surrender and praise.

“Aspiring to live in a spirit of cooperation, co-creation, and companionship with the Beloved” and “affirming the life-giving fruits of love and acknowledging the isolation and loneliness of those separated from Love”, Merrill offers us *Psalms for Praying* which are not meant to replace the original psalms of Hebrew scripture, but to serve as “an invitation to listen to the Voice of Silence that speaks within your own soul.”

I drink almost daily from this deep well of nourishment, especially when my soul is crying out in anguish and yearning. Through Merrill’s words I have been able to experience something of the Comforter, the Counselor, the Good Shepherd who calms inner storms, gives us eternal peace, and centers us again and again in the Heart of all Hearts. I actually felt a response, and experienced a knowing that the “Loving Companion Presence” is indeed with me.

I also experience comfort in knowing that these psalms, cries, and laments, have nourished humankind since at least King David’s time to the present– kept alive in the Hebrew tradition and later in the Christian monastic tradition. They re-emerge through Merrill’s work, in words that speak to us today, calling forth what is needed in our time for the Rose of the World to bloom and flourish. I share below, with permission, excerpts, to give you a taste of this treasury.

⁴ Nan C. Merrill, *Psalms for Praying, An Invitation to Wholeness*, Continuum International Publishing Group, New York, NY, 2002.

From Psalm 46:

The Beloved is our refuge and strength
A Loving Presence in times of trouble.
Therefore we need not fear though
the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the
heart of the sea;
Though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble
with its tumult.

There is a river whose streams
make glad the Holy City,
the holy habitation of the Most High.
The Beloved is in the midst of it,
it shall not be moved;
Our loving Creator is an
ever-present help.

These are indeed psalms for praying!

Molly Rose
January 2012

From Psalm 86:

Give ear to my cry, O Comforter,
and answer me, for
I am sorely in need of You.
Awaken new life in me, as I yearn
to do your Will;
dispel the ignorance of my ways,
as I put my trust in You.
.
O Beloved, numerous fears rise up
within me;
like an army they seek to
overwhelm me, and
they would keep me in darkness.
Yet You are merciful and gracious,
ready to forgive and ever
abounding in steadfast Love
and faithfulness.
Be present to me and receive my prayer;
imbue me with strength, and
help me to release each fear.
Pour forth your Light into my soul,
that all that is hidden in
darkness
may come forth into awareness.
For You, O Beloved, are my Redeemer
and my Comforter.

A Valuable Workbook for the Millennium

Review by Molly Rose, from the Amazon.com website:

http://www.amazon.com/Cultivating-Inner-Radiance-Body-Immortality/dp/1584201177/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1332096529&sr=1-1

I just got my copy of Robert Powell's book, *Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality*, and have looked it over. One word comes to mind: **WOW!** It includes just about everything Robert Powell has taught (as meditative exercises, prayers, and sacred dance) over the past number of years—with much new material as well—all in one volume. What appears to be a workbook with a simple cover design is a great treasure indeed!

Robert Powell was awarded a Ph.D. for his research into the history of the zodiac. He also has some forty years of experience working with Rudolf Steiner's spiritual science as well as being engaged with research in astrophysics, or star wisdom, as his many books testify. He is also the editor of the yearly *Journal for Star Wisdom* and is co-founder of the Sophia Foundation.

In 1982 Robert Powell completed training in eurythmy at the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland, a center founded in Switzerland by Rudolf Steiner for the continuation of research into the many impulses that he seeded through his extraordinary spiritual work. The impulse for eurythmy, a new artistic form of movement, was given in 1912, and the *Inner Radiance* book is written in part to honor the 100th anniversary of this artistic and healing gift to the world.

As a trained eurythmist, Robert Powell has worked for the last thirty years with eurythmy, and also for twelve years with the therapeutic application of eurythmy as a new healing modality. He saw an opportunity through eurythmy, and Rudolf Steiner's spiritual science, of the possibility for people to be able to experience the more subtle levels of existence that are addressed in the *Inner Radiance* book.

He was thus inspired to bring forth Choreocosmos, a movement or dance form born out of many years of serious and deep work with eurythmy, based firmly on Rudolf Steiner's indications. Choreocosmos (from the Greek, meaning "cosmic dance"), which includes cosmic as well as sacred dance (or prayer eurythmy), enables people to move "in harmony with the heavens" and experience the blessings of the planets and the zodiac as they ray down upon the earth and humanity, and as they work throughout the course of planetary and human evolution.

Choreocosmos is intended for *anyone* with an interest in spiritual development—whether or not they've had any formal dance or eurythmy training. Participants may be interested in a spiritual path through movement, or they may wish to develop through prayer and meditation, or gain insight into planetary and human evolution. Through Choreocosmos they are able to receive spiritual insights and blessings, as well as experience a deep harmony in their being, because it involves not only their thinking, but also feeling and the will, as they work with words, music, movement, and gestures in groups or individually. (A video clip of Choreocosmos can be viewed on the Sophia Foundation website: www.sophiafoundation.org).

The practices and exercises in the *Inner Radiance* book are the result of many years work and those of us who have been privileged to work with them over time can attest to their efficacy and profundity. With this book one can work with and build up an individual practice that supports inner growth and spiritual development, as well as cultivating inner radiance. I especially like the inclusion of material on Peter Deunov's music (with which I am familiar, through Paneurhythmy), as music is an important dimension of this work. I am also grateful for the drawings, which are helpful in working out, or remembering, the movement.

This is a book that can be read by anyone, though there is a great deal of material here that cannot be absorbed all at once. It is above all, meant to be *worked with* and returned to again and again, as one feels the desire to deepen one's understanding and practice. However one chooses to work with the material—there are many levels and options—this is a valuable companion for the millennium. It represents a tremendous labor of love and is a real culmination of Robert Powell's life's work. I am very grateful for the gift of this book, which introduces a newly birthed work into a world that is in such need of spiritual help and depth!

* * * * *

And herewith a response from Estelle Isaacson regarding the book:

There is great power in this book! In speaking with a dear friend, she and I had a similar experience, wherein we felt the incredible power of this book—just simply from holding the book in our hands! What a blessing it is! I have experienced the living being of this book and have seen much angelic activity around it—the angels are indeed anxious to participate with us in this vital work. I can hardly put it down! I have encountered the presence of Christ through this book and have heard the same from others who have worked with the prayers and gestures set forth. It is a profound work that can assist one to truly connect to Christ in the etheric realm. I love this book! I only need to be near it, and my whole soul is enlivened. May it reach everyone who is ready to receive it!

Vision of Sophia and the Rose of the World

Estelle Isaacson

The following vision took place at a sacred Nature Temple space, which I was visiting with some friends.

On the Temple grounds, we began with the eurythmy sequence, *Putting on the Resurrection Body*.¹ I experienced Christ's Presence most profoundly during the part wherein the words of the Risen One are invoked.

After this, we began a walking meditation, encircling the Temple grounds three and a half times while singing *Kyrie Eleison, Christe Eleison, Sophia Eleison* (3½ times to honor the years of Christ's ministry). I enjoyed the meditation very much. However, to my utter astonishment, when we turned to face the center of the grounds at the end of the meditation, I saw something I had never seen before—with my naked eyes (!) I could see into another dimension. This truly defies description, because I have never seen this before in the *physical* realm. It was as if the Temple grounds had transformed into a dome of very high-vibration frequencies, which appeared as a shimmering mirror-like edifice. This was similar to the way that a mirage appears, silvery and shimmery, but the energy was not moving in waves—it was stable.

Around this dome were twelve portals to each of the zodiacal constellations. I could see through the portals—some of them appeared to be 'open' and others seemed 'closed'. There was one in particular that was very open and beckoning: the portal to Cancer.

I turned around to look at my friends and they all appeared to be *one being*. They seemed, moreover, to be completely at one with the land, and the land was at one with them. One friend spoke to me, and it was as if the land itself was speaking through her. I was unsure of what to do next. Another friend offered that I could go ahead and experience whatever it was that was happening, and perhaps they each could experience it through me.

I took in a breath and turned back to the center of the circle. I then saw a portal open between the doors to Cancer and Leo. It looked like the entrance to a cathedral; but rather than of stone, it was fashioned out of the elements of Nature. In the center of the opening was a being that was in the form of a cross. I then saw that the being *was* the portal. I knew I was looking into another dimension, and that this being was a guardian for Heavenly Sophia, guarding the womb of her heart. I remained at this threshold for quite some time.

Then, I looked around and saw that there were twelve enormous golden beings standing in a circle. They were huge! They were like worlds in of themselves and were facing the center of the circle in a strong 'M' (eurythmy gesture)—with their hands at the level of their chests, palms facing

¹ The sequence *Putting on the Resurrection Body* is described in Robert Powell's book *Cultivating Inner Radiance and the Body of Immortality*, which also describes the eurythmy gestures for Universal Love and for the sound 'M' referred to later in this vision.

outwards, as if they were pushing against something. I understood that they protect and guard the space and time where Sophia dwells. As far as the human being is concerned, Sophia dwells outside of space and time; no human being can penetrate to 'where' She is unless these guardians allow it.

While at the threshold, I wanted to be with Sophia. The guardians do not allow any to pass who try to approach from a state of fullness. I made my request to see Her from a state of emptiness. The guardians stepped back, making the gesture of Universal Love and radiating warm golden light—it was the same quality of light I have seen in Shambhala.

The guardian beings were very different from the one being I saw as the portal to Sophia. The twelve beings were huge and warm, like suns. I understood that they were once very powerful cosmic beings who had been called to serve Shambhala, and that since they had sacrificed themselves to serve in their capacity, they had become changed and transformed. Through Christ's opening the way to Shambhala, these beings are thus able to evolve along with Earth's evolutionary process. They have been guarding the aspect of Sophia that descended, and have something to do with Will. Indeed, unless human souls undergo a purification of the will, these beings remain immovable for them. When purified, the will forces are in complete service to the Divine, and they become thereby the forces of Love. Purified Will is the power of Love, in the sense of Love as a *verb*. If one's will is simply to follow one's own agenda, these beings seem unapproachable, impenetrable. For when they are in the 'M' gesture, they appear like golden statues, guarding with the strength of a very protective mother who will do all that she can to protect her children. It is only through Love—when the will is transformed into Love—that they then appear in the Universal Love gesture, holding their arms open and radiating the golden light of Divine Love. As they open up in this way to allow a person to pass through, they look like angels and take on their more cosmic appearance.²

The other being, who appeared as the portal to Sophia, was a reflective being—like a mirror. If one is full of self, then one cannot know that the being is there—for it reflects oneself, and there is a struggle with what is reflected. It shows itself as a portal only when one is empty, and then the being appears as a silvery, shimmery portal who grants access. Until one is empty, the reflection of the self will occlude the portal to Sophia, as this being is both a mirror and a portal—and if one gets caught in the mirror aspect, one does not know it is a portal. The being does not *call* to you. Your soul *yearns* for it. And yet you cannot at first find this being, precisely because it does mirror: the closer you draw to it, the more you see your own reflection and notice something about yourself. If you become stuck in what you see about yourself, you will see only your reflection and not notice the portal.

When you are full of self, this being is rather fiery; but when you are empty, it is cool and silvery, and brings clarity.

² I cannot say that my will has reached a state of complete purification. Perhaps I have been allowed to see Heavenly Sophia in order to teach others about Her.

One must first go through the Cross in order to approach Sophia.

Returning to the twelve guardians, I saw them in cosmic space making the Universal Love gesture. Sophia then descended into the center of their circle, Her robes radiant with prisms of light, swirling around Her in space. She was clothed in a starry mantle. Her face was luminous white like a pearl.

I was in awe as I saw Her take up a strong stance of love and strength; the stars all around Her were mirroring Her strength! I could feel Her strength and power in the twelve guardians. She held a sword in Her right hand and a chalice in Her left. She raised the sword to a horizontal position across Her shoulders, while She held the chalice at the level of Her womb.

She said, holding out the chalice: *I shall receive whom I shall receive. But those whom I cannot receive will not be allowed to approach!*

It then occurred to me that She was showing ‘the blade and the chalice’—an image of the union of the divine masculine and feminine energies. In the chalice was the offering of Herself. She held out the chalice to us and lowered the sword and said, *Come and partake of my body that I may be in you and you in Me.*

As She extended the chalice, it multiplied to become many chalices—enough for all to partake of the milk and honey of Her Love and Grace. I tasted the milk and honey and then She gazed lovingly into my eyes. Time passed, but I do not know how much time...we all received of Her.

When I again opened my eyes, I saw that the entire space of the Temple grounds was filled with the Light of the milk of Her grace. I was again astounded by the light that I could see with my own eyes!

I heard Her speak: *My body is the Silence. I give to you my radiant garment of Light. You are the garment of My Being; you are all the body of My Being!*

Beckoned, I went toward Her to receive Her and entered into Her Silence. I saw Her robes open; within Her Being were the starry heavens in Holy Silence. I felt the stars imprint themselves on the garment of my being so that I was *clothed* in Silence; I became the Silence.

After this, I saw Sophia again, standing upon a luminous rose. The petals started to fall away from the rose and fly through space. With the petals of Her Rose, I traveled through time and space, seeing the annals of time pass by me on either side. I understood that the ‘Rose of the World’ was once held in oneness, but separation occurred and eventually manifested as various and sundry religions and philosophies divided against each other.

I again saw Her standing upon this Rose and watched the petals tear from the Rose, as if tearing out from Her own heart. I saw the petals fall into our own hearts! We—the lovers of Sophia—carry the petals of Her Rose in our hearts! We carry the petals of past, present, and future. We had been an important part of the process by which the separation occurred, having incarnated at various

times bearing Her petals in our hearts. We had tasks that we accomplished within the different religions and philosophies of the world, and thus have carried the petals of the Rose of the World in our hearts for a long time.

Sophia suffered a tearing out—as these petals were torn from Her heart and scattered by the ‘winds of doctrine’ as human beings defined and limited God in their finite minds.

But She has watched over each and every petal that has fallen from the Rose of Divine Wisdom.

And we each have a divine mission to care for the petals within our own hearts until it is time for the Rose of the World to manifest in its wholeness.

The Rose of the World, once restored, shall become the chalice where all may partake of Sophia’s Wisdom; all shall receive of Her and be nourished.

She wants us to become aware of the precious petals that we each bear within us. We are a part of Her great hope, Her plan for the New Earth. Each one of us is the Rose of the World, for we bear the Rose within us! We are the microcosm of the Rose—the Rose that will become the Rose of the World!

She told me that we are a *Star*. Together, we are the being of a Star.

When I opened my eyes again, I beheld Her radiant garment of light touching everything around us! Every tree, every flower, the birds, and each one of us—were clothed in Her radiant garment! We were in Her and She in us!

* * * * *

Remembering the awe-inspiring image of Sophia with the sword and chalice, I searched to find a depiction of any goddess who might appear this way. I was excited to find the photo below, which is of a monument that has graced the capital of Georgia since 1958, the 1500th anniversary of Tbilisi. Standing on the top of Solokai hill overlooking Tbilisi, *Kartlis Deda* (the Mother of Kartli) wears traditional Georgian dress, and is 20 meters tall. In her right hand is a sword to defend against enemies, and in her left is a bowl of wine to greet all friends of Georgia. Kartlis Deda’s pose is slightly different than the one I saw Sophia hold, but the message is so very similar!



Tbilisi Mother Georgia

Announcing a new book by Estelle Isaacson

Through the Eyes of Mary Magdalene *Book I: Early Years and Soul Awakening*

by Estelle Isaacson

To be published in spring of 2012 by LogoSophia Press. Approximately 300 pages.
Price to be determined.

In this first book of a trilogy on the life of Mary Magdalene, Estelle Isaacson presents her visions of the life of 'the Apostle to the Apostles' as seen through Magdalene's own eyes. She begins with Magdalene's birth and follows her through the years leading to the raising of her brother Lazarus from the dead. Estelle presents these visions as her own experiences and stresses that while she has done her utmost to portray what she has seen, she is very aware how difficult it is to cast these experiences into words.

Following a *Prologue* "in the starry heavens," *Part One* encompasses Magdalene's childhood, her journeys and education in Egypt, her struggle with temptations, and her conversion. *Part Two* takes the reader through some of Magdalene's experiences as she lays down her former life and follows Jesus as his disciple. *Part Three* visits the Lazarus mysteries and includes revelations concerning his initiation, death, and resurrection. The book ends just after the raising of Lazarus. *Appendices* include subsidiary visions. Among these are a vision regarding the holy women and a message from them, as well as two visions of Magdalene's sister Silent Mary, a figure otherwise unknown except through the earlier visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich. Silent Mary is a special guide in this work of beholding the Mystery of Golgotha.

The book is graced with over 40 illustrations by James Tissot, whose work, largely inspired by the visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich, resonate also with Estelle in a very special way, the artist's details being so very close to what she has herself witnessed in vision.

Introductory matter includes a Publisher's Note by James Wetmore, a Foreword by Robert Powell, and an Introduction ("Witnessing the Witness") by Claudia McLaren Lainson.

With this trilogy on the life of Mary Magdalene, Estelle hopes that Magdalene's biography will inspire many to seek for and find the Christ. Magdalene's story is the story of humanity: each of us has laid down our own divinity and willingly descended to this world to gain wisdom by passing through the refining fires of opposition and duality. It is through Christ's redeeming sacrifice that we may find our true selves, and Mary Magdalene can be our guide in this quest.

Archangel Michael:
The Fiery Thought King of the Universe
How Can We Know Him?
Part II

Bill Trusiewicz

*The Stars once Spoke to Humanity.
It is World Destiny that they are Silent now.
To be aware of this Silence
Can become Pain for Earthly Humanity.
But in the Deepening Silence
There Grows and Ripens
What Humanity Speaks to the Stars...
Rudolf Steiner, Christmas 1923*

In a previous article, Part I of *Archangel Michael: How Can We Know Him*, we examined various aspects of the being sometimes called *The Fiery Thought King of the Universe*, in an attempt to grasp his nature and know him ourselves. Our discussions were aimed at bringing abstract definitions and descriptions down to earth showing how we might recognize the working of this lofty being in everyday life. In Part II we will continue our investigation with the question: why is it in our time that Archangel Michael remains silent? We will be inquiring into what we might call the *word-less* aspect of the activity of the being of Michael. Contrary to what we might think, addressing the word-less requires a rather convoluted path of words since we must overcome what is ordinary in our language, a language that is best suited to the sense world around us, to arrive at a *spiritual* understanding. Although a more direct path can be taken through Art—such as what is expressed so succinctly in the poem above, in taking a scientific approach to what typically defies definition one must deal with the convolutions of the human thinking process, in order to become aware of and by-pass the many obstacles that lie on the path to spiritual knowledge, so that we may reach our goal.

A Monument to Silence

Bill Trusiewicz

I want to erect a monument to Silence:
a tall obelisk
whose height
diminishes not
its ever reaching,
whose ever reaching
is not diminished by
its not yet having reached.

I want to erect a monument to Silence:
spawning itself
with traces ever
arising in conversations,
shards of deep space
tossed into word salads
ever outreaching thinking's
limited reflection of Cosmos

I want to erect a monument to Silence:
a Golden Ear
for humankind.

The object of our inquiry here in these articles, to learn to *know* Archangel Michael, does not refer to *knowing him* in the ordinary sense. Our aim is to develop not just a *knowing-thought* connection with him but also a *knowing-feeling* and a *knowing-will* connection. In so doing we can move from a youthful and imitative connection, to a fully collaborative and mature relationship with him. To do so we must enter *fully* into his gestures so that we feel ourselves to be part of him and he part of us. Nevertheless, what we know of him, purely from the standpoint of thought, is, not surprisingly, the perfect place to start.

We have already mentioned that Michael is taciturn. There is perhaps nothing more important to “knowing him” than to understand this key fact. I mentioned in the previous article that “the only way to see him is through his gaze upon us.” Saying this intimated that we must follow his gestures, in this case the gesture of his “eyes,” his seeing. If we are to find our way into Michael’s silent nature, we may follow his movements, not imitatively—as if alongside him—but participating in his very being. Developing this thought, let us think about what uniquely occurs in language and in speech. To do so it will be helpful if we first think of what can be known *without* the benefit of speech, *without* the advantage of communication that comes through conversation, for instance. If we imagine carefully observing a person walking to work, for several days or even weeks, without talking to them, much can be learned or surmised about them. But, when once we speak to them, we will discover information about which we could never have known or inferred from our careful observation.

With this in mind (if you will forgive the grotesqueness of the idea) let us consider the Archangel Michael as if he were a person with whom we could converse at length. Imagine what limitless knowledge he could grant us? What might we *not* be able to learn from him if he would speak to us? This most noble and resolute Sun Archangel, a leader among the Sun beings—who bears Christ in his bosom—a being whose capacity for knowledge and speech is present to the highest degree, this ruler of the Cosmic Intelligence—how is it that he surrenders his capacity for speech? How is it that the Fiery Thought King does not speak his fiery thoughts? Why is it that Archangel Michael denies us his knowledge through speech?

Out of Silent Depths

Bill Trusiewicz

Out of Silent Depths
Our Voice must arise
Primordial
Stark
Pure.
Nothing
That otherwise rises
Shall lead
The weary throngs.

Firstly, he knows that human beings have reached adequate inner strength, in terms of spirit self-awareness, and that to continue to disseminate the cosmic intelligence would no longer benefit us. Humanity has depended on inspiration (divine speech) from the spiritual world since primeval times when thoughts streamed through us instinctively without our having to exercise our thinking capacity. Since the Golden Age of Greece, reflective thinking, as we experience it today, began to replace inspiration from the spiritual worlds. This is the reason materialistic thinking is as natural to human beings today as the spirituality evident in mythology was natural to humanity the further one looks into the past.

Since the regency of Archangel Michael began in 1879 (and it will last about 350 years)¹, it is no longer necessary to spoon feed humanity with cosmic wisdom. Humanity has come of age to be able to transform what was *cosmic* intelligence, and was formerly given to humanity as divine inspiration, into *human* intelligence. What occurred in the spiritual world immediately bordering our sense world, having been accomplished by Michael in 1879, made it possible for the greater part of humanity to work with the “Grail Knowledge” of the stream of Parzival, which was initiated in the 9th century for a select group of individuals who were prepared to receive it at that time. Modern spiritual science in all of its forms is a direct continuation of the Parzival stream or what Rudolf Steiner called the *New Grail Mysteries*. What exactly occurred in 1879 and what makes the New Grail Mysteries available to a greater portion of humanity?

Rudolf Steiner has indicated the fact that in 1879 Michael succeeded in casting Ahriman (the being often called Satan), down from heaven, after a long battle in the spiritual world that began after the middle of the 19th century. What does this mean? It means that since that time humanity has become free of the influence of Ahrimanic spiritual beings on their thinking. If we understand this event we see that from that time forward the influence of these beings was restricted to the earthly realm; their sway in the spiritual world of *thought* was ended. The Ahrimanic beings could no longer inspire and corrupt the thoughts of those who would rise to pure thinking.

This fact would not be so significant except that correspondingly, the cosmic intelligence, which was also being disseminated by inspiration from the spiritual world up to that point—was also restricted to the earthly realm. With this momentous event the last remnants of direct spiritual guidance for humanity were expurgated leaving humanity completely free from the influence of spiritual beings. This means that Michael simultaneously cleared ALL spiritual influences, both good and evil, that were formerly available to humanity from the spiritual world of human thinking. Both Ahrimanic and Michaelic inspirations virtually ceased. This is another way of saying that at this point in human spiritual evolution, Michael, in order to fulfill a special need in humanity—became taciturn. From then on, we might say he refused to speak his cosmic thoughts directly to us. Why?

We have begun to answer this question, so far in a rather abstract way; let us continue to ask it until we can grasp it more concretely.

One reason why he denies us his knowledge is because Michael knows his limitations. Although the intelligence he possesses encompasses the whole of the mystery wisdom of all ages and thereby authorizes him to be the *Guardian* or *Ruler of the Cosmic Intelligence*, he knows that human beings must reclaim their cosmic connection, and to do so they themselves must *resurrect* the cosmic intelligence, of their own free will; he cannot do it for them. The divine plan is that human beings would become creators like their original divine creator. Mystery wisdom must live in each one of us in a unique way. We are all highly individual beings, each a unique “fingerprint” of the creator. We each are a gift to the world because we bring something no other can bring; the cosmic wisdom must express itself through each one of us *distinctively*. What is needed in our world is for each one of us to rise up with the inner strength that we alone possess—bearing the unique cosmic

¹ According to esoteric teaching and verified by the spiritual research of Rudolf Steiner.

wisdom of the creative being *that we are*, as an offspring of the Creator. This, Michael cannot do for us.

Having begun to explore the idea that cosmic intelligence must be transformed into human intelligence and having introduced the idea that this process was initiated in the ninth century by Parzival, who became “king of the Grail”—with Parzival as our guide, let us attempt to further unveil the difference between what we call *cosmic intelligence* and *human intelligence*. It is not enough to have vague ideas about what this means; we must be clear about it to adequately understand the work of Archangel Michael in our time. The story of Parzival by Wolfram von Eschenbach has been written, essentially, to clarify this difficult question. As we proceed, let us bear in mind the fact that Rudolf Steiner has said on many occasions that the character represented by Parzival was an initiate of very high standing having an importance even exceeding that of Christian Rosenkreuz, for instance, and whose part in world evolution will only be realized in the distant future.

The Parzival story is, of course, open to interpretation. But, even modern scholars who are not versed in mystery wisdom recognize in these stories a very modern point of view. Nevertheless, only if we approach this story with the right questions and persevere with them will it yield the answers relative to the New Grail Mysteries that we are looking for. Concretely speaking, the question remains: what is the difference between “human intelligence” and “cosmic intelligence?” We know from what we have discussed so far that the one comes from the other. How are they the same and how are they different?

It is quite clear from the very beginning of the story of Parzival that the destiny of this individual was a peculiar one. We can see that his path would differ dramatically from his contemporaries; he was, we might say, piloting a paradigm shift. He entered uniquely into the world of knighthood, the world that surrounded the Knights of King Arthur as it existed in the ninth century. If I might remind our readers, many of whom will be familiar with this story, that from his earliest youth any knowledge of Knighthood or of the outer world, for that matter, except for the natural world of his simple home, and the woods that surrounded it, was withheld from Parzival. His mother protected him from knowledge, which she feared would lead to his death as had befallen his father. Those of us who have some familiarity with this epic poem, universally regarded as among the greatest works of literature of its time, know that there is wonderful significance in every word and that the symbolism is rich with meaning. Early in the story, the young Parzival does become attracted to the world of Knighthood, as his mother feared, when he first meets a small band of knights passing down a path on a mountain slope near his home. He mistakes the knights in their shining armor, for gods. Before she knows it, Parzival is ready to leave her protection to meet King Arthur, and join the community of knights.

A most significant fact in the telling of this story is that Parzival does not follow the prescribed method; he does not go through the usual training to become a knight. He did not enter into Knighthood like his contemporaries, but was initiated through his LIFE experiences. He was, most ignorant of the simplest facts and rules not only of Knighthood but of human relations in general. This detail becomes even more pointed when we realize that the code of ethics of knighthood,

which was the code of conduct of the times, was very well developed, complex and rigid. It consisted of rules of behavior that developed over several generations in connection with the cosmic wisdom (whose guardian was Archangel Michael), observed by those who sat at the round table of King Arthur.

“Not in earthly script but in the script of the stars is written the original book from which Wolfram von Eschenbach draws the tradition [of the Parzival story] which he uses,” says, Walter Johannes Stein.² Stein is referring to Flegetanis, whom a certain Kyot uses as his source which he then passed on to Wolfram. Flegetanis was well versed in the wisdom of the stars and is said to have read the name of the Grail in the constellations. We see here an early development of Michaelic, cosmic intelligence. Rudolf Steiner tells us that the round table of King Arthur itself is a picture of the twelve-fold wisdom of the Zodiacal round. This *cosmic wisdom*, as they knew it, determined the education and life of the Knights. Everything they did was a reflection of their connection to this wisdom, which was a form of Cosmic Christianity peculiar to the Celtic British Isles where Christ was recognized as the Lord of the Elements. In keeping with the exceptional spiritual character of pre-Christian Britain, the wisdom of the Knights of King Arthur developed into a combination of the message of Jesus, intricately interwoven with the wisdom of the cosmic Christ—a transformed nature-wisdom—for which the island people had a special affinity. This stood in contrast to Roman Christianity that clung to the person of Jesus often to the exclusion of the being of the Cosmic Christ. The stream of Cosmic Christianity that was taken up by the Arthurian knights emphasized the resurrection, in contrast to Rome which stressed the death of Jesus. In any case, an elaborate code of ethics developed in relation to this cosmic wisdom that served as an outer rule of law by which the knights lived and ruled in their lands. Much can be said in favor of this development, which had a powerful effect on European culture serving a vital purpose for its time and far into the future.

The ignorance or we might say the innocence with which Parzival entered into Knighthood is illustrated by the fact that when he sets off from his secluded home to enter the world of Knighthood, as Wolfram tells us, he was dressed like a fool in rough sack-cloth and ungainly boots. The allusion here is especially significant as we compare his clothing to the bright and refined armor of the knights he had met and was planning to join. Clothing often refers to the astral body, but even from an everyday perspective, the contrast between the different sorts of clothing speaks volumes. The knights were outfitted to serve the Cosmic Christ in so much bright, gleaming, impressive, stiff, *outer* furnishing; while what Parzival brought, though unimpressive in outward form, was the essential warmth and brilliance of his *inner* life, which shone forth in his profound enthusiasm and stunning acts of bravery. The rough clothing of a fool that Parzival wore cannot appear in greater contrast to the bright, shining armor of the knights. Despite Parzival’s natural good looks, for it was said of him that “he was a garland of all the flowers of manly beauty,” his lack of manners and his rough outer garments show him to be seriously at odds with the “outer world” of knighthood with its polished exterior and refined code of ethics.

² *The Ninth Century and the Holy Grail*, Walter Johannes Stein, Temple Lodge, London, 2001, p. 137.

On the other hand, the inner aspect presented by the knights, who to Parzival appeared outwardly “as gods,” does not inspire any more confidence than Parzival’s outward looks and manner. The first four knights he meets (described as a “rich prince” with his three vassals) were on a mission to intercept two other knights who had passed by earlier and who were in the process of perpetrating rape in the abduction a maiden—grievously breaking the knightly code of honor. How can we not see in this picture that Wolfram is painting for us in such vivid strokes: *Parzival*, a “diamond in the rough” at the untamed beginning of ego development, *over against Knighthood*, refined and pure of manner on the outside but terribly flawed in its inner life. Parzival represents the New Grail Mysteries in its infancy meeting the age-old order of chivalry in decline.

The more we look into this story the more we realize how meaningful it is. This long tale hardly leaves any stone unturned, as they say. In it Wolfram illustrates for us all the pitfalls one encounters on the path of the consciousness soul towards spirit self, with its inevitable injuries and remedies. Much can be learned from it, only a few points of which we have time to go into here.

Let us reiterate the broadest gestures indicated so far that fall naturally into a polarity as seen in the contrast between the *old* order that sparkles with refinement on the outside, but is inwardly corrupt; and the *new* order that *appears* chaotic, but turns out to be diamantine within. We shall see here, as we progress, the order of Cosmic Intelligence being superseded by Human Intelligence. Parzival’s trials show us the path of inner development, in which the “diamond in the rough” ego forces within the human being are cut and polished, on a path that presages our own paths—inevitably strewn with blunders—highlighting our need to hone and shine our inner impulses and make them conscious intentions that reflect the many-faceted brilliance that might shine through our connection with higher worlds.

Let us go a step further in applying the symbolism of von Eschenbach’s story to our own lives in an effort to further flesh out the difference between cosmic and human intelligence.

Let me explain, first, that Parzival soon acquires his own armor, and through a long series of adventures, in which one blunder follows the next he eventually learns steadfastness and eventually comes to stand favorably in relation to the Holy Grail, having earned its blessing. Each person he meets, each situation he encounters is significant. He gets bad advice; meets good and bad people; he learns the ways of knighthood; he denounces God and then 4½ years later he surrenders himself to the will of God; in the process, and through much suffering, he discovers that the initially inhospitable greater world is richly peopled with his own relatives and that it becomes his home as he discovers his unique place in it.

On the path of ego development we each confront the “world of Knighthood” as Parzival did. From a spiritual perspective the story is accurate. We cannot come to our own “world of knighthood” other than “as fools.” It is allowable to have enthusiasm for the path of spiritual development but it is not acceptable to be knowledgeable or wise. This means that we cannot carry over our worldly wisdom into spiritual affairs. We must be what we truly are as spiritual seekers on the early stages of the path—children and novices. To be eager “to wear the armor of the knight” as Parzival was, is permissible if one’s intentions are pure. Rudolf Steiner once said, in defense of the so-called “unwise” young people in the Anthroposophical Society, in whom he held

great hope: “If you are honest in what you want to do the spiritual world accepts your enthusiasm for wisdom.” It is a mistake to think that by mastering spiritual teachings or practices that we are wise and spiritual. That all can be done without enthusiasm. But lacking inner warmth it is of no avail—in fact, it often becomes the worst hindrance.

As the story richly demonstrates, it was not primarily the armor, the weapons or the instructions he received that benefited Parzival. So also it is with us. Ultimately, it is not *demonstration* of correct teaching, spiritual practices, mastering exercises, and our ability to win others to our ideas that ensures our success; but the *inner warmth* of our ego forces. It is the *quality* of who we are and what we do.

In the story we observe Parzival defeating the Red Knight to acquire his armor without any of the outward equipment of knighthood—he used his javelot (a small hunting spear, many of which could be put into a quiver) instead of the courtly lance, and dressed like a fool and not with protective armor. Although he soon adopted the paraphernalia of knighthood it is apparent throughout the tale, that he is not a man made by the knightly calling, but a man who redefines knighthood, and so earns the right to the Holy Grail and the Kingship that attends it—that which his contemporaries failed to achieve.

The lesson Parzival would teach us is that we must learn to approach all of our “knightly tasks” not in an outward way—the norm of the institutions of our materialistic society—but as a work of profound egoic inwardness. Our spiritual work must become a matter of developing our delicate organ of human conscience—not memorization, analysis and cataloging; not knowing, dissemination and promotion of what we believe is right. Although these things must remain, they *need to be purged of outwardness*, of materialistic interpretation and handling. When Parzival finally adopted the outward aspects of knighthood, he transformed it by “piercing through to the heart”³ of each matter he encountered, by learning to be responsible by allowing his own heart to be “pierced through” first. The question for us is: can we stand alone and remain steadfast on our journey of unfolding our higher ego-forces in the midst of a cynical one-sided intellectual culture that remains present in ourselves and our companions on our spiritual journey—and by which we will wound and be wounded continually?

Parzival blazed a unique path through trial and error, a path that is a picture of what each human soul will encounter in the development of its unique ego forces. The path that Parzival opened for us is not as much a path as it is an *anti-path*; it begs us to follow the solitary path each of us is called to blaze by the unique nature of our individuality, which is required for personal development in the consciousness-soul age in which we live. This will never be achieved by adhering to outer authorities, no matter how enlightened they may be. Parzival had no models to speak of. The point of the story is to tear down the paradigm of personal development via hierarchical authority, through gurus or teachers that are placed above us. This does not mean that he could not learn to live in a world with outer authorities; it means that he discovered his own inner authority and lived according to *its* dictates.

³ This is one possible translation of the name Parzival: “Pierce through the middle.”

Let us get back to the central question. What does this have to do with Archangel Michael and the transforming of cosmic intelligence into human intelligence?

Today, Cosmic Intelligence is the wisdom of the mysteries that has been “cast down to the earth,” along with the Ahrimanic inspirations. Up until 1879 the mystery wisdom was kept from the general population; now, much of this wisdom is available. There are profound treasures of wisdom that have been revealed. It has all become “earthly;” the angelic world that used to uphold it has withdrawn. What is written, what has been spoken, even by the greatest initiates, once it has been transmitted—is earthly. What we have in our books, what we have received in lectures—is earthly. Archangel Michael intended for it to be transmitted to humanity on earth. He does not raise it up again. He does not speak it again to us. He waits for *us* to raise it up. And we can *only* raise it up if we are willing to go into battle with it as “pure fools,” turning outer knowledge into inner experience.

So the cosmic intelligence is with us—but it is earthly. Now, we may ask: Can we further clarify what human intelligence is? Cosmic intelligence is conceptual; it is universal and abstract and lends itself readily to being taught. It takes the form of laws and rules that have descended from an abstract higher intelligence, like the Ten Commandments, the Torah or any spiritual text when taken at face value without full understanding. Any written or spoken wisdom that can be applied mechanically is cosmic intelligence. Human intelligence, on the other hand, is cosmic intelligence illuminated by human experience and is generally not utilized as an outer law but as an inner guiding principle.

It is not possible to *teach* Human Intelligence; we can only point out an indistinct route, for each path varies in infinite ways. If we adhere to cosmic intelligence without heart we will become moral automatons—correct outwardly but inwardly we will not be free. Human intelligence, on the contrary, can observe the abstract, universal principles of cosmic intelligence in operation but is not a slave to them outwardly, not constrained by its outer (lawful) nature, but alive to the forces and the beings that inform it. Untransformed Cosmic intelligence tends to make us priggish, pedantic, doctrinaire, moralizing and authoritarian or simply spiritual dilettantes with superficial knowledge. Cosmic intelligence can easily be misused becoming the cause of countless conflicts of interest. This is how it has become earthly.

We win through to human intelligence when we fulfill the dictates of Cosmic Intelligence, not slavishly as an outer law; but questioningly, as an inner path of knowledge, acutely conscious of our thoughts, feelings and will impulses, as they relate to cosmic truth. Free from its compelling authority, from its outer influence, free in our unique soul response to it. This is how we come to its unique resonance within us, how we unite our hearts with wisdom inwardly making it our own. We must ask ourselves if we have *truly* won our knowledge—is it *our own*? Do we know what we know? Possessing *human intelligence* is knowing what we know.

Human intelligence is written through and through with compassion, mercy, and with understanding. Human intelligence has a beauty and full-orbed quality that is as familiar with human passion as it is with sublime transcendental truths. Human intelligence is flexible, illuminated and warmed with grace. It holds cosmic intelligence within itself like an oyster holds

an irritating bit of sand that it turns into a pearl. Christ Jesus enlightened the whole of the hierarchical spiritual world by choosing to enter into the human experience of suffering and death. The spiritual cosmos was ignorant of the majestic nature of the human drama, apart from the example of Christ. He elevated our sufferings; he made a prayer of them; and made death not an end, but the ultimate victory, the essential beginning. The spiritual world waits for humanity to complete the task that Jesus Christ began—uplifting the cosmic intelligence that must remain in the world until it has been transformed, making it human.

In the prologue to the Gospel in his name, St. John said: “For the law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” (Jn. 1:17) For John, “the law” was the cosmic intelligence and a great distinction was being made here, a monumental distinction: “...but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” Certainly truth was contained in the law. But *grace*—that was added to it. It was added to the cosmic intelligence—by Jesus Christ—the *human being*—who was also God. St. Paul, who was clear about this distinction, said that “the law was a schoolmaster *to lead us to Christ*.” (Gal. 3:24) If we are to learn “how to know Michael” and understand why he does not speak to us, we must learn to know the satisfaction he takes *in leading us to Christ*.

This is his gesture. Every movement he makes is towards Christ—leading us to Christ. Coming to Christ we learn to know “the one in me who is more me than I myself,” to quote St. Augustine. We come to the cosmic ego which is the parent of our individual ego and are reborn in the process—and become free. In his silence, Michael leads us to the Christ within, to the Word that is being born in the silence within us. He leads us to the one in us from and with whom we unfold our I being, the only one who can accompany us on the path that is an anti-path, and who, through the various challenges of our unique “pure fool” journey, leads us to a knowledge of his *grace* so that the words of the poem with which we began this article become a reality for us...

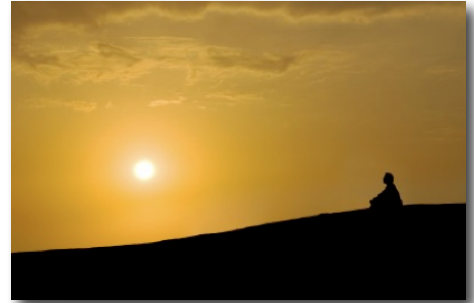
*The Stars once Spoke to Humanity.
It is World Destiny that they are Silent now.
To be aware of this Silence
Can become Pain for Earthly Humanity.
But in the Deepening Silence
There Grows and Ripens
What Humanity Speaks to the Stars...*

...so that it will not only be Christ Jesus who will apprise the spiritual world of the majesty of human beings living heroically for a higher purpose. We ourselves, as we face the experience of suffering and death that is concurrent with human life, will be able to tell our story with *our own* fiery living thoughts —“*to the stars*.”

Dream Download

Sean O'Laoire

It is 4:44 AM and I know I have been dreaming furiously for some time. All kinds of philosophical and scientific, organic and artistic, theological and mystical notions have been swirling about in my head. But they have been coming in elegantly complete sentences; almost as if I was being tutored by a most articulate teacher. Finally, I broke through into semi-wakefulness and wrestled with the idea of ignoring the messages and trying to go back to sleep. But I knew that I would be very annoyed with myself in the morning if I didn't try to record them. So I dragged myself out of bed, put on a very soft light, grabbed a pen and paper and started to write. I am back in bed by 5:22 AM. Here is what I produced in the interim. It is a very strong condemnation of how badly astray we have gone as a species.



We have captured an elegant gazelle, as it bounded like the wind through the savannah and reduced it to a bowl of soup.

We stand, self-importantly, at the side of a dead elephant, one foot on his supine form, rifle mockingly pointed at his sad, silently staring eye, as we smile for the camera. Photo op completed, we allow the sun, the hyenas, the vultures and the insects to finish the work, until only the rotting flesh and quickly bleaching bones remain.

We have traded the golden sands, blue-green lagoons and vaulted cathedrals of the great underground sea-side caverns for the mayhem of gas-fumed, horn-honking, hurried and harried commuting in box cars that snake impatiently and loudly along the concrete rivers of our city streets.

Like flies meandering randomly across the greasy, cobweb-occluded windows of an unkempt kitchen, we are mere millimeters from a freedom, which is our birthright, but ultimately we fall on our backs on the dusty window ledge, feet pointing pleadingly in the air, petitioning a God in whom we no longer believe for a liberation that we no longer expect.

We have solved the mathematics of the cosmos but reduced the symphony of the universe to mere technology - the technology of war mongering.

We have explained away awesome sunsets as the random activity of helium and hydrogen atoms; and reduced mother-love to the cunning biochemistry of the selfish gene.

We have found a priceless painting by Michelangelo, stripped off the paint and liquefied it, winding up, triumphantly, with a pot full of pigment and a blank canvas.

We have taken the Complete Works of Shakespeare and grandly pontificated that they merely consist of X number of words and Y number of white spaces.

We are deadbeat dads, financing our follies with money stolen from our own children; while avoiding the fear-filled, tear-filled eyes of the children of the enemy.

We have pulled planks from the hull of the ship that carries us over the ocean of evolution, in order to make a fire that will cook food for the elite in the cabin, not realizing that the resultant hole is going to sink *all* of us - the full-bellied first world-ers and the slack-bellied third world-ers alike.

The two-year-old, who met each day with awe, has become the 30-year-old who meets each day with angst, and, then, the 60-year-old who meets each day with cynicism.

We have squeezed the mystery out of the myths and crowed atheistically over the desiccated skeleton.

Spirit's sacred safari from Source has been interpreted as the accidental fabrication of the cosmos from the mindless wanderings of intergalactic winds.

Having murdered God, we are now in the process of committing global suicide. We who *are* God have killed God and thus created a radical self-alienation.

We have replaced the dead deity with individual and global narcissism, unleashing again the four horsemen of the Apocalypse. Only their names have changed. They are now called, Deconstructionism, which dismantles art in the service of scientism; Reductionism, which chops up life in order to produce death; Materialism, which mistakes the senses' knowledge for the soul's wisdom; and Consumerism, which replaces cooperation among species with competition for fast-failing resources.

If we be the image of God, he be a demon god.

However, there *is* a solution. When faced with the mystery, we must resist the temptation to analyze it or to interpret it. Instead we must stand silently in its presence; humbly worship it and thus become it.

Because the mystery *is* the message.

May God continue to hold you tenderly in the hollow of Her hand.

Namasté,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Seán', written in dark ink.

Tír na nÓg

February 2012

Sophia Foundation invites you to the Spring Conference

Wisdom Filled Choices for the Future

Heart-thinking in difficult times

Saturday, May 5, 2012 10am - 4pm

St. Mary's Cathedral, St Francis Hall
1111 Gough St., San Francisco, CA 94109

At this one-day conference, four inspiring speakers will endeavor to open our hearts and minds to deeper truths of existence, enhancing our ability to address our world situation from a higher level of consciousness.

Enliven the Heart

We, as a collective family of humanity, must find new directions to turn the tide of human suffering. Join us in this endeavor toward a future built on the principles of love and wisdom.

Receive Teachings of Guided Wisdom



Rev. Angel Kyodo Williams is an ordained Zen priest, author, and founder of the *Center for Transformative Change*, in Berkeley, California. She is also the spiritual director of the *New Dharma community*.



Robert Powell, PhD. is an internationally known lecturer, author, and founder of the *Choreocosmos School*. He is also co-founder of the *Sophia Foundation*.



Father Sean O'Laoire is an ordained Catholic priest and a licensed Clinical Psychologist. He is co-founder and spiritual director of *Companions on the Journey*.



Karen Rivers co-founder of the *Sophia Foundation*, Director of the *New Chartres School*, *Wisdom University* faculty, teaches and ministers the *Rosamira Circle* and *Sophia Grail Circle*.

Music by



Amikaela Gaston is the director and founder of *Int. Cultural Arts and Healing Institute*. She is an award winning vocalist and travels bringing healing music to many cultures.

To register online visit: <http://sophiafoundation.org>
To register by mail email: sophia@sophiafoundation.org
\$75 includes refreshments.

AFRICA PILGRIMAGE

New Itinerary

September 2012: The Sophia Foundation's pilgrimage to South Africa is taking place when the sun is passing through the constellation of Leo in the first half of September. A new development is that the pilgrimage to South Africa will now take place under the guidance of Linda Tucker, founder of the White Lions Trust, who has received profound wisdom concerning the white lions from the Zulu high priestly tradition, and who has single-handedly saved the white lions from being eliminated from their natural habitat, their place of origin, Timbavati, where we shall be based for the greater part of our pilgrimage. The mystery of the white lions, seen as a symbol of the return of Christ ("the Lion of Judah") in the etheric, will be an important theme during our pilgrimage. The new flyer for the South Africa pilgrimage, now posted on the Sophia Foundation website, follows on the pages below.





Pilgrimage to South Africa A pilgrimage along the Starmap of the Sacred White Lions

September 2 - 16, 2012

The Sophia Foundation is hosting a two-week pilgrimage to South Africa in September, 2012, led by Robert Powell and Karen Rivers in collaboration with Linda Tucker, in support of the Global White Lions Protection Trust. Among the experiences planned are visiting sites of ancient Star Wisdom, Adam's Calendar, Elephant Sanctuary, Dragon Mountain, the White Lions of Timbavati, Kruger National Park, and the Valley of the Kings in Naledi. Africa represents the heart in the organism of Mother Earth. According to spiritual science, the human heart is formed with cosmic forces streaming from the constellation of Leo (the heavenly lion), and the lion represents these cosmic forces on earth. The appearance of the white lions in Timbavati is believed to be a sign to humanity from the stars and from the Great Mother. It will be an experience of a lifetime to honor this heart connection with the Motherland and white lions of Timbavati.

General Overview —

Known as the cradle of humankind, African sites have been discovered, studied and interpreted - in part through the 4500 year old Sumerian Tablets - that reveal a new perspective on our origins as a human species. The Nilotic meridian, widely regarded as the earth's central axis in antiquity (in contrast to the Greenwich meridian through London), runs through the Nile River Valley, the Sphinx and the home of the White Lions of Timbavati. Linda Tucker writes concerning the Nilotic meridian in her book, *Mystery of the White Lions* (Npenvu Press, Mapumulanga: South Africa, 2003), pp. 253-256:

Significantly, the course of the Nile follows a longitudinal line...For the ancients this meridian represented zero degrees, the line by which they began measuring longitude...The fact that this very meridian is the prime meridian at the centre of the earth's landmasses underlies the strategic nature of the ancients' identification of this specific line...From the Nile delta...with its pyramids and Sphinx...step by step, due south, until it reached my special kingdom of lions...If the Giza plateau was a perfect star map on earth, and Timbavati was in perfect alignment with it, what is the significance of the White Lion's birthplace located precisely here on our globe? ...Timbavati's furthestmost corner extends out to a point which is in almost perfect alignment to the pyramids at the apex of the Nile Delta: 31°14' east...Why should today's living lion legends align with the lion monument [the Sphinx] of ancient days?...Timbavati's White Lions are an integral part of the Sun God mystery known to the ancient Followers of Horus.

Our journey includes: a giant footprint, evidence of an ancient civilization (nephilim), **Adam's Calendar** – the oldest archeo-astronomical site on earth, ancient ruins made from stones that ring when struck, **God's Window** situated on the Nilotic meridian (one of South Africa's natural wonders and an energy vortex used in ancient African ceremonies), a visit to **Kruger National Park**, and sacred time with the **White Lions of the Timbavati** and **Linda Tucker**. We will work with the White Lion Leadership Academy to gain an understanding of the star wisdom of the white lions.

The group minimum is 15 and the maximum is 20 people.

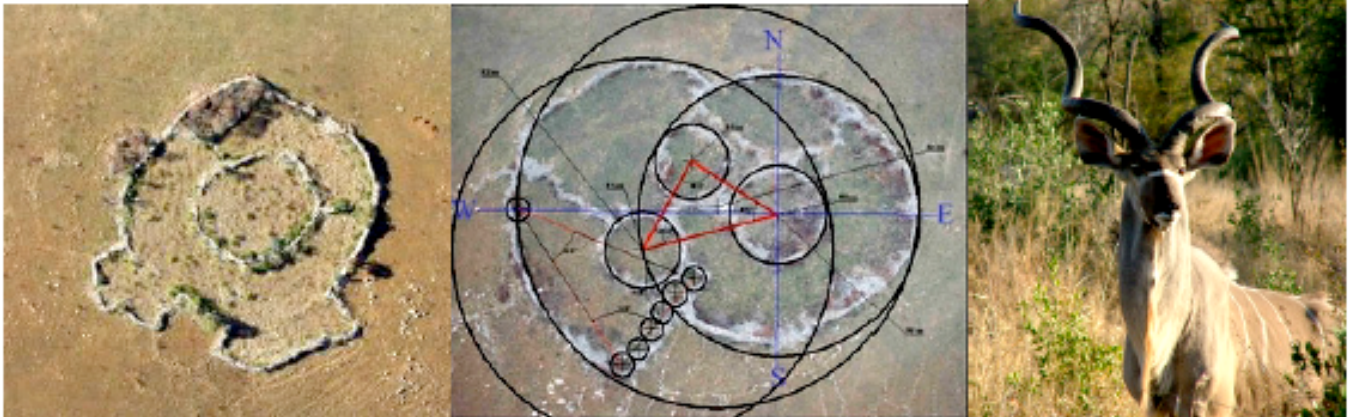
Pilgrimage cost: \$5500 Estimated International flight cost: \$1500.

To Register: email Jen Press: <sophia@sophiafoundation.org>



ITINERARY HIGHLIGHTS

Giant Footprint — In the ancient traditional African knowledge known as Umlando, the secluded Giant Footprint of the Heavenly Princess, is a site held sacred by the indigenous people of South Africa for centuries and is a testimony to the presence on Earth of the "First People". We will visit this secluded site and its massive healing stone placed nearby.



Adam's Calendar & Temples of the African Gods — Long before the rise of ancient Egypt, an advanced civilization lived in southern Africa, mining gold. It is believed that these were the people who carved the first Horus bird, the first Sphinx, built the first Pyramids and an accurate stone calendar.

- **Adam's Calendar**, the oldest ancient archeo-astronomical observation site on Earth, is the flagship among uncountable circular stone ruins, ancient roads, agricultural terraces and thousands of ancient mines, left behind by a vanished civilization. Our journey includes a private conducted tour of some of these recently discovered sights.
- **Temples of the African Gods** - These newly discovered ancient ruins are now at the forefront of scientific research into the origins of humankind, and are the biggest and oldest human settlements on earth. We will also consider the mysteries of possible sound technology used by the ancients to produce energy.



Kruger National Park — Lying in the heart of the Lowveld, Kruger National Park is a wildlife sanctuary like no other, its atmosphere so unique that it allows those who enter its vastness to immerse themselves in the unpredictability and endless wilderness that is the true quality of Africa. Larger than Belgium, a pristine 19,485 square kilometres (7,523 sq mi) game reserve situated in the Lowveld of South Africa, is one of the largest national parks in the world. We will view animals in their natural habitat from the safety of our open Land Rover.



White Lions of the Timbavati

We will visit our friends, Linda Tucker and Jason Turner, who founded the Global White Lion Protection Trust (GWLPT). The rare, endangered white lion is revered by some Africans as the most sacred of all animals. These white lions are not albinos but of a special gene pool and were originally found in the Timbavati area. They almost became extinct as they are seen as a prized trophy among big game hunters. The GWLPT's mission is to protect white lions, which are at great risk from aggressive speed-breeding programs and trophy hunting and to preserve the indigenous knowledge that holds them sacred.

Linda Tucker's book, "The Mystery of the White Lions" is recommended reading. You will experience these extraordinary and sacred beings in their natural habitat, as the pride has been recently released onto several hundred hectares of natural bushveld. Lunch and dinner are included for this memorable visit during which Linda and Jason will give a presentation outlining this wonderful eco project.

Blyde River Canyon

The Blyde River Canyon, a powerful energy vortex used in ancient African ceremonies is one of South Africa's natural wonders. We will visit sacred sites such as God's Window, the rain forest, the healing waters of Bourke's Potholes and more. Our lodge overlooks the sacred mountain called Modimole (God is here) and is situated on the Nilotic meridian, which is one of the foremost meridians within the subtle body of the earth and is considered the axis mundi of the world. It runs north from the Blyde Canyon into Egypt and through the Great Pyramid and Sphinx on the Giza plateau. Known in the ancient African oral tradition (Umlando) as a subterranean river of stars or, golden river, the meridian itself is seen psychically as a great river of golden light and energy stretching between southern and northern Africa.



Accommodations will be in delightful thatched randavals, at Camp Unicorn, a private bush camp in Timbavati, located at the White Lion Protection Sanctuary—a community in natural bushveld that contains many forms of indigenous flora and fauna, such as zebra, impala, wildebeest, bushbuck, duiker, kudu, baboons, monkeys and a large variety of birds. The Blyde River, which translates as "River of Joy" in Afrikaans, runs through the reserve and we overlook the sacred mountain "Modimole" or "God is here" in the local Shangaan language.



SOPHIA FOUNDATION
Pilgrimage along the Starmap of the Sacred White Lions
September 2-16, 2012
Itinerary

Sept. 2, 2012 Flight to Johannesburg, South Africa to arrive by 8:00 a.m. Sept. 3.

Sept. 3 — GUESTHOUSE IN THE MIST

We are collected from Johannesburg's Oliver Tambo Airport, and begin our travel due East across country to the South Africa's bushveld region, rich with game and primordial archeological sites. Stopoff for lunch at Millies Lakeside restaurant, we will be driven directly to Margsol Guesthouse in the mist belt outside of Nelspruit for Adam's Calendar outing in the morning. This characterful colonial guesthouse was one of the very first in the region, and was the place where famous naturalist Eugene Marais wrote his books "Soul of the White Ant" and "Soul of the Ape" the first of their kind investigating the power of the collective mind. Booked exclusively for our group.

Introductions, intention-setting and early night. Character Private Guest House Rooms sharing, 4 bathrooms – sharing. Margsol: D/B & B

Sept. 4 – WILD HORSES AND ADAM'S CALENDAR

Breakfast and Adam's Calendar excursion

In the Barberton Mountains, we begin our journey along the Nile Meridian, the earth's central axis and most high-frequency 'powerline', known to the Ancient Egyptians as Zep Tepi: the golden leyline of First Time, the birth canal where life began on the planet.

Significantly, it is in these primordial mountainlands that pre-moeba records of First Life were discovered by geologists, and the rock formations also house the first gold deposits. The guardians of this site are a roaming herd of hundreds of wild horses, believed by Linda Tucker to guard over a "unicorn portal" to other dimensional realms. These equestrians will lead the SOPHIA FOUNDATION group in to the Inner Realms of Sacred knowledge in alignment with the White Lions due North. In Heraldry and other ancient symbolic systems, the Lion and the Unicorn have been associated throughout the ages, and it is here that we see their stellar alignment.

Lunch in the Barberton Mountains.

Our indigenous guide is Enos Zulu, the fieldguide of Micheal Tellinger and Linda Tucker. In the afternoon we walk with Enos to the primordial site of Adams Calendar, a stone circle site of initiation and worship by many different cultures and nations over millennia. It is here, at this remote site, in alignment with the sacred heartland of Timbavati and

Giza, that Credo Mutwa, Guardian of the Ancient Relics and the Secret Knowledge of Umlando, was initiated. We gather around the oldest stone observatory of the ancient astronomer priests, integrating with the starmap on earth.

Dinner and reflections back at our private guest house. Margsol D/B & B plus lunch



Sept. 5 – DRAGON MOUNTAIN

Full Day pilgrimage ending at Tsau White Lion Heritage Lands

We continue our journey along the golden leyline of the Nilotic Meridian up the tail of the Drakensburg (Dragon) Mountains, a massive tectonic plate which links with the East African rift valley, following part of the route of the great elephants who walk the leyline in their migration.

Drive along the spectacular panoramic route, taken by pilgrims in search of gold before us, to spectacular sites such as God's Window, Pilgrim's Rest, enjoying a picnic lunch en route at the edge of the world's third largest canyon. We are on the cusp of the Kruger to Canyon's Biosphere, declared by the United Nations as the world's third largest biosphere region. It is here, at the epicenter of this massive nature reserve region, in precise alignment with the great Sphinx of Giza due North, that the tabled White Lions were birthed by miraculous natural occurrence.

Declared a "sacred site" by African kings for many hundreds of years due to the mysterious occurrence of snow white lions in this region only on earth, the name Timbavati means the "Place where the Starlions came down..." Sunset drive over the escarpment to arrive at Tsau, the White Lions' heartland, where we are welcomed for a traditional meal around the fire

Camp Unicorn D/B & B plus Lunch



Sept. 6 – TSAU; WHITE LION ANCESTRAL TERRITORIES

Early Morning White Lion tracking and monitoring with Linda Tucker and her partner, lion ecologist Jason A. Turner. Breakfast and intention setting for our uplifting experience in the Heart of the White Lions Sacred Territory known as Tsau: From the Ancient Bushman word incantation – "Starlion!"

Linda Tucker introduces the Star-knowledge of the White Lions and shares shamanic techniques for receiving messages from the White Lions in meditation and dream-time.

Over a hearty lunch made by Shangaan chef Daniel Mkhondo, Linda & Jason share personal anecdotes of their challenges in protecting the White Lions, which were technically extinct in their natural endemic territories due to trophy hunting, and forced removals into zoos and circuses around the globe.

Afternoon introductory Talk: Jason A. Turner, discusses the White Lion re-introduction project into the wild, and the White Lion Genetics in search for the illusive "genetic marker", the "Star-Gene" that could help save the White Lions as a critically endangered sub-species.

Sunset Tracking and monitoring of the Tsau pride: Zukara, Nebu, and Matsieng, named by Credo Mutwa as the Great Star Hunter of the Orion Constellation.

Traditional Dinner under the stars.

Evening viewing of the National Geographic documentary detailing the trials and tribulations of the White Lion project.

Camp Unicorn D/B & B plus Lunch





Sept. 7 – RIVERINE WALK

Day of reflection and gentle journeying into the Inner Worlds.

After breakfast riverine walk along the Nilotic Meridian will be led by expert indigenous trackers through the natural amphitheatre of the wild fig forest of Tsau. This walk imparts principles of the ancient art of tracking, and connection with earth and gold energies. The second part of the walk takes place in silence as we tune in to the presence of the resident beings. During the walk we will pass the Tsau eco-village, built by staff for the staff, as a model for sustainable living. We picnic in the magical Wild Fig Forest on the banks of the Tsau River.

Afternoon Talk: White Lion Meditation on the banks of the Tsau River led by Linda takes us on a journey of enlightenment and empowerment, sharing White Lion techniques to help us integrate the principles and qualities of these most radiant of animals in our own lives. Tuning in to these qualities helps us to achieve greater self-fulfillment, self-healing, leadership potential and effective decision-making. The alignments between the living starlions of these lands and the ancient Egyptian star-knowledge of Giza (held in the ranks of the astronomer priests, the so-called Followers of Horus), is explored. Sunset monitoring expedition accompanying the scientific monitoring team to track the Akeru Pride of white and golden lions, and spend some quiet time in reverence & observation of these two bachelor Starlions and their wild "golden girls".

Hearty Dinner will be served on our return with fireside sharing of our reflections on our stay at Tsau

Camp Unicorn D/B & B plus riverside picnic lunch

Sept. 8 – WHITE LION CULTURAL EXCURSION

After an early morning tracking session with our lion families, a colourful day's excursion to local Shangaan schools supported by the White Lion Trust, which celebrate their rich culture and White Lion heritage with traditional displays and lively sharing with you as honoured visitors.

Lunch at the giant Boabab Tree, estimated between 3-4000 years old, believed by indigenous elders to be a "giant sounding fork" of stellar-earth wisdom.



This lively day culminates with a visit to the family of Maria Khosa, Lion Queen of Timbavati, and an opportunity for authentic bone divination interpretation given by traditional healers of her village. A delicious traditional dinner, with warrior dancing around the fire after dinner, drums up the excitement of the heart and soul of Africa in the presence of the Ancestors of these sacred lands.

Camp Unicorn D/B & B plus lunch

Sept. 9 – KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

Early morning rise for Full Day Excursion to Kruger National Park

The Kruger National Park is South Africa's most famous animal preserve. Every species of South African animal can be seen in this wilderness area, which is near to Tsau. Our driver guides will take us on an unforgettable all day drive through the elephant, giraffe, zebra and antelope populated savannah lands of Kruger, dotted by rivers and ponds where crocodiles and hippos emerge to sun themselves. Whatever you may see, is a blessing from the great creative Force that is Mother Nature; do not be limited by expectations of viewing the so Big Five, any encounter with creatures in their natural ecosystem is a profound privilege. As "King of Kings", the White Lion is the true "Apex Predator", or "capstone species", at the tip of the pyramid of life, governor of all other creators great and small in these wilderness lands.

Picnic lunch packed for you, and stop-off at a full-service rest stop with food court and large gift shop. After a rich day's experience, we are welcome back to Camp Unicorn with a delicious supper and tranquil evening discussion, integrating everyone's personal connections with Nature.

Camp Unicorn D/B & B plus lunch at Kruger



Sept. 10 – EXCURSION TO THE CANYONS

Dawn tracking to the Royal Pride of White Lions, who command another area of the White Lion kingdom known as Mbube (the "LionStar" Heart of the Orion constellation). The Royals are expecting their next generation of starlions, and we will celebrate their progress in the wilds of the White Lions ancestral homelands after nearly two decades of technical extinction in ancestral lands where lion trophy hunting still continues today...

A private meditative boat trip on the dam to experience the golden energy of the world's third biggest canyon. We have met with the elephant giants who walk the earth's leylines, now in alignment with the Nile Meridian we commune with the guardians of the great rivers and dams, the crocodile ancestral spirit ("Sobek") and hippo goddess (Taweret) of the Ancient Egyptians. Our return journey takes us to meet famous Jessica the Hippo. While hippopotami are notorious for being responsible for more human fatalities than any other African animal, Jessica is one of the extraordinary ambassadors of the animal kingdom in our prophetic times when Nature is breaking her laws to illustrate Higher Law (Logos), and she lives with her wild pod of hippos but comes in to meet with her human family at feeding times, sharing love across the species barrier.



Return to camp for a starlit African night around the fire. Camp Unicorn D/B & B plus packed picnic lunch on the dam

Sept. 11 – SILENT RETREAT

Day of Silent meditation and interpretation of enlightened knowledge from the Star beings, integrating unified consciousness across time, continents and species. Our tracking sessions to the Starlions also take place in silence, heightening our extra-sensory perceptions and abilities to receive these luminous beings' stellar transmissions. Camp Unicorn D/B & B plus Lunch

Sept. 12 – INTEGRATION, THANKSGIVING AND JOURNEY ALONG THE NILE MERIDIAN TO MAPHUNGUBWE

Breakfast at 8:30am. We conclude with a closing session on how to integrate the heightened experiences of the past few days with your everyday lives back home, and round up for a ceremony of thanksgiving. There'll also be time to purchase beautiful professional photographs of the prides: Powerful transmissions from the White Lions themselves. All proceeds go directly to the project.

We proceed on our onward journey having established a powerful connection with "Tsau" and carrying in our hearts the star-wisdom of the Sacred White Lions of Timbavati to help enlighten our paths. We now head North along the Nile Meridian and Gold Route, meandering through the unforgettable Drakensberg Mountains, past the ancestral site of Madjaji, the Rain Queen (the counterpart to the Lion Queen).

We arrive at Mapungubwe for sunset. This panoramic reserve is on the borders of Zimbabwe and Botswana. Apart from being possibly the most important site of gold culture of African antiquity, the National Park is a World Heritage Site, home to the three "Giants": the elephant, rhino and the most impressive forests of Baobabs in the world, ancient ancestral presences some over 4000 years old who anchor star knowledge on earth.

Leokwe stone camp Maphungubwe: Dinner, B & B, Lunch at Mike's Kitchen
Naledi Guest House: B & B

Sept. 13 – ROYAL EXCURSION TO MAPHUNGUBWE AND JOURNEY TO VENDA

Dawn excursion by 4x4 and on foot to the spectacular hill-top site Maphungubwe, the ancient civilization and site of the Golden Culture of African Leadership – where the fabled "Golden Rhino" was discovered, proof of an advanced African civilization which worshipped power animals. Walk with indigenous trackers to the site of the Kings and their buried gold, in one of the world's spectacular unspoiled archeological sites.

Mid morning we depart Mapungubwe and two and a half hours later, we enter traditional Venda territories. The Venda are a warmhearted nation who fiercely protect the sanctity of their sacred sites and sacred animals, to the extent that visitors have not gained privileged access to them. They are a proud, hospitable people who uphold one of the most intact cultures in the world. Many of their traditions are simply not available to the outside world, including access to the sacred Lake Fundudzi and forest of Thate Vondo, where only initiates may venture, and then only on sacred dates. They are also Africa's greatest wooden sculptors, and we will have a stop-off at world renowned Venda potters and artists studios.

At days end we arrive at our spectacular destination at the very top of the Soutpansberg mountains. After dinner, we will end our evening with story-telling around the fire with Venda sage Medicine Man and authority on Venda culture and its sacred animals, Dr Mashudu Dima.



According to Venda oral tradition, the White Lion is as an ancestral being of royal descent, the spirit of which still roams the sacred forest of Thate Vondo, while it is only in sacred site of the greater Timbavati region, that this magnificent ancestral spirit has manifested in physical form. Like the White Lion symbol which was central to the identity of Ancient Egyptian deities and the Pharaoh himself, the white crocodile of Lake Fundudzi is regarded as a sacred animal of ancestral importance in Africa, and a key representative of the Ancient Egyptian pantheon. It is spoken about in hushed tones; but unlike the White Lions, will not show itself choosing to remain in the shadowy depths of myth and legend. Leshiba Lodge Guest House: Dinner, B & B



Sept. 14 – A DAY IN THE MOUNTAINS WITH THE VENDA PEOPLE AND ANCESTRAL WISDOM

A day of pure delight and relaxation with the magnificent Mountaintop views of Leshiba. The lodge is built by Noria Mabasa, a Venda Medicine woman and artist with an unsurpassed ancestral vision. Some of us will be in the Indigenous Knowledge Center, others in the bush camp: either way, the site is magnificent.

The reserve protects numerous wildlife species including rhino, leopard, porcupines and pangolins. There are spectacular trails through forests, across plains and down breathtaking gorges with sparkling pools. We visit an ancient rock art site of the

Koisan-Bushman, our oldest living ancestors.

At sunset, after a day of relaxation, we will be joined by the authentic Venda African Jazz band of Thomas Kobayi, with traditional hand-made instruments.

Leshiba Lodge Guest House: Dinner, B & B and lunch



Sept. 15 – RETURN TO JOBURG, MOYO'S, ZOO LAKE, MELVILLE

Departing by 9.30am to arrive by 3pm in Johannesburg, we travel back overland in time to settle into our comfortable family guest house in the heart of Johannesburg's characterful leafy suburb of Melville.

Sunset dinner at Johannesburg's famous Moyo's Restaurant overlooking Zoo Lake, surrounded by lively African music and artworks.

Melville Guest House B/B, packed lunch for the journey



Sept. 16 – ROSEBANK PAN-AFRICAN MARKET

Sunday is Market Day in Johannesburg. You'll have the rare opportunity of visiting one of cities' absolute highlights, a trip to the richly-colored Rosebank Covered Market, a pan-African experience second-to-none, where every possible African art, craft and produce is on display and traded. No better place to purchase your authentic momentos, and at no better price!

Last chance to savor authentic African cuisine with well-prepared market fare.

We are transported to Johannesburg's Oliver Tambo Airport. Return flight to depart not before 5pm.

FELLOW TRAVELERS IN SPIRIT

Each time the SFNA travels to sacred places we wish to serve a needed social cause central to the area visited. If you are not able to join us for the journey itself, but would like to serve the spirit of the pilgrimage, we would like to offer a way for you to participate as a "Fellow Traveler in Spirit," by contributing to a fund which we will gift to The Global White Lion Protection Trust, a non-profit organization that is dedicated to protecting the White Lions and their star wisdom.

We hope in this way you may join us in Good Will and Deed in world travel with a social conscience. Those who become Fellow Travelers in Spirit will receive copies of relevant handouts, notes, and meditative materials prepared for this pilgrimage.



As we travel in sacred places on the Earth, meeting people from all parts of the world, we wish to embody the highest ideals of humanity, bringing an attitude of respect, generosity, courtesy and kindness to all we meet. Our intention is to travel together with constancy and caring, to create true community, to develop and extend the presence of the sacred in daily life.

We will practice no trace living, being careful to leave all sites we visit cleaner than we found them and to protect the environment in all ways.

Those attending the pilgrimage will receive a list of recommended reading and meditation material for inner preparation for the pilgrimage. We will meet each evening under the stars to learn about star mysteries and deepen our relationship with the starry heavens.

PLEASE NOTE:

* This itinerary may change slightly depending on the weather, people's health and most important of all, the welfare of the animals.

* The unique White Lion monitoring experience at Tsau is not open to the public and is offered to our group of trusted Inner Circle people, as an authentic eco-educational and inspirational opportunity.

* Please observe there is a strict protocol in respect of the reintroduction of the White Lions. The White Lion Trust's scientific monitoring vehicles do not intrude on the pride's space, and we ensure we keep our voices to a whisper when approaching these high frequency beings in the wild. We also avoid taking cameras, zooms or spotlights into their environment and instead enter into the magic of their natural existence and share its timeless beauty. The contact with the White Lions is a non-photographic experience. However, magnificent photographic studies of the White Lions and greeting cards are available upon request, proceeds of which are entirely given over to the protection of the White Lions in their natural habitat.

* The Sophia Foundation's Starmap Pilgrimage is recognized as a Credited Module at the White Lion Leadership Academy. Should any of our participants wish to join the Academy program, which commences July 5, 2012, for six weeks, our pilgrimage and workshops on White Lion territories in September will be acknowledged as a Introductory Module credit with respect to specific courses entitled: Enlightenment-in-Action or Sacred Sites. More info available upon request.

The Sophia Foundation pilgrimage to South Africa: a Pilgrimage along the Starmap of the Sacred White Lions, will be led by Robert Powell and Karen Rivers in conjunction with Linda Tucker, and the Global White Lion Protection Trust staff.



Linda Tucker was educated at the universities of Cape Town and Cambridge, where she specialised in Jungian dream psychology and medieval symbolism. She began her research into the White Lion mysteries after being rescued from lions in the Timbavati region of South Africa in 1991 by a shangaan shaman woman, Maria Khosa. In 2002, Linda Tucker founded the Global White Lion Protection Trust, to ensure the protection of these magnificent creatures. Website: WhiteLions.org

Robert Powell, Ph.D. is a mathematician, cosmologist and movement therapist, whose teachings center around Sophia as the Divine Wisdom of creation. His doctoral thesis on the history of the zodiac is foundational for his life's work as a pioneer for a new spiritual cosmology focusing on Sophia, inspiring the founding of the Sophia Foundation of North America, the Sophia Foundation of Italy and the Institute for Astrosophy in Germany. He is the author of *Chronicle of the Living Christ*, *Christian Hermetic Astrology*, *The Christ Mystery*, *The Sign of the Son of Man in the Heavens*, *Divine Sophia – Holy Wisdom*, and *The Most Holy Trinosophia and the New Revelation of the Divine Feminine*. As the founder of the *Choreocosmos School of Cosmic and Sacred Dance*, he gives workshops in Europe and North America, and together with Karen Rivers leads pilgrimages to sacred sites around the world.



Karen Rivers, co-founder of the Sophia Foundation of North America and founder of Chrysalis Productions, a community theater company for children and adults, has dedicated her inner life to the mysteries of the Divine Feminine. Together with Robert Powell Karen has co-led pilgrimages to sacred sites around the world. Karen is on the faculty of Wisdom University as the Director of the New Chartres School, teaches *Choreocosmos*, and courses oriented to the deepening of one's spiritual life and the work of inner transformation. She ministers the Rosamira Circle, the Sophia Grail Circle, and the Children's Grail Circle. She directs a community choir, and is the final stages of writing her doctoral dissertation.



REGISTRATION FORM

PILGRIMAGE TO SOUTH AFRICA

September 2 - 16, 2012

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Postal Code: _____ Country: _____

Email: _____

Check one: Full Vegetarian meals: _____

Vegetarian plus fish: _____

Full Fare: _____

Roommate Choice: _____

To Register send this form with an enclosed deposit of \$1,500 to:

Sophia Foundation of North America

525 Gough St. #103

San Francisco, CA 94102 USA

The first twenty people to register will be able to attend. Payments made by credit card will be charged a 2.5% fee to cover our costs to the credit card companies.

REGISTRATION FEES & EXPENSES

September 2 - 16, 2012

The cost per person for the 2012 South Africa Tour includes lodging, food, excursions, entry fees and transfers, as delineated below, and does not include international airfare.

TOUR COST ESTIMATE – Rates are quoted in Dollars for your convenience, based upon the current exchange rate between the dollar and the Rand, calculated at \$1: R7. If there is a drastic drop in the exchange rate, the Global White Lion Protection Trust would be grateful for a contribution from the group to make up for the shortfall they would otherwise suffer.

Land Price: US \$5,500

Single Supplement: US \$720

Cost Includes:

- Airport meeting and assistance upon arrival and departure
- 13 nights accommodation in hotels and lodges per itinerary in double occupancy
- All meals throughout the tour except where indicated
- Taxes at hotels included (service charges are discretionary at 10 - 15%. Recommended tip for staff at the White Lion Project \$12 per day).
- All transfers to or from hotels, excursions in two, luxury air conditioned 12-seater minibuses with luggage trailer.
- Entrance fees to the following excursions:
 - Ancient Ruins and Adam's Calendar Tours
 - Conservation Fees – Kruger National Park
 - White Lion Project visit
 - Private Boat Ride on Blyde Canyon
 - Hippo visit
 - Panorama Tour

While all accommodations are comfortable with a wide range of food choices and others are simpler, most all of South Africa is charming, authentic and natural. Please advise any dietary requirements so that we can make the necessary arrangements.

FLIGHTS

Each individual is responsible for booking his or her own international air travel and travel insurance, and need to arrive at Johannesburg International Airport (O.R. Tambo Airport) no later than 8:00 a.m. Sept. 3, where we will transfer to our bus. Return flights no earlier than 18:00 (6:00 p.m.) Sept. 16, 2012.

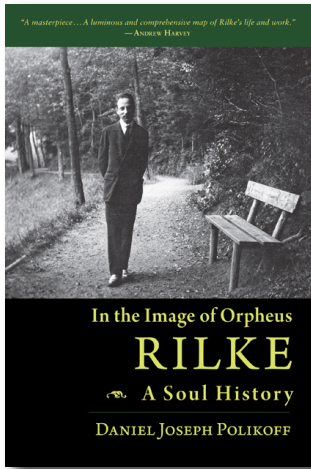
Not included:

- Airline ticket – International
- Trip Cancellation Insurance – highly recommended
- All tips, gratuities, portage. Tip for the tour escort/guide.

Payment/Cancellation/Refund policy for Individual Travelers

- \$1,500 non-refundable deposit due upon registration.
- After March 1 full payment due with registration
- Cancellation before 60 days prior to departure – half of final payment refunded
- Cancellation less than 60 days prior to departure – NO REFUND of tour cost

Book Announcement



**In the Image of Orpheus:
Rilke - A Soul History**
by Daniel Joseph Polikoff

ISBN: 9781888602524
Book (Paperback)
Chiron Publications
\$35.00

In the Image of Orpheus tells the inner story of Rilke's literary career, tracing—step by step—the mythopoetic journey inscribed in the interweaving lines of the poet's life and art. Blending biography with in-depth analysis of Rilke's poetry and prose (from his little-known *Visions of Christ* through the *Sonnets to Orpheus*, the lively narrative draws upon Hillman and Jung, Plato and Petrarch, Apuleius, Ibn Arabi and Lou Andreas-Salomé as it unfolds the poet-seer's vision of the nature and destiny of the human soul—a vision as timely as it is timeless.

A masterpiece....A luminous and comprehensive map of Rilke's life and work.
—Andrew Harvey

Daniel Joseph Polikoff is the author of two books of poetry as well as translator and editor of a dramatic version of the Grail Legend, *Parzival/Gawain: Two Plays*

Available through Chiron, SteinerBooks, and Amazon.

Three Poems by Rilke Translation and Commentary

Daniel Polikoff

The hour bows down and touches me
with its clear metallic ring:
my senses shiver. I feel: I can
grasp the day as a malleable thing.

Nothing was whole before I beheld it;
all becoming stands still.
My glances are ripe, and like a bride,
to each comes the thing that it wills.

Nothing is too small for me to love
and paint great on a background of gold.
I hold it high, and know not whose
soul it will break from the mold.ⁱ

The Book of Monastic Life begins in a moment of inspiration. The monastery bell rings, and the monk is touched by a creative power. He registers the sensation not so much in his mind as in his bodily senses, the corporeal organs of his soul—and then, too, immediately, his feeling and will are awakened. The book's founding moment is thus one of *conception*, but not in an intellectual sense. It is a moment of spiritual transmission or insemination: Rilke refigures the Annunciation with him—or his monk—in the place of Mary. His fertility, though, takes a different form than hers. He bears the power to take hold of the world—which becomes “plastic” in hands—and refashion and reshape it at will. The monk's principal identity is thus established: the call to prayer is, simultaneously, painterly and poetic vocation. He is an artist.

The book thus takes the creative self as its point of departure. In this first poem, God is not present—or is so only in the emissary form of “the hour” which bows down and touches the monk, just as the angel Gabriel bows to Mary. That bow recognizes the absolute centrality of the human vessel which—in both the Christian context and Rilke's transfiguration of it—is destined to bear God anew—not in heaven, but on earth, in the midst of the world of becoming. In Rilke's poem, all creation literally waits upon the gaze of the artist-monk. Things become what they are only when beheld by his eyes, transfigured by his palette and brush.

Asserting the limitless prerogative of the artist-monk's creative power, this first poem veritably bursts at the seams with the self-affirmation characterizing so much of Rilke's Florence diary, the sentiment Heerikhuizen calls “Romantic pride.” Yet this “pride” is really nothing other than a full honoring of the role of the creative imagination, the exercise of which—as that most metaphysical of the English Romantics knew—establishes human being in its divine lineaments: “The primary IMAGINATION,” wrote Coleridge, “I hold to be the living Power and prime Agent

of all human Perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM.”ⁱⁱ

Yet the Self is not the only term dignified in the poem; nor can its imaginative power function in a vacuum. From the first the monk establishes his (imaginative) identity in vital connection to—not only some unmanifest spiritual source—but, as well, the world of creation. Indeed, his intercourse with the world is so intimate as to be figured in marital terms. It is, in fact, in *The Book of Hours* that Rilke first begins using the word “thing” (or “things,” *Ding* or *Dinge*) with extraordinary frequency, styling this seemingly abstract term as a veritable insignia of the creation itself. The prominence of the term—which finally reaches its zenith in its guise as the name of a whole new genre of poetry, the *Dinggedichte* or “thing-poems” Rilke essays in his later *New Poems*—indicates the poet’s progressive movement away from the extreme subjectivism characteristic of most of his early lyrics. It is a sign that henceforth his poetic soul-making will proceed in ever more intimate converse with the objective world—that same “external world” which modernity tends to present as dead, merely material, and thoroughly “disenchanted.”

It is, moreover, by no means for himself alone that the monk paints; the free creative spirit incarnated in his pictures is intended to transmit the like effect to others, grant the gift of spiritual freedom to other receptive souls. Nor does this truly catholic monk discriminate against any aspect of the creation: all things—not merely Madonnas and saints—are worthy of love, fit subjects for his iconic art. All things of the world are, in the monk’s religious eyes, holy images, and so the world itself—the whole of it—becomes for him the fittest image of the divine, and love of the world, the way to God.

I live my life in widening circles
that reach out across all things, high and low.
The last one, I may never complete
but will attempt it, even so.

I circle around God, the primordial tower,
circle thousands of years long;
and still don’t know: am I falcon, a storm, or am I
a great songⁱⁱⁱ

Not long before writing *The Book of Monastic Life*, Rilke wrote an important poem based on the Znamenskaya icon—one spoken, like *The Book of Hours* itself, in the persona of an icon painter. In this poem—a clear precursor to the poetics of *The Book of Monastic Life*—the artist prepares to paint an image of Mary in the signature Znamenskaya pose, her hands at her side, lifting in the gesture of prayer, a (smaller) image of the Christ encircled in the region of her heart.

Die Znamenskaya

As though I were leading a blond child
I want to trace a golden line
about your face—a face like folding doors
behind which a hundred lamps hang lit.

And then we wander around your raiment
trembling, as we follow its folds
and the hands that you still hold
up at your sides like things;
and the way around you grows long.

Paint you small as we may
inside the dark icon,
when we plead: come, dwell here—
the brush goes on endlessly
and the path around your crown
already moves it to despair.

Do not believe I want to bound you
with this weak and timid spur;
your radiant grace spills
over every contour.
Do not believe I want to hem you
at your blue mantle's rim;
your gentle wonder wanders
well beyond this one home.

You are spread far out
over everything. You hold all room.
And every morning the red sun
slips out of your dark womb.

But—o forgive us—we believe
you can be small like the doves,
white and soft and tame like them.
And then you come somehow
into the images as into leaves
and we find you therein—
find you as if asleep
and we kneel (may you correct us)
and kiss you on the chin.^{iv}

Implicitly, the figure of the dove harboring in the leaves echoes the image-content of the icon itself: its depiction of God qua Christ harboring in Mary's heart, spirit nesting in the embodying soul.

ⁱ *Sämtliche Werke*, Rainer Maria Rilke (Frankfurt Am Main, Insel Verlag, 1955) I, 253. Translation Daniel Polikoff.

ⁱⁱ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 304.

ⁱⁱⁱ SW I, 253. Tr. Daniel Polikoff.

^{iv} SW III, 657–658. Tr. Daniel Polikoff.

Rilke's *Elegies* and the *Corpus Hermeticum*

Daniel J. Polikoff

Rilke's *Elegies* revolve around not one single oppositional tension but a set of closely related contraries. Komar provides one terse formulation: "The tension for Rilke is generated between his desire to reach beyond the human to the transcendent realm of the angels and his intense appreciation of the physical world to which he is bound."¹ Building upon our discussion in the last chapter, we might similarly construe the key tension to be that subsisting between the two "halves" of Plato's dividing line—that primordial stroke through the heart of the universe that separates the intelligible from the sensible world, the more enduring invisible order of being from the visible, earthly realm subject to incessant change and mutation. To gain a still deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the whole gamut of metaphysical differences that underlie Rilke's *Elegies*, however, it may be enlightening to refer to yet another ancient text—one that covers much the same ground that Plato does but in its own distinctly illuminating wise; a text, moreover, steeped in the aura of ancient Egyptian lore so relevant to the mood of Rilke's late *Elegies*.

The collection of writings known as the *Corpus Hermeticum*—originally attributed to the quasi-mythical sage Hermes Trismegistus but actually composed in the second and third centuries C.E. near Alexandria—represents a compelling confluence of ancient Egyptian myth and mystery wisdom, Greek philosophy, and biblical culture. The eleventh text—*Mind to Hermes*—begins with the fabled Trismegistus requesting—and receiving—instruction in metaphysics and cosmology from the Divine Mind (Mind or *Nous*) itself:

"Since people have said many contradictory things of all sorts about the universe and god, I have not learned the truth. Make the truth plain to me, master; it is you alone on whom I may depend to reveal it."

"Mark my words, then, Hermes Trismegistus, and remember what I say. I will not hesitate to speak what occurs to me. Hear how it is with god and the universe, my child."

"God, eternity, cosmos, time, becoming."

"God makes eternity; eternity makes the cosmos; the cosmos makes time; time makes becoming. The essence (so to speak) of god is (the good, the beautiful, happiness,) wisdom; the essence of eternity is identity; of the cosmos, order; of time, change; of becoming, life and death. But the energy of god is mind and soul; the energy of eternity is permanence and immortality; of the cosmos, recurrence and counter-recurrence; of time, increase and decrease; of becoming, quality (and quantity). Eternity, therefore, is in god, the cosmos in eternity, time in the cosmos, and becoming in time."²

¹ Kathleen Komar, *Transcending Angels* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 21.

² Brian P. Copenhaver, ed., *Hermetica* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 37.

This passage offers much to think about to any mind that has not (as is unfortunately too often the postmodern prejudice) *a priori* decided that all metaphysic is mystifying nonsense. How does the teaching offered to Hermes compare to that propounded in Plato's divided line? The respective intellectual visions are quite complementary, though to coordinate them we must construe Hermes' (or Mind's) "god" as a transcendental source of the grades of Being and Knowing elaborated in the Divided Line rather than one of the levels of the Line itself. Thus we would have—corresponding to the four levels of Plato's line—the following Hermetic scheme:

God	(wisdom; mind and soul)
1. Eternity	(identity; permanence and immortality)
2. Cosmos	(order; recurrence and counter-recurrence)
3. Time	(change; increase and decrease)
4. Becoming	(life and death; quality and quantity)

Because of its cosmological specificity, Hermes' teaching may permit us to understand the fundamental tension underlying the energy of Rilke's *Elegies* more fully. The primary opposition remains the same, inhering in the critical difference between the enduring order of the cosmos—indeed eternity itself—wherein spiritual being (the angel, for instance) *is what is*, perpetually or everlastingly; and the "lower" earthly realms of Time and—especially—Becoming, the world of multiple distinct things and persons that live, change, and die.

That all too transient world of becoming is, of course, the earthly world in which we dwell—and the world the poet of the *Elegies* finds himself in at the outset of the poem, his psyche beset by existential despair on account of the awful cleft between himself and the higher spiritual state of being represented by the angel. Hermes' teaching—like Plato's parable of the cave—helps us interpret the deeper reason for that despair. Attributing *identity* (self-consistent being) to eternity implies, correlatively, that within the realm of becoming—*when that realm is isolated from the larger order within which it is embedded*—neither objects nor human subjects *are what they are in and of themselves*, but instead are riven by (internal) difference; afflicted by flux. Rilke laments states of impermanence, division, and inauthentic existence in myriad ways in the *Elegies*: he bewails the love that disappears even as it is tasted (Second Elegy); regrets the condition of nigh ineradicable division *within* the self as well as that between the self and its world seemingly characteristic of the human state ("That's what Fate means: being opposite, and nothing else, and always opposite—Eighth Elegy); and excoriates the utter superficiality of life lived and experienced as if it were naught but a passing show, a banal soap opera of bourgeois boredom (Fourth Elegy) or a carnival of cheap thrills (Tenth Elegy).

Even so, Hermes' teaching (again, like Plato's) does not lead us to regard that alienated condition as an inescapable fate, for the difference between mortal and eternal life is by no means an incontrovertible one. Hermes (or rather "Mind") declares: **"Eternity, therefore, is in god, the cosmos in eternity, time in the cosmos, and becoming in time."** Ideally, a fundamental *continuity* subsists between all the levels of being, with each level *participating* in every other. Indeed, the source of spiritual desolation and despair—in Rilke no less than in Plato or Hermes—lies not in the order of the universe, but in the darkened vision of the soul

trapped in what appears to it as a purely phenomenal reality devoid of deeper meaning; a *psyche* unable to relate its experience of the flux of thought, sensation, and emotion to those higher orders of consciousness (actually *internal* to its own being) attuned to the cosmic order; *human being* mired in sensational circumstance so that space, time, and causality—the categories of existence—seem to operate upon it from some source *external* to itself, while the soul itself—its very life—seems hopelessly cut off from any sense of intelligible meaning or purpose.

Hence the need for the literary trajectory traced in the *Elegies*. It is the function of Rilke's purificatory poetics to initiate the individual soul or psyche into the higher orders of consciousness implicit in its being—*not* so as to abandon and betray its earthly existence, but so as to *see through* the appearance of its *purely* transient nature, *reconnecting* both soul and world to that “really sound and full sphere and orb of being.” Beholding things and events within the context of the cosmic soul-space *both concealed and revealed* by them, the poet's illumined vision—prospectively at least—transfigures both the self and the things of this world. The precondition and basis of that transformation, however, remains deeper insight into the “essence” of the realm of becoming itself; the intimate knowledge of things that can only be attained by way of a penetration into the integrally related quintessences of *life* and (most especially) *death*.

All of this is more easily said than done, of course, so we had better turn our attention directly to further salient specifics of Rilke's literary deed: the poetic means by which the *Elegies*—working constantly through the plastic element and force of the creative Word—strive to accomplish the great task of self- and world transformation.



Rainer Maria Rilke

Gratitude From the Institute for Astrosophy

Lacquanna Paul

As an English speaking member of IFA, the Institute for Astrosophy (Institut für Astrosophie)—the German institute formed in support of the astrosophical research of Dr. Robert Powell—I am privileged to have the opportunity to extend gratitude to all who participated toward the funding of the future publication of Robert's latest research regarding the "as above, so below" correspondence of the starry firmament with locations on the earth, Astrogeographia. This work has been co-authored with fellow scientist and colleague from Australia, David Bowden, who has developed software for the project (available through the Sophia Foundation), and has contributed important empirical research.

To all those who spearheaded this endeavor in their individual communities the Board of IFA extends their gratitude:

USA: Linda Delman
Eileen Sullivan

Italy: Uberta Sebgondi

Canada: Rosamund Hughes
Mary Speck
Randall Scott

Europe and Worldwide: Bernt Rossiwall

Australia: Lynne Klugman

Bernt Rossiwall, the IFA managing secretary, indicates that our projected goal, necessary for the publication, has been reached. Thus, we were able to support Robert on the memorable occasion of the celebration of his 65th birthday with recognition of the significance of this important work toward the documenting of scientific research regarding the significance of the stars.

On the evening of the awarding of this gift, Bernt Rossiwall had prepared a list describing 14 important discoveries comprising Robert's contributions to the science of the stars, Astrosophy, which was read out by Choreocosmos participants representing the German, Italian, French, and English speaking worlds.

Altogether there were 42 participants representing 10 countries for the Choreocosmos week, January 13-17 2012 in Kinsau, Germany – dancing in three concentric circles the mysteries of the Seven Seals of the Apocalypse. The multiplicity of outstretched arms, the silky veils in beautiful colors all moving together in fluid harmony, when viewed from outside the moving circles, resembled the winged hierarchy of the Seraphim called forth to co-participate with the dancers in a communal deed of love. Moving together to the masterworks of the great classical composers to the musical accompaniment of Russian concert pianist, Ludmila, was a gift to all and was warmly appreciated. Our musical week together was graced on the final day by a private concert

performed by the Munich based Schwabinger Piano Trio, which was a special birthday offering as a gift to the participants and to celebrate Robert's birthday.

The sense of generosity and communal conviviality filled our time together so that one could not help but feel abundantly blessed. The sharing of meals enhanced by the magnanimity of generous hearts, fresh produce - the gift of Heidi and Arnold Langen's bio-dynamic farm at Bollheim near Cologne in Germany, exquisite Italian cuisine prepared by our friend, Tiziano Freschi and his helper, Bernie Genolet from Switzerland, together with appreciative helpers amongst the course participants, brought the warmth of shared endeavor to our daily meals. And the impressive array of birthday delicacies brought by supportive friends rendered dessert time, a time of holy silence! The upstairs hall was generously supplied by Gisela and Johannes Storto with various energy enlivening sweets and tended by Johannes' ever-watchful eye for photographic moments to capture the ambiance of the day. To all, the board extends gratitude for the generosity of spirit we shared as a precious gift during our week together in Germany, January 2012.



Robert Powell and Heidi Langen

Gratitude is also due to the Sophia Foundation in America, especially co-founder Karen Rivers and administrator Jennifer Press in coordinating support to help make the publication of *Astrogeographia* research possible. Donors from 15 countries contributed:

North and South America:

Canada
USA
Peru
Argentina

Australia

Asia:

Turkey

Europe:

Norway
UK
Netherlands
Germany
Luxembourg
Switzerland
Austria
Italy
Spain

May the wisdom imparted by Sophia's starry mantle continue to find a home in the hearts of humanity throughout the world.

EASTER SEQUENCE

C. A. Lawrie

1978

Palm Sunday

And do you hear once more the people cheering in the street,
Joyous to lay their branches down before the patient ass's feet?

The way to Golgotha was decked at first with leaves
Leaves of the palm-tree that stirred not in the silent air
Till hands of the people reached to pluck them there
– Laying down their lives, they were.

The people laying them felt a well-spring near
As if all nature wanted to declare
Her readiness to bear.

And to the palm-tree was the hour given
To lay her offering at the gate of Heaven –
The old, and yet the new, Jerusalem –

The ass steps on. The people cheer and sing.
The palm-fronds left behind lie swiftly dying.



Monday

The fig-tree felt its fate already near
And trembled, bitterly aware, no fruit
Formed yet beneath the fleshy leaves
It spread once over Adam's nakedness and Eve's.
His wrath struck to the core.
"Henceforth this tree shall grant men fruit no more."



And turning to the Temple, swift His way,
The glory of His Entrance entering there
Routed the tradesmen, money-lenders, spilled
Their glittering coinage, tableware.
They fled in shame and fear.
His word rang through the building. All could hear.
"This is My Father's House. For prayer,
Not thieves."
Within the priests He saw the hatred stir.

Tuesday

Their hatred turned at first to questioning –
The sting of death impaling them on Him
They must impress, win His submission to
The hardened spirit of the Sanhedrin –
Could they understand Him? And so He drew
There, sounding through the air, a sun-blade
Riving the true sphere of God and Caesar,
Binding them together. He beheld them shrink,
Deeper within their wounds the poison drink,
Derive a strength of hatred doubly stirred.
And forth He went with His disciples, dared
To will their destiny with Him, prepared
Them in an intimate human ring,
With mighty pictures of His Second Coming.

Wednesday

The Second Coming . . . still they drew to Him;
The first was not yet made complete and
Integral. Against Him, Caiaphas, a
Number of his people – priests – held judgement;
And in their midst was voiced the will to kill –
As if in answer came a woman fair
And broke her smouldering ointment on Him there
Of love, embalming Him to Sacrifice –
But scorn lit up in a disciple's eyes
'Why waste this source of revenue for the poor?'
"The poor in spirit" – Love gleamed in His face –
"Need yet to see me here before the Door – "
But darkly in himself he turned his gaze
Who trod across might's stone to Caiaphas.

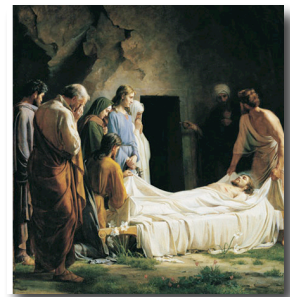


Thursday

"Need yet to share Me here before the Door –
And from the living centre of My Heart outpour
Blessing of bread, sun-substance, Manas
Given to you to do likewise. This is
My Blood. And this the sop, for Judas.
Take your flight across the city's sullen stones
And light your earthly flames. Take me
Upon the Mount of Olives. Take me in
Your arms. For I will feed you in a
Later age. My kiss bestow, not of betrayal
But of blending with you. You shall declare
Me, as no man living may, intimacy
Of detail. You shall bless the Earth that once you trod
Using her selflessness to crucify your God."

Friday

Bár – ra – bás: the robber's rap of doom
Releases Christ to enter in the Tomb
Of Earth – of Death – hoarding its ancient hate
Dark Ahriman still storming at the Gate.
But see, three drops of blood suffice to salve
Her core, and bathe her blessed limbs anew
In ore – a radiant sun-seed in her
Heart is stowed, robbing the bitter darkness
With its gold. And through the serried terraces
Of stone, He strides who gives His Life to be
reborn.



But yet the waiting Heavens hold their breath:
Can Christ rise forth, wrest victory from death?

Deep in the Father's silence all must hold:
The stone across the tomb's dark jaw is rolled.

Saturday

For who will follow Christ into the tomb?
The crack of thunder parting through the room
Dissolves the walls – an earthquake great and wide
Splits the remaining fissure side from side
That harboured Adam's ancient bones and skull,
Of all who shared the impact of the fall.
This stone decay knows deep the man of stone
That grits his teeth, tastes ash, the skeleton.
The earth that once extruded forth her moon
Receives anew the Spirit of the Sun
In time to give the moon once more a home.
But now in souls that circle, sub-terranean:
Speaks forth the Christ, the cosmic human form
"I hold the living key to death's dominion."



Sunday

"I AM the Risen Christ, the Spirit-Sun
That dawns at last within the Earth's
Horizon. I AM the Living Source
Of all that flows within your
Earthly course. I AM within you
And your will can flow in harmony
With God. Yet for a time I leave you
For your Good. To gain the strength
Concealed in imperfection. I love you
And I love my Self in you:
THE DEED OF FREEDOM
Yours is the WAY to rise
With ME – the Earth – to God and Gods above
Man's cosmic destiny to be:
Spirits of Freedom . . . LOVE."





Impressions of Mt. Shasta

by Cheryl Mulholland

The Sophia Foundation retreat to observe the 2012 Venus Transit will include several excursions into the natural splendors of majestic Mt Shasta. My husband and I recently travelled there to scout the area and make some arrangements for the conference. This article offers some impressions of the pristine beauty and mystical nature of this place.

As one approaches from any direction, Mt Shasta hovers on the horizon like a radiant beacon towering above the surrounding landscape. Arrayed year round in gleaming ice and snow, the entire mountain seems to float like a majestic kingdom, poised between heaven and earth. The mountain's glorious crown, vibrant against the bright sky, is often ringed with unusual and dramatic lenticular cloud formations. Powerful geophysical forces are at work within the mountain and have formed its many natural wonders. The diverse features of this natural wonderland include: extinct and dormant volcanoes, cinder cones, craters, hot springs, artesian waters, pristine lakes and rivers, cascading waterfalls, sacred caves and caverns, and innumerable fauna and flora.

Shasta is an old volcano—a mountain created from fire. Formed by successive eruptions of molten lava and ash cast heavenward, Mt Shasta is part of the Pacific Ring of Fire—the largest zone of volcanoes in the world. The Cascade Range is one section of this ring extending about 700 miles from northern California through Oregon and Washington into southern British Columbia. Mount Shasta is the second tallest volcano in the Cascade Range at 14,162 feet. Rudolf Steiner indicated that the Ring of Fire is where the extrusion of the Moon occurred during the ancient Lemurian epoch.

The scintillating white beauty of the Shasta cones also conveys a profound spiritual impression. The mountain seems to conduct an immense flow of universal life current. Like an energetic geyser, rising and falling, connecting the depths and the heights, Mt Shasta is a living energy center—a spiritual organ of the earth. It is no surprise that *'she'* has always been regarded as a Sacred Mountain and a portal into subtle, spiritual realms. For Native American peoples the mountain was revered as a place for ceremony and rituals to pay homage to the Great Mother.

Tribal legends of Mount Shasta regard this holy site as home to the Ancient Gods similar to the myths of Asgard and Mount Olympus.

The legendary status of Mt Shasta as a gateway between dimensions continues to attract spiritual seekers from around the world, and many New Age events are held here. Mt Shasta is recognized as part of the earth's chakras system, and a place to connect into the finer, spiritual forces of the earth and the cosmos. Mt Shasta is also thought to be a link in a geometric energy grid connecting the Earth to the galactic grid.

The Sophia Foundation retreat will be held on the south slope of the mountain in the historic town of McCloud. The McCloud Mercantile Hotel has large meeting spaces for meals, lectures, singing, and sacred dance as well as sleeping accommodations. There is an artesian water fountain in the hotel that has flowed continuously for eighty years. All participants will dine together here on wholesome vegetarian fare.

Our first excursion will be to the nearby McCloud Falls, which is one of twelve sacred sites in the Mt Shasta area. A gentle trail along the river and through the forested landscape leads to three waterfalls, the Lower, Middle & Upper Falls. The elemental spirits are strongly felt here in the jubilant interplay of water, sun, and air. As a gesture of gratitude, Jim and I offered the Morning Meditation to the resident nixies, elves, fairies, and gnomes. Our gestures synchronized with the pulsing rhythm of the cascading water, and we were blessed by the delicate breezes and gentle rainbow spray from the waterfall.

For viewing the Venus transit on June 5, we sought the highest observation point possible. Halfway up the mountain at 7600 feet is Panther Meadows, a former ceremonial gathering place for the indigenous Wintu & Karuk Tribes. Here we will set up our day-viewing telescope to observe Venus transit the sun. Further up the mountain is Upper Panthers Meadows Springs amid ancient rock formations, rock altars, and medicine circles. Named "the Mouth of God" by the indigenous, this life-giving spring gushes forth from very the bosom of the mountain, to wind through the forests and become the surging McCloud River. The river continues onto the plains flowing ever onward as a great current of life bestowing forces.

Mt Shasta is a place of primal mysteries veiled in the magnificence of the natural world. It calls to the human spirit. These mysteries are deep and lofty, ancient and future bearing. Inspired by the insights of Robert Powell at this significant moment of the Venus transit, we will explore these mysteries together as a community of people who wish to work for the healing of the earth and humanity. I have the impression the Great Mountain, the Great Mother, the elemental beings, and the Star Beings await us.

Earth Chakras & the 2012 Venus Transit at Mt. Shasta, California

Saturday, June 2 –
Wednesday, June 6, 2012

with Co-founders of the Sophia Foundation of N. A.

Robert Powell, PhD

internationally known author
and lecturer on cosmology and star wisdom

and **Karen Rivers, M.A.**

Director of the New Chartres School
Wisdom University Faculty

**Featuring — observation of the Venus transit,
the new star wisdom of Astrosophy,
and the enlivening experience of Sacred Dance.**



*To the starry heavens above,
I direct my gaze.
Starlight penetrates into my heart.
The heart's power strengthens my eyes.
My eyes strengthen the inner light of my soul.
Peace streams into my soul.*

—BASED ON A VERSE BY RUDOLF STEINER

Experience the stars, the dramatic occultation of Venus across the face of the Sun, from the holy ground of one of the earth's seven primary chakras. Mt. Shasta, the location of this event, is one of the earth's planetary chakras, corresponding to the seven visible planets. This most potent region of Mt. Shasta, one of the most powerful upon the planet has long been known to the Native Americans, who thought it to be the center of creation. The Modoc Indians taught that after the creation the Great Spirit dwelt upon Mt. Shasta.

During this time on Mt. Shasta we will focus upon Earth mysteries and the wisdom of the Stars, helping participants find a living relationship to the starry heavens through evening star-gazing, and to the Earth through sacred dance, song and silence, uniting with Divine Sophia. The culmination of the retreat will be the observation of the Venus transit, which starts around 3:30 pm on Tuesday, June 5 and lasts for about six hours. The Sun will set around 8:30 pm while Venus is still transiting. We will observe the transit through a specially prepared telescope, which will be set up by astronomer David Cooper. In the words of Rudolf Steiner: "Venus transits are very interesting because they take place only once every hundred years or so, and very significant things can be observed when Venus is passing in front of the Sun."

The movement of Venus before the face of the Sun occurs in pairs eight years apart with over a hundred years between the pairs. Venus orbits the Sun every 225 days. From the earth's point of view, Venus usually crosses the position of the Sun above or below the Sun's bright disc. In 1874 and 1882, Venus went across the Sun's face, and then again in 2004. The second of the pair will occur on June 5/6, 2012. The Venus eclipse of the Sun will not recur again until December 2117, in another pair eight years apart.

Choreocosmos Workshop on the Seven Seals of the Apocalypse

An Experience of One of the Participants

I would like to relate what I saw on the morning of Sunday, January 15, 2012. That morning we did the cosmic dances for the Fifth Seal (Sophia) followed by the Sixth Seal (Michael)—Jupiter in Cancer, followed by the Sun in Cancer. Then we did the Sun in Leo as the introduction for the closing text of the Seven Seals celebration. This was followed by the closing “expansion and contraction” in two circles interweaving—with the inner circle expanding and the outer circle contracting simultaneously. It was during the expansion and contraction that I had a vision. During the alternate expansion and contraction of the two groups I saw in front of me a great light above the group. When I looked more closely at this light, I saw it in the form of a person clothed in radiant light—a person who was neither male nor female, but was vast and of extraordinary beauty. It was a matter of a luminous being, and I saw to its left (my right) a great gold-colored pair of scales. I tried to see the face of this being, but was unable to on account of its vastness. I looked again at the scales, and then I saw on the other side a very large, curved, bronze-colored sword. The arms of this luminous being gestured from above below, showing at one and the same time firmness and gentleness regarding its power in moving the sword. My impression was that it wanted to show me first the balance and then the sword in movement, as if the balance were more important than the sword. The entire image was beyond physical space—I was seeing beyond our world. This vision was magnificent, grand, beautiful, and gentle. The luminous being then disappeared and the vision ended.

Anonymous



CHOREOCOSMOS
SCHOOL OF COSMIC AND SACRED DANCE
Schedule 2012

April 13-17, 2012 “Sophia Grail Circle Training for Facilitators” starting on April 13 at 7:00 pm. A 4-day training at the Barn, near Petaluma, California, starting Friday evening and ending at noon on Tuesday. Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard. Registration: contact the Sophia Foundation. Information: Karen Rivers: Tel: 415-662-2147. E-mail: karen@karenrivers.info.

April 20-22, 2012 “Liturgy to the Earth – In Honor of Earth Day on Sunday, April 22”
At the culmination of this workshop at 11 AM on Sunday morning, there is an open invitation to participate in the Liturgy to the Earth, followed by a pot luck lunch. A weekend workshop with Robert Powell. **Choreocosmos: Cosmic Dances of the Four Elements.** Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard. Location: the Summerfield Waldorf School, 655 Willowside Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95401. For directions, information and registration, contact Tracy Saucier: tracy@summerfieldwaldorf.org. Tel: 707-575-7194 x 100.

April 27-29, 2012 “2012: Prophecy – Phenomena – Hope” (Sophia Grail Circle)
A weekend workshop with Robert Powell. **Choreocosmos: Cosmic Dance – Planets in Signs of the Zodiac.** Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard. Location: the Waldorf School of the Peninsula, 11311 Mora Drive, Los Altos, CA 94024. For directions see www.waldorfpenninsula.org. For information and registration contact Cecille Greenleaf: Tel: 650-533-0074. E-mail: caogreenleaf@gmail.com.

May 5, 2012 “Wisdom-filled Choices for the Future” (Sophia Foundation one-day conference)
10 AM—4 PM in the St. Francis Hall at St Mary’s Cathedral, San Francisco. Presenters: Amikaela Gaston, Rev. Angel Kyodo Williams, Father Sean O’Laoire, Robert Powell and Karen Rivers. Download the conference flyer from the Sophia Foundation: www.sophiafoundation.org, or contact the Sophia Foundation: Tel: 415-552-1150. E-mail: sophia@sophiafoundation.org. Information: Eileen Sullivan, Tel: 415-883-6504. E-mail: emjsullivan@gmail.com.

May 12, 2012 “Etheric Movement” A one-day workshop with Robert Powell & Lacquanna Paul at Sophia’s Sanctuary, 2836 Bloomfield Road, Sebastopol, California 95472. Contact: Linda Delman: Tel: 707-827-3334. E-mail: lindaevansdelman@comcast.net.

May 20, 2012, 3:00-6:00 PM “Meditations on the Tarot” (Christian Hermeticism meeting)
Meeting and lecture with Robert Powell, at the Barn, near Petaluma, California. Contact: John Hipsley. Tel: 408-744-9004. E-mail: jhipsley@igc.org.

June 2-6, 2012 “Earth Chakras & the 2012 Venus Transit” with observation of the Venus transit. 18th Annual Conference of the Sophia Foundation of North America. With Robert Powell and Karen Rivers. Registration: contact the Sophia Foundation. Tel: 415-522-1150. E-mail: sophia@sophiafoundation.org. Information: Karen Rivers: Tel: 415-662-2147. E-mail: karen@karenrivers.info.

June 15-17, 2012 “2012: Prophecy – Phenomena – Hope” (Sophia Grail Circle). A weekend workshop in Utah with Robert Powell. **Choreocosmos: Cosmic Dance – Planets in Signs of the Zodiac.** Musical accompaniment with pianist and composer Marcia Burchard. Address of location in Utah to be announced. Information and registration: contact Heidi Lazerson: Tel: 801-221-7094. E-mail: stargateunion@hotmail.com.

June 18-22, 2012 “Life Beyond the Threshold of Death: Cosmic Dances of Jacob’s Ladder” A five-day 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 22-24, 2012 “2012: Prophecy – Phenomena – Hope” (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.

July 1-7, 2012 “Sacred Astronomy: The Paradigm of Creation” A one-week intensive of the New Chartres School with Robert Powell, Karen Rivers, Andrew Harvey, Carolyn Myss, Richard Tarnas, and others. **Choreocosmos: Cosmic and Sacred Dance** at Chartres, France, including visits to Chartres Cathedral, walking the labyrinth, and more.
Contact: <https://www.wisdomuniversity.org/Chartres/>
Intensive VII - <https://www.wisdomuniversity.org/Chartres/intensives-VII.htm>.

July 9-13, 2012 “Life Beyond the Threshold of Death: Cosmic Dances of Jacob’s Ladder” A five-day workshop with Robert Powell. **Choreocosmos: Planets in Signs (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 13-15, 2012 “2012: Prophecy – Phenomena – Hope” 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 16-20, 2012 “Life Beyond the Threshold of Death: Cosmic Dances of Jacob’s Ladder” A five-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. Tel: 415-522-1150 E-mail: sophia@sophiafoundation.org.
Information: Karen Rivers: Tel: 415-662-2147 E-mail: karen@karenrivers.info.

July 27-29, 2012 “2012: Prophecy – Phenomena – Hope” 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. E-mail: kcalegar@earthlink.net.

July 30-August 3, 2012 “Life Beyond the Threshold of Death: Cosmic Dances of Jacob’s Ladder”
A five-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 E-mail: kcalegar@earthlink.net.

August 12-19, 2012 “Preparing for the End of 2012” (with Foundation Stone Meditation)
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 12 for dinner; departure on August 19 after breakfast. English/German with Italian translation. Information: Uberta Sebregondi. Tel: +39-06-86904627 / +39-335-6749935. E-mail: usebregondi@gmail.com.

August 19-24, 2012 “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 at Castle Titignano, south of Assisi – accommodation at the retreat center. Arrival on August 19 for dinner; departure on August 24 after breakfast. English/German with Italian translation. Information: Uberta Sebregondi. Tel: +39-06-86904627 / +39-335-6749935 E-mail: usebregondi@gmail.com.

September 2–16, 2012 “Pilgrimage to South Africa.” Journey to South Africa led by Robert Powell and Karen Rivers, with eurythmy and singing at the various mystery sites. Pilgrimage to South Africa organized by the Sophia Foundation. NEW color brochure can be downloaded from the Sophia Foundation website www.sophiafoundation.org (Activities>Pilgrimages).

Saturday, October 27 – Friday, November 2, 2012 “Choreocosmos: International Week” in Roncegno near Trient, Italy. “Cosmic Dances of Sophia: Entering the School of Sophia” in the anthroposophical spa hotel “Casa di Salute – Raphael:” 11th graduation of the Choreocosmos School. English/German with Italian translation. Arrival on October 27 for dinner; departure on November 2 after breakfast. Information: Sally Ellis-Jones, Tel: +39-0461-724893 / +39-3482-106251 E-mail: sellisjones@yahoo.com.

November 2-4, 2012 “Choreocosmos Graduates Meeting” in Roncegno near Trient, Italy. “Foundations of Choreocosmos: A Spiritual Path Arising from Eurythmy” in the anthroposophical spa hotel “Casa di Salute – Raphael:” English/German with Italian translation. For those attending Choreocosmos Week, the week finishes on November 1 at 10 pm, and the graduates’ meeting starts the next morning on November 2 at 9:00 AM. For those not attending Choreocosmos Week: Arrival on November 1 for dinner or on November 2 for breakfast, ready for the start of the meeting at 9:00 AM. The graduates’ meeting closes on November 3 at 10 pm. Departure on November 4 after breakfast. Information: Sally Ellis-Jones, Tel: +39-0461-724893 / +39-3482-106251 E-mail: sellisjones@yahoo.com

Visit the Sophia Foundation website for further information:
www.sophiafoundation.org

Sophia Foundation e-mail: sophia@sophiafoundation.org

Prayer for Elders

Father and Mother, Creator and Sustainer:

*May I become a true Elder,
A Wellspring of Wisdom,
working for the well-being of future generations
and the Earth as a whole.*

*May I be inspired and guided by
Love and Wisdom,
and armed with Truth, Strength, and Courage.*

*May I serve
The Living Earth, Our Mother,
who bears and sustains the Family of Humanity,

The Community of Living Beings,
who share the Earth,

The Children of the World,
who bear the future,

The Spiritual World,
from whom we receive our help, strength, and grace. Amen.*



This prayer came to Molly Rose who had in mind people of a certain age who do not wish to simply grow old, but to consciously take up the spiritual mantle of eldership.

Starlight, the newsletter of the Sophia Foundation, appears twice a year, in the spring and in the autumn. If you are intending to send a contribution to the next issue, please do so by September 1, 2012. Now that the newsletter is in an online version, it is possible to include numerous images, photos, etc. accompanying the text of articles and other contributions to *Starlight*. Let us know what you think about the online version of the newsletter and whether you have any suggestions for it.

